

Zulu Songs In Desert Outpost!

Leonard Bernstein Conducts Orchestra in Negev Capital

Special Cable from COLIN LEGUM, well-known South African journalist who is now on a visit to Israel

BEERSHEBA, Tuesday. — From all parts of the Negev Gedudim marched and drove into Beersheba, which lay basking in the desert sun of the Sabbath afternoon. The whole town was in gala mood. The nearest Egyptian troops were at Gaza and Falluja, 30 miles away on either side. As the gedudim marched down the streets they sang the songs of their units.

One unit came marching down the main street of Beersheba singing Zulu songs. Zulu songs in this desert outpost! The explanation of this mystery lay behind the identity of six heavily bearded figures leading the Gedud—two former South Africans from Potchefstroom, two from Johannesburg, one from Cape Town and one from Krugersdorp.

Israel's southern army was marching to a Sabbath symphony concert to hear the first symphony orchestra ever to have played in the southern desert. The setting for the concert was a "fantasia" vision—a perfect amphitheatre surrounded by the 20 foot walls of two enormous buildings and a mighty ruin.

Three thousand men and women crowded into this amphitheatre. Their uniforms were as diverse as the men and women who wore them. There were sabras and settlers, Jews from Morocco and Libya, Britain, Canada, Scandinavia, the Orient and Central Europe. There were unkempt Palmach girls in blue shorts and elegant Chen girls in full uniform. Some of the men wore scarves and sashes—war trophies from the Arabs.

Wooden Benches

The amphitheatre was lined with wooden benches—heaven alone knows where they were produced from. The benches were overcrowded, and hundreds of colourful figures leaned down from the parapets of the surrounding buildings. These were the men and women who delivered Beersheba from the hands of the Egyptians.

PRETORIA.

(Organised by Pretoria Zionist Council)

RABBI M. KOSSOWSKY

Executive Member, S.A. Zionist Federation

and

MR. I. DUNSKY

Treasurer, S.A. Zionist Federation will address the

UNO ANNIVERSARY MEETING

on

MONDAY, 29th NOVEMBER

at 8.15 p.m.

at

MEMORIAL HALL

Beatrix Street

As the sun beat down upon this festive scene, the musicians of the Israeli Symphony Orchestra entered the well of the amphitheatre and a great roar of welcome went up for Leonard Bernstein, conductor of the orchestra. The unrestrained chattering gradually died down.

The military commander introduced Leonard Bernstein, the conductor. His voice rang clearly through the sea of silence.

"Our ears are attuned to a different kind of music, but we shall never lose ear for this kind of music. We will always remember that the ideals for which we fight are best expressed by the symphony concert of this afternoon," he said.

The Wounded

As Bernstein raised his arm, the concert-goers rose, and the desert air carried the first notes of Hatikvah on its dry breath through the town and across the plains of the Negev. It was a moment of rich melodic memory. I kept my eyes riveted on two rows of wounded soldiers brought down from the hospital to attend the concert. Swathed in bandages, with legs and arms in plaster, these men had borne the brunt of the fighting in the attack on Beersheba.

The last notes of Hatikvah died down, and the crowd subsided. Bernstein took his place at the grand piano—he is both conductor and pianist—and the orchestra began a Mozart concerto. The Jewish defenders of the Negev, men and women drawn from the five continents, were united into a common bond of cultural affiliation.

And thus it was that the music issued forth from the ruins of Beersheba on a Sabbath afternoon.

KRUGERSDORP PREPARES

Advice has been received from Krugersdorp that a representative committee under the chairmanship of Mrs. E. Silverman has been appointed and is making an all-out effort for the I.U.A.

In addition to monthly functions the following have been arranged:

Saturday, January 29, 1948—Dance at Communal Hall.

Wednesday, February 16, 1949—Flower arranging competition at Communal Hall, convened by Mrs. D. Meltzer.

Saturday, February 20, 1949—Progressive Dinner and Dance at Communal Hall.

Wednesday, March 16, 1949—Purim Children's Fancy Dress.

Saturday, March 26, 1949—Dance at Communal Hall.

ISRAELI UNITED APPEAL ANNOUNCEMENT

OWING to the overwhelming numbers of contributions collected at simchas and private gatherings, it will no longer be possible to publish detailed acknowledgments in the press. Official receipts will continue to accompany the grateful letters of thanks from the I.U.A. office.

An appeal is made to all supporters of the I.U.A. to continue their worthy efforts on behalf of the fund, and it is trusted that they will appreciate the reasons why individual acknowledgments can no longer be made.

"Free Trip To Israel"



One of the most keenly contested competitions at the Mammoth Fair held recently in Johannesburg, was the "Free Trip to Israel." Mr. Shaban of Sky Taxis, who had generously contributed the much coveted prize, attended a meeting of I.U.A. in order to hand over the voucher naming the lucky winner. This proved to be Mrs. Z. Saitowitz.

Competition

Mr. Abel Shaban, of "Sky Taxis," handed over to Mrs. M. Judelman, convenor of the Palestine Air Trip Competition, a voucher entitling the winner to a free return trip to Israel.

DOORNFONTEIN, JUDITH'S PAARL AND BERTRAMS

Speaking in Yiddish, Mr. Leo Tager, national chairman of the Israeli United Appeal, addressed a meeting of Doornfontein, Judiths Paarl and Bertrams Jews at the Ginsberg Hall last Monday evening. He reviewed the present position in Palestine. Rabbi Dr. M. Kossowsky, who presided, introduced the speaker.

It was not by coincidence, said Mr. Tager, that Israel had become a State. It had been built up by the unquenchable ideals, the hard work and the ready sacrifices of the pioneers. The creation of the Jewish State was not an accident but a political inevitability. Bevin did not believe that the Jews would be strong enough to maintain their State and so gambled on relinquishing the Mandate. When he realised his great mistake, he made every effort to break the might of the Jews by supporting the Arabs in every possible way. But the Jews proved equal to the battle and to-day it is generally acknowledged that the Jews have won the battle of Palestine.

Mr. Tager explained the difficulties of the Jewish State in its early days, but stressed that the people were happy and optimistic. The spirit of Israel could not be broken.

REPEAT PERFORMANCE POPULAR REQUEST

The Highlands North branch reports that the concert held last week was so successful that at popular request a repeat performance will take place at Maccabi House, Ballito Park, at 8.15 p.m. on Sunday, November 28.

Among the artists appearing will be Louis Alter and his Balalaika Orchestra, Lionel Ryder, Jose Oriando Shura Kryzowsky, Jayne Susman Pincus, Al Debbo, Nina Cassen and Gershon Fine. An added attraction will be a play by Gershon Fine entitled "The Professional," produced by Mr. I. Ziegelbaum with the cooperation of the Dramatic Section of the Jewish Worker's Club.

MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY

When it comes to planning original or unusual functions, workers seem to have an inexhaustible reserve on which to draw. honours, this time, must go to the Springs branch for its "Mad Hatter's Tea Party," where every domestic gadget, bar the proverbial kitchen stove, was used in the making of smart and up-to-the-minute styles in headwear. The result was a parade of hats enough to rouse the envy of the most daring of milliners. Well merited prizes went to the most original, the silliest and the most attractive hats.