

PROGRAMS TO EASE MOVES ABROAD

FSI: Center for Overseas Briefing

"Oh, that's the street I'm going to live on....." exclaimed a young woman going on her first assignment as a secretary to Bucharest. She was looking at slides in FSI's newly opened Center for Overseas Briefing. The sunny room with files for each post, and a small but growing collection of slides and video tapes of some, is designed to help FSI students and others prepare for assignment with current information on at-post living facilities: housing, schools, health, recreation, opportunities for dependents. The Center is Director Joan Wilson's brainchild and headquarters for her, Barbara Hoganson and the Workshop for Foreign Service Families. It is patterned after the Canadian International Agency combined briefing and training center. In addition to Joan, Larry Dutton, Dean of the School of Area Studies at FSI, was particularly instrumental in its establishment.

Proto-type of things to be seen at the Center is a video-post report of Kabul which shows the market — complete with interesting faces, flies and long beans — typical housing, schools, offices, and recreational activities. The tape was shot and edited by Andre Jesequel, an AID audio-technician who visited Kabul to film a water project. Mike Guido, Chief, AID Operations Training Branch (see parallel story), told Joan that Jesequel would be in Kabul. Joan contacted Ambassador Ted Eliot who was ex-

cited about the idea of a viewable post-report and, because he would be away from post, passed the project on to DCM Ted Kerin. Kerin, along with GSO Michael Billick, worked with Jesequel on the writing and filming.

Requests have been sent to 200 posts to develop visual materials — either slides or video-tape — which can be available for individual or family viewing. To date they have been received from Berlin, Bilbao, Bucharest, Dar es Salaam, The Hague, Hamburg, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Nice, Ponta Delgada, Surabaya and Taipei, as well as Kabul. The effectiveness of the project is ultimately dependent on post responses. Picture takers unite, someone wants to look at your slides! In addition to these visual materials and post files which have been accumulated, the Center can arrange for film showings using AID and other movies.

Anyone who is going abroad or only thinks they might be is welcome to drop into the new Briefing Center for information. Those just back from the field are asked to stop in and share their experience. The Center is located in FSI, Room 400, 1400 Key Blvd., Arlington.

The Family Workshop continues to offer its regular training sessions. The next two-week seminar begins October 31. Call for reservations. The new number is 235-8784.

AID: Operations Training Branch

The specialized needs of technical personnel and their families who are being suddenly sent from a university or a county agent's office in the United States to a strangely different place abroad to work and live are uniquely met by AID's Operations Training Branch. "We want to get material in their hands in Bangor, Maine, or where ever they are", says Michael P. Guido, Chief of the office. Other AID personnel can also take advantage of this program which blends a general monthly training course with specific material put together for the particular family and assignment.

A packet of materials including information on packing, a Peace Corps Guide to Health, social usage, education of children abroad, jet fatigue and culture shock is mailed to employees and their families. Also provided is a copy of *Living Overseas* by Louise Winfield, "still the best book on the subject".

The training course has a one week introduction for all new-hired overseas bound employees. There is a one-week course for spouses running concurrently. This course is designed to promote effective living abroad. A second week on "Human Relations — Intercultural Communications" for employees may also be attended by spouses on a full time basis only. AID has recently gotten approval for 7 days' per diem for spouses *en route to post* to stop over in Washington in order to participate in training. Families already in Washington are not eligible for the per diem.

Additionally, the Operations Training Branch maintains a library of around 400 films covering the countries where AID has programs. Arrangements can be made for individuals to view any of these at their convenience.

Mike Guido has been involved in such training since 1964. He served in Beirut from 1952-58 where he was married. In 1958, the Guidos took a 2 month old child to Khartoum, Sudan, where they lived for 6 years. He travels regularly, recently returning from a trip to Bangkok, Manila and Korea. If he is not setting up films or running a session, Guido can often be found on the phone answering questions from someone in Iowa about the electricity in Ouagadougou.

Three Wife Consultants with long-time family living experience in various geographic areas are also part of the training program. Carrie Garufi has lived both in southeast Asia and South America. Myriam Sigler lived in Kenya and Mary Ploutz has experience in India and the middle east. These women alternate with the special sessions for spouses and are

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Participants in a recent English Training Seminar browse through Overseas Briefing Center files containing post reports and other information about U.S. Missions abroad. Visual aids are also available.