

BRITISH O.R.T.



SECOND POST-WAR REPORT

1948 - 1949

Organisation for Reconstruction and Training Jews in Trades and Agriculture

Established 1880. (Registered under War Charities Act, 1940)

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BRITISH O.R.T.



Second Post-War report covering the years 1948 & 1949

"The achievements of the O.R.T. Schools exceed all my expectations. The Schools are better than I hoped they would be."

SENATOR HERBERT LEHMAN (*former Governor of New York*)

Ever since its establishment in ENGLAND (about 30 years ago) the British O.R.T. has been closely associated with the work of the WORLD O.R.T. UNION. This association has become even more interwoven since the end of World War II, when the British O.R.T. acted as a Liaison between O.R.T. Union and its important establishments in the British Zone in Germany. We therefore think it appropriate to give a brief outline [see Pages 5 and 6] of the work of the World O.R.T. Union of which British O.R.T. forms an integral part.

The years 1948 and 1949 represent a period of radical change in the direction of Relief and Rehabilitation among Jews who have suffered from the War and the persecution before and during the War.

The proclamation of the State of Israel which opened its gates to Jews and not only permitted free immigration of Jews, but also encouraged and helped it, directed large streams of Displaced Persons and uprooted people into Israel. As much effort as possible had to be

concentrated in assisting in the Rehabilitation of the people who were going into Israel.

Jewish public opinion everywhere, and especially in those countries which supplied the funds and the most active workers, considered the work connected with the mass immigration into Israel of urgent priority. It appeared to everyone concerned that the removal from Europe of the largest number of Jewish Displaced Persons would ease the work of European Relief and assist in the economic reconstruction of the new State.

In the circumstances, it was natural that the Central Board of the World O.R.T. Union should accelerate its work in Europe to enable increasing numbers of O.R.T. trainees to emigrate and be given a reasonable chance of earning, by their own efforts, a livelihood in Israel or in other countries of immigration.

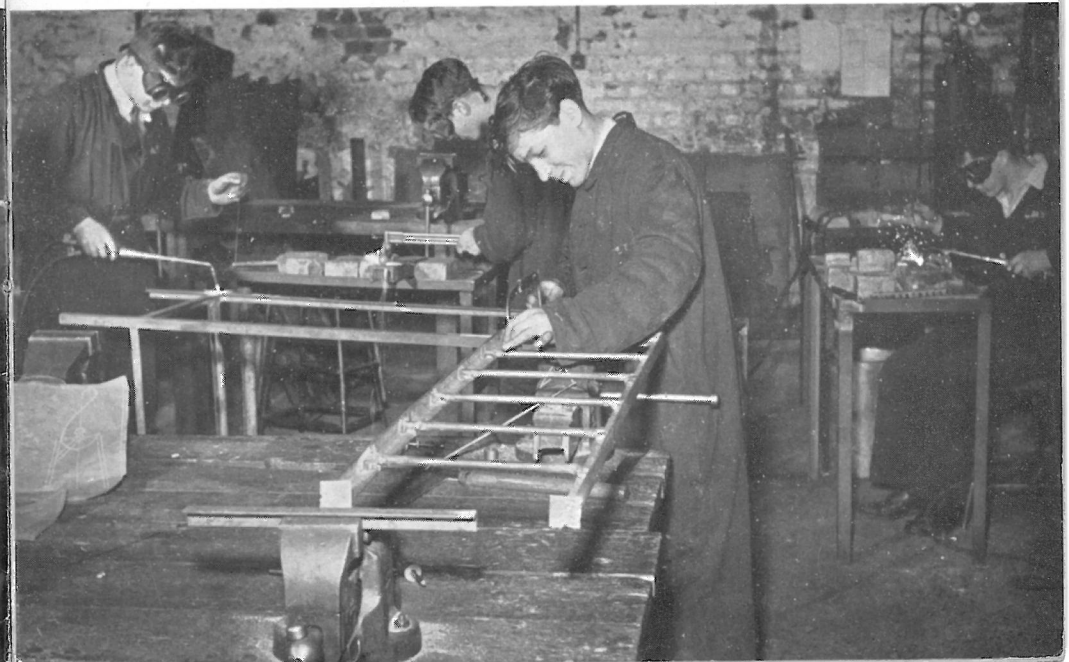
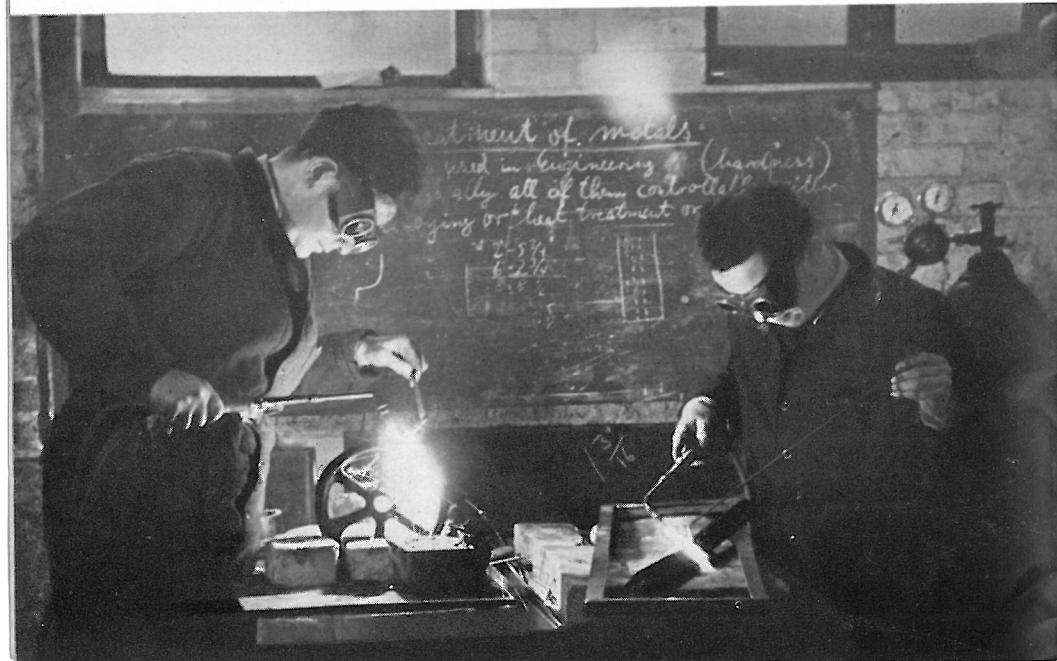
Detailed accounts of the work of the Central Board of the World O.R.T. Union in Germany, Austria, Italy, Poland, Switzerland, France, Hungary, Holland, N. Africa and so on are contained in publications obtainable from the London O.R.T. Office.

In addition to participation in the general programme of the O.R.T. Union, the British O.R.T. had its own particular problems connected with the maintenance of its vocational training centres and the collecting of funds for work among Refugees both in England and abroad.

The Executive of the British O.R.T. take this opportunity of expressing its appreciation to the many contributors, voluntary workers and Committees for their moral and financial support, without which the efforts of the past two years would have been much less effective. Sincere thanks are also due to the JUNIOR DESERVING CHARITIES organisation whose members organised a social function at the Brent Bridge Hotel, Hendon, and as a result made a generous contribution to O.R.T. funds.

HELP FROM OVERSEAS

Grateful acknowledgement is also given to the Communities in South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, South America and the United States, and particularly to the American Joint Distribution Committee, for their very generous financial contributions to O.R.T. work. Without this practical assistance thousands of war victims would have been deprived of the opportunity of learning a new trade in O.R.T. Schools. The acquisition of this new means of earning a livelihood was later the means of giving thousands of Displaced Persons renewed courage and hope in the future.



The British O.R.T. continued to enjoy most cordial relations with other Anglo-Jewish Associations including the Board of Deputies of British Jews, The Jewish Committee for Relief Abroad, Bachad, Youth Aliyah, Hechalutz and other organisations interested in the welfare and rehabilitation of Jewish uprooted people.

The Executive of British O.R.T. record with sincere regret the untimely passing of Colonel Robert Solomon, M.C., LL.B., who was for many years Adviser on Jewish Affairs to the Control Commission for Germany. Colonel Solomon took a keen interest in the work of the British O.R.T. and was a member of the O.R.T. Council. His readiness to assist and advise on current problems affecting Jewish Refugees was at all times valuable. He is greatly missed by all colleagues.

LEGAL ADVISERS

The development of the British O.R.T. required legal assistance and in this respect the Committee wishes to record its gratitude to Mr. Leonard Sainer and to Mr. H. C. Seigal who were ready at all times to help the Committee.

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

The Committee also wish to acknowledge the assistance Mr. Thomas Hetherington, C.A., has given in the auditing of the Accounts and in his regular supervision of the office books.



Outline of the Work of the World O.R.T. Union

Whilst the central directive of the O.R.T. Union came from O.R.T. Head Offices in Paris and Geneva, the actual administrative work in areas of the British Zone of Germany and in Palestine (which until the middle of 1948 was still under British Government Administration) fell to a considerable extent to the British O.R.T. In this connection the British O.R.T. assisted in supplying machinery, tools, textbooks and technical periodicals and in sending Instructors. Additional assistance was given in carrying out negotiations with Government Departments, International Relief Organisations, and Jewish Communal Organisations. Help has also been given to individual O.R.T. students who found their way to London and needed assistance in an effort to settle either temporarily, or permanently, in England. The British O.R.T. helped these Ex-Students by getting employment permits, attending to their passport difficulties and helping them to continue their journey overseas when emigration papers became eventually available.

O.R.T. functions in 19 countries and provides training in 70 different trades. During the year 1948, 43,000 students were attending O.R.T. Courses. In 1949, 33,000 students were on the O.R.T. registers. Additional training centres were established in North Africa, Latin America and Israel.



As this report goes to Press, the World O.R.T. Union is opening more schools in French North Africa, in CASABLANCA, ALGIERS, CONSTANTINE and TUNIS. Machine Tools shipped from LONDON are forming part of the equipment in the new schools.

We are particularly glad to add that the Education Committee of the Board of Deputies of British Jews have made a special grant towards O.R.T. work in North Africa.

In Israel the O.R.T. maintains 38 courses in nine different localities. Priority is given to instruction in building trades, carpentry and special subjects designed to meet the requirements of the country in a qualified labour force.

An interesting reflection on the foresight of O.R.T. administrative officers is that hundreds of immigrants to Israel from Europe received partial training in European O.R.T. Schools preparatory to their emigration.

It is with deep regret that we record the death, on March 14th, 1950, of Mrs. ANNA CENTER SCHNEIDERMAN.

Mrs. Schneiderman, who was National Vice-President of the Women's American O.R.T., visited England in the summer of 1949, prior to a tour of O.R.T. Centres abroad.

All O.R.T. colleagues will long remember her indefatigable efforts in helping to ease the sufferings of Jewish war victims. She took a deep interest in Jewish affairs and was a tireless worker for several Jewish associations. Her devotion to duties which she chose voluntarily remains an example to all.



BRITISH O.R.T.

The local activity of British O.R.T. can be outlined under five headings:—

- 1) London O.R.T. Training School, Kensington.
- 2) Goldington O.R.T. Training Farm, Bedfordshire.
- 3) Fund-raising Activities.
- 4) Propaganda and Publicity.
- 5) Development of Provincial O.R.T. Committees.

LONDON O.R.T. SCHOOL

One of the significant recent changes in the work of the British O.R.T. is the alteration in the curriculum of the London O.R.T. Training School. Since the opening of the School in July 1946, to the closing down of the Engineering Departments in July 1949, the London O.R.T. School has trained some 200 students in various branches of Engineering as well as giving all students a general education.

Gradually the Refugee youths in Britain have found employment in Industry and the need for O.R.T. vocational training among these refugees has diminished.

During the summer of 1949, British O.R.T. received numerous enquiries from Jewish organisations and individual adult refugees asking for specialised short-term training in NEEDLE TRADES.



As practically all the applicants were older people who were earning during the daytime, arrangements were made to establish EVENING CLASSES. Within a few weeks 100 applicants had applied for training and the training commenced on August 1st 1949. The Evening School provides six instructional courses in Shirtmaking, Dress Designing, Tailoring and Dressmaking. The Dress Designing courses are under the direction of two expert London dress designers who give their services voluntarily. It was not possible to accommodate all the applicants at the commencement of the course, but an average of 50 students for each three monthly session is fully maintained. English is the language of instruction, but many of the students speak Polish, Roumanian, Hungarian and Yiddish and act when necessary, as interpreters to one another.

During the year many applications came in from adult refugees who had to find new means of livelihood and to meet these requests more classes were added, including a course in Trousermaking.

Among the many students who have been assisted the following instances are of particular interest.

- 1) A 55-year-old student (a widow of a Medical Doctor) had found her first remunerative position after taking a course in Shirtmaking. Previously she was supported by Communal Committees. Now she is quite independent.
- 2) A Polish Ex-soldier excelled in his class work and became an Assistant Instructor. He has recently taken employment in a

Shirtmaking factory and was offered a position as Production Manager there.

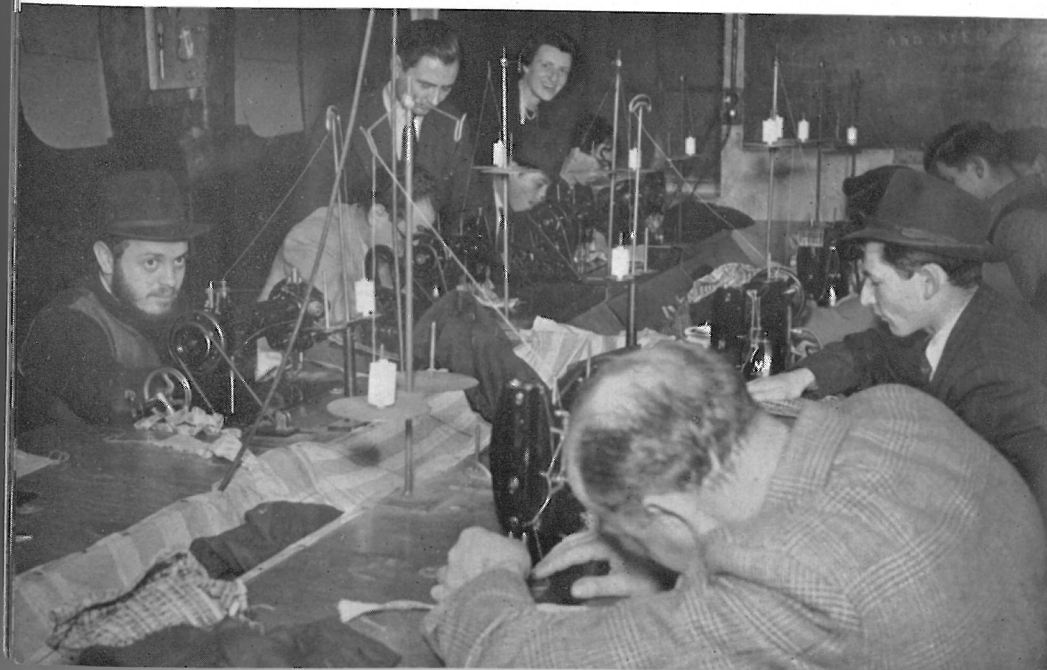
The total number of students trained in the first six months of the Evening Classes is 94. The new term has just begun with all classes filled to capacity and there is a waiting list of students wishing to be enrolled as vacancies become available.

The lease of the present School premises in South-West London has now expired and as soon as possible the training workshop will be transferred to premises in North-West London where the majority of the adult students reside, so that expenses of travelling and evening meals can be reduced.

The London O.R.T. School is particularly indebted to O.R.T. friends in America who have sent regular consignments of material and other school aids as required. Grateful acknowledgement is also given to the National Scholarship Fund of the Women's American O.R.T. for the Monetary grants which they forwarded to the London O.R.T. Day School for Scholarships.

GOLDINGTON O.R.T. TRAINING FARM

This Agricultural Centre in Bedfordshire which is run in association with HECHALUTZ B'ANGLIA provides practical training in General Farming, Poultry Keeping and Market Gardening. It includes an O.R.T. Workshop where the students learn to repair all their own farm machinery. Students reside in a large farm house and are given a general education with emphasis on Hebrew and other subjects which





*Dairy farming
at Goldington
Centre*

will help them when they emigrate to Israel—as is their intention. During the past years several groups of Chalutzim have left Goldington and are now settled in Israel.

Throughout the year the number of residential students undergoing training was 38. Eighteen students graduated after a twelve months course and more trainees have arrived.

FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES

During 1948 British O.R.T. was a Constituent of the British United Jewish Relief Appeal but early in 1949 it was decided to work independently from the United Appeal.

Mr. Israel Shafran was appointed National Organiser in September 1948, and took over the work of Fund Raising. During the period under review a number of Concerts, Variety and Film Shows, etc., were organised. The N.W. London O.R.T. Committee ran local dances and as a result made several

contributions to the funds. Other events were the 21st Annual O.R.T. Ball at the Savoy Hotel in 1948; the Inauguration of the British O.R.T. Women's Committee on June 15th 1949, when a luncheon, kindly given by Mrs. Sid Hyams, was held at the Grosvenor House Hotel and was attended by some 80 distinguished guests, including O.R.T. Representatives from Women's O.R.T. in Canada and America, as well as friends from S. Africa. Speeches were made by the visiting delegates; by Mrs. Israel Brodie, wife of the Chief Rabbi; and by other leading Communal Workers in Britain.

PROPAGANDA AND PUBLICITY

Special efforts have been made to keep the work of the O.R.T. before members of the Anglo-Jewish Communities. The O.R.T. film "Passport to Freedom" was shown at Public Meetings. Among the speakers who have kindly given their time were Members of Parliament, Lieut.-Col. MARCUS LIPTON, Dr. SOMERVILLE HASTINGS and Mr. ANTHONY GREENWOOD. Miss ALICE BACON, M.P., also spoke at the WOMEN'S O.R.T. Luncheon. Dr. Otto Dutch, formerly Director of O.R.T. in Germany, gave a number of first-hand reports to public and private gatherings on the work of the O.R.T. in Germany. Mrs. Rose Henriques of the Jewish Committee for Relief Abroad, and a Council Member of British O.R.T., addressed a number of meetings. Mr. A. J. Halpern, chairman of British O.R.T., visited many towns in the Provinces and spoke at various meetings in London.

The N.W. London Committee organised a meeting in Hendon in co-operation with the local branch of the Jewish Ex-Servicemen's Association. Major M. Waters took the chair and Lieut.-Col. Marcus Lipton, M.P., was principal speaker. Two students from the London O.R.T. School—Rachel Rabinovitch and Leib Zeret—gave their personal experiences of how O.R.T. training had enabled them to become independent workers in a new country.

The East London O.R.T. Committee organised a meeting which was held in the Hackney Town Hall. Mrs. Ida Mowshowitch (Member of British O.R.T. Executive) spoke in Yiddish on the work of the O.R.T. in Germany where for some months she had been acting Director of O.R.T. in the British Zone. This Meeting was well attended and aroused considerable interest in O.R.T. work for displaced persons abroad.

A well-attended meeting was held at the New Synagogue, Stamford Hill, with Mr. S. Oster in the Chair. Speakers included Mr.



Changing the
soil in the
Greenhouse
Goldington
Centre

Anthony Greenwood, M.P., Dr. O. Dutch and Mr. Moss Amias. The film "PASSPORT TO FREEDOM" was shown and the meeting resulted in the enrolment of some 50 new subscribers to British O.R.T.

A further meeting was held at the Joseph Freedman Hall at the Golders Green Synagogue under the Chairmanship of Mr. H. C. Seigal, and was addressed by Mr. Somerville Hastings, M.P., and Mr. A. J. Halpern. The O.R.T. film was also shown here and a number of new members and subscribers were enrolled.

A number of Friendly Societies, Ex-Servicemen's Groups, Synagogues, etc., make contributions to O.R.T. funds as Corporate Members. Individual membership exceeds 700.

Through these public and private meetings the work of the O.R.T. is becoming widely known and appreciated in the Anglo-Jewish Community.

Twenty thousand copies of the O.R.T. pamphlet "Bridging the Gap" were printed and effectively used for publicity purposes.

The number of "British O.R.T. News" Bulletins circulated in 1948 and 1949 reached the figure of 80,000. Articles on various aspects of O.R.T. work were published in the "Birmingham Recorder" and the "Jewish Chronicle".

Preparations are now in hand for a wide appeal to the Community, and as this Report goes into print we are glad to record that the O.R.T. Appeal has received the blessing of the Chief Rabbi, Dr. Israel Brodie. Among the sponsors are Dr. A. Cohen, President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews; Dr. Israel Mattuck, Minister Emeritus of the Liberal Synagogue; Rabbi Dr. Solomon Gaon, Haham of the Spanish and Portuguese Community; Sir Henry D'Avigdor Goldsmid, Mr. Jack Goldberg (Chairman Federation of Synagogues), Mrs. Rose Henriques, Mr. Barnett Janner, M.P., Alderman A. Moss, The Hon. Philip Samuel, Professor Samson Wright, M.D. The Joint Honorary Treasurers are Lt.-Col. Marcus Lipton, O.B.E., M.P., and Mr. Oscar Philipp.

Development of Provincial O.R.T. Committees

Since the latter part of 1949, a senior member of the British O.R.T. Staff—Miss Lillian Rubinstein—has given special attention to the development of O.R.T. work in the Provinces. Miss Rubinstein has seen O.R.T. work in practise in Poland, Italy and France and she is, therefore, able to give provincial audiences first-hand reports on the methods of teaching and general procedure adopted in various O.R.T. Vocational Training Centres. Miss Rubinstein has addressed some 50-60 Meetings and has assisted in the organisation of new O.R.T. Committees in BIRMINGHAM, LIVERPOOL and MANCHESTER. It is hoped that local Committees will soon be established in Leeds, Hull, Glasgow and other Provincial towns where the work of O.R.T. is not at present so well known.

In Liverpool, Miss Rose Heilbron, K.C., spoke to a well-attended meeting at which the O.R.T. film "Passport to Freedom" was shown. Other meetings in Provincial towns are in course of preparation.

Future Activities

The future activities of British O.R.T. are likely to develop along different lines. In some respects vocational training activities in England may decrease.

More emphasis must be given to the task of raising funds to enable Jews in Britain to take a greater part in assisting the World O.R.T. Union to maintain its Vocational Training Centres overseas. In this endeavour to raise funds we ask all our supporters to subscribe as generously as possible and to make the work of the O.R.T. known to their friends in the hope that they too will wish to help. As a step in the direction of fund raising the British O.R.T. organised a Variety Concert in January 1950, and due to the energetic help and organising abilities of Mr. and Mrs. Sid Hyams, some £1,700 was contributed.

The commitments of the World O.R.T. in the coming year are indeed heavy and it is vital that British O.R.T. activity should be directed towards the implementation of the wider plan of Reconstruction which the World O.R.T. has undertaken, with the financial help of the American Joint Distribution Committee, the South African Appeal and funds from other countries.

The British O.R.T. London Office will continue to serve the requirements of the World O.R.T. Union by way of sending machinery and equipment to O.R.T. Schools in Israel, France, French North Africa, and other areas of activity.

The "Relative Aid" system by which former O.R.T. students in France can receive sewing and other machines paid for by relatives in England will, it is hoped, be continued and probably extended to other countries. The British O.R.T. supervises the purchase, packing, licensing and shipping of all such consignments.



As in past years, British O.R.T. will be meeting Delegates and Voluntary Workers from O.R.T. associations overseas. These personal visits afford opportunities to discuss methods of O.R.T. work abroad, and at the same time provide the visitors with an opportunity of deciding for themselves ways in which their own Committees can help O.R.T. students in less fortunate countries.

The work of O.R.T. has received support from many notable personages, but it is fitting to conclude this report on O.R.T. work by quoting extracts from MRS. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT'S radio message of January 1949:—

"When I was in France for the United Nations session this winter, I visited a school which it occurs to me you might enjoy hearing about. This particular school was in Montreuil, but there is another in Switzerland. Both are run by an international group known as the Organisation for Rehabilitation through Training. Most of us over here have known it under the name of 'O.R.T.' for a long time. Behind that title there is a fine and worthwhile purpose. When I first heard about O.R.T.—which was a great many years ago—the organisation over here was collecting money to provide farm tools and machinery to the Jewish people who needed help and they would train people in this country who were going to Palestine, or who were inadequate in their training wherever they might be. Now, the aims of course, have become world-wide, and the help has become world-wide, because the need became world-wide. Now you find schools and training centres dotted all over and machinery provided by the O.R.T. in displaced persons' camps and all over the various countries where it is needed. The interesting thing about the school in Paris is that they train not only the Jewish youngsters and some older people of the neighbourhood, they train anyone who needs training. . . ."

O.R.T. work must go on . . . it needs your help



WORLD O.R.T. UNION ADMINISTRATION:

Switzerland: 6 rue Eynard, Geneva.

France: 10 Villa d'Eylau, 44 Avenue Victor Hugo, Paris, 16.

O.R.T. Associations Overseas

Algeria	China	Morocco
Argentine	Denmark	New Zealand
Australia	Ecuador	Peru
Austria	France	Poland
Belgium	Egypt	Sweden
Bolivia	Germany	Switzerland
Brazil	Greece	South Africa
Bulgaria	Holland	Tunisia
Canada	Hungary	United States of
Chile	Israel	America
Columbia	Italy	Uruguay
Cuba	Mexico	Venezuela

O.R.T. VOCATIONAL TRAINING COURSES

The training is based on prepared study programmes and comprises both practical and theoretical instruction.

Student progress is tested by regular examination.

General Engineering	Locksmithing
Motor Mechanics	Welding
Typewriter Mechanics	Watchmaking
Dental Mechanics	Electrotechnics
Radiotechnics	Joinery
Cabinet-making	Masonry
Tinsmithing	Agriculture
Pottery	Toymaking
Photography	Dress Designing
Leatherwork	Weaving
Mechanical Knitting	Dressmaking
Shirtmaking	Tailoring
Corset-making	Millinery

LONDON O.R.T. SCHOOL
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*Printed for British O.R.T.
by The Cornerstone Press Ltd.
Ashford, Middlesex*