

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : AFSA-OOT

DATE: 5 Mar 51

FROM : LCDR Hazelett

SUBJECT: Comment on Mr. Harold P. Edmundson's letter dated 5 Feb 51

1. The subject letter, with enclosures, was referred to Dr. Kullback, Dr. Campaigne, Dr. Eachus, and Dr. Sinkov. Dr. Campaigne made the only written comments, which are attached to this memo.

2. Dr. Eachus orally concurred with Dr. Campaigne's comments and requested that, when convenient to yourself, the paper entitled "Proposals for the Mechanical Resolution of German Syntax Patterns" be returned to him for further detailed study.

3. Dr. Kullback had no comment on the content of Mr. Edmundson's letter or the enclosures. Upon my suggestion that it might be inferred from his letter that Mr. Edmundson is hinting that he be employed by ASA (or AFSA) or be given a contract as a consultant, Dr. Kullback stated that he would recommend against any such action (Dr. Kullback is personally well acquainted with Mr. Edmundson).

4. Dr. Sinkov also concurs with Dr. Campaigne's comments. He further states that "no doubt translation of European languages may some day be feasible. Its efficiency, from the standpoint of economy, will be greatly reduced, if not nullified, by the requirements for special handling of the material, both prior to and after processing by the machine."

5. After consulting with all the above-named persons in AFSA, I have drafted the attached proposed reply to Mr. Edmundson.

Very respectfully

S. E. Hazelett
S. E. HAZELETT, LCDR, USN
AFSA-141A

From: AFSA 34

To " " 03A1.

Subject: Translating Machine.

Following up my letter of —, I may say that the paper by
 1. the Institute for Numerical Analysis, entitled
~~paper~~, "Proposals for the Mechanical Resolution of
 German Syntax Patterns," is the most detailed
 and most realistic approach yet to come to
~~my~~ attention. It makes mechanical
 translation sound possible, ~~and~~ but it also makes
 it apparent that ~~working out~~ ^{the elaboration of} a good ^{electro-mechanical} translation
 program would take several years.

~~2. Mr Hazlett's paper is a good analysis
 of the situation, but perhaps unduly pessimistic.~~
 It is true that at this time there is no immediate
 prospect of an economical translating machine, However,
 it is not clear that there will not be one some
 day in the future, and I, for one, would be inclined
 to think that day not too far off, in terms of decades.

H Campaigne