

Toward an International Language

European officials have often pointed out that English spelling is unnecessarily difficult—*cough*, *slough*, *through*, and *thorough*, for example. Having chosen English as the preferred language in the European Economic Community, the European Parliament has commissioned a study to find ways to simplify communication between government departments.

In the first year, the committee suggests using *s* instead of a soft *c*. Certainly, sivil servants in all sities would reseive this news with joy. The hard *c* could be replaced by *k* sinse both are pronounsed alike. Not only would this klear up konfusun in the minds of klerikal workers, but typewriters could be made with one less letter.

Growing support is expected when, in the sekond year, it is announsed that the

troublesome *ph* would henseforth be written as *f*, making words like fotograf 20 persent shorter in print.

In the third year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling can be ekspekted to reash the stage where more komplikated shanges are possible. Governments would enkourage the removal of double letters, which have always been a bane to akurate speling.

We would al agre that the horrible mes of silent *e* in the languag is disgrasful. Therfor we kould drop thes and kontinu to rid and ryt as though nothing had hapened. By this tym it would be four years sins the skem began and pipl would be reseptiv to steps sutsh as replasing *th* by *z*. Perhaps zen ze funkshun of *w* kould be taken on by *v*, vitsh is, after al, half a w. Ze unesesary *o* kould be dropd from virds kontaining *ou*. Similar

arguments vud of kors be applyd to ozer kombinashuns of leters.

Kontinuing zis proses yir after yir, ve vud eventuli hav a rili sensibl ryting styl. After tventi yirs zer vud be no mor difikultis and evrivun vud fin it isi to understand ich ozer.

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DEPARTMENT OF PONDEROUS PROSE

Can you translate the passage below into simple English?

An incredibly insatiable desire to understand that which was going on led to the demise of this particular *Felis catus*.

(Answer on page 113)

The Lighter View consists of short articles, cartoons, quotations, or any other type of humorous material about the editing life. We invite you to make suggestions and contribute material that you find humorous. Send ideas to Barbara Cox, MedEdit Associates, 5429 SW 80 Street, Gainesville FL 32608. Phone (9 AM to 4 PM EST, Monday through Friday) 352-376-3071; fax 352-336-8377.

“Strive for excellence,
not perfection.”

—Susan G Stafford,
professor, in BioScience

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