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THE DEWEY NEWSLETTER



The Center for Dewey Studies

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY AT CARBONDALE • Carbondale, Illinois 62901

Volume VIII

Number 2

October, 1974

REPORT ON
TURKISH
EDUCATION

Only a few typewritten copies of Dewey's *Report and Recommendation upon Turkish Education* (1924) in English were prepared. The report was published in Turkish in 1939 and reprinted in 1952. In 1960, the Research and Measurement Bureau of the Ministry of Education published the report in English, using a retyped copy and translating both the Preface and one missing page from the 1952 Turkish version. One copy, 34 pages, without date, is in the Columbiana Collection, Butler Library, Columbia University. The Preface says:

Professor John Dewey, a Colombia (*sic*) University professor and one of the greatest educational philosophers of the century, came to Turkey in 1924, at the invitation of the Ministry of Education. He stayed in Turkey for two months observing the educational problems and prepared two reports for the Ministry, embodying the results of his observations and containing a number of proposals. Professor Dewey prepared one report while he was actually in Turkey. This was in the nature of a memorandum rather than a report and indicated the amounts of money which should be appropriated in the national budget and how the appropriations should be used.

That first densely-typed six-page report, including two pages of "summary with respect to budget," has now been located in the National Archives, Washington, D. C. The report itself, is too long for the *Newsletter*, but we reproduce here the letter of the First Secretary, Robert M. Scotten, transmitting the Report:

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to enclose herewith a copy of the preliminary report submitted to Vassif Bey, Minister of Public Instruction by Professor John Dewey of Columbia University. Professor Dewey's definitive report will be prepared and submitted to the Turkish Government later.

As the Department is aware Professor Dewey has been in Turkey for the past two months engaged in studying the Turkish educational system with a view to suggesting improvements. He spent some three weeks in Constantinople, went to Angora for a fortnight and concluded his visit on September 18th after a further stay in Constantinople. The Turkish press heralded Professor Dewey's mission as that of an advisor to the Ministry of Public Instruction and seemed to expect a series of miracles from him. It was not until near the end of Professor Dewey's stay at Angora when the newspapers began to declare that he found conditions so unfavorable that he could not retain his advisorship that he issued a statement making it clear that there had never been any question of his remaining in Turkey as an advisor and that he had come simply to study the situation and offer such suggestions as might appear pertinent. The Department doubtless knows that Professor Dewey's trip was initiated and his expenses defrayed by Mr. Charles R. Crane and that the invitation was conveyed by Sefa Bey, Vassif Bey's predecessor as Minister of Public Instruction. These facts were apparently not known to the Turkish press.

I think it would be fair to say that Professor Dewey is leaving with a rather pessimistic view of the future of education in Turkey. He does not consider that there is much value in discussing educational theories as long as the means for carrying out any theory are as defective as they are at present. The salaries now paid to Turkish teachers range from Ltq. 20. (\$10) to Ltq. 50. (\$25) a month and there is no permanency of tenure; teachers are transferred from one part of Turkey to another without warning and without any apparent reason. No dignity or standing attaches to the teaching profession. For all of these reasons the recruiting of teachers is becoming more and more difficult. Furthermore the whole educational administration is handicapped by red tape. At Constantinople,

for instance, no school can spend more than \$12 without the authorization of a board of some dozen persons. The board is overworked with the result that the most urgent repairs on a school building wait for months.

When instrumentalities for carrying out a new educational program have been found Professor Dewey believes that the program itself should cover a period of at least five years and thus secure some measure of continuity of educational policy over a reasonably long period of time.

Professor Dewey was painfully impressed by the extreme centralization of the Turkish educational system. The present Minister is an incompetent and self-inflated Czar (the expression is not Professor Dewey's, although I have no doubt he would agree to its accuracy) and is sparing no efforts to concentrate in his hands the whole educational administration. He is even endeavoring to control the teacher's organization which recently led to the departure of the Constantinople delegation from the teachers congress at Angora--this by way of protest at a plan sponsored by the Minister to abolish the more or less autonomous organization of the teachers by cities.

Professor Dewey, while at Angora, had three interviews with the Minister of Public Instruction who showed himself quite willing to answer Professor Dewey's questions, but by no means anxious to elicit or even receive Professor Dewey's suggestions. It was apparent that the Minister had clearly in mind his own program for education in Turkey and was not particularly interested in ascertaining the views of an "advisor" foisted upon him by his predecessor. Constantinople on the other hand gave Professor Dewey a warm and appreciative welcome. The press, especially as represented by Zekeria Bey of the "Djoumhouriet" and by Hussein Djahid Bey of the "Tanine" was outspoken in its commendation and in its recognition of the importance of Professor Dewey's mission. Ihsan Bey, Director of the Normal School, the Rector and Faculty of the University and the Constantinople teachers generally also showed in varying degrees an intelligent understanding of Professor Dewey's views.

To summarize: I feel confident that Professor Dewey has had an interesting and for the most part agreeable trip. So far as Turkey is concerned I fear the effects of Professor Dewey's reports will be practically nil. Until Turkey ex-

changes her naive faith in grandiose theories for an actual and persistent putting into effect of certain practical and unsensational improvements nothing of real moment will be accomplished. Professor Dewey was amused by the expectation generally entertained among Turks that he would at once propose a whole series of reforms by which they apparently understood changes of the most sweeping and destructive character. Judging from the present administration of the department of education it may be said that when it comes to faith in theories and the destruction of precariously existing and by no means perfect but still existing and functioning realities, there is no limit to Turkish competence.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
/s/ Robert M. Scotten,
First Secretary of Embassy,
In charge of U. S. High Commission

EARLY WORKS

IN PAPER

Thanks to a grant from the John Dewey Foundation, the five volumes of *The Early Works of John Dewey, 1882-1898*, will be available in paperback early in 1975. Each volume is to be priced at \$2.95.

GIFTS OF

EARLY WORKS

Sets of the cased volumes of *The Early Works* are being presented by the John Dewey Foundation to the one hundred ten institutions in this country that offer the Ph.D. degree in philosophy. In many cases, this will be an institution's second set and the gift should help keep the books available in libraries and reading rooms.

MIDDLE
WORKS

Volume 1 (1899-1901), *Essays and THE SCHOOL AND SOCIETY*, of The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899-1924, has been inspected and the Center for Editions of American Authors "Approved Text" seal recommended. Volume 2 (1902-1903), *Essays, STUDIES IN LOGICAL THEORY and THE CHILD AND THE CURRICULUM*, is scheduled for inspection in October.

RATNER-DEWEY
COLLECTION

Joseph Ratner has started transferring to the Dewey Center his sizeable collection of materials by and about John Dewey. Already deposited, but not yet inventoried, are important segments of the collection: early reviews and articles by John Dewey, some not signed, collected by Davis Rich Dewey; several drafts of a planned new introduction to *Experience and Nature*, typed and handwritten by Dewey; a large group of pocket-size notebooks mostly from the 1880s and 1890s with reading notes, class notes, memoranda--and among the scholarly notations, observations on the growth and development of his children; a number of sets of class notes made by Edith Penfield at the University of Chicago.

JOHN DEWEY
RESEARCH
FUND

The first awards have just been made from the John Dewey Research Fund established by the John Dewey Foundation and administered by the Center for Dewey Studies. The purpose of the fund is to support and encourage Dewey studies by helping scholars and students to defray research-related costs such as manuscript searching, travel, purchase of and copying research materials, typing of manuscripts. Although grants are not limited to the particular expenses listed, grants will not be made for subvention of publication.

Applications may be made at any time but awards will be made only twice each year. All proposals received before January 1 will be acted on by 15 February; proposals received before July 1 will be acted on by 15 August.

Proposals should be made on a standard form available from the Center for Dewey Studies, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois, 62901.

JOHN DEWEY
ESSAY PROJECT
1975

In another continuing effort to encourage Dewey Studies, the John Dewey Foundation and the Dewey Center will sponsor a second John Dewey Essay Project. The 1975 topic is "John Dewey's Philosophy of Science." The Project is open to matriculated graduate students; judges are Israel Scheffler, Harvard University; Patrick Suppes, Stanford University; Stephen Toulmin, University of Chicago. Deadline for 1975 entries is 1 June 1975. Further information is available from the Dewey Center.

WINNING
ESSAYS
1974

First place award of \$1000 in the 1974 Essay Project on "The Ethical Theory of John Dewey" went to Richard Werner of Westfield (Mass.) State College, who was a graduate student at the University of Rochester when he entered, for his essay, "John Dewey's Ethics: Pragmatism and Justification in Ethics."

Second place award of \$500 went to Paul Gudel, graduate student at the University of Chicago, for his essay "Morality as a Self-Corrective Process."

CHECKLIST OF
WRITINGS ABOUT
JOHN DEWEY

The *Checklist of Writings about John Dewey, 1887-1973*, by Jo Ann Boydston and Kathleen Poulos (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1974) has been published. As expected with a Checklist of this kind, entries were discovered while the work was in press; many more have been found since the book appeared. Newsletter readers will soon receive a supplement to use while waiting for the first revision of the *Checklist*.

GEORGE
AXTELLE

With sorrow and regret, we announce the death on 1 August 1974 of the founder and first Director of the Center for Dewey Studies, Dr. George Axtelle. We will send the moving memorial note upon request, and the note will appear in the next issue of the John Dewey Society's *Insights*.