

Deaf Culture Question of the Week - May 25 - 29, 2009

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Who was the only deaf delegate to attend the Conference of Milan in 1880?

- a. James Denison
- b. Laurent Clerc
- c. Robert McGregor
- d. George Veditz

Scroll down for the answer.

Answer: "a" James Denison - The Second International Conference on Education of the Deaf held in Milan Italy from September 6 - 11, 1880 banned the use of sign language in schools for the deaf worldwide. In terms of the course of education of deaf students it is considered a catastrophic event in the history of Deaf culture. There were 164 delegates at this conference. Only one delegate was deaf, James Denison, who was among the five delegates sent from the United States. The resolution of the Milan Conference that banned the use of sign language and ushered in the "dark ages" of the oral method read as follows:

"The Convention, considering the incontestable superiority of articulation over signs in restoring the deaf-mute to society and giving him a fuller knowledge of language, declares that the oral method should be preferred to that of signs in education and the instruction of deaf-mutes."

The above resolution passed with only the United States and Great Britain voting against it.

Read more about the Conference of Milan at these websites. See all the resolutions that were passed regarding educating deaf students in 1880 at the Wikipedia site.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milan_Conference

<http://deafness.about.com/cs/featurearticles/a/milan1880.htm>