

Newsletter

Association of
AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE WOMEN

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SENATE BILL INCLUDES JOBS AND TRAINING

Two amendments of particular importance to Foreign Service spouses are included in this year's Senate Bill (S-1190) to authorize appropriations for the Department of State.

The first, introduced by Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr. of Delaware, is "employment of Foreign Service spouses" and provides the necessary Congressional authorization for the Department to: "give equal consideration to employing qualified family members of U.S. government employees (including family members of Foreign Service personnel)" when filling temporary and local hire jobs abroad; provide regular career counseling for such spouses; and maintain a centralized system for cataloguing their skills i.e. institutionalize the Skills Bank. This is amendment #20.

The other amendment directs the Secretary of State to increase language training opportunities to Foreign Service family members because it is the "sense of Congress" that this would "increase the effectiveness of U.S. diplomatic representation abroad." This amendment, section 109 at the end of Title I, was introduced by Senator George McGovern.

By the time the *Newsletter* is published, the Senate bill with these amendments is expected to have been passed. Since the amendments do not appear in the House bill, whether or not these are enacted will probably be determined in conference. Members who are concerned about these amendments should write their representatives or the conferees who, as we go to press, have not yet been appointed.

Cynthia Chard worked with the Senate Foreign Relations International Operations Subcommittee to get these amendments included in the legislation. She is AAFSW's newly-appointed legislative liaison and will continue to watch the bill. Members interested may contact Cynthia (547-8793) for information on the bill's status and for the names of the conferees.

Forum Meets with Director General; Report to Go to Overseas Posts

by Janet Moore Hawley

On Tuesday, April 19th, the steering committee of the Forum met with the Director General, Ambassador Carol Laise, to discuss the Forum report, "The Concerns of Foreign Service Spouses and Families." Management was represented by Ambassador Laise, Edward Perkins from the staff of Mr. Richard Moose, Deputy Under Secretary of State for Management; Shaw Smith, Director of Programs; Mary Kincaid, Personnel-Employee Relations; Sam Hart, AFSA; Frank Matthews, Department of State *Newsletter*; and Terry Healy, aide to Ambassador Laise. Steering committee members present were Lesley Dorman, President of AAFSW; Jean Vance, Forum Chairman; Jessie Bartlett, Cynthia Chard, Janet Hawley, Mary Holmes, Janet Kennedy, Stephanie Smith Kinney and Alice Lowenthal.

Jean Vance introduced the members of the steering committee and began her opening remarks by briefly reviewing the

background of the Forum—how we established the dialogue—stressing that the report represents the views of a wide group of women in the field, as well as those in the Washington area. Jean stated that the total cost to AAFSW had been \$1400, emphasizing the importance the membership places on the report and the opinions expressed therein.

Ambassador Laise replied that the Forum Report had been most favorably received and merited careful consideration. "I am gratified and impressed with what you have done. I find it extremely good, thorough and helpful...I want to let you know that I hear you and appreciate what you have done, and I will do all that I can to deal with the means to implement the recommendations." She mentioned that the cost factor must always be considered, however, and asked, "Which recommendation has the highest priority?"

Stephanie Kinney answered that until the Department of State and the spouses of Foreign Service employees establish a new relationship based on a recognition of mutual responsibilities, it would be difficult to pursue other recommendations.

Recommendation #2, the establishment of a Family Liaison Office (FLO) was discussed at length. The Steering committee stressed that this is the principal recommendation without which little else can be accomplished. The value of FLO to the Department can be analyzed in dollar and cents, which would justify cutting a position in one area to establish a new centralized office. Mr. Moose's staff is in the process of completing a progress chart on the establishment of FLO and sees it in an informational/community sense role.

Ambassador Laise wondered if it were possible to establish a "sense of community" in Washington or whether ef-

Moving Again?

Don't forget to notify Membership chairman Julie Bond of your new address. For your convenience, we have included a "change of address" form on page 2 of this *Newsletter*. Why not mail it today?

AAFSW members who prefer to use their maiden names and who are not themselves Foreign Service employees are reminded to be especially prompt in notifying the Membership chairman of any address change. If a *Newsletter* or other piece of Association mail is "returned to sender" there is no way of finding a forwarding address. The same problem exists for women who are applying for membership in AAFSW. There is no way of checking the eligibility of a Foreign Service spouse unless her husband's name is known.

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Forum

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forts should be concentrated on posts abroad. We replied that there are two concepts involved—community and mobility. The crises seem to occur during the mobile periods. A Family Liaison Office would be a centralized place where information and help would be readily available.

In discussing the whole question of the Department's attitude towards dependents, Janet Kennedy noted it was evident in small ways, which would involve little cost to improve. For example: Though it is possible for a dependent to take full time language training (on a space available basis), she can't be tested for proficiency upon completion. Thus the time invested in learning the language cannot be transferable as educational experience, and emphasizes her status as a nonperson. Management agreed to investigate this immediately.

Action to be taken includes sending the complete Forum Report to every post with a cover letter from the Director General and the Forum, asking for input on its possible implementation; a Department of State *Newsletter* article on the Forum Report; a memo for Mr. Moose on FLO staffing; a meeting with the heads of USIS and AID; and another meeting with the Director General in May.

Ambassador Laise expressed satisfaction with the meeting and emphasized that the dialogue is critical. "The quality of the institution and the families who make it up are exceptionally important. It is a microcosm of our society. As we change from paternalism to partnership, what can be provided to make this a viable relationship? The basic problem is that we don't have the resources, but the process is so important and we must do it together."

It is up to all of us as Foreign Service women to help define this future relationship. As AAFSW President Lesley Dorman said at the conclusion of the meeting, "The Forum plans to continue the dialogue."

CAN YOU HELP?

Collectors are needed to pick up donations for the Book Fair in D.C., Maryland and Virginia. Members who are willing to participate on a regular basis, and those who can help out for only a day or a week, are urged to call Collection Coordinator Jane Owens (538-4462) or Chairman for Volunteers Liselotte Dugstad (978-6950).

FSECC's Director Receives Award

The 1977 Pioneer Award was presented to Bernice Munsey, Director of the Foreign Service Educational and Counseling Center, by the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities at its 14th Annual International Conference in March.

Founder of the Virginia Association for Children with Learning Disabilities in 1968 to help meet the needs of one of her four children, Bernice later served for five years as a member of the Board of Directors of the national ACLD. During that time she coordinated the first meeting at The White House on Learning Disabilities and participated in meetings there on the gifted, on educational research and development, and on employment of the handicapped.

Bernice chaired the Education Committee of the Virginia Advisory Legislative Council study of the needs of all handicapped children and adults which proposed seven major laws benefiting the handicapped to the 1972 session of the Virginia General Assembly. All passed, including the law mandating the appropriate education of all handicapped children at public expense.



Bernice Munsey at AAFSW's March meeting.

FSI Workshop

The following courses have been scheduled by the Workshop for Foreign Service Families. To enroll, call or write the Workshop for Foreign Service Families, FSI, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520 (235-8771 or 235-8772).

June 1, 2 and 3: Family Living and Overseas Assignment Workshop. This three-day workshop focuses on ways to enhance family adaptability and strength in an overseas context. Topics include life cycles, parenting, stress management, effective listening and problem-solving communication techniques, drug and alcohol problems, language learning and community action planning.

June 13 - 24: Two-Week Seminar. Lecture and discussions on four areas — the current American scene, living in another culture, Foreign Service logistics, and personal planning. Sections on career planning, financial management, cross-cultural theory and coping with stress are included.

July 11 - 22: Two-Week Seminar

September 7: Re-entry Seminar. This one-day seminar defines many of the stresses experienced by members of the family returning to the United States from an overseas tour and demonstrates techniques for accelerating the family's adjustment to home assignment.

September 12 - 23: Two-Week Seminar

BUILDING PASS

The Department of State has issued the following notice to all employees:

"Lack of a building pass for spouses of employees is sometimes a handicap to those using the bank, DSRA, medical and housing services or the credit union.

"On individual request, the Department will issue a Polaroid pass authorizing entrance to the building during working hours (8:45 A.M. to 5:30 P.M.) five days a week for a year. Spouses of new employees entering on duty may be issued a building pass on request after the spouse employee is sworn in.

"Spouses wanting passes should state the reason in a written request to: Mr. Joseph E. Rosetti, A/SY/DO, Room 3811 NS, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520."

New Members

AAFSW extends a warm welcome to the following new members:

Mrs. Weir Brown (Vivian)
Mrs. Donald Edwards (Marion)
Mrs. George S. Herrmann (Gail)
Mrs. Robert Hubbell (Betty)
Ms. Charlotte M. Jones
Mrs. John P. Kennedy (Nancy)
Mrs. Harold Koeller (Alessandra)
Mrs. Samuel W. Lewis (Sallie)
Mrs. Lee Ralph Lohman (Mary)
Mrs. James D. Moffett (Beverly)
Mrs. John J. Muccio (Sheila)
Mrs. Emmett J. Murphy (Anne)
Mrs. Roger Swenson (Diana)
Mrs. Donald R. Tyson (Sydnee)
Mrs. Dennis Wood (Judith)