

MARCH 1978 NEWSLETTER



— Lisa M. Turnbull

MRS. CARTER ACCEPTS HONORARY MEMBERSHIP ATTENDS MEETING ON MENTAL HEALTH

Rosalyn Carter has accepted an honorary membership in the Association of American Service Women. She was our guest at the March meeting, a panel discussion on "Mental Health and Foreign Service Living: Issues and Answers". In accepting the membership from President Lesley Dorman, Mrs. Carter said she could well understand the stresses on Foreign Service families and was aware of the "lack of care" for these problems. She also cited the value of "natural support systems", clergy, friends and community. She is shown here listening to the panel. With her are, from the left, Sheila Mahon, Barbara Snow, Gay Vance, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Dorman, and Mary McGloin.

Peter Bourne, presidential assistant on health issues told over 400 members and guests that mental health problems should be given parity with physical ones by the government. "Some kind of long-term budgetary commitment is absolutely mandatory", the Wash-

ington Post's Donnie Radcliffe quoted him as saying. Bourne emphasized the need of understanding problems which can sometimes be avoided if people know the alternatives. Dr. Stephen Hersh of the National Institutes of Mental Health pointed out that there is no one way of coping. Coping varies with and depends on the individual, the couple, the family and the community and their interactions. At all levels, basic trust, mutual respect and a sense of purpose are vital. "Ambassadors must lead". Mary Louise Weiss recounted the growth of community action efforts at post since 1972. "Community action is the name of the game". She told of the *Malaysia Handbook*, written by Edith Bennett, which has been a prototype for some other posts. Janet Lloyd explained FLO. Representatives of other mental health support systems were available to answer questions. Lee Dane organized and moderated the program. Further questions on the subject may be addressed to her c/o AAFSW, P.O. Box 8068, Washington, D.C. 20024