STAFF NEWS

January 1974

A SIXTH AND FINAL MEETING of the Committee of 20 has been announced for June 12-13, in Washington, to be preceded by sessions of the Deputies in March and May. The Committee "would aim to complete its work on the reform" at the June meeting, according to a communique published at the end of its January 17-18 session in Rome's Palazzo dei Congressi.

A number of important tasks were assigned by the Ministers to the Executive Directors, such as are likely to crowd the Board's calendar and intensify the work of the staff over coming months.

Mr. Witteveen had proposed that a temporary supplementary facility be established within the Fund to assist in the financial problems facing non-oil producing countries as a result of the increased cost of oil imports. The Committee agreed that this proposal "should be urgently explored."

The Committee also agreed that, for an interim period and without prejudice to the method of valuation to be adopted in the reformed system, it would be appropriate to base the valuation of the SDR on a "basket" of currencies. They invited the Executive Board to work urgently on the composition of a basket of currencies, the effective interest rate and other questions, with a view to early adoption by the Fund of this method of valuation.

The Executive Board was invited to prepare for the Board of Governors a draft resolution to create a new Committee to replace the Committee of 20 as an interim step pending the establishment of a Council of Governors. This suggestion for the structure of the Fund has also been put forward by the Fund's Management, following consultation within the Executive Board.

These were among the major decisions of a series of meetings which engaged not only the C-20 Ministers but also their Deputies, and the Ministers and Deputies of the Group of 24. Much of their discussion related to the financial effects of the current energy crisis, and the final communique urged that the Fund, the World Bank and other international organizations should cooperate in finding solutions.

The meetings in Rome were extensively reported and commented upon in the world press through the efforts of more than 100 journalists attracted to the scene. A number of informal press briefings were given by individual Ministers, culminating in a press conference by Ali Wardhana of Indonesia, Chairman of the Committee of 20, assisted by Jeremy Morse, the Chairman of the Deputies, and another given by Mr. Witteveen. In all, the meetings brought together over 200 delegates. The Fund contingent included, besides Mr. Witteveen and some of his Department Heads and other staff advisors, approximately 40 staff from Washington and six from the

Paris Office in various service capacities. Interpretation was given in English, French, Spanish, Italian and Japanese. (Photo taken at Nairobi C-20 meeting).

On January 17, the Italian authorities hosted a reception for those attending the meetings at the Capitoline Hill with dinner afterwards at the Banca d'Italia.

THE IMF INSTITUTE has sent out details of its 1974-1975 program to Governors and Alternate Governors, as well as to authorities in member countries who have requested details of the Institute's activities. The program consists of four courses on Financial Analysis and Policy, two in English and one each in Spanish and French; two, in English and Spanish, on Balance of Payments Methodology; and two courses, in English and French, on Public Finance. The courses are to begin in Ausust 1974 and will continue until July 1975. The closing date for applications for the first course in financial analysis and policy, which is to be conducted in French, is March 8. As in the past, the number of participants is restricted to about 25 for each course and participants will be selected from as wide a range of countries as possible. Housing accommodation is provided at the Concordia Building, which is on New Hampshire Avenue near the Fund.

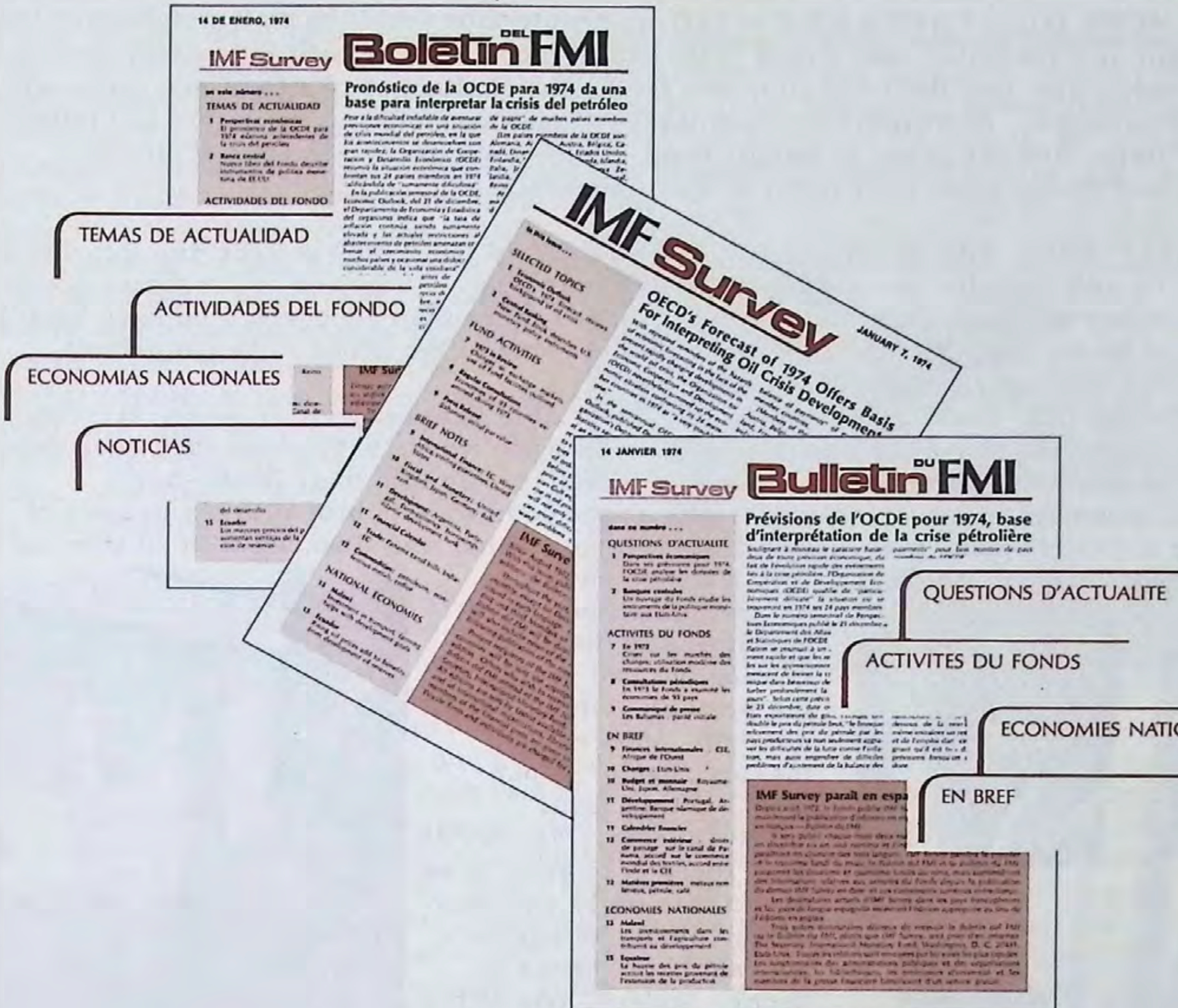
REQUESTS ARE FLOWING IN daily from Lomé and La Paz, Paris and Madrid, Algiers and Bogotá, Quebec and Santiago, Brussels and Vientiane, for subscriptions to the Bulletin du FMI and Boletín del FMI, the new French and Spanish editions of the IMF Survey.

With the start of publication of these two new editions on January 14, the Fund became the first agency in the U.N. family to offer a periodical in three languages appearing as often as twice monthly. Invitations to subscribe to the French and Spanish editions went to potential new readers picked from the ranks of financial officials in governments and international agencies, academicians, bankers, business executives, and the press.

The process of building a carefully-controlled circulation -- aiming for about 5,000, both in French and Spanish, by the end of 1974, in addition to a distribution of 13,000 in English -- is being carried out jointly by the Communications Division and the Information Office. It is the latest step in preparations that began last year when the Executive Board decided to make the IMF Survey more readily accessible to readers in French-and Spanish-speaking countries.

Production of the Bulletin du FMI and the Boletín del FMI is a joint effort of the Information Office and the Bureau of Language Services. The assignment to BLS goes beyond merely producing a translation of the IMF Survey to be published a week later. Rather, in keeping with the goal of making the Bulletin du FMI and the Boletín del FMI as timely as the IMF Survey, BLS is asked to produce translations of news developments, especially those concerning the Fund, during the week before it goes to press. All three editions are printed and mailed over weekends, and are delivered in many capitals on the Monday and Tuesday following the Friday that they go to press.

To manage this demanding task, J.S. Haszard, Director of BLS, assigned Simon de la Renaudière, a reviser-translator in the French Division, and Antonio Medrano, a reviser-translator in the Spanish Section, as regular revisers, respectively, for the French and Spanish editions. As Editorial Officer for the two new editions in the Information Office, Carmen Etcheberry, a translator with 3 years' experience in the Spanish Section, was recruited from BLS. General supervision of the French and Spanish editions in the Information Office has been assigned to Pierre de Fontnouvelle, an Assistant Editor of the IMF Survey, who was chief of the French Division of BLS before joining the Information Office staff four years ago.



In addition to timeliness, a requirement set by the Executive Directors was that the French and Spanish editions should preserve the graphic style of the IMF Survey. This assignment was given to Robert Frederick and Armando Vaccari, graphics artists on the IMF Survey staff. Mr. Frederick designed the English edition, and adapted its graphics to the Bulletin du FMI and Boletín del FMI.

All three editions are airmailed without charge to government and international agency officials, libraries, university professors, and financial journalists, and with a charge for delivery to businesses, commercial banks, and private individuals. The Information Office (ext. 5682) welcomes suggestions of persons outside the Fund with an interest in news and features of its activities and field of interest. Delivery of the new editions for use within the Fund, either on an ad hoc or regular basis, can be arranged through Documents Distribution (ext. 3015).

PETER ENGSTROM (right) has been elected Chairman of the Staff Association Committee following the resignation of Joseph Keyes for reasons of work. Geoffrey Tyler was elected to replace Mr. Engstrom as Vice-Chairman of the Committee. In his letter of January 7 expressing his "deep regret" in relinguishing his post, Mr. Keyes said that "the pressure of mission work ... precludes my serving." He will continue to be a member of the Committee.

STAFF NEWS WILL CARRY REPORTS from time to time sent in by staff members on long-term field assignments, describing their experiences in their overseas posts and the way in which they and their families are facing the challenges of life in new and exciting surroundings. In November, Poul Høst-Madsen reported on the trials and tribulations of importing his piano to Bangladesh. Below, Victor Sertic tells of life in Liberia and Hyong Chun Kim reports from Indonesia.

NOW THAT THEY ARE IN THEIR SECOND YEAR of their stay in Liberia, Mr. Sertic writes, he and his wife are well settled into their post. "Supplies of consumer goods, largely imported from Europe and the U.S., are more than adequate", he says happily. "Tropical fruits we buy from girl vendors who come to the house - the grapefruit, especially, are delicious."

The Sertics' house in Monrovia is comfortable with central, if noisy, air-conditioning. They also have a house-boy to help with the work, with whom they have developed a very cordial relationship. They even had to step into their house-boy's personal financial managements schemes at one point to help him with his project of building a zinc-roofed, mat-walled frame house, which was financed with an interest-

free advance on his salary. The house-boy is now living in the house, renting out two rooms at the princely sum of $7.00 a month apiece and making regular repayments on his loan.

In Liberia, Mr. Sertic has found it is easy to be drawn into other persons' money plans, either as guarantor or lender or donor. Indeed, one of his lending operations could even unintentially lead to a net increase in family assets. Since their arrival, he and his wife had regularly been visited by "Charlies", as the traders in African artifacts are called. Occasionally, he himself entered into the market and found that his powers of bargaining steadily improved as time went on. One day a Charlie asked for a loan to pay the customs duty on a new shipment, and offered a bag of his merchandise as security. Eventually, Mr. Sertic agreed to lend him a sum which was considerably below the market value of his merchandise. "After all", he recalls, "I wanted to get my money back." He is still holding the goods today, however, and the Charlie has not tried to redeem them.

Power failures occur regularly in Monrovia -- usually, it seems, just before the Ambassador and the Minister are due to arrive for dinner. Calling the emergency number may, if one is lucky, lead to the power being restored in minutes. But, Mr. Sertic says, some of their friends have been left without power for over 40 hours and forced to transfer all their frozen food to the Sertics' freezer. The mail, too, can play tricks. "All at once I received six letters sent by the Fund over a period of two months," Mr. Sertic says. "That was one week after Mr. Schweitzer had ended his West African tour, and one of the letters told me all I had to know about his visit to Liberia."

But there is some time to relax despite all the activity. The Sertics reported: "We have visited the two most popular scenic attractions in the country, the large expanse of Lake Piso in the west of the country (below, right), and the Nimba mountains in the North. Otherwise, there is only limited scope for any pleasure trips by car, since Liberia has only 300 miles of paved roads. It is, however, an exciting experience to fly in a small plane across country over the bush and the forest, or along the sea coast." Also, they find, "The social life is absorbing and covers the full range of activity from highly official functions to quiet informal dinner parties, with or without dancing -- and with or without air conditioning! A few of these parties ended in animated discussion with our Liberian guests when opinions were exchanged freely in a warm and relaxed manner and when we suddenly found we had made new friends -- friends who like to joke, who love to laugh, and whom we very much appreciate ..."

LIFE IN INDONESIA reminds Mr. Kim of an old proverb from his home country of Korea -- "Seeing something once is better than hearing about it a hundred times."

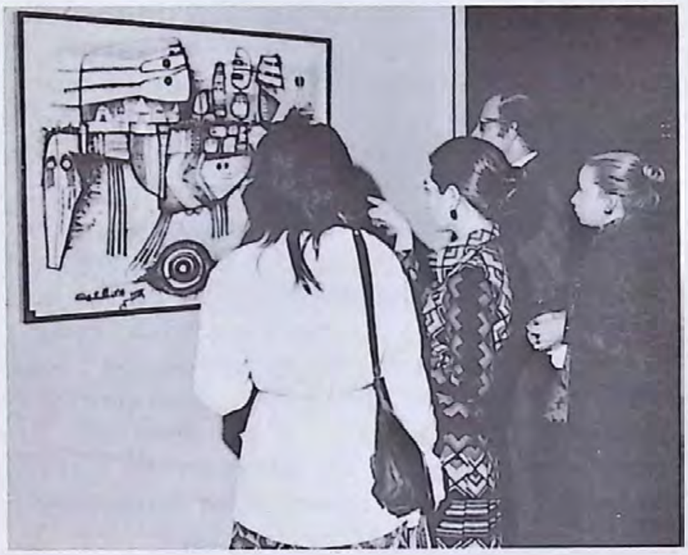
Mr. Kim has now been serving in Djakarta as Assistant Resident Representative for the Fund since March 1972, and he recalls that before he, his wife and two children arrived there they had the impression that the weather would be almost unbearably hot and uncomfortable. However, they were relieved to find that this is not the case at all -- indeed the weather is much better than what they had become used to in Washington or Korea, especially during the summer. They were also pleasantly surprised that the people in Indonesia generally appear well-dressed and fed, particularly considering the present per capita GNP, which is still low. Moreover, they have found few problems with the language, since after they had been in Djakarta only a few months Mr. Kim's son began acting as a proficient interpreter.

The same precept of "seeing is believing" also applies to his official duties, Mr. Kim says. "Only by working with 'real' debit and credit entries in the balance sheet of of the central bank and by becoming involved with the daily operations of the Ministry of Finance," he comments, "can one have a 'real' feeling for the concept of reserve base or money supply, of the intimate financial relationship between central bank and commercial banks, or between the central bank and the Government, and really study the scope and effectiveness of monetary and fiscal policies and their impact on the country's balance of payments."

The Kims are still frequently surprised at the relatively slow pace of life in Djakarta and impressed by the fact that human virtues are still valued more than purely monetary returns. They sometimes feel a little isolated too, in their far-off post. "Being far away from a center of international activities", he says, "it is a bit difficult for us to keep in touch with such events as the continuing discussion on international monetary reform or to have a sense of the depth of the energy crisis facing the developed world. Sometimes, we also miss the Washington Post, tender beef steaks, and a telephone system that can connect you with anyone or anywhere instantly."

PIERRE-PAUL SCHWEITZER was recently appointed chairman of Banque Ameribas, S.A., a merchant bank based in both Luxembourg and Paris. The bank, which was established in 1971 and has a current capitalization of $24 million, is jointly owned by the Bank of America and the Banque des Paris et des Pays Bas. Mr. Schweitzer succeeds Pierre Haas, an Executive Vice-President of the Banque de Paris, as Chairman of Banque Ameribas.

GEORGINA BEIER'S whimsical oils, drawings and silk-screens, which are the subject of the Art Society's current exhibition on display in the second floor court, reflect a strong influence of primitive art. This is not surprising. Although she was born in London, the artist has lived in both Nigeria and New Guinea. In Nigeria, she founded the Oshogbu Artists Workshop in 1963, which produced the well-known "Oshogbu Group", and in Port Moresby, New Guinea she initiated the Center for Creative Arts at the University there from which the first professional New Guinea artists sprang. On her return to Nigeria in 1971, she founded the "Design Workshop", which is intended to restore an awareness of Nigeria's unique design tradition. One outgrowth of the center is the Museum of Yoruba Pottery in Ife, which was opened last December. In addition to a wide range of graphic production, Ms. Beier has been commissioned to paint murals in such exotic settings as the palace of the Olotan of Otan and for Chief Ovia Idah's residence in Benin City, Nigeria. The present exhibition, which opened on January 17, will remain in place until February 22. Our pictures show (above) Jean K. Wolford, a close friend of the artist, greeting John Gunter, President of the Art Society, and (right) some of those who came to the opening viewing one of the works on display.



Further information on any of the works on display may be obtained from either Sigrid Vollerthun on ext. 4875, or Ms. Wolford on 244-6094. Those interested in membership of the Art Society should contact the Secretary of the Society, Jean Boyd, on ext. 5242.

VISITORS TO THE FUND. A group of Brazilian economists and financial writers visited the Fund on January 18. Their questions on Fund activities and operations were answered by Carl Blackwell, Chief, Current Studies Division, Research Department, and Martin Koelle, Chief Information Officer, with translation into Portuguese handled by Denise Ford of the Western Hemisphere Department, who is herself a Brazilian.

On January 23, 26 members of the Montgomery Country Teachers Workshop visited the Fund. Rasheed Khalid, Chief, Budget Division, Fiscal Affairs Department, briefed the party, who were mainly interested in the relationship between political and monetary affairs. The visit was organized by Mrs. Sirry, the widow of Mohammed Sirry, who died last October. Mr. Sirry was a Senior Economist in the Fiscal Affairs Department and a close friend of Mr. Khalid.

New Members Of Fund Staff


Mrs. Monique Buhler
France - OED


Ms. Sheila Chaudhry
Canada - AFR


Miss Jean Curtis
Jamaica - WHD


Mr. Hema R. De Zoysa
Sri Lanka - FAD


Miss Emerita G. Ignacio
Philippines - TRE


Mr. Maurice Kerby
Haiti - BLS


Mr. Ernest Klimonda
U.S.A. - ADM


Miss W. Anne Palfrey
U.K. - OED


Mr. Oystein Pettersen
Norway - INST


Mr. James R. Wein
U.S.A. - EUR


Miss Jean West
U.K. - ADM


Ms. Valerie A. Wohl
U.S.A. - ADM


Mr. Charles Woolridge
U.S.A. - ADM

THE CAMERA CLUB's fourth meeting of the season, held on January 15, was marked by the largest number -- 140 -- of entries for a monthly competition in the Club's history. Mr. Morris Graff of the Silver Spring Camera Club judged the entries. Winners were: Class AA: 1. Carlo Rietveld (Bank); 2 and 3 Harold Shipman (Bank); 4 Colette Leroy (Fund); Class A: 1 Malise Dick (Bank); 2 David DeRoche (brother of Fund staff member); 3 Hugh Chambers (Fund); 4 Rosalia Caracino (Fund); 5 Charles Goor (Bank); Class B: 1 Herbert Wright (Fund husband); 2 Kunio Kikuchi (Bank); 3 Sally Carlson (Fund wife); 4 Etsuko Murakami (Bank); 5 and 6 Bart Bussink (son of Bank staff member).

The Annual Photographic Exhibition, which will open on March 5th in the Atrium, is now in preparation. All staff are invited to attend the opening.

THE FUND/BANK SKI CLUB's first trip of the season took members and their friends to Whiteface Mountain near Lake Placid for four days of skiing over the New Year's weekend. 46 optimistic skiers boarded the bus on Friday night, defying the gas shortage, speed limits and very gloomy reports on snow and ski conditions. There was much grass and little snow on the slopes when they arrived Saturday morning, but nothing dampened the enthusiasm of the group, and after a hearty breakfast experts and beginners alike were on the slopes at 11:00 a.m. sharp. Such determination in the face of very depressing skiing conditions greatly impressed the snowmakers and weatherman, and their combined efforts had the slopes covered with snow to everybody's delight by Monday morning. The New Year was greeted noisily and energetically within the cozy walls of the Cloudspin Inn. Since dancing is, as everybody knows, an essential exercise for tired ski-legs, this activity continued until the early morning hours, topping off a very pleasant weekend.

TWENTY-FIVE YEAR STAFF. Mrs. Nell S. Belair, Secretarial Assistant, Office of Executive Directors, commemorated twenty-five years of service with the Fund in January.

MARRIAGES. Miss Alice O. Encarnacion, Legal Department, was married to Mr. Carlito R. Penalosa on December 8, 1973; Miss Lynda A. Wolz, Bureau of Statistics, was married to Mr. Jerry F. Hinkle on December 15; and Mr. Kimiaki Nakajima, Fiscal Affairs Department, was married to Miss Yuki Iino on December 22.

BABIES. A daughter, Barteline Aster, was born on November 2, 1973, to Mr. and Mrs. Sijbren Cnossen; a daughter, Muna, was born on November 26, to Mr. and Mrs. Izzeldin I. Hassan; a daughter, Paola, was born on December 28, to Mr. and Mrs. Luis A. Tassara; and a boy Abdullah, was born on December 28, to Mr. and Mrs. Ghulam H. Jewayni.

HUIBERT PONSEN, will be leaving his post as Senior Advisor, European Department, at the end of the month to take up a position as Director of General Financial and Economic Policy at the Ministry of Finance in The Hague in his native Netherlands. He came to the Fund in November 1950 as an Economist in the then-European and North American Department. In January 1957, he was appointed Assistant Chief, British Commonwealth Division in the European Department; in January 1961, Chief, Western European Division; in January 1965, Assistant Director in the European Department; and in January 1966 he was promoted Senior Advisor. Mr. Ponsen received his diploma in 1940 from the Institut Kuyper in Amsterdam. Before joining the Fund he worked in De Twentsche Bank, Amsterdam, and, among other posts, as Economics and Finance Editor of the newspaper Het Vrije Volk. He is married and has two sons.

GERTRUD LOVASY, who retired from the Fund at the end of 1965 after 21 years of service, died on January 9. Miss Lovasy joined the Fund in August 1946 as one of the first economists on the staff of the Research Department. At the time of her retirement, she held the position of Advisor. Since her retirement, Miss Lovasy worked as a Consultant in the Economic Analysis and Projections Department of the World Bank. A memorial service was held in the Atrium on Friday, January 25, at 4:30 in the afternoon which was attended by many of Miss Lovacy's friends and colleagues.

BRIDGE CLUB. After a fortnightly break over the holidays, the Bridge Club resumed its 1973/74 Cup Competition on January 8. It will conclude in April with the presentation of the Club's silver trophy.

AN EXERCISE ROOM, with a variety of physical fitness equipment, sauna and shower stalls is being readied on the concourse level, room C-109, for use by Fund staff. Details will be made available soon.

CAR POOL LOCATOR SERVICE. Staff are reminded that locator services are available in room 6-320, and on the first floor of the old Fund building across the street. All staff are encouraged to avail themselves of the service.

STAFF **NEWS**

Published monthly by the Information Office of the International Monetary Fund Washington, D.C. 20431