

ELNA UPDATE

Esperanto League for North America, Inc • Box 1129, El Cerrito, CA 94530 • (415) 653-0998

Issue 1, 1991

WORLD LANGUAGE & WORLD LANGUAGE PROBLEMS

Fatal Language Problems

- In Chicago, a German symphony conductor had a heart attack during a performance. Medication was delayed an hour while searching for an interpreter.
- An Italian ship sunk after being rammed by a Swedish ship. Language confusion contributed to the accident, and also prevented rescue of many Italians.
- A Chinese man in Illinois was confined in an insane asylum for decades because nobody could understand him.
- Unable to read warnings in Spanish, 6,000 Iraqis died and 100,000 were crippled from eating seed wheat which had been treated with insecticide.
(Extracted from "An Outrageous Situation Which Our Leaders Ignor" which appeared in "Saluton" the newsletter of the Esperanto Society of Chicago, Jan.Feb. 1990)

Esperanto – A Dangerous Language in Iraq

According to "Franca Esperantisto", an Iraqi Esperantist was imprisoned for several years simply for speaking Esperanto. After being let out of prison on the condition that he never teach the language he fled to Kuwait. Unfortunately the french magazine did not reveal if he made it out of Kuwait before Iraqs invasion.

The book by Ulrich Lins, "La Danĝera Lingvo" (The Dangerous Language) is soon to go into its second edition and is an excellent resource for information about the discrimination speakers of Esperanto have suffered from its very beginning. This book is available through the ELNA Book Service. (Franca Esperantisto, Nov. 1990)

Puerto Rico Senate Votes For Spanish

Dealing a blow to Puerto Rico's statehood movement, legislators overwhelmingly approved a bill making Spanish the sole official language of this Caribbean island of 3.6 million inhabitants.

The bill revokes the Official Languages Act of 1902, which designated both English and Spanish as the languages of the commonwealth government's business. The new law will make Spanish the only official language.

Fewer than 25 percent of Puerto Ricans are fully bilingual in Spanish and English, and opponents of the Spanish-only measure said it would set back programs to extend English fluency. Statehood advocates claimed that the real purpose of the proposed law is to hurt Puerto Rico's chances of becoming the 51st state. (Extracted from San Francisco Chronicle, 3/6/1991)

French Bungle Bid To Reform Spelling

Prime Minister Michel Rocard sought at first to do French school children a favor when his government proposed removing many irksome accents and anomalies and otherwise taking the kins out of the language.

Rocard reasoned that in the computer age, the French language should be made more orderly so that children could spend less time memorizing illogical spelling rules and more time studying software and superconductors.

He also hoped that the changes would help stem the decline of French worldwide. The French are unhappy that their old bete noire, English, is steadily gaining the upper hand.

Critics say the changes trample on the linguistic roots of Prousts language and fret that there will be a linguistic civil war in which children learn the new rules and parents use the old spellings.

Changes should evolve from usage, they argue, rather than be dictated. "This is a totalitarian measure," said Francois Bayrou, a member of parliament and a leader of the anti-reform movement. (Extracted from the San Francisco Chronicle, Monday, January 28, 1991)

NATIONAL NEWS

U.S. Conferences And Classes

April 5 - 7, 1991. All California Esperanto Conference. The Sand Man Inn. Santa Barbara, CA. Esperanto. For Information, Esperanto-Rondeto de Santa Barbara. 5140 San Lorenzo Dr. Santa Barbara, CA 93111-2521.

July 8 - 13, 1991 – 4th Midwest Esperanto Classes and Conference. Will be conducted in Esperanto and English. For information write to: Sherry Wells, P.O. Box 1338 Royal Oak, Michigan, 48068.(313) 543-5297. (source: Esperanto USA)

July 1 - 19, 1991 – 22nd Annual Summer Esperanto Workshop at San Francisco State University. Come and study Esperanto in one of the worlds most fascinating city. Some partial scholarships available. For more information, write to: Cathy Schulze, 410 Darrell Road, Hillsborough, CA 94101 (415) 342-1796.

July 20 - 25, 1991 – 39th Annual Conference of the Esperanto League for North America. Will be conducted in Esperanto and take place in Raleigh-Durham North Carolina. ELNA members will receive descriptive brochure and registration form with an upcoming issue of ESPERANTO USA. Non-members are requested to write to: ELNA, P.O. Box 1129 El Cerrito, CA 94530 (415) 653-0998

University Of Hartford To Offer Courses In Esperanto

A special one-week Esperanto Institute will be held at the University of Hartford from August 12 to August 17. Elementary and Intermediate level courses will be taught by J.C. Wells, Professor of Phonetics at the University of London and President of the World Esperanto Association. Assisting Professor Wells will be a variety of noted Esperanto speakers, including Dr. Humphrey Tonkin, President of the University of Hartford.

Participants may elect to take either of these courses for non-credit or for credit. The institute will be sponsored by the university's foreign language department. Information about fees and other details may be obtained from Hilda Grossman, Director of Summer Programs, at (203) 243-4401 or by writing to University of Hartford,
West Hartford, Ct. 06117

INTERNATIONAL ESPERANTO NEWS

Four Articles About Esperanto In The Annual Review of the American Society of Geolinguistics

I just received the new year review (1990) of the American Society of Geolinguistics, a society founded by Mario Pei in 1965, whose goal is to collect and distribute up-to-date information about present day languages of the world. I was very happily surprised to see, that among the 14 articles in that issues were four about Esperanto. (adapted from a letter in Esperanto by Cecile Low and published in Novorka Prismo, January 1991)

Esperanto Linguists Hold 9th Conference at United Nations

On the 14th of December, 1990, the main headquarters for the United Nations in New York was again the location for the conference of the Translation Section of the United Nations and the Center for Exploration and Documentation for the World Language Problem (CED), the linguistics branch of the *Universala Esperanto-Asocio*. As clarified by Dr. Humphry Tonkin "Both the Translation Section of the UN and the Esperanto movement are trying to solve in practice the real difficulties of mutual understanding across language barriers." Fifty specialists from the university and translation professions participated.

The theme of the 9th Conference About Language and Communication was "The analysis of content from an international perspective". Dr. Tonkin, the director of the CED and president of the University of Hartford, noted in his introduction the timeliness of the theme, in a world where a more active role is being played by countries outside the European cultural sphere.

The Center for Exploration and Documentation was founded in 1952. It produces one of the main linguistic reviews about language planning, "Language Problems and Language Planning" (publisher John Benamins, Amsterdam), published books and organizes conferences about diverse aspects of international communication. From its beginning, it has worked with the United Nations and its organizations, mainly UNESKO. (*Universala Esperanto-Asocio "Internaciaj Novaĵoj"* - January 9, 1991)

History Note: First Film In Esperanto

The first (in the USA) talking picture in Esperanto was a four-minute film made July 13, 1929, in the Paramount studio, New York City. The actors were Germaine Chomette and Henry W. Hetzel. Donald E. Parrish, secretary for the United States section of the Universal (world) Esperanto Association with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, delivered an address and salutation to accompany the film at the 22nd annual convention of the Esperanto Society of North America. The film was exported to 16 countries. (FAMOUS FIRST FACTS, Joseph Nathan Kane. The H.W. Wilson Company, New York 1981. Page 405. Submitted by Mike Jones)

New Esperantology Institute in Moscow

On the 23rd of December, 1990, the "Instituto de Internacia Komikado" in Moscow, USSR was founded the combined effort of Moscow State University, the Academy of Sciences in the Soviet Union and the Russian Open University. The Institute will focus on the instruction of languages used for international communication, including Esperanto. Special attention will be given to the scientific exploration of Esperanto and its ability to be used for practical uses. (*Universala Esperanto-Asocio "Internaciaj Novaĵoj"* - January 9, 1991)

Rok' Gazet' - 6,000th Magazine in Esperanto?

The latest addition to the world of Esperanto magazines is not only the youngest, but also the most youthful. We're talking about "Rok' Gazet'" a rock music review which is produced by an international group of editors with headquarters in Donneville, France. The first issue was published in February of 1991. For those who believe that rock music exists only in English, its 28 pages of news about Esperanto rock groups will be a big surprise.

"Rok' Gazet'" is the newest in a long line of Esperanto periodicals. Other new arrivals include "Vietnam", an illustrated magazine from the Vietnam Information Agency, which started publication in 1990, and a modest bulletin for academicians about . . . periodicals in Esperanto! Its editor, Dr. Arpad Mathe (Hungary) has recently uncovered the titles of 5,994 diverse reviews, bulletins, etc., which appear in or are about Esperanto. Since that was the number at the the end of September, 1990, we can ask, is "Rok' Gazet'" the 6,000th Esperanto periodical?

Dr. Mathe notes that many of these periodicals are short lived. "According to our research, the average life span is 4.5 years." During the 101-year history of the Esperanto press, every six days one Esperanto periodical has either appeared or disappeared! Often the cause is financial, because the Esperanto movement usually must depend on money from its members to publish and distribute its reviews. The historic first periodical in the language, "la Esperantisto" (1889-1895) died when the Czarist censor forbade subscriptions to it in the Russian Empire.

Today, according to research by Dr. Mathe and his colleagues, more than 500 periodicals exist in Esperanto. Many, of course, are fairly simple bulletins from associations and clubs; but more than 100 have an international readership. Among them, the oldest is the organ for the International Catholic Esperanto Union, "Espero Katolika", which began publication in 1903. The most widely read include the World Esperanto Association's review, "Esperanto", with more than 6,000 subscribers in 100 countries, and "El Popola Ĉinio", a 54-page illustrated magazine about the People's Republic of China, which is published by the Chinese Foreign Language Publishing House. Other very popular magazines include "La espero el Koreujo" from South Korea, "Monato", an international news magazine which is the Esperanto Equivalent of "Time", and "Juna Amiko", a magazine for school children and other young Esperanto learners. Literary, scientific and specialist publications abound, although of course with fewer subscribers. (Extracted from "Internaciaj Novaĵoj", a bulletin of the World Esperanto Association).

1991 ELNA BOOK SERVICE CATALOG

This 26-page catalog details nearly every item available from the ELNA Book Service. Books and materials are conveniently grouped by category. The Book Service catalog is sent to members and "Friends of Esperanto" at no cost.

Non-members should send \$2.00 (check or money order, please) payable to ELNA. Those purchasing the catalog will receive a coupon worth \$2.00 off their next order.

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ELNA Membership Benefits

- ❖ The satisfaction of contributing materially to the propagation of Esperanto in the U.S.A.
- ❖ A bi-monthly newsletter keeping you up to date on issues of importance to Esperantists
- ❖ The quarterly ELNA Update with information on the world language problem and Esperanto as its solution
- ❖ The ELNA Book and Tape Service catalogs and the ELNA Membership List
- ❖ Discounts on most items carried by the ELNA Book and Tape Services

**Non-Member
 "Friend of Esperanto"**

A "Friend of Esperanto" is not a dues-paying member of ELNA, and therefore, not eligible for the regular membership benefits. Instead, a "Friend" offers encouragement to the Esperanto movement by providing financial support. A "Friend" receives:

- ❖ Four issues of the ELNA Update via first-class mail. The ELNA Update keeps you abreast of the world language problem and Esperanto as its solution.
- ❖ A free copy of the year's ELNA Book Service Catalog

ELNA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please show the type of membership or support by an X in the appropriate brackets. All memberships are on a calendar year basis, January 1 - December 31. For items marked (*), we must have your birthdate.

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- [] Friend of Esperanto \$7.50
 (non-member)
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