

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN PARIS
AT THE GRAND HOTEL ON FEBRUARY 2ND 1981

Shelley Appleton: The meeting of the Executive Committee of the World ORT Union and the second century of ORT is opened. We will start as is customary at ORT Executive Committee meetings with a moment to remember those of our colleagues and companions who have passed away during the previous year.

William Bøe, who gave his life rescuing Jews during the war, died during the year.

Richard Fischer, a Director of ORT Italy for a great many years passed away.

Rafael Jonah, also from ORT Italy

Chaim Miller of New York City and his wife Ida both died within weeks of each other quite recently, a great loss was sustained by the American ORT Federation by their deaths.

Dr Logman Amini, the husband of Parvine Motamed, our director of ORT Iran for many years and now a member of the staff of the World ORT Union, died within the last several months.

In addition to those there are all of the others - teachers, other members of the worldwide staff of ORT who died in this year, and whom we also remember. Would you stand for a moment in commemoration.

This is in very many ways an extraordinary meeting. It's the second century of ORT, and everybody up on this dais is new, the ones who previously occupied these august seats are sitting down there somewhere - Dr. William Haber, our beloved, my beloved predecessor, Daniel Mayer (applause). I don't know whether Max Braude is here yet. He is here (applause). I hope they will not judge their successors too harshly. Give us a little time.

It is extraordinary in that respect, it is a new century, a new cast of characters. It is also extraordinary in some other respects. There are times in the history of organisations, individuals, nations, when all kinds of difficulties seem to converge. We are passing through one of those periods in ORT. We are passing through a crisis period. We will survive it, I think, survive it handily and survive it successfully. We will survive it, I think, without damaging or impairing our growth or the services which we provide for the thousands of children and adults who depend on us to provide them with the means for making a dignified life for themselves and their families. We will do it, but we will have a couple of years, this year and possibly next year, when we will have to make some sacrifices and much more importantly, put a lot more effort into providing the sinews of ORT, and the sinews of ORT fundamentally is money.

happened during the course of this weekend and we also reviewed matters concerning the appointment of auditors and the Committee recommended that we appoint one world-wide firm of accountants to coordinate all the audits of all the national organisations.

There then followed a very long, detailed and painful discussion on the preliminary budget for 1981. I do not think that I need to go into the details of this discussion; we will shortly have a presentation of the budget by the Director General and I suspect much of our comments then will only be repeated again during the course of the conversation. But concern was expressed by individual members of the Administrative Committee that we should even contemplate a budget which shows a deficit. However, the budget at that time was approved in order that it might be used in negotiations with the AJDC for their subvention for 1980.

The next item on the agenda was the review of capital projects. This again was an item which appears on today's agenda and I do not wish again to go over the same ground, but we reviewed with concern the financial problems which the commitment for the school's extension in Buenos Aires in the Argentine gives us and recognise the financial consequences of the position of the Executive Committee last January to proceed with Phase 2 of the School of Engineering. It was decided that both these matters be reviewed and be discussed again at the next Administrative meeting.

The next item on the agenda was fundraising and the Administrative Committee decided that the only serious way out of our problems was to improve the quality of our fundraising and therefore additional financial assistance would have to be given to the Head Office in order to help fundraising throughout the world. In particular, we should seriously look at Australia as a new source of funds since this was a country with a large potential, but at the moment, only producing in the order of \$15,000 per year.

We reviewed the Technical Assistance programme and recognised the very impressive recovery which we have made from the staff losses suffered during the course of the move from Geneva and recognised that in fact, in 1980, our turnover would in fact have been in excess of that of 1979 and 1978, and we had recovered all the staff losses and all the drawbacks of that particular operation.

We reviewed the position of the Pension Fund and saw a report from consultants that Jersey or Guernsey would be a better site for the location of the Pension Fund than Geneva, and we resolved that the matter go back to the Control Commission

for their final judgement.

And finally, we reported on negotiations with the Central Archives for the Jewish People in Jerusalem, who had agreed, for a one-time fee of \$30,000 to receive all the ORT archives in order that they might be kept as part of the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem, and not separately as had previously been planned. Arrangements will also be made for us to receive microfilm or microfiches and for these to be duplicates of the important records to be stored in London, in New York or in Paris, wherever required.

Following that meeting, we reviewed the budget again and I wrote to all presidents of national organisations, all members of the Administrative Committee, as Chairman of the Administrative Committee, with the latest draft of the budget showing the seriousness of the deficit and asking for response, and for suggestions as to what we could do in these circumstances. I received two or three replies, one of which from Lyone Heppner, at this meeting, and all these replies were considered at the next meeting of the Administrative Committee which took place on Saturday night at 17.30.

There again followed a very serious and frank discussion of the budget and again I do not wish to anticipate a discussion which will take place shortly. However, the result of that discussion is the budget which you have before you in your package of papers and as a result of those changes, we were able to reduce the apparent deficit on the budget. Nevertheless the Committee decided that it would be impracticable to ask national organisations to reduce their programme or to cut their programme during the course of the school year. It was for this reason that the Administrative Committee as a whole recommended that we submit, with one exception, Sidney Leiwant, to the Executive Committee a budget showing a deficit of this order, with the proviso that there be a frank warning to all national organisations that in the event that we are unable to improve fundraising or find any other alternative source of funds, we may well have to contemplate a cut in the programme during the course of the next year, and that the Director General be authorised to initiate discussions with the national organisations in order to prepare them for a possible reduction in our subventions for 1982.

The next item on the agenda was a review of our financial situation. It was reported to the Administrative Committee that a particular line of bank finance had been withdrawn, but that alternative arrangements had been made, and we reviewed the situation, and the Committee was satisfied that we have sufficient financial facilities available to us to enable us to complete our programme of capital expenditure,

despite the serious financial position which we are in. We then followed a review again of the capital projects, and it is a discussion which will come up again during this morning's agenda. And, if I may, I would rather like to leave the arguments until that time. Nevertheless, I will report that the Administrative Committee are making that presentation. We then received the report of the Anieres Committee, who have been considering the future of Anieres and the Committee felt that they should put forward three particular points of view for consideration and for us, the Administrative Committee, to report to you. One view was that Anieres is not serving its intended purpose, and that each national organisation should set up separate teaching facilities, and we should not have a central training facility. Monsieur de Toledo, as the President of the Anieres Institute, felt that Anieres did respond to the needs of Western Diaspora Jewry, and that it should continue. If not, you could well lose a source of income. The Committee established, in fact, that whatever technical assistance income comes into Anieres could in fact be replaced elsewhere. And Beverly Minkoff expressed the view that the Institute has unfortunately, in the last few years, not come to serve the purpose for which it was originally intended. However, she was worried by the solution to train teachers in their own countries, since we would lose the link which binds ORT together and that trainee teachers should come together at some point. The Committee considered all these points of view and recognised the seriousness of the steps which it was proposing to take, and in the end recommended that we should not take any students in for the next school year. On the recommendation of the desire of French ORT to provide suitable facilities in Paris. The Committee had received the report of ORT Israel, that it did not intend to use the facility at Anieres at any time in the future, that they were proposing to set up their own training facilities in Israel and that South America were proposing to cover their own teacher training requirements within that continent. In those circumstances, the committee did recognise that the sole purpose of Anieres now was to serve the French-speaking peoples and North Africa, and that could be done with facilities in Paris.

The next item which we then dealt with was a review again of the Pension Fund since we had received a request from some of the Committee of the Pension Fund that the transfer should not take place and that it should be left in Switzerland. The Administrative Committee authorised myself, and the Chairman of the Executive to determine the names of the employees representatives of the WOU on the staff Pension Fund. We have agreed, in fact, and will put to

you shortly for your formal submission - the names should be myself, Joseph Harmatz and Ian Engel. When the new Committee will meet they will again discuss and hopefully agree where the Pension Fund should be sited, and come back to report at the next meeting of the Executive Committee. We then finally came on to the rather difficult question of the auditors and we found that a number of national organisations have particular requirements about the identity of auditors, and it became apparent that we could not achieve what we had once wanted, which was to have one firm to cover the audit throughout the network. This matter has now gone back for discussion between the Director General and the national organisations to see if we cannot come up with an approved solution for the next meeting.

And finally, the Administrative Committee resolved to co-opt as part of its membership Jacqueline Maus as a representative of ORT Switzerland. We realised that we had made a considerable error in Jerusalem, that we are a Swiss organisation and that we had not in our Administrative Committee the President of ORT Switzerland. And therefore, at a later point under varia, this afternoon, we would wish formally to propose that Jacqueline Maus be recommended and adopted for the Administrative Committee. Thank you.

Shelley Appleton: You have heard the report of the Administrative Committee. Before we proceed to discussion, let me do a very small bit of business which I neglected to do earlier this morning and which Dido Willcox has reproved me for. There is going to be a visit to the schools tomorrow morning and we must know how many of you are going, so we can order coaches. Would you raise your hands, please.

Now, you have heard the report of the Administrative Committee. The floor is open for discussion, comment, etc.

(inaudible)

Shelley Appleton:

There has been a motion to accept. Do I hear a second? Then moved and seconded. Discussion.

Moshe Etzioni: Dear Friends, the place of our Central Office has been changed, the leadership passed to other hands, a new Director General has been appointed, but the old, if I may say so, habits, of not submitting any written reports, of the activities of the Executive Committee in due time to enable the members to take a real active part in the discussion, has not been changed. Not only has it not been changed but it has changed for the worse.

Previously, we at least got some papers in our rooms. This time, we found them on our table here. When are we supposed to read them? I have raised this matter several times previously at meetings, but it seems that my voice was like a voice in the wilderness. We say in Hebrew "kol coré bamitba". I have no other alternative but to submit a formal resolution that at least one week before the meeting of the Executive Committee, each member of the Executive should get a recent report of the activities of the Executive Committee together with all resolutions passed at the last meeting. Thank you.

John Davidson: When we arrived here, among the papers that we found on our tables was a printed copy of the World ORT Union Constitution and By-Laws. I had been wondering, as many others had, what the status of that was. We knew that the new constitution had been submitted in typewritten form to the Registry of Commerce in Switzerland, but we didn't know whether there had been any objections to it, whether it had been approved for printing, and whether the printed copy had been signed by Jacqueline Maus, as we understand it would be required to be. If, in fact, it has been approved, it is important that we know it. If it has not been approved, and any further work should be done, it seems to me very important that counsel familiar with the matter should be utilised to complete and obtain any approval that is necessary. This may be a technicality, but a very important one to ORT, because we are a Swiss organisation and must comply with the provisions of Swiss law. Furthermore, I understand that the tax exemption which the World ORT Union enjoys for a period of five years will expire in April and that an application for a renewal of that exemption must be filed and presumably, if the new Constitution has not been approved, this may create problems for the tax exemption. If these matters have been taken care of, I think it is very important that we be informed of them, and if they have not been taken care of, I suggest that counsel be directed to take care of it promptly.

Shelley Appleton: Thank you John. Let me say that I am not personally aware as to whether the important thing you suggested has been done or not. Possibly someone from the Swiss delegation would - Jacqueline Maus?

Jacqueline Maus: Je peux vous répondre que pour taper la Constitution, cela a duré très longtemps du fait de la réduction du personnel de l'ORT Union à Genève. Il y a déjà quelque temps que tous ces documents ont été envoyés à Londres, et ce n'est qu'hier que l'on a remis la Constitution en anglais à signer, donc je ne pouvais pas passer à la Chambre de Commerce à Genève, et je le ferai dès mon retour à Genève avec la Constitution en français et en anglais. Merci.

A ce moment-là, je peux vous donner une réponse.

Shelley Appleton: Our Director General informed me that part of the reason we were late is that signatures were required from top officers and it took quite some time to obtain those signatures, but that all the technical details are now completed and it is now ready for submission. I think I saw Mr de Toledo's hand up there a moment ago. Mr de Toledo, did you wish the floor?

Pierre de Toledo: Monsieur le Président, Mesdames, Messieurs, je suis étonné de la légèreté qu'on s'apprête à aborder le problème de l'Institut d'Anières. Une commission a été nommée il y a déjà plusieurs mois qui a siégé deux fois, et je pense que quelque chose aussi important que l'Institut mériterait, avant d'être supprimé, d'un trait de plume, d'une discussion spéciale, et un point de l'ordre du jour spécial, avec une information qui soit envoyée suffisamment tôt au moment de l'Exécutif. Quand je parle de légèreté, en effet je constate que l'on parle de ne pas engager d'élève pour l'année prochaine. C'est impensable. Vous avez une centaine d'élèves, car nous avons chaque année une centaine de candidats, qui préparent leur examen d'admission à l'Institut, et qui font pour cela un travail considérable. Et il serait bien étonnant qu'à l'ORT, nous acceptions que ces élèves, tout d'un coup qu'on leur dit "Il n'y a plus d'Institut, fini, terminé". Je ne sais pas ce que vous penseriez, Mesdames et Messieurs, si l'on disait tout d'un coup que l'une des écoles importantes d'Israël était fermée, et qu'on prend plus d'élèves dans cette école, qu'il n'y a plus de solution de rechange, vous seriez certainement tout à fait indignés. Il est probable que vous arriveriez à la conclusion que celle du Congrès Mondiale Juif, au dernier Congrès qu'elle a eu à Jérusalem, et qui a dit, Messieurs, le Diaspora a le droit de vivre. Il est absolument inacceptable, à mon point de vue, ce serait une injustice grave de supprimer la promotion sociale que représente l'Institut Central d'Anières. Voulu par Syngalowski il y a trente ans, non seulement pour former des cadres, mais aussi pour servir de promotion sociale. On voudrait absolument qu'Anières soit une organisation peut coûteuse, destinée à former six ou sept enseignants par an. Ce n'est pas cela. Les six ou sept enseignants sont une nécessité, et je voudrais à cette occasion souligner que jamais, nous n'avons refusé un professeur, lorsqu'on nous a demandé. Chaque année l'ORT France, l'ORT Maroc nous demandent ces enseignants. Chaque année, nous les avons fournis. C'est donc une contre-vérité, j'appellerai ça parce que je n'aime pas mâcher mes mots, un mensonge, que de dire que l'Institut

n'a pas répondu à son but. Autre chose qu'il faut que vous sachiez: nous avons à l'Institut d'Anières, des formations d'assistance technique. Ces formations d'assistance technique, si l'Institut est fermée, seront supprimées, les contrats qu'on a signés, je sais bien qu'à l'ORT maintenant, on n'en est plus au respect des contrats. Néanmoins, je voudrais m'opposer contre cette () du problème.

Cette assistance technique, Mesdames, Messieurs, nous rapporte chaque année, de poids élevés, de poids éduqués, sans frais, sans que cela coûte rien, un certain nombre d'élèves juifs, parce que nous savons que toute l'infrastructure de l'Institut est payé par le compte que nous faisons avec l'Assistance Technique. Actuellement, l'Institut est "self-supporting", le taux de financement pour 55% environ du montant, ce qui fait, et je voudrais qu'on soit clair à ce sujet, que l'ORT Union paie la formation de ce qui correspond précisément à ces cinq ou six élèves dont on a besoin comme enseignants chaque année. Du reste, la formation des autres Juifs qui ont bien droit, mon Dieu, à cette promotion sociale, cette formation elle est payée par l'ensemble des recettes de l'Institut d'Anières.

Mesdames et Messieurs, je vous remets pendant longtemps sur ces problèmes, je ne veux pas le faire. Je veux vous dire simplement ceci: les jeunes Juifs francophones qui au cours de leurs études s'avèrent au dessus de la moyenne et s'avèrent capable, ont le droit d'avoir un diplôme, tout comme ont droit d'avoir un diplôme les élèves, disons entre autres, d'une de nos écoles en Israël. Ce n'est pas seulement les professeurs, c'est la promotion sociale, et ce n'est pas parce que ces élèves n'ont pas la chance d'être israéliens, on doit leur supprimer la manière d'avoir un diplôme. Et quand je dis supprimer le diplôme c'est un fait parce que UNICEF nous a fourni toute la documentation pour les équivalences et il ressort de cette documentation très clairement que la forme de la diplôme qu'on peut avoir à Genève, qui est un diplôme d'ingénieur de plein droit, que ce diplôme a des équivalences dans tous les pays qui nous intéressent, et que de ce fait-là nous pouvons pas envisager simplement comme on a fait avec cette légèreté que je déplore, pour mettre la main sur ces millions que représente l'Institut, du moins c'est à peu près ce à quoi on aboutit comme conclusion, avec cette légèreté on se dit, on se contente de dire, on fera nos instructeurs, que ça lèse de élèves juifs francophones, aucun importance, nous voulons les millions, que ça lèse ces élèves qui ailleurs n'ont pas la possibilité d'entrer dans une grande école, ces élèves qui auront leur diplôme à Genève et qui ailleurs ne l'auront pas, ils ont le droit d'avoir ce diplôme. Et je ne voudrais pas que l'ORT s'abaisse à dire parce que l'Institut peut être estimé à quelques millions de francs suisses, qu'on peut le vendre, que pas à cause de ça on

supprime l'Institut d'Anières voulu par Syngalowski et dont notre ami Nathan Gould, Executive Director du Women's American ORT, a encore dit "we feel deeply that such a central institute as an organ of World ORT Union serves many, many purposes which are vital both to the Director of the World Union as such and to the many unique services it can render in teacher training and also as a laboratory for the development of the concept of methodologies of technical education. Women's American ORT has no reason to alter this view." Je voudrais le dire très haut et très clair, nous savons que l'Institut est un lieu de coordination pour l'ensemble du réseau de l'ORT. Nous savons que les élèves juifs de France, de Maroc, ont le droit de faire une promotion quand ils sortent avec un CAP d'une école de l'ORT, ils ont ce droit. Ne leur enlevez pas ce droit, en simplifiant les problèmes, et en disant il suffit de fermer l'Institut. Conclusion: je voudrais qu'en tout cas, on renonce à ne pas engager des élèves pour l'année qui vient. Nous avons déjà des engagements, les places sont réservées, on ne peut pas les arrêter. Je voudrais que l'on décide, que pour cette année, rien n'est changé, et qu'en attendant, une étude sérieuse soit faite pour dire par quoi on va remplacer cet Institut, parce qu'il est facile de dire, on fera autre chose, et moi je n'ai rien vu de sérieux, et je voudrais que l'étude soit faite avant que l'on prenne une décision qui peut être définitive et qui serait déplorable.

(Applause).

Shelley Appleton: Mr de Toledo, there is no intention on the part of the Administrative Committee or anybody who was involved in those discussions to simplify what is we agree an enormously complex and emotion-laden problem. I will exercise my Chairman's prerogative and take this item out