

SPECIAL REPORT

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I was so rash as to agree to chair an informal meeting, and am, consequently, making this report to you as chairman of this planning committee. At the meeting we devoted some time to a number of administrative matters, but the topic uppermost in the minds of those present was the need for a new professional society, representative of the interest of the assembled group, and the bulk of the evening was devoted to that topic. We deliberately refrained, at that time, from naming the proposed society because it is an open question whether it would be preferable to organize a machine translation society or one of broader scope that would include in its field of interest mechanized syntactic analysis for purposes other than translation and other aspects of the automatic processing of linguistics data. It was readily agreed that some such society is needed but also that the assembled group could not, in a single session, consider and decide upon the purpose and scope of the society. At this point, therefore, it was decided that the group is to serve as a formal ad hoc planning committee on the formation of a professional society, that this planning committee would deal in the interim with more or less urgent problems that would be the task of the society if it were now in existence, and that the preliminary study of the major tasks of the planning committee should be assigned to several working groups, each made up of three or four members of the planning committee. We named four working groups to consider, respectively, the questions related to formation of the proposed society, a second group on the journal, a third group on future meetings, and a fourth group on terminology. The first working group composed of Dave Hays, Anthony Oettinger, and Winifred Lehman will give careful consideration to the scope and purpose of the proposed society and will draw up a draft plan of organization for it. The working group on the journal composed of Victor Yngve, H. P. Edmundson, and Victor Oswald will consider and recommend ways of further strengthening the journal MT. They will consider its future structure and scope, and such questions as the establishment of an editorial board to consult with the editor on policy matters. The working group on meetings composed of

Léon Dostert, Sid Lamb, Jules Mersel, and Dick See will consider and recommend ways and means of insuring that future meetings in the field are organized so as to be as fruitful as possible, and ways of assisting societies and groups in other fields with special problems on current work in machine translation and related problem areas. The working group on terminology composed of Harry Josselson, Paul Garvin, and Kenneth Harper will study the extent of the terminological problem and attempt to determine whether it is desirable at this time to establish a nomenclature for the field and to take steps to clarify the terms used in reports and publications. All four working groups have been asked to give some thought to the international aspects relevant to their respective assignments because this field of research is recognized to be truly international in character. Each group will prepare, within the next few months, a report, and either a draft plan of organization or a set of recommendations and distribute them to the full committee for comment before a final report from each group is adopted and issued. Information about these final reports and about any decisions taken by the planning committee will be reported in the journal *Mechanical Translation* as soon as possible. Thank you.