

ELNA NEWSLETTER

NEWS OF THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM AND ESPERANTO AS A SOLUTION

Published by the Esperanto League for North America, Late Summer, 1973, Vol. IX, No. 2.
Editor: R.T. Sandberg, P.O. Box 275, Fox Lake, IL 60020, U.S.A.

AWARENESS OF LANGUAGE BARRIERS is becoming more acute among U.S. business firms as more of them send men to foreign lands. They are finding that the cost of training the personnel they send to a foreign country in the language of that country is high, but not nearly as high as the cost of not doing so. A story on page 20 of *The Wall Street Journal* for August 20, 1973, cites "the case of one aerospace company that lost more than \$500,000 recently when it closed a project in which 35 families were sent to the Middle East to train Arab aircraft technicians. The Americans, who spoke only English, simply couldn't communicate with the Arabs, who spoke only Arabic." The same story reports that "When a big Midwestern manufacturer bought into a Brazilian company early this year, it hastily dispatched three of its top technicians to shore up the sluggish Latin outfit. The American concern was in such a hurry that it didn't even teach its men or their families Portuguese, the language of Brazil. The results were disastrous. The American experts couldn't communicate with the Brazilian workers, and production started falling off. Their families, isolated by the language barrier and new culture, couldn't adjust; two of the marriages started falling apart, and the husbands put in for transfers back to the U.S. After six months, the company concluded that the two 'just couldn't operate' in Brazil, and they're now heading back home. The third family belatedly is enrolled in Portuguese classes."

One result of the spreading new language-barrier awareness is that corporate spending generally for foreign language instruction is zooming upward. To continue quoting from *The Wall Street Journal* story: "American University's Business Council for International Understanding Institute reports that corporate requests for language training there have increased tenfold in two years. In Phoenix, the Thunderbird Graduate School of International Manage-

ment expects 65 executives to take its 'Key Man' intensive language course this year; that's up 50% from last year's enrollment and nearly three times the 1971 level. And a spokesman at the Berlitz Schools of Languages of America Inc., a unit of Macmillan Co., says language training for corporate executives has risen from a negligible level 20 years ago to make up well over half its present business....Berlitz.....has language contracts with more than half the 3,200 U.S. companies doing business abroad, and it's wooing the 1,500 foreign businesses with interests in America. The Inlingua Schools of Languages—a chain that was formed six years ago and that now has more than 130 branches—says its New York office alone has signed 20 companies to language contracts in a little over a year...Lessons usually run \$10 to \$12 apiece, and the cost of bringing a couple to fluency can exceed \$3,000. But that's significantly less than the losses some companies have racked up because their foreign-based executives couldn't speak the language."

One solution to the problem of the aerospace company might have been one of which both the company and the author of the *WSJ* story are unaware: namely, the training of both groups—both the American technicians and the Arab trainees—in the language Esperanto, which is much easier to learn than either English or Arabic, before bringing them together. An intensive three-month course in Esperanto taken by both groups—the Arabs taught by a native speaker of Arabic and the Americans by a native speaker of English—would probably have resulted in far more effective communication between the two groups than a full year's intensive training by one in the other's language. Esperanto's rules of grammar have no exceptions and can easily be learned in one day. Thereafter, the only problems are practice and building a vocabulary. Even the vocabulary-building is simplified by a system

of prefixes and suffixes. And in spite of its comparative simplicity, Esperanto is fully capable of expressing anything any other language can express.

The reason international corporations do not take advantage of this deliberately created language—this tool that could save them a great deal of money—is probably the fact that in most cases they are completely unaware of its existence or have rejected its claims as being too good to be true without having put them to any sort of test. This in spite of the fact that Esperanto has had practically every really great work of world literature translated into it and is spoken and written as a second language by thousands of people in every part of the world who enthusiastically attest to its effectiveness.

Members of practically all the major professions around the world have their own Esperanto societies. People have been made to feel at home in very foreign cultural surroundings because of a mutual knowledge of Esperanto. Members of the *Universala Esperanto-Asocio*, the largest single Esperanto organization in the world, regularly communicate with distant countries and request services of an international network of "delegates" by means of Esperanto. This has been going on for 80 years, and to an Esperantist a repetition of these facts is banal. Yet most of the people in the world are in total ignorance of Esperanto, or do not believe it is a reality. To me—the editor of this newsletter who has been successfully using Esperanto for more than 20 years—this is incredible. May the rest of the world soon come out of its Dark Age and discover the nonpolitical tool of international communication that Esperanto provides.

PRESIDENT E. JAMES LIEBERMAN has issued the following report on the recent progress of Esperanto and recent ELNA activities:

In the United States, there were a number of major Esperanto events in

1972: the World Congress in Portland, Oregon, the publication of two new Esperanto self-teaching methods equipped with tape cassette or LP record; excellent newspaper articles, most notably those in the *New York Times* (August 5) and the *Christian Science Monitor* (August 16); and an Esperanto seminar for the first time at the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association in New York City. ELNA had a booth at that meeting and the newly revised and printed bibliography *Esperanto and International Language Problems* by Humphrey Tonkin was first distributed at that time.

ELNA services to members have included the *Newsletter* edited by Richard Sandberg and a *Bulteno* edited by Eric Felker and Charles Power (Karl Pov). We are indebted to these individuals for generous donation of their time and energy; ELNA pays only for printing and postage costs. ELNA members have also been well served by Cathy and William Schulze, who have devoted most hours of most of their days to running an excellent book service and information center. They plan to transfer the book service to Frank Helmuth by the end of the year. There is not space here to detail the accomplishments of numerous ELNA members, regional groups and committees. Reports from officers of the Estraro and committees will appear at a later date.

POLICY ISSUES

PUBLICATIONS: Besides the *Newsletter* and the *Bulteno*, members also receive one international Esperanto periodical and additional items, i.e., the *ELNA Directory* and the *Tonkin Bibliography*. It is important that members receive quality products in order that they be well informed, remain members and recruit others. There has been much discussion over the years about the type of periodicals ELNA should issue. I now propose that the *Newsletter* and *Bulteno* be combined and issued quarterly in an eight-page format (Dorothy Holland's bulletin for the Esperanto teachers is an excellent model of the bilingual approach). In addition, ELNA should issue an annual compilation of articles, translations, poems, etc. in Esperanto at a level worthy of international circulation. We have the resources within ELNA to do this. I would like to hear from members who wish to help in this area, who can edit,

write well in English and Esperanto, and who would like to undertake translations into Esperanto, or write original articles. (Eric Felker has had to resign due to other commitments.)

MEETINGS: This year we attempted to arrange a tour to fly at group rates to Belgrade. A nice brochure was prepared by Garber Travel Service in Brookline, Massachusetts, which was circulated to ELNA members and others including over 300 subscribers to the Sociolinguistics Newsletter. Although 80 Americans had registered for the Belgrade Congress, less than 10 signed up for the tour, which was too few. (Perhaps the SAT Congress in Toronto was a competing factor.) It is now planned to have an official ELNA business meeting in Chicago to coincide with the Modern Language Association convention between Christmas and New Year. Many ELNA members and officers—but not all—feel that a major ELNA meeting every other summer will suffice and that too much energy and money should not be expended for annual meetings. We should encourage more regional activities which are less expensive but equally valuable for local media coverage. People who might otherwise travel considerable distances for a summer ELNA meeting may save their money and participate more often in International Esperanto Congresses. Although December in Chicago may be an awkward time, the MLA meeting brings some of our most talented experts together, an important drawing card for ELNA members who want to improve their knowledge and command of the international language.

BUDGET: The annual budget of approximately \$5,000 represents dues income (usually \$8.00) from over 600 members. For discussion purposes, I suggest that no more than half be spent for publications and information, 25% for advertising and recruitment, and 25% for administration. I would like to see ads in such places as *World Magazine* and *New Republic*; perhaps also the *Journal* of the National Education Association.

I am looking forward to hearing from members in response to these ideas and to receiving your ideas for improving the quality and quantity of activity on behalf of Esperanto in the United States.

THE WORLD CONGRESS

of the *Universala Esperanto-Asocio* in

Belgrade was greeted in the name of the Esperanto League for North America by Virginia Bartmess of Portland, Oregon. Ken Thomson of Texas took the place of William Schulze as a committee member from ELNA. Jonathan Pool, a faculty member of the State University of New York at Stony Brook who has been studying political science in Germany this summer, attended the congress and has sent us the following personal report:

Over 1500 speakers of Esperanto from all over the world gathered in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, during the week of July 28 to August 4 for the 58th annual World Esperanto Congress. Like most big conventions, this one was many different things for the very different people who showed up.

For some, it was the first opportunity to hear and speak "live" Esperanto after a period of studying the international language alone. For others, it was a reunion with old friends, accumulated over years of conventioning and traveling—two things that Esperanto speakers tend to do a lot of.

For many, the convention was a place for teaching or learning—or both. Professors gave Esperanto lectures on their specialties in international law, astrophysics, transportation economics, marine biology, philology, and other fields. Folk music and folk dance troupes introduced the conventioners to the variety of Yugoslavia's regional cultures. Full-day excursions into other parts of Yugoslavia illuminated some of the diversity of the scenery, the architecture, and the daily life of that country.

For still others, the congress was a place to do their business. A book dealer unloaded Esperanto literature all through the week like it was going out of style. Newspapermen and broadcast journalists gathered stories about the amazing phenomenon of factory workers, housewives, students, civil servants, and other ordinary-type people from about forty countries holding an international convention with no interpreters. An American social scientist and a Polish graduate student conducted interviews for a study of "intergroup differences in the assessment of linguistic competence." The stamp collectors, computer experts, postal workers, and many other interest groups among the congress participants held

meetings to discuss their special problems. The "Esperantocrats," the people who manage the far-flung network of organizations devoted to promoting the language and serving its speakers, met to resolve organizational problems and play movement-politics. And diplomats did their best to create goodwill for their countries among the Esperanto-speaking public.

The "best" of some diplomats was better than the "best" of others, however. Among the fifteen or so who made it up on Sunday morning to participate in the official opening ceremony, the representative of the U.S. Embassy stole the show, to the surprise of most at the congress. Edmund Bator, the Embassy's First Secretary for Cultural Affairs, studied Esperanto pronunciation over an early breakfast and then addressed the convention entirely in Esperanto, to the repeated long applause of the audience. Bator's encouraging words, in English translation, were:

"A funny thing happened to me on the way to this meeting—I learned how to 'speak' a new language in only ten minutes!

"More seriously, however, I would like to express appreciation for the amount of time and dedication that all of you are giving to international understanding through a common language. Many Americans learned of your efforts last year for the first time when our country hosted this congress in Portland Oregon. I am glad to see that this year over a hundred Americans are registered at the congress in Belgrade.

"Governments alone cannot create understanding and good will among nations. Efforts like yours to improve people-to-people contacts are necessary. So I am glad to see you continuing your important work. And on behalf of the U.S. Embassy I'd like to welcome the American participants to Belgrade. Thank you."

Later in the week, staff members of the Embassy gave a briefing to about fifty of the Americans attending the congress.

The new era of cooperation instead of confrontation was evident in the deliberations of the congress. Esperanto speakers, like all other organized groups, have plenty of conflicts and factional cleavages. But this year harmony was in the air. Many delegates referred to the Conference on European Security and Co-

operation as helping create an international climate in which Esperanto can hope to play an important part. And as contrasted with a few years earlier, the old East-West lines no longer governed agreements and disagreements in Belgrade. A Polish delegate was seen rising to oppose a motion offered by another Polish delegate; an American rose to withdraw his own motion in favor of a competing motion of a Bulgarian delegate. Such was the picture this year—something that had long been advocated by the Esperanto movement as an ideal but rarely realized by the Esperantists themselves. In this atmosphere, a new long-range action plan was adopted after years of wrangling. And in a surprising display of solidarity the two sides of the generation gap—probably Esperanto's most serious split—agreed on a new, more intimate association between the youth branch of the movement and the main organization. If this fusion doesn't prove permanent—well, nobody said Esperanto cures old age!

(Fortunately, many who have grown old in years and in body have never been afflicted with old age in any other way—Ed.)

THE SAT WORLD CONGRESS

was held in Toronto, Canada, during the same week the UEA Congress was taking place in Belgrade. Most Esperantists know that "SAT" stands for "Senaciacca Asocio Tutmonda" ("Whole World Without-nation-ness Association" is about as close as one can come in English translation). Headquartered in Paris, it among Esperanto organizations has been most closely associated with the international labor movement. It is best known among non-members as the organization that has sponsored the compilation and publication of the definitive Esperanto dictionary, the *Plena Ilustrita Vortaro* (the Full Illustrated Dictionary).

Much smaller than the UEA Congress with about 200 participants, the SAT Congress attracted a higher percentage of Americans (about 30), probably because of its more convenient location as far as they were concerned. Participants from France were the most numerous at the congress (the French had expertly organized a round-trip charter flight).

Although many Esperantists belong to both organizations, the average SAT member tends to have viewpoints slightly more to the left than the average UEA member. Some SAT members feel that UEA congress proceedings do not allow a free enough discussion of ideas.

Mark Starr of Long Island City, New York, represented Local 189 of the American Federation of Teachers. Here, translated from the original Esperanto, are his remarks at the opening session:

I greet the congress in the name of the Labor Education Department, Local 189, in the important AFT (AFL-CIO).

Here is its Resolution, unanimously accepted April 4, 1973: "Whereas more nations are beginning to rebel against the culture-colonialism of the great world powers; and whereas it is a dangerous illusion to anticipate that 3-4 billion persons will be required to speak English; and whereas the multinational corporation makes necessary, more than ever before, reciprocal intercomprehension and solidarity in labor-union activity; and whereas at the present time the new labor government in Australia, members of the British Parliament and members of other parliaments to a greater extent support the international language, already supported by outstanding individuals such as Willi Brandt, Franz Jonas (cofounder of SAT) and Victor Reuther: Therefore let it be decided that Local 189 supports Esperanto as the one non-national language for all mankind and sends its strong and warm greeting to the SAT Congress in Toronto and gives its delegate a mandate to participate in the inaugural meeting."

I am proud to be that delegate, especially because I at first thought that our Toronto colleagues had more courage than wisdom in taking the risk of staging the first SAT Congress on this continent. Now I think they have a full measure of wisdom and competence as well as courage.

When Zamenhof himself in 1910 attended the first World Esperanto Congress in the U.S.A. (it was the sixth worldwide), he eloquently praised the "land of liberty." He was a humanist, not a Zionist, and he asserted that nationalism becomes chauvinism for the powerful countries and a danger for the small. Certainly Lanti more clearly acknowledged the danger of nationalism. He did not forget that America consists of Canada to the north and very impor-

tant countries to the south, as well as the U.S.A. Unfortunately, he died in Mexico and never visited Toronto.

At least in the United States and Canada we have the right to publicly discuss people in high places and evil. (Watergate is a world-famous word.) Hopefully with the help of the AFT in the schools we will be able knowledgeably to discuss the Canadian protest against the economic dictatorship of the United States, the danger in the multinational corporation and the extreme ethnocentricity that looks nostalgically to the past instead of working for a rational world and marching forward with the help of Esperanto!

ARTHUR BROOKS BAKER, a speaker of Esperanto for 67 years, died last May in Santa Barbara, California, in his 96th year.

Within a year after learning Esperanto in 1906, Mr. Baker wrote and pub-

lished a brochure entitled *The Elements of Esperanto* and founded the *Amerika Esperantisto*, the first Esperanto periodical in the U.S.A. Also among his works is the excellent text, *The American Esperanto Book*. In 1909 at the World Esperanto Congress in Barcelona, he invited the participants to the 1910 World Esperanto Congress in Washington, D.C. At the age of 94, he attended the World Esperanto Congress in London. He made his last public appearance when he spoke at the California Esperanto Conference in Santa Barbara last April. He never waivered in his belief that Esperanto will someday be a language spoken fluently by every educated person in the world. May he rest in peace.

ELNA CONGRESS

hotel reservations may be made through R. Kent Jones, 3318 N. Lake Shore Dr. No. 801, Chicago, Illinois 60657. The

dates are December 27th through December 29th. The Modern Language Association meeting in Chicago during the same period means we will be able to call on many language experts to address our evening sessions. The Esperanto Society of Chicago may hold its Zamenhof Banquet in conjunction with the congress.

BALLOTS

for the election of a treasurer and three members of the Board of Directors will be mailed to all ELNA members in September.

READ

in the next issue of the Esperanto-language *ELNA-Bulteno* about the results of Dr. John Lewine's talks with educational, library, club and trade association officials in Chicago last June regarding Esperanto. In the same issue, read about the June-July seminars on the translation of Esperanto technical terms. This issue will be sent in September.

ESPERANTO MAGAZINES! In the past, a single agency for the Esperanto magazines being published throughout the world has not been available—a situation that often forced the prospective subscriber to send money to multiple addresses or forget about subscribing to most of them. The result has been a distressingly small readership for many interest-packed Esperanto periodicals.

Effective immediately, we will provide the following services for you:

1. Place new orders (without traditional restrictions as to calendar year).
2. Order renewals and notify publishers of changes of address.
3. Refund your money in the event of non-delivery.

Our prices will be as low as is consistent with the work and risks involved. This includes postal difficulties, currency conversion, taxes, price changes, dollar devaluation and cessations of publication.

Request our order form and price list for 78 periodicals from 26 countries.



R. Kent Jones, Mgr.
Esperanto Language Service Company
3318 N. Lake Shore Drive, No.801
Chicago, Illinois 60657

ESPERANTO LEAGUE FOR NORTH AMERICA

Post Office Box 275
Fox Lake, Illinois 60020, U.S.A.

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Fox Lake, Ill.
Permit No.32

Address Correction Requested
Return Postage Guaranteed

NEWS PLEASE EXPEDITE