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Minutes of Executive Committee meeting, Rome, July, 1979William Haber

On this morning's agenda, you will notice there are two separate programmes this morning. The first one is on the Congress in Jerusalem which I will be chairing, and the second one is on the fund raising activities of ORT, which David Young will be chairing.

Let me take just a few moments by a few sentences by way of introduction. We have had a lot of discord and tension and difficulty in Geneva. as a result of one or another of the developments growing out of the decision to change the Central Office. I am pleased to report that on the basis of the information which has come to me, that the activities in the various countries concerning the plans for the 1980 Congress in Jerusalem have not been adversely affected. The progress that has been made we shall hear as the morning progresses. As far as I am concerned and as far as we are all concerned, this is a great simcha for us, for a Jewish organisation, in these times after the Holocaust, after all the great tragedies, of recent decades, to be able to celebrate its hundredth anniversary particularly in an atmosphere where we can talk with great excitement about what has been accomplished in the past 25 or 30 years, about our growth in all sections of the world, is in itself something worth recording. And I am certain that the meeting in Jerusalem for which plans are now underway, will bring together the ORT family in numbers never before experienced, and I hope in an atmosphere of peace and excitement, which it well merits.

I am going to start by asking Robin Gilbert, who has been following developments as the coordinator and who has been in close touch with the professional leadership in the various countries to give us a summary report as to what has transpired and then I will open it up for discussion, and please will everyone from the various countries if they have something to tell us as to what plans or what problems they have, to make their views known or give us suggestions. We still have plenty of time to correct any errors, and perhaps after this morning we will have a better sense of direction than we have now. I call upon Robin Gilbert as the coordinator of the plans for the Jerusalem congress.

Robin Gilbert

I think you will find that this morning will divide into three. I shall begin by speaking specifically about the plans for the Congress. However after that I am sure we will hear from the floor certain developments which have been taking place in national organisations, which are linked to the centenary, which are linked to the Congress and certain fund raising events, and certain campaigns which are inspired by the Centenary, so there will be an area which will fall into both the first half of the meeting which is concerned with 1980, and the second half which is concerned with fund raising.

At the last meeting of the fund raising group, the lay fund raising group in Ferney Voltaire in February we brought you up to date on developments. And since then quite a lot has happened, and yesterday the professionals who are involved in the committee for the Congress and for the Centenary met. And I am first going to report on that meeting of Professionals that began on Friday afternoon, that is going to listen to your comments about what I have to say,