

News Digest

4 Central Street

Millers Falls, Massachusetts 01349

No. 10

May, 1968

EXPERTS ON LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION CONFER IN INDIANA

BLOOMINGTON CONFERENCE COVERS MANY ASPECTS OF ESPERANTO: Specialists in language, education, and other fields, gathering at Indiana University during the April 19-21 weekend for a conference on the teaching of Esperanto and its literature, exchanged information and ideas in an exciting and productive series of lectures, panel discussions, workshops, and demonstrations. The conference was sponsored by JEN and by the Esperanto Society at Indiana University. Most sessions took place in the attractive and comfortable facilities of the Indiana Memorial Union on the university's main campus in Bloomington.

THE FRIDAY PROGRAM FEATURED a panel discussion of "Esperanto Literature --Perspectives for the Future." The panelists were Prof. Joseph Schraibman, a specialist on Spanish literature and the teaching of literature; Prof. Margaret Sheviak, a library scientist specializing in children's materials; and Duncan Charters, preceptor in Spanish language and literature instruction--all of Indiana University--and Prof. Humphrey Tonkin, of the Department of English of the University of Pennsylvania. One of the topics receiving most attention was the information and supply problems unique to the dissemination of Esperanto literature with its worldwide public. Panelists also drew intriguing parallels between the literary development of Esperanto and that of certain East European languages. Much attention, too, was paid to distortion of meaning resulting from translation, and to the possibility that Esperanto, as an international language comparatively free from national cultural bias, might be highly suited to the communication of information about one culture to members of another.

ALSO ON FRIDAY, the participants toured the language laboratories of Indiana University, which with 190 student consoles and a library of ten thousand different tapes claim to be the largest in the United States. The members of the conference became students for an hour and practiced a dialog recorded on one of the instructional tapes of the *Modern Esperanto* course materials being developed



INDIANA CONFERENCE on teaching of Esperanto and its literature

Panelists listen to a point by Duncan Charters in discussion of future of Esperanto literature

From left--Joseph Schraibman, Jonathan Pool (moderator), Margaret Sheviak (partially hidden), Humphrey Tonkin, Duncan Charters

at the university. Then the conferees gathered for an informal discussion on "Esperanto as an Introduction to Language Study," in which many ideas were put forward for research to close the knowledge gap which participants agreed is very wide on this topic. Friday evening Professor Tonkin gave a lecture on "Esperanto Today," in which he outlined the current state of Esperanto and its literature, taking to task several eminent personages, including Margaret Mead and William Benton, for their erroneous and ethnocentric public statements on Esperanto or the international language problem.

THE SATURDAY SESSIONS BEGAN with a discussion of modern approaches to language teaching and their application to Esperanto between Duncan Charters, who is also the author of the *Modern Esperanto* materials, and Prof. Daniel Quilter, a specialist in Spanish literature and in language teaching methodology at Indiana University. Charters held that the unusual structure of Esperanto requires some modifications in the application of the audio-lingual principles described and endorsed by Professor Quilter. On Saturday afternoon the conference participants broke up into two groups to discuss problems of teacher training and introduction of Esperanto into schools, and problems of student motivation and teaching methodology. Later, Charters demonstrated his *Modern Esperanto* course methods to the conferees in a special observation room equipped with a one-way window. At the end of the hour, the students in the experiment, who had known no Esperanto prior to the class, were engaging in a considerable range of controlled conversation.

REPORTS from the two discussion groups were heard and the demonstration class was evaluated later Saturday afternoon in a session chaired by Prof. Howard French, head of the German Section of the Southern Illinois University Department of Foreign Languages. Then Dr. E. James Lieberman, a psychiatrist and the Chief of the Center for Studies of Child and Family Mental Health of the National Institute of Mental Health, Washington, D. C., gave a talk on "Psychological Aspects of Learning Esperanto." Lieberman speculated on ways in which learning Esperanto might affect one's sense of mastery and possession differently from the learning of other languages. He also commented on psychological reasons why Esperanto might belong to the family of notoriously under-researched "taboo topics" of the behavioral sciences such as sex, suicide, and extra-sensory perception.

POETRY IN ESPERANTO formed the main topic for Saturday evening's discussions. Professor Tonkin analyzed two translations of Andrew Marvell's famous poem, "To His Coy Mistress," pointing out the pitfalls and problems confronting translators into Esperanto, especially of works from earlier historical periods. Mr. Charters concentrated on Eugen Michalski's *Ajno*, an impressive work by an Esperanto poet of the twenties. The poem is remarkable for its conciseness and its impressionistic technique.

THE CONFERENCE ENDED on Sunday morning with a lecture on the topic of "Standard Pronunciation in Esperanto" by Eleanor Higginbottom, teaching associate in linguistics at Indiana University. Her talk considered the meaning of the term "standard," the trends in the definition of standard consonant sounds and of intonation in Esperanto, and the forces for increasing and decreasing uniformity. There was also a discussion about the costs and benefits of teaching strict standard pronunciation from the beginning vs. relying largely on the social forces encountered by the speaker.

IN AN INFORMAL WIND-UP DISCUSSION among participants, agreement was expressed that the conference had been highly rewarding, thanks especially to the detailed preparations made by Mr. Charters, who acted as conference secretary. A conference report will be prepared shortly, and those who are interested may also acquire tape recordings of the panel discussion, the session on teaching methods, and the lecture on standard pronunciation. Write to JEN for information on these materials.

SOVIETS PUSHING ESPERANTO RESEARCH: According to an article in the April 27 - May 4 issue of *Moscow News*, Soviet scientists are conducting research on Esperanto under the auspices of the interlinguistic section of the Institute of Linguistics and the Esperanto sub-section of the Council for Cybernetics (both in the USSR Academy of Sciences) and under the Academies of Sciences of the Union Republics, as well as in various international organizations. A 536-page Russian-Esperanto dictionary was published in 1966, and the article reports a "bigger dictionary is now being prepared." Esperanto dictionaries are also being compiled in Estonian and other languages of the USSR, according to the article.

LANGUAGE BARRIERS VEX OFFICIALS: The *Wall Street Journal* on April 1 reported that one European official of the World Bank "bristles . . . at the fact that English is the only official language. 'Some of the staff sit mute in the meetings,' he says, because they aren't competent enough in English to carry on a technical discussion." In Belgium, the UPI on April 22 reported the consent of Leo Collard to try to form a new government, replacing the one that fell in the midst of that country's language crisis, and commented, "His chances of success appeared slim because he speaks only French."

COMING UP

TARRAGONA DEADLINE NEAR: All applications for participation in this year's congress of TEJO, the world organization of young Esperanto speakers, must be submitted by the end of June. Several new events, including a visit to a big champagne winery, have been added to what was already the varied program of the congress. The meeting will take place from July 27 to August 3 in Tarragona, Spain. Information about participation and about group flight possibilities is available from JEN.

SEMINARS PLANNED IN SCANDINAVIA: The Swedish organization of young Esperanto speakers is planning a three-day international seminar on "Societies and Groups" for late June. In Finland, the cultural festival of the university city Jyvaskyla, which will take place during the first half of July, will include this year among its varied programs one on Esperanto, featuring lectures on the language problem in Africa and on linguistic discrimination. Also, the widely known International High School in Helsingor, Denmark, has added Esperanto to its curriculum. More information on these seminars and courses is available from JEN.

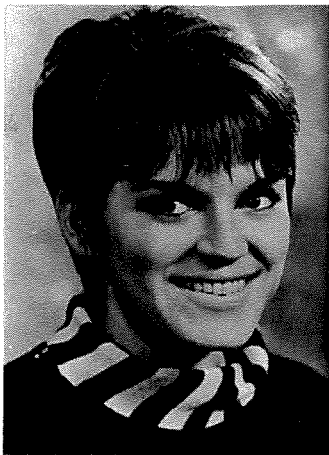
PUBLICATIONS

PLENA ILUSTRITA VORTARO AWAITS ADVANCE ORDERS: The manuscript of the *Plena Ilustrita Vortaro* (complete illustrated dictionary), whose publication will satisfy a need felt since the earliest days of the international language, has recently been finished and is ready for printing. The volume will encompass 1600 pages, three times as many as the *Plena Vortaro de Esperanto* (compiled in 1934), whose successor it will be as the definitive dictionary of Esperanto. Printing, however, cannot begin until and unless 2000 advance orders, guaranteeing payment of up to \$19 each, have been received (the price will be reduced if enough orders are received to increase the printing). Write to JEN for information about how you can place an advance order and thereby help ensure the publication of this monumental work.

BOOK AND RECORD SPECIALS: The Esperanto Book Center and the West Coast Esperanto Book Service (addresses on p. 4) have announced a reduction to \$5.25 in the price of the hit record *Jen Nia Mondo* (previously \$5.75) and a special price (for E.L.N.A. and JEN members) of \$4.50 (list price \$6.00) for Marjorie Boulton's biography, *Zamenhof, Creator of Esperanto*.

TO INFORM YOU . . .

- CALIF. TEACHERS ASSN. JOURNAL: May issue has article on Esperanto. Copies available from E.I.C. (West) for 35¢.
- WORKCAMPs: Yugoslavia will have Esperanto camp next summer. Info from JEN.
- MARIO PEI: Esperanto speakers on S.F. Peninsula dined with him on April 18.
- BUDDING WRITERS: You can compete for the *Nova Talento* cup in fine arts contest at any world Esperanto congress. JEN has details.
- NAVAJO INDIANS: Tribe headquarters library has acquired Esperanto books.
- CANADIAN ESPERANTO CONGRESS: Meets June 29-30 in Toronto.
- CAN YOU DRAW? *La Praktiko*, international popular magazine, needs volunteer artist. Write to JEN for information.
- ARGENTINA: Youth Esperanto groups formed in Buenos Aires and Cordoba, youth magazine in Esperanto planned.
- AMERICAN SOCIETY OF GEOLINGUISTICS: 3 JEN members took part May 4 in Chicago chapter panel discussion of language diversity and its solutions.



NEWS FROM JEN

"LET'S BE FRIENDS!" This is Magdelana Nagy, a single, 22-year-old working girl in the city of Pecs in southern Hungary. She has been studying the international language Esperanto for 5 months and now wants to find a pen-pal in the United States. Magdelana is an avid reader, and she likes to dance and play the guitar. She plays tennis and handball. She also collects stamps, postcards, and boys. She writes: *"Bonvolu skribi detale pri vi kaj la viaj. Mi atendas senpacience vian respondon."*

Would you like to make friends with Magdelana? You can get her address (and the addresses of many others around the world who want to correspond with Americans in Esperanto) from the International Correspondence Service of JEN (address below).

IMPORTANT ADDRESSES

INFORMATION CENTER, ESPERANTO LEAGUE (E.I.C.)
Room 821, 156 5th Avenue, New York, New York 10010
ESPERANTO INFORMATION CENTER (WEST COAST E.I.C.)
410 Darrell Road, Hillsborough, California 94010
ESPERANTO BOOK CENTER
Room 822, 156 5th Avenue, New York, New York 10010
WEST COAST ESPERANTO BOOK SERVICE
2129 Elizabeth Street, San Carlos, California 94070

HOW TO WRITE TO JEN

Write about membership, subscription, and other matters not mentioned below to:
JEN, c/o Arthur Morse, Secretary
4 Central Street, Millers Falls, Massachusetts 01349
Order the Research Bibliography (25¢ for JEN members, 50¢ for others) from:
Francis R. Lanzone, Jr., Treasurer
2129 Elizabeth Street, San Carlos, California 94070
Send inquiries about corresponding with Esperanto to:
JEN Correspondence Service, c/o Miss Ellen A. Lewis
15 Salisbury Road, Brookline, Massachusetts 02146
Send material for the *News Digest* and inquiries about JEN's Esperanto correspondence course to Jonathan Pool, Editor and Course Director
377 International House, 1414 East 59th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637

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4 Central Street
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