

TRANSLATION

News

No. 7

JOHNSON, MALIONEK AND YULE WIN SEATS ON ATA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OPEN CAMPAIGNING BY TWO NEWCOMERS SEEN AS SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN SURPRISE VICTORY

Three freelance translators from three different parts of the country won seats on the ATA Board of Directors in an election that was marked by open campaigning by two of the eight candidates. Julie Johnson, a freelance translator from San Francisco, took close to 60% of the votes cast to lead the field. Meerl Yule, a Kansas City-based translator, came in second, with Thomas Malionek of Washington, DC winning the third and last seat. Out of an electorate of some 1350, approximately 592 ballots were cast, with Ms. Johnson getting 353, Ms. Yule 266 and Mr. Malionek 245. Figures for the other candidates were unavailable at press time.

The results were significant in that both Ms. Johnson and Mr. Malionek were relative newcomers to the ATA political scene, and had to go the petition route in order to get on the ballot. While their names had been recommended to the Nominating Committee by ATA directors George Kirby and John Bukacek, the Committee, headed by former ATA President Karl Kummer, nonetheless passed them over. Thus, the election of Johnson and Malionek might be construed somewhat as a rejection of the current ATA administration, in that the chief sponsors of two of the winning candidates have been outspoken critics of certain ATA policies.

Also noteworthy in the election of Ms. Johnson and Mr. Malionek was the open campaigning engaged in by both, with their individual campaigns being evidently well-organized and funded. Ms. Johnson had grass-roots support from the Northern California Translators Association (NCTA), which in a precedent-making move, openly endorsed her candidacy. While Mr. Malionek did not garner the endorsement of any ATA chapter, he too had sufficient organized backing to win the third seat on the Board.

Ms. Yule, the Chairman of the Chapters Committee, who has long been involved in both the national organization and the Mid-America Chapter (MICATA), was apparently well-known and recognized enough to gain second place in the balloting, even without campaigning.

ATA Election Code?

The mailing of campaign literature by Ms. Johnson and Mr. Malionek resurrected a tactic [see "ELECTIONS", Page 4]

Conduct Unbecoming... (?)

ACTIVE CAMPAIGNING BY CANDIDATES HAS HISTORICAL PRECEDENCE IN ATA

The 1990 ATA elections, which saw two candidates for office - Julie Johnson and Thomas Malionek - engage in open campaigning, was not the first time in ATA's 31-year history when candidates actively sought out membership votes. Nonetheless, it has been a tactic that has not necessarily won the favor of ATA officials, although on two occasions, certain officials did resort to campaign tactics, which at the time were characterized as being "right out of the book of a seasoned politician." However, there has been no clear trend of success or failure connected to active vote solicitation.

"Higher with Heyer"

In the 1964 elections, a slate of dissident candidates headed by the late Daniel Van Acker and Renee Pfister, openly solicited the support of the ATA membership by widely distributing campaign literature. Unlike the two candidates of 1990, the Pfister-Van Acker slate posed a united front against the so-called administration candidates, with the consequent result that ATA members basically had a clear choice between two distinct groups of candidates. But the campaigning became even more intense and widespread when an "Independent", Nadine Heyer, joined the fray and distributed buttons with her photograph and the slogan, "Higher with Heyer". To counter the efforts of the pro-Pfister-Van Acker forces, the administration presented its views and platforms not through campaign literature, but by the effective use of ATA publications, although it continued to allow the opposition space in those publications to air its own views.

A Different Environment

The environment of the ATA in the early 60's was far different from what it is in 1990. The membership rolls were naturally much smaller (there were around 500 or so members), but even despite the small numbers, there was far

[see "CAMPAIGNING", Page 4]

FIRST INTERNATIONAL STRIKE OF TRANSLATORS (FIST)

Basic Tactics and Demands

A Fantasy?

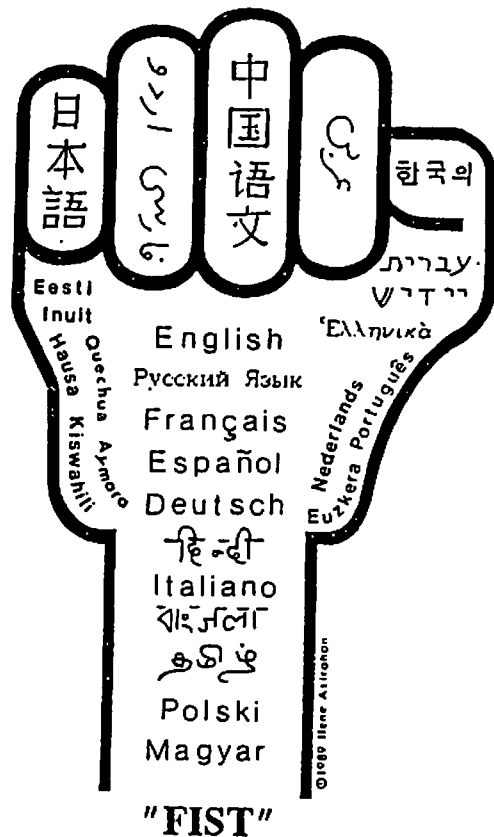
By Alex Gross

This article is at least partly a fantasy. I know all the reasons why the events I am about to describe are unlikely to take place in the near future. I will even examine these reasons in some detail towards the end. But for now let us simply entertain the idea embodied in my title and see where it leads us. Let us imagine that all the professional translators in the world, working in their separate countries in business, science, diplomacy, or even espionage and the military, have in fact come together as a single group and have launched a strike under a single banner, First International Strike of Translators or "FIST," bearing a device something like the one shown here. Let's just assume this has happened or is about to happen. I then have three questions. Who precisely are we, the ones about to go out on strike? Assuming we can answer this and have decided we have something in common, what is it that we would want, what would be our actual demands? A strike—or the threat of one—is of course the classic weapon to resolve grievances, but we must first define what these grievances are and how they might be resolved. And finally, what effects could such a strike possibly have, both for ourselves and for the world beyond us?

Let us begin by talking about who we are, even though we may suppose we know this well enough. First of all, we are people who through birth, study and/or accident have come to be familiar with two or more languages. In all but a few countries this already marks us as unusual. And even in those countries where bilingualism is more accepted, we still stand out because we habitually deal in the detailed process of crossing between our languages and in helping others to do so. In some countries this ability is held in awe, in others it is dismissed as a rote skill and/or a plentiful commodity, and in yet others it is the object of considerable suspicion. In none of these lands, even where translation is more commonplace, is the ability to translate regarded as altogether normal. After all, we translators can actually handle two or more languages, are able to live to some degree in

two or more cultures, and may in fact have two or more loyalties. And in a world of single loyalties, single nationalities and single cultural choices, this marks us as different and also as potentially dangerous. We all know this of course, and we do the best we can to prove our loyalty to the countries and companies which employ us.

But if we are looking for something to unite us in our undertaking, this is certainly a factor worth considering. Whatever our nations, origins or loyalties, it is likely to be something we have in common. We are able to look at two or more different cultural contexts and explain the first in terms of the second and often the second in terms of the first as well. In a world of single loyalties this is a useful skill but also an odd accomplishment, something that marks us both as dull, devoted drones and as potentially divided outsiders.



"FIST"

Such an accomplishment is all the more remarkable in a world where at least some ideological and national distinctions are slowly beginning to blur, blend, perhaps relax a bit. Let's just suppose that some of the internationalist rhetoric we are beginning to hear is actually true, let's imagine that we really are moving into a broader, more multi-cultural world environment. What do we then become? Do we not first and foremost among all human beings bear the

[Continued on Page 3]

"F.I.S.T." [cont'd. from Page 2]

banner of such a change? Could it just possibly turn out that we are pioneers and heroes? If the world's definition of freedom were expanded to embrace being free to know more than one culture, might we not rank rather highly in such a hierarchy of freedom? Is all this also a fantasy, or is it something worth considering? Such is my partial answer to the question "Who are we?"

And now the second question: what is it that we want? Assuming we could get every translator in the world to go out on strike with us, what would we ask as conditions for returning to work? Would we merely insist on the time-honored demand of improvements in pay and working conditions? Would we perhaps add a few clerical caveats on the maximum numbers of words to be translated per hour? Would we express Luddite dismay at the appearance of computers in our midst? Or would we launch some truly powerful salvos on the philosophical and educational level at a world that still fails to understand the true interactive relationship between language and reality? I am appending a tentative list of such demands—as I see them right now—and invite dialogue with readers to expand and refine them.

PROVISIONAL DEMANDS OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL STRIKE OF TRANSLATORS

1. Specific demands concerning pay, working hours, and work conditions, to be formulated cooperatively by an international committee, with possible differences according to specific conditions in various countries and societies.
2. Explicit recognition by all the world's governments of the primacy of the translation process in international communication and a commitment from these governments to ensure, in cooperation with our standing committees, the highest possible standards of translation in all such communication media.
3. A further commitment from the world's governments and universities that they regard language/translation as the major fountainhead of culture and human understanding, and that they realize that knowledge and science are more likely to be seen in the future as a branch of language than language as a branch of knowledge or science.
4. The granting by all countries (or by an international organization) of special passports

for translators, similar to those issued to diplomats, facilitating travel for them in all foreign countries they may wish to visit.

5. Granting translators the option to refuse to translate texts they find morally unacceptable, for example declarations of war, terrorist demands, death threats, statements that one nation or people is intrinsically superior to another, assertions about religious or political systems that are injurious to those holding different views. In such cases, translators would at least have the option of returning these statements to their authors for further thought and redrafting. While this demand may appear radical at first, it in fact reflects a process already at work in some international organizations, where the fine print and fine tuning of international agreements sometimes reaches its final shaping in the hands of translators or results from a cooperative process involving them.

6. Gaining widespread recognition and publicity through national and international bodies for what is at present a barely perceived reality, namely that the quality of a translation is to a great extent dependent on the quality and clarity of the original text. Just as it is rarely possible to make a clear xerox from a fuzzy original unless it is first enhanced, so a poorly conceived and indifferently written original text can be just barely rendered into a foreign language with considerable help from the translator. In practical terms, Adjudicative Committees comprised of translators should be formed to deal with problems arising in this area. In major cases where complaints of an "unfaithful translation" may be lodged, the role of such a committee would be to determine if such complaints are justified or if any truly faithful translation would have been possible in the first place. Where complaints are found to be unjustified, the committee shall be empowered to fine those lodging them for willful abuse of the translator and to require them to bear the expense of such proceedings. Decisions of such a committee shall be binding.

7. The right of translators to function as final advisors on the feasibility and usefulness of all computer-based translation aids and to determine standards on how these will be used in their work. This by no means indicates hostility to such devices among translators, many of whom are actually curious or even excited to learn how such devices can help them in their work. This demand merely confirms two recognized circumstances, that the use of computers in translation is still a relatively new and untried process, and that there is a great deal of misleading information in this field. A computer system may work brilliantly in the hands of its

[See "F.I.S.T.", Page 5]

"ELECTIONS" [cont'd. from Page 1]

last used in the American Translators Association some 26 years ago (see *News Analysis*). Their campaigning raised the question in some quarters as to whether it was in conflict with ATA's election code, which is mentioned in the Association's by-laws. However, it was learned that the election code, although specifically referred to in the by-laws, has never actually been formulated. ATA President Deanna Hammond said that the Board is in fact recommending that the reference to such a code be removed from the by-laws, although she admitted that she had received "several requests" in the week following the mailing of the campaign literature to establish a committee to work on an election code.

Little Change in Board Composition

The election of three freelancers will not, however, significantly alter the current composition of the Board. The body, which is currently composed of 4 staff translators, 1 academic, 2 translation company executives and 6 freelancers, will lose 1 staff translator and gain 1 freelancer, so that there will be 7 freelancers on the 13-member Board after the October Conference. The departure of Mr. Kirby from the Board might ease some of the tensions that have derived from the long-debated agency-freelance relationship, although Mr. Mallonek, in particular, has hinted at some dissatisfaction with current ATA policies affecting freelance translators.

Another source of disagreement between Board members, namely the purported lack of open communication between the Board and the membership, was pointedly addressed by Mr. Mallonek and Ms. Johnson. Ms. Yule, on the other hand, will bring to any sharp policy differences among Board members, her reputation as a conciliator and mediator.

"CAMPAIGNING" [cont'd. from Page 1]

more interest and active participation in the Association's internal affairs. Member apathy, symptomatic of the ATA throughout the mid-1970's and 1980's, had not yet taken hold. Accordingly, the average ATA member of 1964 was far more aware of issues than his or her 1990 counterpart, and the campaigning of that year fell on attentive ears.

Notwithstanding the general acceptance by the membership of open campaigning, several ATA officials, led by Henry Fischbach, at the time a candidate for ATA Vice-President, frowned upon the practice of circularizing members for their votes. Mr. Fischbach characterized the 1964 elections as "reminiscent of local precinct politics." In a revision of the ATA by-laws following the election, Mr. Fischbach and his supporters pressed for the inclusion of language which they felt would curtail open campaigning. The statement, "Mass personal electioneering by mail on the part of any one candidate or group of candidates is unbecoming in a professional society..." was embodied in the by-laws and remained intact until it was removed in a revision made in the early 1980's.

In the late 1970's, some ATA officials engaged in a kind of "counter-campaigning", aimed specifically at one particular candidate who was considered by them as "dangerous" to the "wellbeing of the Association." However, this "counter-campaigning" was very limited and therefore stands little comparison to the campaigns of 1964 and 1990.

The 1980's saw no campaigning at all, perhaps ascribable to the continued lack of interest by members in the Association's internal affairs. Clearly, ATA officials expressed concern over voter apathy, and attempted to instill in the electorate, albeit in a conservative manner, a greater sense of participation in elections. If voter apathy did exist in the last two decades of ATA, it might have also been attributable to a larger and more geographically-broader membership, where the "faceless" factor played a more significant role. This indeed contrasted with the 1960's, when ATA's membership was much smaller (and more geographically concentrated), allowing for greater candidate recognition. However, despite the desire of ATA officials to get the membership out of its lethargy, these officials still believed that it was not necessary to change the procedure by which candidates were presented to the membership: a description of their backgrounds and a brief general statement of objectives. For the most part, all candidates willingly abided by this procedure, and there was virtually no departure... until this year.

Resurgence of Campaigning

Why, after an absence of some 26 years, did active campaigning for office return to ATA? The question is not easily answered; to be sure, it lends itself more to speculation than answer. Naturally, there is the factor of dissent, even sharp dissent over present administration policies. But dissent alone does not appear to be sufficient reason for a candidate or candidates to invest time and money in a campaign, no matter how small or limited. Clearly there has been dissent in ATA in the past 30 years, but with the exception of 1964, no candidate has resorted to open solicitation of votes. One might then speculate that Ms. Johnson and Mr. Mallonek resorted to campaigning possibly because of a belief that no organizational vehicle exists in which they could address what they perceive are important issues, and in which they, together with their opposition colleagues, could air their specific views on those issues. Both Johnson and Mallonek did express dissatisfaction over the way ATA and ATA officials communicate with the membership. Perhaps these candidates detected something that others did not detect: that there is a growing self-awareness by the modern-day translator, a self-awareness that, in the minds of these candidates, has not been permitted to flower freely, and that open campaigning was the only effective tool currently available to bring about that consciousness-raising.

"F.I.S.T." [Cont'd from Page 3]

inventors and yet create intractable problems when integrated into normal work routines. Some systems which work well in one setting are less successful in others. Other systems, touted only recently as useful translation aids, have disappeared along with their manufacturers. Furthermore, as with interpreters, whose work is often so demanding that they can only work for brief one- or two-hour shifts, there may also be special human needs connected with using computers in the demanding field of translation. This could prove especially true in those cases where advocates of complex and expensive systems promise vastly increased outputs without considering the work or health needs of human translators. (*)

And now our most crucial question: would we actually be able to realize these demands by launching—or threatening to launch—such a strike? This question strikes at the heart of our fantasy and also forces us to consider the reasons why, according to many, such a strike could never in fact occur. Or, if it did, could never succeed. I will consider these arguments in a candid manner and without totally denying that such criticisms have some merit. But it also is worth considering that what seems totally impossible today may not be at all impossible a few years or a few decades from now.

The first thing we should clearly realize is that we are under no obligation to begin such a strike right away. In fact all practical experience in this field dictates that we should not begin it until we are truly ready. The key to all successful strikes is capable, prolonged, and thorough organization, and this would clearly involve endless work. In the meantime the mere announcement that translators might be planning such a strike or are even discussing its possibility can, in a media-driven world, begin to give us some of the publicity we need to start mobilizing our own resources. It is just possible that we already possess some of the necessary power—we simply need to make this power manifest and begin to shape it in the public awareness and in our own. No doubt some early reports would ridicule our efforts and suggest that they are doomed to failure, as the world at large does not tend to view translators as very important in the scheme of things and supposes that we are all easily replaceable, whether by other translators or by machines.

But it is precisely here where our organization and research efforts should concentrate, in order to prepare a credible response to such charges. Thus, I visualize the initial effort to realize these demands as being one of prolonged discussion, organization, international coordination and

"consciousness raising" among ourselves, along with a parallel publicity campaign to keep the press and general public apprised of our intentions and progress. One major goal of these discussions and organizing activities will be to provide others and ourselves with accurate answers to our last question: what would happen if the strike actually took place? And to prepare practical answers to this question beforehand.

At this point I am prepared to claim on the theoretical plane—leaving some of the hardest questions for last—that *if* we were successful during the discussion and organization phase, and *if* we really were able to persuade all translators and interpreters in all fields in all nations to go on strike with us, the results could be nothing less than astounding. Business, communications, international relations, science, the military, espionage, patent registry, and applications for international jobs and divorces would all come to a grinding halt. The entire world—ourselves not least of all—would be astonished by the truly enormous power that flows through our hands.

But how would the world react to such a strike, you must by now be asking, would not all governments everywhere simply rush out and hire others to take our places, leaving us all out on our ears without a job? The answer to this question would depend on how effective we had been during the earlier phase of publicizing our demands. If we did a good enough job here, we might never actually have to go on strike. It might be possible to convince the world's governments and businesses of our enhanced value without ever having to fire a shot.

Here we would need to stress the specialist nature of our work and persuade the public that it would be far harder to find replacements for us than they think. We do more than move words and phrases around, we regularly fashion and transfer entire realities between nations. But even if we failed in this effort—and even if we failed in our strike—we would still have the satisfaction of knowing, as we stood on the unemployment lines, that it was only a question of time before our replacements came to feel the same way about their work as we do and began to voice the same desires and grievances. We are after all a very special group of people, and any others who try to play our role must necessarily be or become much the same people as ourselves.

It's time to consider the really hard questions, which I have postponed until now. I am of course well aware that as of now not all translators will share my views or even grant the need for such a strike. I also know that many

[See "F.I.S.T.", Page 6]

"F.I.S.T." [cont'd from Page 5]

translators have worked so long as intermediaries, and are so accustomed to professional self-abnegation that for them any such appeal to activism must seem profoundly inappropriate. Other translators work directly for the government or the military and are certain their employers would never countenance anything like what I have described. Yet other translators work in countries where the legitimacy of any strike by the citizenry, much less by government workers, has never been granted. Thus, as innocent and well-meaning as we may see ourselves and our cause, some of us could actually end up being jailed--perhaps even executed (this is after all a fantasy)--for our efforts. Yet I believe that solutions might become possible in all these cases, provided we are not in too great a hurry.

On the positive side, translators and interpreters are already international by the very nature of their work. We share an international network of contacts, professional groups, and publications. It is by no means impossible that we can spread the word of our plans far and wide. We are after all also a relatively small group of people, and this has advantages as well as disadvantages. Some may also argue that business and government would simply ransack the schools and universities for linguists to take our places. We can provide against this by expanding our group in the first place to embrace all language professionals, including teachers, perhaps restyling ourselves as *FISTITALP* or "First International Strike of Translators, Interpreters, Terminologists, and Allied Language Professionals." Or we can just let the government go ahead and draft language professors--it might be amusing to see if they are really able to translate.

At this point, my fantasy--to the extent that it is a fantasy--is running low. It really does seem to me that there ought to be some means by which translators can come to enjoy more recognition than they now receive. They are in a very real sense life's true aristocrats, connoisseurs, and *Kenner*, its enjoyers of multi-realities, as anyone knows who has ever heard them converse or joined them at table. In an increasingly sophisticated and multicultural world they--unlike wealthy idlers, businessmen or scientists--are the true distinguishers of the world's many realities and the touchstone of the differences between them. It is hard to believe, strike or no, that they will not soon be recognized for their unique pioneering qualities.

But of course some will simply smile my fantasy away. Such a scenario surely belongs only to the future. Or perhaps someone will come along, do everything I have described and more, and describe me as an old fuddy-duddy for even calling it a fantasy.

(*) For further information about these aspects, see Jean Datta's excellent treatment *Machine Translation in Large Organizations: Revolution in the Workplace*, pp. 167-173, *Technology as Translation Strategy*, *American Translators Association Scholars Monograph Series*, Vol. II, 1988, edited by Muriel Vasconcelos, University of New York at Binghamton (SUNY).

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Stamps, Seals and Even Slogans

FLORIDA BOARD OF MEDICINE DEMANDS STRICT ADHERENCE TO TRANSLATION REQUIREMENTS

Tallahassee.- The Florida Board of Medicine has issued, and is implementing, very strict criteria in respect of translations submitted to it for review. In addition to usual and traditional translation requirements, the Florida Board of Medicine (FBM) requires that anything and everything appearing in the source language document, including but not limited to such details as addresses, telephone numbers, form numbers, language embodied within stamps and seals, slogans (even political or socio-political) and other markings which might appear to be trivial or not applicable, or absent pertinence, must appear in the translation.

The FBM also requires that "all information appearing on a document to be translated must also appear on the translation each (and every) time it appears on the source language document. This includes pre-printed information." The FBM will reject any translation that fails to contain absolutely

everything that is in the original language document, even what by reasonable standards is not applicable or not pertinent.

The requirements for inclusion of such details established by the FBM appear to be the strictest in the country, and the FBM is vigorously applying these strictures.

For further information on the translation requirements of the Florida Board of Medicine, readers may contact that agency directly at 1940 North Monroe St., Northwood Center, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0750.

HOW MUCH IS A TRANSLATOR WORTH ON A PER HOUR BASIS (AN M.S. OR PHD REQUIRED)? FOR THE ANSWER AND A COMPARISON TO THE COMPENSATION GRANTED TO OTHER OCCUPATIONS AND/OR "PROFESSIONS", SEE PAGE 8.

DALE S. CUNNINGHAM
1932 - 1990

A MAN'S CONTRIBUTION REMEMBERED

By Bernard Bierman
Editor, TRANSLATION NEWS

Editor's Note: This memorial piece, which was written this past summer, was submitted to all ATA Chapter newsletters. From what could be learned, only the "Capital Translator" published it. However, since its original writing, additional details about Mr. Cunningham's life and death have come to light, necessitating some modifications to the original memorial. Following is a slightly-modified version of the original piece.

The August edition of the ATA Chronicle carried an "In Memoriam" piece about a man named Dale Cunningham. In a certain way, it was regrettable that his obituary only skimmed the surface of this tortured and complex man, and in another way, it was tragic that his name had to appear in the pages of the Chronicle solely in connection with his death. Today, his name means little, if anything, in the American Translators Association and in the translation community at large, but once upon a time it had great meaning. But the meaning is still there, even if temporarily dormant, for it has been translated into a legacy, a legacy that unfortunately remains denied by those few who cannot find forgiveness in their hearts, and worse, who pass on their denial to the innocent and unknowing. Indeed, to find the legacy of Dale Cunningham, we must harness the strength to go below the surface of human faults and failings. For some that is easy. For others, it is difficult, since anger saps the strength.

Dale Cunningham's obituary said that he had been a Secretary and President-elect of the American Translators Association, as well as an editor of an ATA publication called "The Translator's Tool Chest". That accurately describes only some of the physical roles played by him in America's leading association of translators and interpreters. It does not, however, tell us about Cunningham the man, and what the man called Cunningham contributed. But what he, the man, was should be mentioned, and what he, the man, contributed must be remembered, and perhaps even honored.

And what of this man, this translator, this linguist named Dale Cunningham? The man, the flesh and blood man, was a complex being, with a soul that was tortured from perhaps the time he was a child. He said that as a child, he was subjected to verbal abuse, particularly by his father. If that were so, then it stands to reason why he was transformed from the abused to the abuser. In both, he could find no peace, yet he searched for whatever solace he could find. And he found it in two distinctly different things: language and alcohol. He hated the latter, but his uncontrollable addiction consumed him. It transformed him into a veritable Mr. Hyde. It caused him to see so much of the world through cynical eyes. He found fault with his family, his friends, his colleagues, for it was much easier to blame them for all of his failings. But as much as he was addicted to

alcohol, he was equally addicted to language, and in particular, translation. He loved translation with a passion. He adored it. He could never get enough of it, and he could not stop talking about it. And he loved translators, even though the effects of his drug of choice often made it appear as if he hated every last one of them. It took an understanding of the nature of his disease to discern when the drug was speaking and when Cunningham, the translator was speaking. But underneath the reservoir of alcohol one could find the real Dale Cunningham: the man who lived, breathed, slept and ate translation. His goal, his only true goal, was to rid translation of its status as some adjunct occupation, and bring it to the level of recognition which he fervently believed it deserved: that of a profession embodying distinctive intellectual skills and talents. The mind-altering effects of alcohol could not and did not - ever - alter that vision.

Yes, Dale Cunningham was once a Secretary and a President-elect of the American Translators Association. But one just as well say that he was a pole, or a piece of paper, or a leaf of a tree. No, he was a little more than just a "Secretary" or a "President-elect". In the infancy and adolescent years of ATA, when there were so few people to work, to contribute, to nurture, Dale Cunningham was omnipresent...a workhorse, a dynamo. Dale never stopped working for the Association, not even in the middle of the night (oftentimes to the great annoyance of his colleagues who appreciated normal resting hours). When the ATA was just a little over a year old, he organized its first chapter, the Delaware Valley Translators Association. He wrote unceasingly, and there was almost a missionary message in all of his writings: the message of translation and the American Translators Association. Translation was his gospel and the ATA his church. He flooded and help to flood the fledgling organization with literature, its lifeblood. He wrote, or helped to write, or in some direct way contributed to such long-gone publications as "The Translator's Tool Chest", "Translator Tax Tips", "Translation Inquirer", "Babel", "META" and the DVTA Newsletter. Not content with merely one chapter in the Philadelphia-Camden area, he helped establish a New York chapter, one which became the predecessor of today's New York Circle of Translators. In 1963, Mr. Cunningham took a step that would add even more permanence to his legacy. He proposed the idea - revolutionary at the time - of a Convention of translators...American translators. And not only a Convention that would last several days, but one that would be held in what his colleagues viewed as a "foreign" city: Philadelphia. Many of those same colleagues thought he was crazy and vehemently opposed his plan. But he persevered, and almost single-handedly staged the very first Convention of the American Translators Association, and a highly successful one at that, for in an association that barely numbered 500, he attracted over 200 persons, including some who came from as far away as California. His work put the ATA on the map, and it convinced all that translation was no longer a New York phenomenon, but a nationwide profession. And the legacy [continued on Page 8]

Equal Opportunity (?) Employment.

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AIDE to help paralyzed 30-yr-old at work & in Red-
 wood City home, 2 days or 1 night/wk. Some free time
 on job to study, etc. \$10/hr. Call 368-4967.

Source: The Stanford Daily (10/2/90)

CUNNINGHAM MEMORIAL
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continued, for the pattern and format that
 Cunningham devised for the 1964 Convention
 were followed without change, without
 alteration, without modification for 20 years.
 And in 1970, when the ATA slipped into the
 depths of silence and apathy, Dale
 Cunningham helped to trigger its resuscitation
 by starting a monthly publication called the
 "ATA NEWS", which some 14 months later
 became the ATA Chronicle.

In the late summer of 1971, tragedy struck
 both Dale Cunningham and the American
 Translators Association. On the larger plane,
 the tragedy was called the Vietnam War. Mr.
 Cunningham was arrested in connected with
 purported anti-war activities. His arrest not
 only sent shivers of fear through the ATA,
 but unleashed a wave of hatred for this
 admittedly-controversial man. Some treated
 him as if he were a convicted felon; others
 accused him of harboring secret plans to
 involve ATA in Vietnam politics, plans which
 he denied to his dying day that he ever had.
 And others projected for him what no one
 could project: that he would be a disastrous
 President. He was judged by his colleagues
 on the basis of what he would be. Dale
 Cunningham, President-elect of the American
 Translators Association was removed from
 office not on the basis of law, but on the
 basis of projection. The ATA was turned into
 a battlefield. Cunningham lost the battle, but
 interestingly won the battle against his other
 detractor, the U.S. Government. There was
 not a scrap of evidence to bring him to trial.
 Rather, he sued the Government for false
 arrest, and won his case. His record was not
 only expunged, but he received a cash

settlement for his pain and humiliation. Yet,
 the ATA was not moved by this. Dale
 Cunningham continued to fight for his
 reinstatement, and the more ATA resisted,
 the more uglier became Cunningham's tactics,
 although those of his adversaries were not
 prettier. Propelled by anger and
 frustration...and alcohol, he sunk even
 deeper into the depths of ugliness: he
 threatened physical violence, an act which
 undoubtedly sealed his fate within ATA. He
 tried unsuccessfully to lower the flames by
 asking not for reinstatement, but only for
 recognition of his contributions. But it was
 too late. The doors were closed, sealed and
 bolted. Eventually, he gave up and his name
 (and contributions) became unmentionable.
 His treatment as an unmentionable and an
 untouchable, extended to the present day.
 The madness refused to die.

No one, not a solitary soul, can be blamed
 for Dale Cunningham's destiny. He alone
 controlled that destiny. Even had he been
 allowed to assume the Presidency of ATA, his
 destiny might not have been any different,
 for with or without ATA, with or without
 translation, with or without Vietnam, he was
 one of the severely walking wounded. He
 nursed his wounds with alcohol, and the
 wounds and alcohol drove him into the bowels
 of the earth. He skidded into abject
 poverty, living alone on public assistance in
 the drug-ravaged and crime-infested streets
 of Camden. Nonetheless, he continued to
 hope that one day, just as this nation was
 coming to grips with the Vietnam experience,
 the ATA would come to grips with him, its
 own personal Vietnam experience. But that
 was not to be. He did have friends at the
 end, but the friendship that he wanted from
 his beloved profession never came. He was
 not to be forgiven for his human failings, and
 more tragically, not to be recognized for his
 contributions.

Dale Cunningham is dead. But his work for
 and contributions to American translation are
 not. They may be presently unknown and
 unrecognized, but they are not dead.
 Perhaps it will take more years before the
 deaths of the unforgiving allow our heirs to
 unearth the truth. But I know that that day
 will eventually come. And it will not be too
 late. I know that when the history of
 American translation is written, the true
 history, the name Dale Speers Cunningham
 will be there.

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