



Zionist Committees Discuss Urgent Problems

Programme Of S.A. Zionist Federation

Mr. B. GERING, chairman of the S.A. Zionist Federation, presided over a well-attended meeting of Zionist committees at the Coronation Hall on Sunday morning. The meeting was fully representative of Zionist societies in Johannesburg, Pieterburs, Pretoria and Vereeniging; delegates from a number of country centres, including Pietersburg and Witbank, also attended.

During the meeting, Mr. Gering expressed the hope that similar meetings would be held in other parts of the country. He stressed the importance of the Zionist workers and making suggestions for an opportunity of airing their views and making suggestions for local Zionist activity. The establishment of the State and certain problems faced by the organisation, namely, the economic position of the State, the organisation of Aliyah and relations with the Government. Many delegates were not aware of the role of the Zionist movement in the past and how it has to play to-day, and thought that the Federation should cease its activities. Mr. Gering reported on the recent work of the Federation, showing how it was organised to assist the people in every way.

It could be no question of the Zionist Federation closing down its activities, on the contrary, it would intensify its efforts to meet the needs of the people in the Diaspora.

Mr. Gering stated that the United Appeal was a "temporary partnership". He personally thought there should be one United Appeal for the Keren Hayesod, Hebrew Youth Aliyah, etc.

Mr. TAGER, vice-chairman of the Federation, spoke of his visit to Israel. He declared that there would be a State in Israel. He declared that it has come to exist. The question at this stage was whether the State should include the Negev and the Negev Desert. The Negev was necessary to the State to have a sufficient number of thousands of inhabitants, and also had great potentialities. Israel's struggle

was fought on two fronts, in Palestine and at UNO. Our armies were scoring success after success, and at UNO our representatives were more than holding their own.

Mr. ALEXANDER LEWIN, who just returned from Israel, speaking in Yiddish, said that not so long ago, posters in Jewish shops and cafes in Palestine, were displayed bearing the picture of Herzl and the Hebrew inscription "Im Tirzu ein zu Agadah". To-day these posters were captioned "Ra-zinu ve-ein zu Agadah". The truce was a great burden on Israel, it was neither peace nor war. The plan of the enemy was to starve the Negev, let Jerusalem suffer from thirst, and cripple the economic position of Israel, so that in the end, Israel would make concessions. But Prime Minister Ben Gurion had declared "As long as there are strangers in Palestine, we shall fight."

Mr. ISRAEL DUNSKY, treasurer, S.A. Zionist Federation, said that he was pleased the previous speakers had avoided the "gilded" note, for we should not blink our eyes at the difficulties confronting the infant State of Israel; but he was confident they would be overcome. He had attended the Actions Committee.

"Never at any stage during the proceedings," he continued, "was there any mention of liquidating the Zionist Organisation."

The Actions Committee had drawn up a programme of activity and responsibility of the World Zionist Movement. He stressed the fact that with the establishment of the State, our burdens had in no way been reduced. Assistance was required in every possible way. We had to think in terms of intensifying the Zionist movement and not destroying it, and it was for everyone to realise the vital importance of the role he had to play in the Zionist movement.

The chairman then invited discussion, and useful suggestions were made, and constructive criticism offered.

Mr. ZACKS (Pietersburg): All Zionist campaigns should be merged into one United Zionist Appeal. The country communities were dwindling and frequent campaigns are a waste of effort.

Mrs. PALTE (Pietersburg): Something should be done about individuals who could afford to give large donations to the Campaign, yet offered paltry sums.

Mrs. JUDELMAN (Benoni): The women should help the Hachsharah farms as much as possible. As far as organised Aliyah was concerned, she suggested that the Zionist Federation give every possible assistance.

Mr. D. SOLOMON (Vereeniging): There were still individuals to whom Zionism was "taboo" and efforts should be made to enrol them into our ranks.

Mr. LEVY (Pretoria): We did not realise the importance of training young people in South Africa for a life of chaluziut. All the responsibility for this training has been left to the Youth. The Zionist Federation should take a much greater interest.

Rabbi Dr. NEUFELD (Pretoria). The speakers should have given an intimate picture of what they saw in Israel and not repeat things that are well known. A stronger relationship was necessary between the Diaspora and Israel. Active steps should be taken to Hebraise the Diaspora, Tozereth Ha-aretz should be greatly fostered.

Mr. A. SARETZKY (Boksburg) moved a vote of confidence in the Zionist Federation for all it had done to help Israel.

Mr. G. BAUTZER (Johannesburg) criticised the Hachsharah centres on the ground that they are run on Party lines. He suggested that all the training centres be combined and that a qualified "shliach" be brought out for the purpose of giving proper training to those on the farms.

Mr. WEBRANCHEK criticised the Zionist Federation for having invited only office bearers and committee members.

Mrs. GLUCKMANN: The Keren Kayemeth should have been mentioned by the speakers—it had played and was playing a vital role in Israel.

Mrs. Ch. LEVI (Pretoria): The meaning of "Hachsharah" was not fully understood. People on "Hachsharah" were not being treated fairly. The seniors should give far more assistance than they had given.

Mr. A. LEVI (Pretoria) explained why it was necessary to have separate Hachsharah farms for the different ideological groups.

Mr. S. HIRSCHMANN (Pietersburg) praised the youth for coming to the meeting and voicing their opinions. He sensed a certain apathy throughout the community as a whole, and maintained that too much time had been spent in the raising of funds with the result that other matters had been neglected.

Mr. B. GERING, in replying to the discussion, asked that everyone help in the present struggle. Greater supplies were needed; but before they could be sent, more funds would have to be collected. The Israeli United Appeal had to be completed quickly to pave the way for a new campaign next year.

The Zionist Federation was endeavouring to help the Hachsharah centres; but they did not want to "spoon-feed" them, and conditions for them had to be a little difficult for the life of a chaluutz in Israel was hard.

In closing the meeting, Mr. Gering expressed his pleasure at the gathering and the useful function it had served.

M.D.A. Concert

THE dramatic presentation "The Journey Home" will be a special feature of the third annual concert of the M.D.A. to be held at the City Hall on November 15. This is a factual story of a Polish refugee who is rescued in Greece and makes a home in Israel. The part of the girl is portrayed by Isobel Cort, a promising young actress who recently starred in Taubie Kushlick's production of "Love on the Dole", and the narrator is Mervyn Isaacson, well-known to MDA audiences. The script is written and produced by Louis Goldman, who is responsible for the



MR. LOUIS GOLDMAN

recent production of "Arms and the Man" and is one of the city's more controversial dramatic critics.

The rest of the concert is arranged by the Jewish Musical Institute. The Fourth Symphony Orchestra will appear, conducted by Solly Aronowsky, the Institute's Musical Director. They will render Palestinian and Jewish music, as well as Gounod's "Faust" Ballet music, etc.

Hannah Seimick, Sophie Levitt, and Sheila Smith, the young South African dancers, will render colourful Jewish traditional dances.

The well-known Palestinian singer, Cantor Dov Propis, and the popular tenor, Norman Zwick, will sing modern Palestinian and Jewish traditional folk-songs.

The annual MDA concerts have a reputation of being unusual and enjoyable and this one should be no exception. Proceeds are in aid of an "Air Ambulance," and for this reason alone the concert deserves public support. Enquiries: Phone 33-2782, Box 9228, Johannesburg.

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