

## Educational Counseling Now at FLO

Educational counseling services formerly provided by the Foreign Service Educational and Counseling Center (FSECC), which closed in April, are now available to Foreign Service personnel through the Family Liaison Office in the Department of State. FSECC clients are being contacted directly to determine the disposition of their files.

The Family Liaison Office will be able to provide assistance in the following areas:

- D.C. area schools; public, private, and special education
- Boarding schools in the United States
- American and non-American day and boarding schools abroad
- American colleges
- Correspondence schools and colleges
- Career awareness, interests, and aptitudes
- Educational evaluations
- Secondary School Admissions Test (SSAT), Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and Achievement Test (ACH) information and registration forms and individual administration of these tests for handicapped students
- Summer programs; schools, camps, volunteer opportunities
- Liaison between family at post and dependent in the U.S. school when there are problems
- Application to a school or college when there is no time for the standard application procedure.

For counseling services in any of these areas contact the FLO, 632-1076, to set up an appointment.

## PRESIDENT DORMAN TESTIFIES FOR CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE

*AAFSW President Lesley Dorman presented the following statement before the Subcommittee on Retirement Income and Employment, Select Committee on Aging, United States House of Representatives, May 7, 1979.*

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee;

Thank you for the invitation to testify today. I am Lesley Dorman, President of the Association of American Foreign Service Women. We feel that our experience as Foreign Service women can throw light on the unfavorable impact of geographic mobility on mid-life women. Millions of wives are struggling to cope with dependence on a mobile breadwinner whether in corporate, government or military life. The loss of our support systems — family members, friends, work colleagues and fellow church members — helps create feelings of inadequacy, loneliness, anger, and its handmaidens, guilt and depression.

Extended overseas service exacerbates these stresses and adds more. We experience the alienation of culture shock, the isolation of language inadequacy, the hazards of rigorous climate and endemic disease, the trials of evacuation, and the pervasive fear of terrorism. Considerable energy and effort has been spent by the foreign affairs community and by the women themselves in finding creative responses to these hardships. May we at this point ask to have included in the record the *AAFSW Forum report on the Concerns of Foreign Service Spouses and Families* and our recent study on employment?

Many Foreign Service women in mid-life today are neither secure nor fulfilled. They have sacrificed the earning potential of their most productive years in cultural adjustments, family support responsibilities, and in the creation of a favorable social ambience for the conduct of American foreign policy.

Whatever her inclinations, the Foreign Service wife has been shoehorned into a clearly defined traditional role. Although she was never paid, her contributions to mission activities were evaluated on her husband's performance report until 1972. In addition, government policy was to discourage her from seeking employment for profit. Local work laws, language problems and lack of appropriate job opportunities have precluded any real possibility for her to establish her own economic base, and she is completely dependent on her husband.

While life in the Foreign Service is stimulating and has undeniable rewards of personal growth, travel, and world-wide friendships, the attractions of these desirable facets are fading as more and more wives realize that they may pay for these benefits by penury in their later years.

The skyrocketing rate of divorce among couples whose marriages have endured more than 15 years is as apparent in the Foreign Service as in society at large. Few courts recognize marriage as an economic partnership. We have seen the tragic unpreparedness of the Foreign Service displaced homemaker who re-enters the United States and is disoriented by the changes in American society that have occurred during her absence. International mobility has prevented her from establishing an employment record or from taking advantage of continuing education to modernize her skills. She finds herself without health insurance, Social Security, or any share in her former husband's annuity, and with little prospect of acquiring any of these.

Therefore, the aware Foreign Service wife is questioning whether she can continue being a "Dependent." Furthermore, Foreign Service wives need and want the same kinds of recognition which have spurred women

cont'd p. 5