

Women's American ORT Efforts For Hatikvah Drop Outs Gains Momentum

Women's American ORT's efforts to focus greater attention on helping young drop-outs in the poverty stricken Hatikvah quarter of Tel Aviv to return to school and gain useful trades are gaining momentum in the organization's 1300 chapters from coast to coast. This was announced by Ger-

trude S. White, National President of Women's American ORT, at the organization's headquarters in New York City.

This intensive campaign is being mounted to help Israel harness the invaluable potential of its most precious resource - the human. Among the ORT-Israel schools which cope with the special problems of young people who cannot be absorbed into a regular school or work situation is Beth Yehoshua, located in the Hatikvah quarter of Tel Aviv.

Typical of the students who attend this special school, which seeks out its potential students in their homes, is Ari, who is 15-1/2 years old. He is a pleasant, shy youngster from a very poor home in a run-down neighborhood of Jaffa. His father died when he was a very small child, leaving Ari's mother and six brothers destitute.

Ari spent many years of his young life floundering before reaching Beth Yehoshua several months ago. He was sent there by a court order, in coordination with the decision of a probation officer, instead of being sent to jail. Beth Yehoshua aims at restoring Ari's self-image and finding a productive and rewarding place in society for him.

Ari likes his chosen trade, which is carpentry. In fact, he likes everything about Beth Yehoshua - the teachers, the atmosphere, and above all, the principal.

Says Ari: "Beth Yehoshua's principal is completely different from any principal I ever knew. He is firm and does not readily give in. At first, I wanted to quit school, but he refused to hear of it and something in his manner made me listen to him and stay. I am tremendously happy that I did."

Another student at Beth Yehoshua is Shlomo, who is 17. He is a buoyant lad, one of a family of nine, in the poorest of circumstances. The Ministry of Social Welfare referred him to Beth Yehoshua after he had wandered from one school to another. At this school he feels he really belongs. He says: "Here I find many students who have the same kind of problems and who come from similar backgrounds. We understand each other on the deepest levels and so we help each other and get along." Shlomo is studying electricity and hopes soon to be a qualified electrician and out earning his own living.

Mrs. White said that the special atmosphere, curriculum and methodology at Beth Yehoshua aim at "entirely remolding its students so that they are able to get a new perspective on themselves as individuals, students and citizens and to be integrated fully into the mainstream of Israeli society."

ORT, the vocational and technical education program of the Jewish people, has been in operation since 1880. Over two million people have been trained by ORT since its inception. Today, the international ORT network is comprised of some 800 vocational and technical schools located in two dozen countries on five continents with an annual student enrollment in excess of 100,000, 75,000 of whom study in Israel. The Bramson ORT Technical Institute in New York City and ORT's recent entry into the Jewish Day School movement in Florida are bringing ORT's experience and know-how to the American scene. Women's American ORT, founded in 1927, is the largest of groups in 40 nations which support the global ORT program.

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