

d176079

ORT

BULLETIN

ORGANIZATION FOR REHABILITATION THROUGH TRAINING

VOLUME XIV. No. 5

Published by the American ORT Federation

May-June, 1961

Inside Features

May 1960 marked the 13th birthday of the State of Israel. This Bar Mitzvah was noted by the press of the entire world. The ORT Bulletin takes this occasion to devote a sizable portion of this issue to the activities of Israeli ORT in articles on the present status of its trade school network as well as the tasks facing us in the future.

Bensley Lauds Israeli ORT	Page 2
Chart of School Network	Page 3
Israel's Manpower Needs	Page 4
Five Eager Beavers in Blue	Page 7

Work in Iran Goes Forward

The spectacular development of industry in Iran has created a virtual revolution in the lives of Iranian Jewry. This economic revolution has ever widening repercussions, of which ORT's enrollment figures are but one index.

The 43 percent increase in the student body during the single year 1960, represents a very significant leap forward. The enrollment increase was accompanied by a doubling of the machinery and tools at ORT's disposal and the addition of a number of valuable new instructors who have graduated from the Anieres ORT Institute.

Job Opportunities

The employment situation for skilled workers is at a new high and mechanics, auto-mechanics, electromechanics and secretaries are in great demand.

During the past three years the trend of Jews to confine themselves to commercial and trading activities has been considerably reversed. A new and healthy attitude toward manual work has taken hold. This tendency is mainly attributable to the overriding fact that jobs are available and that pay for industrial work has risen dramatically.

Major Developments in Israel Network Point to Expanded Vocational Activities

The Bar Mitzvah year of Israel finds ORT at the peak of its development of a trade education network in that country. More than 10,000 students received training at ORT centers during the 1960 school year. The facts behind this figure speak volumes.

The two outstanding areas of growth during 1960 were the vocational high schools, without doubt the most essential continuing field of Israeli ORT operations, and the opening of the Jerusalem and Jaffa centers for day-time study of apprentices.

This year alone saw a 22 percent increase in the student body. But this tells only part of the expansion story. Because the demand for enrollment so far exceeds the schools' capacities, a screening process has become essential. This, in turn, has resulted in a higher student level and a correspondingly higher educational level. 1960 also saw the further development of three-year trade high schools in immigrant settlement areas.

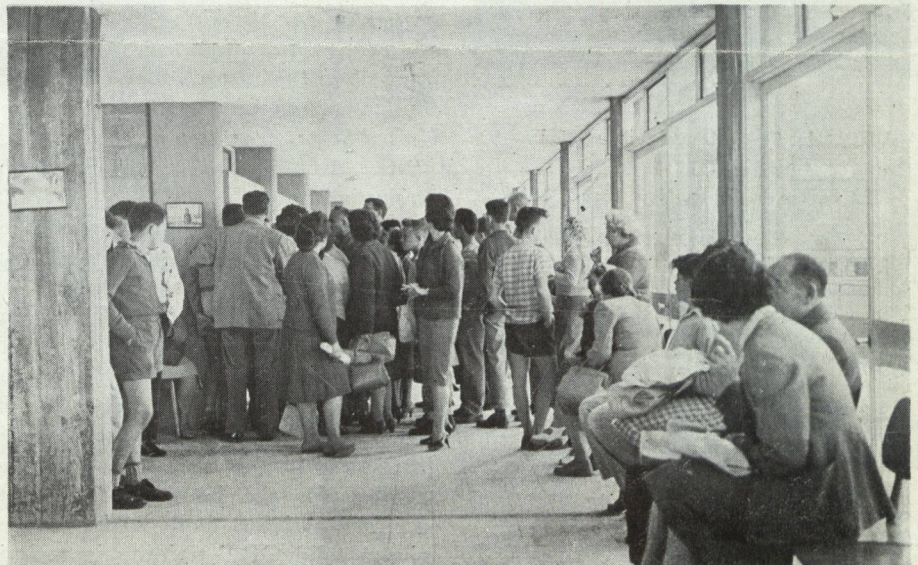
Last year's apprenticeship enrollment almost tripled as a result of a broadened approach to on-the-job training.

ORT has also pioneered in technicians institutes. Last year the first five year *technicum* was added to the roster of such institutes. It is located at Givatayim and features studies in refrigeration, construction technology and machine engineering.

International Center

At the Nathanya School, ORT has also organized, at government request, an international training center for African youth. This project is part of Israel's technical assistance to the new nations of the awakening continent.

As Israel looks beyond its thirteenth anniversary, the progress of the past augurs well for the development of an even greater and more comprehensive ORT school network in the future.

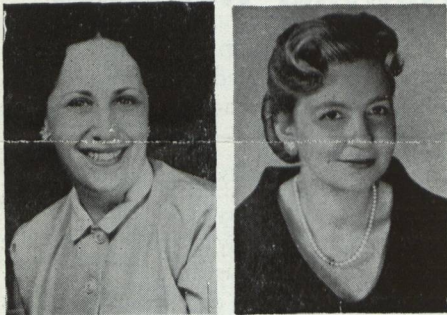


These parents are waiting to register their children at the Syngalowski Center in Tel Aviv for the 1960-61 school year.

WAO Issues 16th Convention Call New Haven Celebrates 10th Anniversary

Women's American ORT's 16th Biennial Convention Call has been issued by Co-Chairmen, Mrs. Irving Roth and Mrs. Monroe Rosenthal and National President, Mrs. Joseph C. Gayl. This year's convention will be held at Philadelphia's Hotel Bellevue-Stratford from October 23rd through the 26th.

WAO's conventions are the highest administrative and decision-making bodies of the organization and are attended by delegates representing



Mrs. Irving Roth and Mrs. Monroe Rosenthal, WAO Convention Co-Chairmen.

regions and chapters throughout the nation. The official call points out that, "The 16th Biennial Convention faces a period of mingled stability with cruel new dislocations. Whatever the extreme—fruitful opportunity or flight from repression—the program of ORT is, for the Jewish people, the answer of our times."

"In summoning the 16th Biennial Convention of Women's American ORT we pledge ourselves in dedication to the ideals of the ORT movement, to

secure the principles of ORT so that we may continue to meet, as yesterday, the poignant needs of our people in the days and years ahead.

In a recent press release, Mrs Gayl stated, "One of our primary ORT objectives is to satisfy mounting needs in Israel." It is expected that the October Convention will make another significant stride forward in WAO's ever mounting assistance to ORT operations.

Bensley Lauds Israeli School

Charles J. Bensley, a leading member of New York City's Board of Education, in an address to the June fifth meeting of the Executive Committee of the American ORT Federation, reported on his recent survey of secondary education in Israel made at the request of Abba Eban, Minister of Education, in the course of which he inspected a number of ORT schools.

During his visit, Mr. Bensley toured a total of eighty schools. He stated with great conviction that, "The two most outstanding schools that I have ever seen anywhere, whether in Israel or the United States, were the Syngalowski ORT School in Tel Aviv and the ORT agro-mechanics school in Nathanya." He said that the Tel Aviv school was uniquely designed and that it was as finely equipped as any school he had seen.

"One of the things that struck us particularly at the Tel Aviv center was your electronics division. You have a curriculum that is far advanced. I don't think we have its equivalent in the United States except on a college level."

Mr. Bensley was exceedingly enthusiastic about the staff.

His visit to Nathanya was another fine experience. Mr. Reichman, Director of the school, was referred to by Mr. Bensley as "One of the finest principals I have ever met."

Impressed with the spirit of the students and the progress being made in their studies, he also expressed gratification with the dormitory building program for the housing of students who are arriving from Africa to receive a solid ORT training in technical skills.

A large audience attended the 10th anniversary celebration of New Haven Men's ORT held on June 4 at the Temple Keser Israel. Largest men's chapter in ORT, numbering well over 300, the organization saw its beginnings at the home of Dr. Jacob Sharp in 1951.

This was the first ORT chapter to receive a "Merit Award" from the national organization. At the anniversary ceremonies, American ORT Federation presented its "Special Achievement Award" to the chapter "In recognition of exceptional devotion and extraordinary contributions to ORT." Jack Rader, AOF Executive Assistant, attended the celebration and delivered a message of greetings.

Officers for 1961-62 are Morris Oppenheim, President; Meyer Louis Kravitz, Joseph Edlin, Louis Janoff and Sam Bess, Vice-Presidents; Abraham Alderman, Recording Secretary; Benjamin Weiner, Financial Secretary; Harry Chernoff, Assistant Financial Secretary; Abraham Snyder, Treasurer; Charles Sheitelman, Assistant Treasurer; Harry Perkes, Max Seledensky, members of the Executive Committee. Abraham Brodner, Isaiah Spector and Dr. Jacob Sharp are members of the AOF national Board of Directors.

Receives Honorary Degree



William Haber

Dr. William Haber, President of the American ORT Federation, received an Honorary Degree from Hebrew Union College on June 3. Awarded a Doctor of Humane Letters at the Cincinnati institution by Dr. Nelson Glueck, President, Dr. Haber was honored at the College-Institute's ordination service.

At the ceremonies, which were joined by community leaders from throughout the United States, Dr. Haber, Professor of Economics at the University of Michigan, received the following citation, "In his career have been brilliantly blended the creativity of the researcher and the devotion of the Jew attached to his fellow man."



May-June, 1961

Published Bi-Monthly Except July and August
Vol. XIV. No. 5 Annual Subscription — 50c

American ORT Federation
222 Park Ave. South, New York 3, N. Y.
ORegon 4-5750

Cable Address: AMORTFED, New York
ORGANIZATION FOR REHABILITATION
THROUGH TRAINING

Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y.

OFFICERS—Dr. William Haber, President; George Backer, Honorary President; Mark Carter, Mrs. Joseph C. Gayl, Adolph Held, Max Herzfeld, Julius Hochman, Louis Hollander, Mrs. Ludwig Kaphan, David Rosenstein, William R. Sinkin, Vice-Presidents; Charles Kreindler, Secretary; Alexander Dolowitz, Treasurer; George J. Mintzer, Chairman Exec. Comm.; Julius Hochman, Vice-Chairman Exec. Comm.; Harry Greenberg, Chairman Admin. Comm.; Paul Bernick, Executive Director.
The American ORT Federation represents the World ORT Union, with which it is affiliated, in the United States. ORT is devoted to the vocational training and economic reconstruction of Jews throughout the world.
The American ORT Federation currently receives its funds exclusive of membership dues, by special agreement with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, a member agency of the United Jewish Appeal.

tes

10th
Laven
t the
men's
over
nings
rp in

ter to
n the
anni-
ORT
pecial
napter
votion
as to
cutive
n and

s Op-
Kra-
f and
raham
Benja-
Harry
etary;
Charles
Harry
ers of
raham
Jacob
F na-

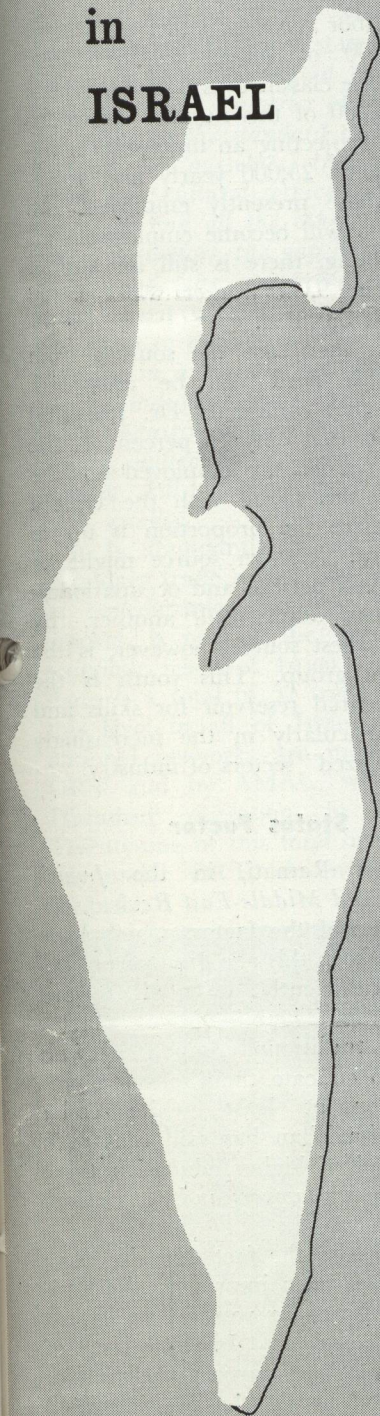
gree

Haber,
the
R T
ceived
y De-
Hebrew
ge on
rded a
umane
e Cin-
tution
sident,
ollege-

joined
rough-
r, Pro-
iversity
ing ci-
n bril-
the re-
e Jew

1960 STUDENT ENROLLMENT

The ORT TRADE SCHOOLS in ISRAEL



LOCALITY	Total	Vocational High Schools	2 Year Schools	Adult Courses	Apprentice and Pre-Apprentice
AFULE	447	92	355		
ASHKELON	354	27	271		56
BNEI-BRAK	144	144			
GIVATAYIM	731	538		193	
HERZLIAH	267	127	90	24	26
HOLON	372	151	221		
JAFFA	1,178	273		106	799
JERUSALEM	871	405		42	424
KFAR ABRAHAM	202	202			
KFAR ATA	129		129		
KFAR CITRIN	148	148			
KFAR MONASH	62			62	
KFAR SABA	122	102	20		
LYDDA	673	116	416		141
NATHANYA	924	726		68	130
RAMAT-GAN	632	291	162	179	
RAMLEH	98	65	33		
REHOVOTH	442	338		72	32
TEL-AVIV	2,492	1,056	108	1,328	
TEL-LITWINSKY	18		18		
TOTALS	10,306	4,801	1,823	2,074	1,608

Israel's Manpower Needs

The skilled manpower shortage in Israel is now receiving priority from government planners and economists because it clearly ranks high among the most urgent economic problems in Israel.

During the initial period of statehood, the prime concerns were the rapid absorption of the immigrants who poured into the country. In recent years, industrialization has gathered momentum. For a long period, the chief labor problem was finding jobs for the unemployed, many of them immigrants.

Anticipating the growing demand for skilled manpower, the basis for a nation-wide secondary vocational school network was laid, directed primarily toward adolescent youth, plus supplementary activities geared to other segments of the population. The mounting



Students in Jerusalem are on intimate terms with the insides of a motor.

ORT enrollment, rising from a little over 1,000 thirteen years ago to over 10,000 during 1960, is but one indication of the efforts made in this direction.

Nevertheless, until recently, despite severe deficits in skills, Israel has, generally speaking, a labor surplus. What is new now is the altered economic picture. The situation with respect to industrialization has been almost entirely reversed. There is now sufficient capital for large industrial expansion but, in the words of David Krivine, Economic Reporter for the *Jerusalem Post*, "The main bottleneck in Israel's industrial development is manpower. This is a new problem and without precedent in this country."

Mr. Krivine goes on to point out that the pace of investment has risen rapidly

and has overtaken the rate of increase in the population. Giora Josephthal, Minister of Labor, estimates that some 30,000 additional members of the labor force will be needed during 1961; some 14,000 for new or expanded industrial enterprises, 8,000 for various services, and the rest for crafts, agriculture, building, communications and transport.

The labor force of Israel at present is 732,000 of whom approximately 100,000 are classified as skilled workers. About 6,000 of this number retire annually. Projecting an immigration figure of some 25,000 yearly and considering those presently employed and those who will become employable after schooling, there is still an annual gap of some 9,000 workers which somehow must be filled.

Where, then, are the sources from which this need can be answered. Among other comments, Dr. Josephthal points out that only 28 percent of the married women are employed and he compares this figure with the United States where the proportion is up to 40 percent. Another source might be handicapped persons and occupationally retrained adults, still another. By far the largest source, however, is the 14-18 age group. This youth is the main potential reservoir for skills and work, particularly in the increasingly "technologized" sectors of industry.

Status Factor

Yohanan Ramati, in the *Jewish Observer and Middle-East Review*, discusses some of the factors which have tended to keep this age group from becoming sufficiently oriented toward skilled trades. There is the status factor which has traditionally impelled Jewish parents to educate their sons for professions or at least, white collar work. Abba Eban has said that even at the level of higher education there are "too many lawyers and not enough engineers."

There is also the fact that the wage structure has been improving the position of white collar workers as against industrial workers. In addition, of course, for a very large proportion of the Oriental youth, the pressing need to earn a living plus their completely different cultural traditions, reinforced by resistant home conditions, loom as obstacles.

Primary schooling is generally completed at 14 years of age. Of every



Student in one of the metal working shops at the Givatayim school.

hundred
ondary
schools
the 54,
and, of
a loss
country
fied, e

M.
Planni
Comm
can n
under
Accor
deman
social,
maint
nomic
selves
states
oblige
indust
vance
velop
izatio
merc
high

It
secon
its c
brack
econ
there
this
natio
ORT
Hista
Twe
are
AM.

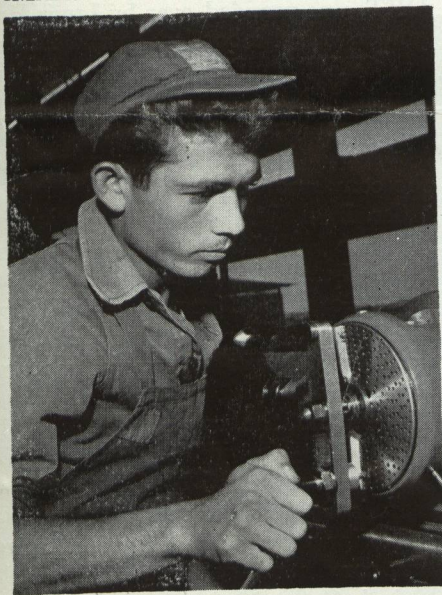
No
stu

hundred graduates, 80 go on to secondary education, 54 to academic schools and 26 to vocational. But, of the 54, only 22 complete their studies and, of the 26 only 13 complete theirs, a loss of enormous dimensions in a country that so desperately needs qualified, educated and trained citizens.

Closing the Gap

M. Meyer, Director of the Industrial Planning Bureau of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, stated, "Israel can no longer be counted among the underdeveloped countries of the world. According to the standard of living we demand for ourselves, the economic, social, and cultural services we seek to maintain, and all the other usual economic indicators, the gap between ourselves and the advanced industrial states is not so very great. This fact obliges us to develop our economy and industry in a manner befitting an advanced industrial state. We must develop industries which require specialization, skilled labor, know-how, commercial skill, efficient production and high quality."

It is abundantly clear, then, that secondary trade school education, with its concentration on the 14-18 age bracket, is one of the most pressing economic needs of Israel. At present, there is a total of 52 trade schools at this level in all of Israel. The only national networks are maintained by ORT and by AMAL, which is the Histadrut operation in the field. Twenty-one of this total or 40 percent are under ORT, eleven are run by AMAL.



North-African born lad is a third-year student of tool and diemaking at Syngalowski Center.

ORT students constitute 36.3 percent of the total student body in the entire network of trade high schools. However, in the sub-division of advanced technical high schools, the ORT students number 67 percent. Trained technicians are regarded as the missing link between the University-trained engineer and the skilled hand.

The problem was highlighted by the *Jerusalem Post*, which noted recently, "Israel suffers from a severe shortage of skilled technicians, men who can relieve the engineers of part of their duties. At present, it is estimated that engineers spend one-third of their time doing work which could easily be delegated to technicians."

The role of ORT in vocational training as a whole assumes even greater significance when we examine the statistics in a breakdown of the specialized fields covered. In the metal trades and mechanics, ORT students number 38.6 percent of the total and in electronics and electricity, 40 percent. In auto-electricity and garment manufacture the ORT student body constitutes 100 percent of the trainees; construction technicians constitute some 49 percent, metal machinists, 45 percent, and agromechanics, 50.8 percent. Generally, in the most essential trades, ORT's proportion of trainees considerably exceeds the 46.3 percent which represents its over-all enrollment total.

Special Courses

In addition to its secondary school network, ORT's four-pronged program in Israel includes a number of two-year schools primarily oriented toward immigrant youth, adult courses and apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship training. At this point, the three and four-year secondary schools graduate some 1,000 annually while approximately 1,500 who complete proficiency and adult improvement courses are added to the skilled labor force each year.

In 1960 some 32,000 primary school students graduated in all of Israel. The projected figures for 1961 and 1962 show the same spiraling trend as we have in the United States, 42,000 and then 50,000. A considerable number of these youngsters will not, for a variety of reasons, go on to secondary schools. They must, nevertheless, be rendered productive in some other manner.

Part of the answer to their need is the expanding apprenticeship program.

Abba Eban Says

Abba Eban, Minister of Education, during visit to the Syngalowski Center on June 1, 1961, said, "I am deeply impressed by what I have seen. Here indeed is the creative source of a people whose destiny will be decided on the battlefields of toil. My heartfelt greetings to all those who have developed this institution of real value."

While there are many problems to be encountered in developing this as fully as is necessary, ORT has experimented with a number of useful approaches. The "sandwich" system alternates groups of students between classroom and shop and the "guided apprenticeship" provides for a year of intensive preparation for a specific job. At the government's request, the entire ORT approach to this aspect of training has been broadened to on-the-job practice plus in-school supplementation. As a result, last year apprenticeship has almost tripled.

One final factor pertaining to the future should be mentioned. Levi Eshkol, Minister of Finance, stated in his 1960 budget address to the Knesset, "During the coming four or five years we shall have to prepare our economy for a period in which there may be a considerable reduction in capital imports." At the same time, Israel will have to make large investments in mines, quarries, development of water resources, new settlements, housing, port development, transportation and many other absolutely vital areas.

Productivity Factor

If capital investment from abroad falls off while Israel must continue to expand its economy, the capital must come from Israel itself. The only possible source for such capital, outside of drastically reducing the standard of living, is to increase sharply the productivity of labor. Not only must the absolute number of workers increase greatly but the per capita productivity must likewise keep pace with Israel's needs.

Increased labor productivity is a key problem. This implies the highest possible degree of training and utilization of the most modern techniques. ORT, therefore, faces not only the need to expand its facilities rapidly but also the pressing necessity to maintain and raise the standards of education, adapting its equipment and teaching methods to Israel's fast-tempoed industrial revolution.

Secretarial School Network Develops

A relatively new development in ORT operations which has grown rapidly in recent years, training in secretarial and bookkeeping skills, has expanded into a network that already comprises some 20 schools and other training units. The geographic spread of this new ORT facet is indicative of the success of this type of training and of its demand in diverse areas. Concentrated in the schools at Constantine, Algiers, Rio De Janeiro and Montreuil, these courses have also taken hold in Lyon, Teheran, Rome, Casablanca, Marrakech and Wroclaw.

Some of the programs have one-year courses and others provide full-fledged three-year secretarial high schools. The shortage of secretarial help and the availability of relatively well-paid jobs has impelled many girls who previously might have gone into needle trades to enter this white collar field.

Fresh Opportunity

In addition to the open job market, there is a general feeling of achieving a higher status in this kind of work. For a good many bright and eager to learn young women, having the opportunity to enter these schools has been a great impetus toward further cultural and educational development. In North Africa, in particular, entrance to these centers has meant the addition of a new dimension to the great liberation from the illiterate state of previous generations of women.

An indication of the tempo with which the secretarial schools have grown can be seen in the fact that the first comprehensive school of this kind

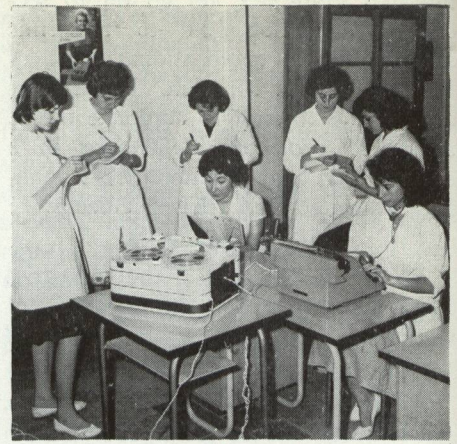
at Montreuil, Paris, is merely five years old.

There seems little doubt that because of the widespread demand for these skills and the pleased reception which has been accorded their graduates, this training area will continue to expand.

B & P Convention

The Business and Professional ORT, which held its convention on June 4 at the Statler-Hilton Hotel, disclosed that its support for the Ramat-Gan School, which is its special project, in the past year greatly exceeded the assistance rendered in previous years.

Some 300 members attended the convention and dinner and dance which followed. The invocation was delivered by Rabbi Irving J. Block. The new officers are: President, Samuel Post; Vice-Presidents, Alice Bernstein, Sidney M. Conowit, Sarah Friedman, Arnold Gershunoff, Frances J. Sober, Meyer Waldman; Treasurer, Joseph Gottfried; Financial Secretaries, Jean Friedman, Mina Sitzer; Recording Secretary, Ida Mandell; Corresponding Secretary, Bea Goodman; Office Secretary, May Levitt; Publicity Director, Hon. Morris J. Solomon.



Taking dictation from tape recorder at a secretarial school.

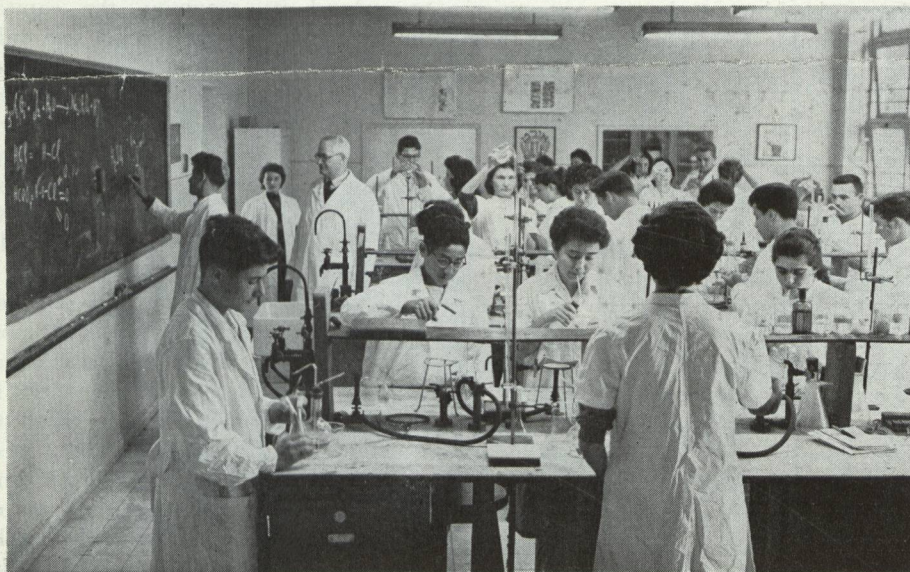
National Groups Endorse Program

One of the leading national landsmanschaft organizations, the United Galician Jews of America, at its convention, recently renewed its support to the National ORT League.

The President of the Galician Jews, Sigmund I. Sobel, member of the AOF executive committee and chairman of the NOL Executive Committee, in his presidential message to the convention, spoke warmly about ORT's services to the Jewish people. Philip Braver, Vice-President of the organization, greeted the convention on behalf of the ORT League. A testimonial dinner tendered to Mr. and Mrs. Blumenreich, a leader of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and a devoted friend of ORT, was presided over by Louis Hollander, noted labor leader and American ORT Vice-President. The convention was attended by the NOL Executive Director, Chaim Weintraub.

A resolution was likewise adopted at the convention of the Zionist fraternal order, Bnai Zion, held in Atlantic City on June 1, 1961. The outgoing President, Hyman J. Fliegel, member of the AOF Board of Directors and a Vice-Chairman of the NOL, stressed the work of ORT in his annual message. A declaration along these lines was adopted at the convention of Brith Abraham. Maurice Goldstein, AOF Board member and NOL Vice-Chairman, is President of this organization.

Similar statements were voted at recent conventions of the Orthodox Rabbinical Council of America and the Conservative Rabbinical Assembly of America.



Laboratory Assistants at Ramat-Gan.

Five Eager Beavers in Blue Aprons

The following excerpts are reprinted from an article written by a correspondent of the Israeli evening newspaper, Maariv Lanoar. The story concerns events at the Tel Aviv ORT Center.

Something new and very strange happened at the ORT technical high school in the Syngalowski Center a few months ago. A whisper passed through the spacious dining-room and 676 young men in blue overalls and caps looked up in astonishment.

What? Where? Impossible! There were never girls here before . . . five young girls, about 14 years old, dressed in the center's traditional uniform, hesitantly entered the dining-room and joined the long queue waiting to receive their meals.

Five in '49

That there never were girls in the ORT school is an exaggeration, say Mrs. Eren, public relations director, and Mr. Karni, pedagogical director of the school. In 1949 there were five girls studying at the school when it was located in Jaffa and they are all now employed as radio technicians—excellent ones too. Yes, and there was a girl the following year who finished her studies with distinction.

Why, then, didn't ORT admit more girls, except in its girls' schools, during the past ten years? Conditions weren't suitable and there were not enough candidates to initiate a technical training program for girls.

The radio workshop is very noisy; the first class has just ended a lesson. They rush from the modern work benches placed in the center of the hall and start arranging the different in-

struments in the tool boxes around the table. Alas! The fate of all beginners in ORT is the same—file, file, file!

Here they are—five of them. They slam the cover of their tool boxes, brush away an undisciplined curl and they're ready for their next lesson. But first let us introduce them: Sipora Moshe, 14½ years old, from Rumania; Nira Shachar, same age but a Sabra; Leora Stein, same age, from Poland; Sabra Pesia Rotpinek; and Malca Shapira, absent that day, of Polish origin.

In a Man's World

These five young "eager beavers" dared the first jump into this man's world. Four of them are in front of us with their dark blue trousers, blue shirts and caps with the yellow badge of ORT, and blue aprons round their waists. In their clothing and studies they are exactly like the boys.

We asked them how they got there. In Sipora's Hebrew, a year and a half old, she said, I always wanted to learn everything connected with radio electronics when I was abroad. When I first arrived in Israel there was no such school for girls (she plays shyly

Jacques Bramson Honored

Jacques Bramson, Director of ORT's Montreuil School, has recently been honored by the French Government for the third time. One of the highest distinctions in France, *Commandeur de la Legion d'Honneur*, was awarded to Dr. Bramson. Five years ago, Dr. Bramson was named a *Chevalier du Merite Social*. At that time, the then Labor Minister, Paul Bacon, pointed out that the occasion marked the first such distinction received by a director of a vocational training center. He was previously presented with the *Legion of Honor*. We, in ORT, are very proud of Mr. Bramson and extend to him our heartiest congratulations.

with a *Magen David*) that's why I was so happy when I discovered that enrollment for girls was open here and I registered immediately."

Leora, small with tousled blond hair, said much the same.

Pesia, round faced, with glasses, talks quickly. "I did not even think of coming here and had already been enrolled at a secondary school. Then some of the boys told us that girls would be admitted to ORT. I liked the idea, went there, passed the exams and that's it. It seems quite strange because my teachers in school were convinced that I would go to a teachers' college."

'Nuts' to Fashion

Sipora's comments, short and to the point, "When I passed an orientation test I was told that fashion design would suit me. Then I thought, 'nuts,' that's not for me."

Nira, slim, tall, dark-haired, is said by the teachers to be first in class even among the boys. Her girl friends say that she does everything like a boy and even better. She tells about entering the school. "It has been my dream since third grade. My cousin put this 'folly' in my head; he was an ORT graduate and when I saw the beautiful things he did there I decided that I had to enter this school."

What does the teacher say? This smiling young man, himself an ORT graduate, comments, "I may say that the girls are better than many of the boys and that they may very well fill future technical jobs hitherto done by men."



Intensity and joy mark the faces of two of the "eager beavers" as one operates a lathe and the other a drill press.

Cross Currents of Change Stir Tunisian Jewry

by George Schreiber

In the *hara* of Tunis are squeezed some 20,000 people, into a tiny area of labyrinthine alleyways. At the Porte de France, the tiny Tunisian taxi has to be abandoned. The Porte is all that is left of the wall. Now it stands heavy, somewhat lugubrious in the middle of a wide square.

Behind and around it is a hodge-podge clutter of open food stalls, peddlers standing in front of their few spindly fish or meager fruits, a medley of people and noise. Most Jewish food stores are indistinguishable from Arab and are just as dirty. The market streets are thick with swarms of people. Flies are everywhere, including the meat.

Youth Busy

A proper perspective requires that one does not stop with these stigmata of poverty. There are few youth to be seen, except for very young children. They are busy elsewhere. At the ORT school at Ariana, boys who live in the *hara* are running high speed lathes. And at the Center for apprentices opposite the former Jewish cemetery site girls from the *hara* are examining blood specimens under microscopes. This, too, is part of the *hara* picture—its new direction.

Around the *hara*, there is a boom in clothing production. I visited several shops which had opened within the past nine months. One socks manufacturer seemed to have a considerable amount

of second-hand American machinery, much of it unused because of lack of material. Some of the dress shops look like miniature Seventh Avenue transplants, but the factory is often no more than a garage-like shop and quite often just another part of a house where people live.

ORT has been largely responsible for recruitment of Jewish workers in the garment and shoe shops. In half a dozen shops visited, ORT was the chief source of workers' supply via its apprenticeship service. Several shops had acquired their entire work force from ORT.

Under the best of circumstances, the primitive stage of the factory system has not been exactly conducive to good work conditions. Yet ORT has undertaken to see that not only is there a reasonable approximation of decent conditions, but that apprentices enjoy some expectation of job, skill and pay improvement.

After-Work Classes

In some cases the apprentice can learn little on the job because of the employer's limited knowledge of his own craft. That is why the after-work classes which ORT has organized for apprentices are so important. Both in Tunisia and Morocco there is still a long way to go to maximum sustained attendance in these classes.

The Tunisian ORT schools are part of the educational system of the community. Many of the students come from the primary schools of the Alliance Israelite Universelle. ORT schools are the only vocational education facilities



Young Tunisian student working at a grinding machine.

available to Jewish youth; but they are much more than that.

The presence of ORT, and the living example of what its graduates have achieved during the decade that ORT has been there, has seriously affected the Jewish outlook. ORT has helped induce an acceptance of technology and industrial work where these were previously alien. The forces of change that have been churning and altering Jewish life in recent times tended to turn Jews increasingly toward academic and professional education. The technological revolution had to be brought to Tunisian Jews by ORT.

Situation Altered

Lest this be considered an inflated estimate, it is a simple fact that before ORT no more than one or two Jews applied annually for the state certificate of trade aptitude, and frequently there were no Jewish applicants at all. This picture is now entirely changed. Scores of ORT students take and pass the exams regularly.

In the country as a whole, there were 2,323 ORT students who received training during 1960. Of these, the largest number were in apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship plans. However, in the two to three-year schools the figure stood at 652. The balance were in workshops or adult courses.

Have You Overlooked Your ORT Membership

You have helped bring education, hope and independence to thousands of Jews the world over. Renew your membership now in American ORT Federation to help continue this work.

ORT BULLETIN
222 Park Avenue South
New York 3, N. Y.