

Branch of Jewish Red Cross Formed in Sydney

RABBIS STRESS VITAL IMPORTANCE OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES

"The people of the Yishuv have given their all, we should be ashamed to have given so wretchedly. This drive now becomes a matter of sheer humanity, of self-respect. This is not charity, but a matter of helping a father, a brother, a sister. When participating in the M.D.A. we merely join a first aid battalion."

With these words Rabbi Max Schenk summed up the sentiments of all speakers at the public meeting held last Sunday night at the Maccabean Hall to officially establish the Magen David Adom in New South Wales.

A well-attended meeting, inaugurating the Aid to Israel drive, donated considerable numbers of blankets, sheets, pillow cases, crates of first aid kits, large amounts of medical supplies, foodstuffs and new clothing.

On the platform with the speakers were Justice Sugarman and representatives of many Jewish organisations, including Mr. H. B. Newman, president of the Zionist Federation, Mr. R. R. Diamond, president of the Ex-Servicemen's Association, Mr. Sol Einfeld, Mr. Sam Karpin, and Mrs. Harris Cohen.

Rabbi Dr. I. Porush, during an impressive ceremony in which he dedicated the M.D.A. flag, said: "Between the feasts we are called upon to do a Mitzvah. This is a great occasion. We are dedicating

is a great occasion. We are dedicating this flag to something sacred. Our record of good deeds for humanity goes further than our record of good soldiers.

The Chairman and Convenor of the drive, Mr. S. Steigrad, said: "The M.D.A. and the International Red Cross are among the few organisations today doing relief work for humanity, while countries and peoples spend vast sums on war machines and war equipment."

Mr. Steigrad described the good work done by the M.D.A. in Palestine over the years, and said that the M.D.A. has never before called on the world for assistance. Today the job is so vast, and the situation so changed, that the M.D.A. had to call for help. He explained that this is not a drive for money, but for blankets, medicines, chemicals and food-stuffs, which are urgently needed to bring the wounded and the sick back to normal and healthy life.

"Thanks to U.J.O.R.F.," said Mr. Steigrad, "we were able to send a small consignment even before our drive started." He commended U.J.O.R.F. and other organisations for their assistance and promise of co-operation. He pointed out that the Association of Jewish Ex-

Servicemen had already held a function for M.D.A., and had promised further help.

Mr. Peter Komesaroff, Director of the Victorian M.D.A., described the organisation of that body to the audience.

He explained that Committees of doctors, chemists, and grocers had been formed, that children went out regularly to sell M.D.A. stamps, the proceeds of which were used for freight payments.

"£42,000 worth of goods have been

"£42,000 worth of goods have been collected in Melbourne since the start of the drive," he went on. "Two hundred and forty collectors and 14 suburban committees have almost been unable to cope with the rush of donations, such as one of 250,000 socks.

"Find many volunteers, especially with cars," Mr. Komesaroff advised. As this is a non-political drive, we have had the support of people who otherwise would not have given for Zionist causes."

He reported on the visit of M.D.A. representatives to the recent International Red Cross conference in Stockholm, and said that affiliation with the international body is to be expected.

The M.D.A. in Israel helps Arabs and Jews, benefits civilians and soldiers, and generally carries out the work of a Red Cross organisation.

Rabbi M. Schenk said that it was hard to imagine the amount of work to be done, unless one had seen both the preparations and the scope of work. The Rabbi described the organisation of the M.D.A. in Palestine. Centres and warehouses were distributed all over the country.

A pleasing feature of the function was the offer by Government Disposals, through Miss Joseph, of 10 crates of first aid emergency kits. The kits were offered for 1/6 each, although their actual selling price would be in the vicinity of 12/6. The only proviso made by the Government was that a guarantee be given that the kits would not be sold for profit. Individuals present at the meeting spontaneously bought the whole consignment for the Magen David Adom.

