

#23

Commission for Chess in Schools

A meeting on August 25th

Attendants: Dr. R. Tudela, FIDE Deputy President, Venezuela  
Mr. R. Toran, FIDE Deputy President, Spain  
N. Palladino, Italy  
I. Gelfer, Israel  
Prof. Dr. Drimer, Romania  
J.C. Escriban O'Connor, Argentine  
D.C. Jarrett, England  
Mrs. M de Briceno, Venezuela  
R.N. Da Silva, Angola

Dr. Tudela started the meeting by appointment of Mr. I. Gelfer as secretary of this meeting.

Mr. J.C.E. O'Connor - spoke about some aspects of chess like developing memory, creativity, etc.

In his introduction he said that as the teaching of chess at schools compliments with the principal goals of FIDE as the diffusion and development of chess as well as the raising of the level of chess, culture and knowledge on a scientific, creative and cultural basis. On behalf of FIDE statutes he thinks that the first function is to know the "know-how", under what principal ideas the task of the commission shall be, as there could be two principal ways

- 1) the concept of chess as a sport and culture benefit for children
- 2) the concept of chess as a benefit for all sciences learning or the achievement of mental development through chess.

These two principals could be arranged for common applications. The commission shall decide the way.

Dr. Tudela - gave some aspects of the project he handled in his country as a model for other countries to start chess activity among school pupils.

He reported that after the change of government, the Ministry for the development of intelligence was eliminated, but due to previous preparation and excellent reports the Chess project was passed on to the Ministry of Education. Mr. R. Tudela has given a copy of the basic report results to the secretariat and to Mr. Palladino.

The report will be translated into English. The main conclusions are:

- 1) After analyzing the results obtained in two exploration-test-retest of Intelligence Quotient conducted by WISC in the two groups, that is children in the experimental and the children in the control group it is concluded that
  - A) The significant statistical differences found in the first two explorations of intelligence quotient of the experimental group, were due to the inclusion of the independent variable: chess methodologically taught.
  - B) Male children of all social levels showed an increase of intelligence quotient (I.Q.) after 4 1/2 months of studying chess in the systematic way adopted.
  - C) Female children of working class families also showed I.Q. increases after 4 1/2 months.
  - D) The female sample of children, including marginal, medium and medium high social class showed an increase of their I.Q. after 8 months of initiating the chess training.
  - E) The female sample of children of the high class showed an increase of I.Q. 4 1/2 months after starting the chess training.
  - F) The socio-economic conditions of the sample studied was the main reason for the difference in timing I.Q. improvement in girls of class II, III and V mentioned.

The general conclusion is that chess methodologically taught is an incentive system sufficient to accelerate the increase of I.Q. in children of both sexes, with primary level education, at all socio-logically strata levels.

The study includes very interesting results regarding transfer of chess thinking to other areas of study.

Chess has had many definitions throughout history and has been examined as an art, a science, a sport, and a training. In this study it is concluded that chess is a mental exercise of strategic processes in a game form, conducive to the acceleration of the increase of the Intelligence Quotient.

Prof. Drimer - brought some points which he considers to be the major points in school-chess activity.

- 1) to try and create a book of one system. A pedagogical book which can be a basis for all FIDE-member countries dealing with this subject. He is suggesting that perhaps UNESCO can help in bringing up such a book.
- 2) After bringing a method we should cope with activity - exchanging ideas, then proceed to playing etc.

A possible convention for this subject may take place in Romania.

Mr. I. Gelfer - This commission should look for concrete purposes and not only academic discussion. Activity is being held in many countries and our main question should be what benefit FIDE federations can get from us. Suggesting 3 central points:

- 1) A central document which will help and persuade governments and authorities to introduce chess into schools.
- 2) Changing of useful information.
- 3) A further step will be meetings.

Mr. N. Palladino - sees difficulties in informing federations about any subject, especially such as we deal with.

The future of FIDE are the young people. Suggested some points for the spoken document (knowledge, ability, competitiveness) and said that the document should be sent directly to governments.

He is also suggesting a kind of questionnaire to be distributed to FIDE members asking information about school-chess activity if there is any. He is suggesting as well to try and organize translation and distribution of books for teachers through a centre office (Madrid's). FIDE office as agreed in the last congress.

Mr. D. Jarrett - informing that the next congress "Chess in Schools" will probably take place in England in Feb.-March 1986. Bringing up some useful points about the subject: The attitude of governments towards the subject is different in certain places, and two of the fundamental points we should try and convince are:

- 1) Chess is as any sport subject, and should be considered so
- 2) Chess is a choice. Showing some books that were produced in England and saying that their system of education would suit everybody.

Mrs. A. de Briceno - is pointing up the problem of translation.

Mr. R. Toran - chess is recognized as sport in Spain. When he started his activity in developing chess in Spain he found an article written by Dr. Klaus - the dean of Philosophy in Berlin University which can be a very good basis for the document we want to create. It gives a lot of arguments for chess.

Mr. Toran is telling about his experience in Spain and about the ways he introduced and developed it through the years, starting with 100.000 books for beginners, then catching the interest of commercial firms and so on. Today they have many competitions, in many ages and sectors, a school of trainers and a school (college) for members and arbiters.

It is important that everybody who has some kind of material will send it to the office in Madrid.

Dr. Tudela - adding that the commission should strive for distribution material in the cheapest way, not upon a commercial basis.

Prof. Drimer - suggesting to combine programs for chess and other subjects like sciences.

Mr. O'Connell - chess is now a social phenomenon, and we have to think about the way of imposing it to everybody and to act promptly, otherwise we lose essential time.

In Argentine chess is also considered a sport and is a part of the Ministry education, being taught in about 150 schools. Showing some chess material, too, among them a piece by an Argentine author trying to explain how to teach chess.

Dr. Tudela - is trying to summarize and suggests that the first project of the commission will be producing the FIDE document for helping chess in the countries. The second one should be a program of teaching of teachers and the third one is exchanging some more ideas, which every new one should be sent to Madrid - the centre of our activity. Showing as well a material from the Venezuela program.

Mr. Gelfer - suggesting that some selection should be made out of all documents.

Mr. Palladino - the commission should have a board, which should work upon the material and approve it before distributing.

Dr. Tudela - is adding that the elements in all the material should be very simple and elementary.

Mr. Jarrett - This commission needs to help those countries which simply have nothing and give them the priority in material. Representing the English program for teachers and students.

Mr. Da Silva - saying that the suggestions he heard could be very useful for his country and others in the same situation. Pointing some ideas about the subject, among them the point that there are differences in methods of teaching even for political reasons. The main problem in the developing countries is the need to know how to teach.

Mrs. de Briceño - showing some material about simple ways of teaching in her country.

Dr. Tudela is concluding the session by suggesting that the commission will bring to general assembly a draft for a suggested document which will contain important elements showing the benefit of introducing chess to schools, bringing some useful statistics about and which can be based upon Dr. Klaus' essay, among others.