PALESTINE PILGRIMAGE

By Schooner to the Holy Land

journalist who formerly lived in Palmerston North, is one of 11 Jews who are shortly to leave Australia in a schooner they have bought, bound for Palestine, where some of them will land, and the others will carry on in the Mediterranean coastal trade. Six of them are former Palestinian seamen, "aboriginal Palestinians" in Davis's words, but all will go on seamen's tickets, which will enable them to land. For two in particular it will be a kind of pilgrim-These two are Davis himself, who found that Palestine had a meaning for him when he went there with the A.I.F. during the war, and Meir Isaacman, an artist who is known in Sydney for his "Sydneytown" cartoon on the back of the Daily Telegraph. They are working together on a book, and they both hope to enter journalism in their own ways when they reach Palestine, several months after their departure from Australia.

We interviewed Winston Davis in Wellington the other day, and he told us why he is going, and what he hopes

[77 INSTON DAVIS, a young to do. He came to New Zealand a few weeks ago to see his own people.

Every Man Needed

'We're a mixed gang-all Jews-and we're going for Zionist motives." he said. "We feel now that there are not many of us, and we have got to stick together. I went to Palestine in the army in 1943 and I discovered myself there. I found that I wanted to feel a part of it. There were people there who'd been through horror after horror-many of them representing in themselves the highest developments of 20th Century civilisation-and they'd all been reduced to one common denominator, and had taken on a new garment. Our people need to wrap their lives around an ideal and an inspiration, and for us it is in words 'Redeem thyself in the Land.' But our state has to be not only religious and intellectual-we need every kind of man. You never hear the words 'common labourer' in Palestine. We need seamen-or rather we have the men but there are no ships for them to work in -so our boat is going over there to take these six seamen back and make up a complete crew over there, and then begin helping Palestine by trading.



WINSTON DAVIS Not just for the trip

The ship is a yawl-rigged schooner built in Holland in 1917. Its present name is Argosy Lamal, but it will shortly take a Hebrew name. It has been trading for some years in the Pacific Islands,

and a syndicate in Sydney has now bought it from navy disposal for this new purpose. One of the owners is its captain, a Palestinian called Prusinowsky. Some of the crew are Australians, and one is a Lithuanian. Davis is the only New Zealander.

"Do you object if we ask whether you're going to throw bombs?"

"No," he said, "I don't agree at all with the policy of terror; I'm horrified at what has just happened. It is useless, It doesn't represent the will of Zionists in general. But I do fee! that these things are the result of absolute despair. The discussions about the 100,000 admissions from Europe have been going on for four months, but 23,000 Jews have died since the war ended."

"Do you propose to carry Jews from Europe to Palestine?"

"We hope that by the time we get there-after a long trip up past Borneo and Singapore, where we hope to get Diesel engines and machine parts from army disposal dumps to sell in Palestine-it will be legal for us to carry immigrants to Palestine."

Davis himself is learning Hebrew and hopes to be able to work as a journalist, until he eventually goes on the land. He is now finishing a novel, and came to New Zealand partly because it was "the nearest thing to Galilee."

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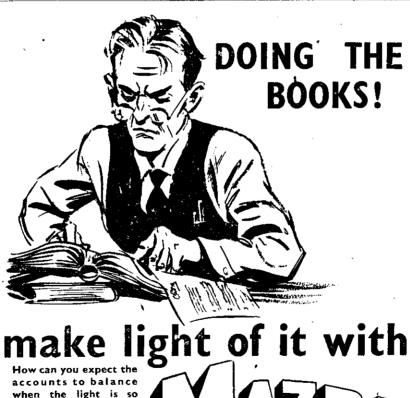
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