

Two Journeys for *Discovery*

Title 64

In May 1959 and again in March 1960 I could report in *Discovery* my impressions of two countries I had never seen before, Israel and Algeria. There were great differences between the two, politically, scientifically and socially, yet both were new in the impact science had on each of them.

I flew to Tel Aviv at the invitation of Israeli friends who had some money to spare from their 10th Anniversary Celebrations of Independence in 1948. We were several English science writers and we stayed for two and a half weeks during which we saw all that was scientifically interesting. At the Weizmann Institute I met its distinguished scientists, Michaelis (polymers), DeShalit (atomic physics), Katchalski (biophysics), Feldmann (biology), Gillis (mathematics), Sondheimer (organic chemistry), Sela, (cell biology), Schmidt (inorganic chemistry) and David Samuel (isotopes).

We were driven through the Negev desert to Eilat on the shore of the Red Sea and stayed in the kibbutz Kafar Blum. In Jerusalem we interviewed its famous Mayor Kolleg, Miriam Ballaban (publisher) and at the University Samburski (philosophy), as well as a charming lady, Hanna Sobel (biology), Kugelman (psychology) and Stein (chemistry).

It was a hectic visit with appointments every hour or so, relieved only by the silence of the desert and the warm welcome I received everywhere, as of course my Journal was respected and well-known. I much admired what had been achieved in Israel during the 11 years since Independence and recorded my impressions. in *Discovery* as 'Harness the Sun', 'Deluge the Desert', 'Teach Technology', 'Serve Humanity', 'Find the Future' and other such essays with similar titles. My report occupied 15 pages, of which about one half were photographs.

My second journey, to Algiers, at that time still French Colonial Territory, was perhaps more dramatic, but less interesting scientifically. It was again a group of science writers who was invited, this time by the French Administration and we were impressed by the Solar Furnace in the Sahara, the Nuclear Research Institute of the University of Algiers, Missile Research at Colomb Béchar, where a night firing of a rocket was shown to us, the oil and gas technology in the Sahara and the hydroponic research at Béni Abbès. On my return I published 21 pages, again half of them photographs. Algeria was more interesting from a technological point of view, whereas Israel impressed us more through its emphasis on basic science and its promise for the future. The Scientific Temper was much in evidence in Israel, although science also played an important part in the development of its Defence Forces.