

## New Deputy at FLO Named

Marilyn S. Holmes is the new Deputy Director of the Family Liaison Office, replacing Mette Beecroft who joined her husband on assignment to Germany.

Marilyn is more than qualified to understand and interpret Foreign Service life. She was a Foreign Service daughter, worked for USIA, married a Foreign Service Officer (also a Foreign Service son), and raised two Foreign Service children, Gerald, 16, and Katherine, 19.

Marilyn began a volunteer Family Liaison Office in Rome during their last posting, and that office later became one of the first official FLO's in the field.

A 20 year member of AAFSW, she served the Association in a number of capacities during Washington years — as Program Chairman from 1967-1970, and as FSECC Liaison from 1974-1977. She also served as Chairman of the FSECC Governing Committee.

Since their marriage, the Holmes have been posted to Younde, Cameroon; Rome, Italy (twice); and Paris, France. Prior to her marriage, Marilyn was Films Officer for USIA in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. She later worked in the educational documentary film industry in the United States, for Byron Films, Inc. making films primarily for educational television, again for USIA in their films division, and for MGM's Weekly Newsreel.



## AAFSW TESTIFIES AGAIN ON FS ACT

On December 16, 1979, representatives of AAFSW, at the invitation of the Senate, testified before a subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Relations on the Foreign Service Act of 1979.

Lesley Dorman, President of AAFSW, stated in her testimony before Senator Claiborne Pell, Chairman of the subcommittee, "We do not feel that it is appropriate for the AAFSW to take a position on the proposed Foreign Service Act of 1979 as a whole. We do feel that any new Act should fully recognize the unique sacrifices and adjustments required of Foreign Service families so as to make clear the justification for the Secretary's authority to help families in special ways."

One of the special ways Lesley pointed out included the continued funding of the Family Liaison Office in the Department of State. Going over the history that led to the formation of the FLO, she said, "Since the opening of the office in March 1978, FLO has been inundated with requests . . . In the past two weeks alone, they have dealt with hundreds of evacuees. FLO also operates the Skills/Talent Bank, a computerized record of spouse employment resumes. We are concerned that FLO might be cut back or eliminated under a different Secretary of State. Even now, FLO needs additional space and staff. Therefore, we urge Congress to incorporate the Family Liaison Office in the new Act to guarantee the continued existence of this valuable service."

Lesley told the Committee, "We are (also) concerned about the effects on families of OMB's proposed cuts in the current budget. The Congressionally-mandated Hayes Study shows that the lower and middle ranks of the Foreign Service receives lower pay than the Civil Service for equivalent work. Yet money for pay parity as well as funds for allowances already authorized by Congress would be denied. These costs will be ab-

sorbed by the family members, exacerbating family problems.

"Although an employee has the option to resign if family concerns so dictate, let us consider the costs to the system. Not only does it cost more than \$25,000 to test and train a new Foreign Service Officer, but the accelerated loss of seasoned employees with expertise, languages, and above all, personal contacts accumulated over the years, could become a hemorrhage of irreplaceable assets."

Lesley reiterated AAFSW's concern over inadequate career opportunities for Foreign Service wives, especially while abroad, and the resultant lack of financial security in case the Foreign Service wife is divorced.

She said, "In its response to the *Forum Report*, the Department of State posed the question of 'whether the Foreign Service, with its high international mobility and increasing demands on the time and energy of one family member, can accommodate the modern, highly-educated American family in which both parents work and both share parenting and homemaking responsibilities.' We feel that if the Foreign Service is to be truly representative of American society today, which is stated as one of the basic objectives of the proposed Act, then that accommodation must be made.

"Census figures show that two-thirds of married women in America are presently employed. It is clear that the American woman needs and expects to have a broad range of work choices and to be able to pursue a meaningful career. The Foreign Service spouse is concerned that long-term international mobility, combined with structural barriers to employment will continue to exclude her from establishing her own economic base through a career, or at a minimum, through recent work experience. Pressures for spouse employment will continue to mount and must be met with imaginative programs."