

# Israel Benefits Mankind

BY THEODORE HATALGUI  
(Dir. of Inf. Jewish National Board)

At the end of next year, the Keren Kayemeth Leisrael known in English-speaking countries as the Jewish National Fund, will celebrate its 75th birthday. Established in 1901 by the 5th Zionist Congress in Basle under the auspices of Theodore Herzl in accordance with a proposal submitted a few years earlier by Prof. Herman Schapira, the JNF became the first instrument for the practical implementation of

the then still utopian Zionist dream.

Long before statehood, the map of Eretz-Israel bore witness to the undefatigable work of the Fund in the domains of land acquisition and development. So did its landscape with arid zones turning into fields of manifold crops, young saplings sprouting from barren hills and turning into large forests equipped with picnic areas and recreation spots, malaria-infested swamps transformed into fertile agricultural soil and hundreds of new settlements growing in previously inaccessible border areas.

Throughout all these years, the philosophy of the Keren Kayemeth has been standing on two equally important pillars: work in Israel, where the basic aims of the Fund are being implemented; and educational, informational and fund-raising activities embracing all strata and all age groups of the Jewish People in the Diaspora.

On the threshold of the fourth quarter of a century of existence, the JNF feels by no means content with looking back at its past achievements. While their record, impressive as it is, constitutes a source of legitimate pride, things to be done in the future are in the foreground of the JNF's thinking and planning. Like a number of governmental and other public bodies, the Keren Kayemeth thinks in terms of an Israel of the year 2000. Its own share in shaping the physical features of the country towards the turn of the century is well-defined: to provide the necessary infrastructure for the expanding agricultural settlement and to improve the ecological conditions - and thus the quality of life -- of a country undergoing a rapid process of industrialization.

A closer look at these two objectives demonstrates that here too like in so many other fields, little Israel serves as a modern experimental laboratory where answers are being looked for in some of the most vital problems of the contemporary world: how to fight hunger by turning arid zones, through scientific methods, into cultivable land -- and how to fight pollution in ever more urbanized societies.

That a nation of three million can, at least in some important fields, serve as an example for the three billion inhabitants of our globe is one of the characteristics of Israel. The JNF is understandably proud of playing its own

role in this development. Although the 75th anniversary of the Fund is still almost a year and a half ahead, the JNF will start marking it already at the end of 1975, so as to turn the year 1976 into its "Anniversary Year," thus allowing all its territorial organizations to concentrate on it during a period of their own choice.

The JNF Head Office in Jerusalem is now preparing a wide range of promotional material which, while listing past achievements, will put an emphasis on plans for the future. These ideas will also be the main feature of a special film which will stress the equal importance of the Fund's operations in Israel and its activities in all parts of the Jewish world. In addition, modern audio-visual media are being put into operation. A list of development projects will be presented to the National Offices as a means for the promotion of fund-raising. Some of these projects may follow the pattern recently adopted for Canada Park in the Valley of Ayalon mid-way between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and for the American Bicentennial Park between Jerusalem and Beit-Shemesh.

Another way of encouraging fund-raising during the Anniversary Year would be the use of the number "75" or one of its multiples (750, 7500, etc.) in donations of trees and any other kind of contributions. Special certificates are being prepared for the occasion (as are, incidentally, new kinds of diplomas to be introduced shortly, e.g., the JNF Wedding Certificate -- a welcome addition to the time-honored Golden Book and Children Book diploma, Bar Mitzvah and tree planting certificates, etc.)

A dynamic septuagenarian planning ahead for years to come, constantly rejuvenated by new ideas and kept strong by the forceful momentum of its own performance -- that is how the Jewish National Fund feels, and looks, on the eve of its Anniversary Year.

NEW YORK -- The National Jewish Welfare Board, in cooperation with the American Jewish Historical Society, has prepared an exhibit for the American Revolution Bicentennial, costing \$25, which is being made available to local communities in a convenient kit form. To order a kit, write to the JWB Lecture Bureau, 15 East 26th Street, N.Y., N.Y. 10010.

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