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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF BRITISH O.R.T.
HELD IN THE SECOND FLOOR COMMITTEE ROOM, WOBURN HOUSE,
UPPER WOBURN PLACE, W.C.1. AT 5.45 P.M. ON THURSDAY,
16th OCTOBER, 1958

Present: Mr. A.S. Diamond (in the Chair)
Dr. V. Halperin (Director of World O.R.T. Union)

- Mr. & Mrs. E. Alexander
- Mr. & Mrs. S. Beloff
- Mr. H.B. Berndoff
- Miss Casper (Jewish Child's Day)
- Mrs. A.S. Diamond
- Mr. G. Ellenbogen
- Mrs. R. Freedman
- Mr. R. Gilbert
- Mr. R. Glasser
- Mr. J. Gorman
- Mr. G. Haus
- Lady Henriques
- Mr. G. Him
- Mr. & Mrs. B. Herson
- Mrs. E. Ivens
- Mrs. Kurston
- Mr. M. Lipton
- Mrs. E.J. McKenzie
- Dr. N. Nicholls
- Miss F. Pitt
- Mrs. Rene-Martin
- Dr. M. Sandler
- Dr. M. Schaul
- Mr. R. Sharf
- Mr. & Mrs. G. Stone
- Mrs. H.H. Wingate
- Mr. H. Wolf
- Mr. I. Zelvin

and

- Mr. H. Goldberg
- Miss J. Austin
- Mrs. M. Hetherington
- Jewish Chronicle Representative

Apologies
for absence:

- The Chief Rabbi, Dr. I. Brodie
- The Haham, Rabbi Dr. S. Gaon
- Mr. A.G. Brotman
- Mr. J. Collier
- Mr. Edmund de Rothschild
- Miss H. Dolovitz
- Mr. Anthony Greenwood
- Mr. Barnett Janner
- Mr. D. Kessler
- Alderman A. Moss
- Rabbi Kopul Rosen

MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were adopted.

The Chairman, Mr. A.S. Diamond, welcomed the members of British O.R.T. and Dr. V. Halperin, Director of World O.R.T. Union.

REPORT ON THE WORK OF BRITISH O.R.T. DURING 1957/8

The Chairman said he would give a very short review of the work of British O.R.T. since the last Annual General Meeting nearly a year ago. While he did not wish to say that the progress had been spectacular there had been a considerable/

considerable increase in the number of membership subscriptions and the number of donors. Satisfaction must be felt regarding the progress made during the year when the state of British O.R.T. three years ago was considered and it was realised that British O.R.T. had been practically re-built during that time.

In April last year Mr. Goldberg, who had been so indefatigable, had joined British O.R.T. and had spent some months becoming acquainted with the conditions of this country. The office had been moved to very satisfactory central premises and a very busy programme had begun. Times had not been favourable for charitable organizations in the country.

A Luncheon had been held in December 1957 in the House of Commons for the establishment of an O.R.T. Marine Trades School in Israel.

Many meetings of very varied kinds had been held including film shows and receptions in the Lord Mayor's Parlours in Manchester and Liverpool. Among those who had spoken at our meetings had been Professor Norman Bentwich, Judge Laski and Alderman Moss.

In the course of the year the Executive Committee had been widened, and, if he might mention names, the Chairman said he would like to mention Dr. M. Schaul, who had suffered greatly from ill-health, and whom we were so glad to see with us. He had already done a lot for O.R.T. and had introduced O.R.T. to his large circle of friends. Mr. G. Him had very kindly put at the disposal of O.R.T. his artistic knowledge. Mr. R. Sharf had also been a great asset to the Committee. Mr. G. Sacher, although not a member of the Executive Committee, was a member of the Year Book Sub-Committee and had obtained new subscribers and donors and many advertisements for the Year Book.

Mr. Diamond said that at present there were three main activities to be faced:- 1) The Annual Ball. 2) The 1959 Year Book. 3) The Concert in the Royal Festival Hall.

The Chairman said that one or two generous donations had been received including £2,000. from the Central British Fund for work in Poland: Jewish Child's Day had given a generous donation for equipment for the Deaf and Dumb School in Casablanca: The J.E. Joseph Trust was giving over £1,000 a year for scholarships tenable at O.R.T. schools in Israel. A number of sewing machines had been sent to Poland through the good offices of Mr. G. Sacher.

Mr. Diamond said that he would like to record the thanks of the Committee to all Subscribers and Donors. As the circle of supporters was still so small it was unfortunately necessary to ask the same people for assistance again and again each year.

In speaking of his retirement as Chairman of British O.R.T., Mr. Diamond said that he would remain an active member of the Executive Committee but he had not the time necessary to fulfil to his satisfaction the duties of Chairman. He said he would like to thank everyone for the help given to him during his chairmanship. He believed that it was in the interests of British O.R.T. that the offices should circulate.

BRITISH WOMEN'S O.R.T.

Mrs. Wingate apologised for the absence of Mrs. S. Golden who, she explained, was busy preparing the Tombola for the Annual Ball.

Immediately after the Ball Women's O.R.T. would be re-organized so as to enlarge the number of working members. Mrs. F. Bernard would be coming from America to help in this.

It was reported by Mrs. Wingate that the monthly Luncheons had now been discontinued. A few large Luncheons would be held commencing with one at the beginning of the year when Mr. Max Braude would be the speaker.

Mrs. Wingate said that financially the group had done a little better than the previous year.

It was her hope that everyone present would attend the Ball.

O.R.T. AID GROUP

In giving the report of the O.R.T. Aid Group Mr. G. Haus said that it had been started by a good number of enthusiastic young people but, while during the year there had been a number of successful functions (musical meetings, lectures, dances, etc) there was now only a very small band of real workers. All arrangements, etc. had to be made by them and the group was in a state of apathy. It was doubtful whether the group could continue unless there was some sort of amalgamation, or co-operation, with British O.R.T. and British Women's O.R.T.

Mr. Haus handed over a cheque for 100 gns. to be transferred to World O.R.T. Union.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Diamond said that Mr. H.C. Seigal, Honorary Treasurer of British O.R.T., was at present in South Africa, and had asked him to present the accounts for 1957.

Mr. Diamond said that British O.R.T. performed two functions:-

1) It acted as local agent of World O.R.T. Union, receiving large amounts of money which are donations to World O.R.T. Union - e.g. from the Jewish Colonization Association. This money was kept in a separate banking account and instructions were issued from Geneva regarding its disposal - usually for the purchase of machinery to be shipped to schools abroad.

2) It raised funds in Britain for support of O.R.T. schools throughout the world.

The accounts were unanimously adopted.

DR. HALPERIN'S ADDRESS

Dr. Halperin said that British O.R.T. was one of the oldest national O.R.T. organizations, and before the Second World War had played a vital role in the World O.R.T. movement. He hoped it would again become one of the strongest partners in the movement. He brought the greetings of the new Chairman of its Executive Committee, M. Daniel Mayer (formerly French Minister of Labour). There was a great deal to be done in England, but they all wished to thank British O.R.T. and its Chairman for the progress made in the last three years. They regretted the decision of Mr. Diamond to retire, but were glad to know that he would continue his active encouragement and assistance.

M. Halperin then gave a summary of the work of O.R.T. in the various fields. Its work was essential in western Europe, North Africa, Israel and Poland alike.

In Israel during the past year about 7,000 students had received training from O.R.T. Nearly 40% of the vocational education in Israel was done by O.R.T. apart from the training of would-be immigrants in other countries. In addition, at Anieres a group of Israel agromechanics had been accepted to be trained in the latest European techniques, and negotiations were in progress for a programme of training foremen for Israel, both in Switzerland and in O.R.T. schools in Israel.

In Poland, where a year ago there were no O.R.T. activities, 2027 persons had already or were receiving training in short-term courses. Another 640 had been placed in apprenticeship. The bulk of all these were Jewish repatriates from the USSR; and the total Jewish population of Poland was only about 35,000. Most of the teachers were former graduates of Polish O.R.T. schools, and it would be difficult to exaggerate the improvement in individual morale already affected by this programme.

The work in Austria for Hungarian refugees, both in and out of camps, continued to be of the utmost importance.

In North Africa and Iran O.R.T. had transformed the life of the Jewish populations. There were still about 400,000 Jews in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, and 75,000 in Iran. That fine film "Mellah" was an understatement of the work and the need for it.

The programme in France, Italy and Holland continued to be of great benefit.

Before ending, Dr. Halperin desired to say that England was not the only country which was at the giving and not the receiving end. O.R.T. was strong in the U.S.A., South Africa and Canada, and also in countries like Switzerland and Scandinavia where the Jewish communities were very small. O.R.T. needed the support of all countries and all could help.

AFTER DR. HALPERIN'S ADDRESS

Mr. Diamond thanked Dr. Halperin and said he had stimulated the members to further action.

CONCERT

Mr. G. Stone drew the attention of the Meeting to the Concert to be held in the Royal Festival Hall on 28th January. He said that notices would be sent out regarding it and asked for support from the members present.

Mr. R.R. Glasser suggested that there should be a professional public relations approach to the masses so that O.R.T. could become more well-known throughout the country.

COUNCIL

The following persons were declared elected members of the Council, there being no contested election.

The Very Rev. The Chief Rabbi,
Dr. I. Brodie

The Very Rev. The Haham,
Rabbi Dr. S. Gaon

Prof. Norman Bentwich
Mr. Walter Goehr
Sir Henry D'Avigdor Goldsmid
Mr. Anthony Greenwood
Mr. Barnett Janner
Sir Keith Joseph
Mr. D. Kessler
Mr. Benn Levy
The Hon. Ewen E.S. Montagu
Ald. A. Moss
Mr. L. Sainer
Rt. Hon. Lord Silkin
Sir Leon Simon
Dr. B. Stross
Prof. J.M. Yoffey

EXECUTIVE

The following persons retired and were re-elected by ballot to serve on the Executive Committee:-

Mrs. E. Alexander
Mr. S. Beloff
Mrs. S. Beloff
Mr. W. Frankel
Mr. G. Haus
Mr. C. Hin
Mr. R. Sharf
Mrs. H.H. Wingate

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