staff news
INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1986

WASHINGTON REVISITED: THE MEETINGS RETURN

Presidents, vice-presidents, and prime ministers figured among the 12,000-plus delegates, staff, press, guests, and visitors who registered for the 41st Joint Annual Meetings of the Fund and the Bank this year. Indeed, what with a prince from Luxembourg, aristocrats from a number of other European countries, and dignitaries from all over the world, you could indeed be excused if you were to confuse the attendees with a global who's who. At one point the appearance of three presidents (Reagan of the United States, Barco of Colombia, and Conable of the World Bank) together with two Secretaries (Van Houtven of the Fund and Thahane of the Bank) on the podium at the same time prompted one wag to observe that this was the next best thing to a "full house" in poker.

The first intimation that the meetings were fast approaching was the establishment of the initial registration desk in the main lobby of the Fund on September 15. Desks had mysteriously appeared over the weekend, camera booths were set up, and by 9 am that morning computers and laser printers (to print the badges) had been switched on, and die-punches and laminators (to assemble the badges in finished form) warmed up, ready to hum once the first staff members and Executive Directors presented themselves.

For ten days this initial registration operation processed the credentials and produced the badges Fund and Bank staff members and Executive Directors and their staffs needed to attend the meetings. The registration workers had, in addition, to suffer the slings and arrows of outraged staff who thought they should be attending the meetings, but whose Departments felt otherwise.

On September 25 everything, in terms of registration, swung into high gear as the Group of 24 Deputies started their meetings. magnetometers–those latter-day versions of the Arc de Triomphe--were erected in the main lobby of the Fund and all registering delegates had to pass through them before they could obtain their badges. Press registration and the Press Room cranked into gear in the IMF Visitors' Center, and the main

In plenary session: Fund Managing Director Jacques de Larosière, Fund Secretary Leo van Houtven, Meetings Chairman César Gaviria Trujillo (who succeeded V. Barco), Bank Secretary Timothy Thahane, and Bank President Barber Conable.

The Managing Director: In a pensive moment during the Annual Meetings.

registration desks were opened at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. To say that three separate registration operations were a nightmare is somewhat of an understatement, especially as concurrent registration of guests and visitors at the hotel was also underway. But "Registration Supremo" Michael Dennison and his organizing cadre of Bill Grundy and Marian Rozak, supported by the Computer Divisions centurioned by Claudio Artigas-Gomez, ensured that after a couple of minor false starts the whole operation went smoothly.

A constant undercurrent running through the meetings was the surprise announcement by Managing Director de Larosière that he would leave the Fund by the end of the year. Although he had informed the Executive Board in advance of the meetings, the public announcement was not made until his formal address to the meetings at the opening session on September 30. The world's press, of course, had considerable advance notice of this impending announcement and along with the policy issues to be discussed by the various ministerial committees, the possible successor to the MD captured world headlines before the meetings even started. According to the early handicappers, Dutch Finance Minister H. Onno Ruding and Banque de France Governor Michel Camdessus were the front-runners. At press time no consensus had been reached.

While the corridors were buzzing with speculation over the possible successor to the Managing Director, the more mundane business of the meetings proceeded. The Chairman's Reception--that "intimate party" for 6,000 guests--went ahead as scheduled at the Sheraton Washington, and as the ministerial meetings of the Interim and Development Committees wound down, the staff initially assigned to headquarters started to move up to the hotel.

The biggest logistical headache (after preparing all the hotel rooms as offices for delegations) for the Joint Secretariat was transferring, overnight, the Press Room from the Visitors' Center to the hotel. In less than eight hours, some 200 typewriters, facsimile machines, and other equipment had to be gathered up, loaded on trucks, transported, and installed in the cavernous Exhibit Hall "A" at the Sheraton Washington. Needless to say, the Joint Secretariat team under the direction of George Kyritsopoulos had everything under control. The Press Room at the Fund closed at midnight on September 29 and by 6:30 am the next day everything was set and ready to go at the hotel.

For many of the staff who have been working at the Annual Meetings for a number of years, returning to the Sheraton Washington, after a year away at the ritzy, Far-East modern architecture of the Seoul Hilton, was rather like slipping back into a comfortable old pair of shoes. Somewhat faded, but it reminded one of home. Seoul was fun, but different. It looked great--dazzling, in fact--but its shortcomings became apparent with greater familiarity. The dear old Sheraton Washington, on the other hand, with its five-year-old refurbishment fast fading, was rather reassuring.

Gone was the Xanadu disco from Seoul, but the Early Light and the "Pit" were familiar and comfortable places for rest and relaxation when a day's work was done. The terrible food and exorbitant prices had not deserted the Sheraton Washington. They were only a dim memory until you took the back elevator from the Park Tower Garage to the main hotel. There, glowering at you when you first exited onto the eighth floor, were the same terrible house ads, vivid reminders of the overpriced and undernourishing restaurants that abound in the Sheraton Washington. $1.25 cups of coffee, $1.75 Danish, and $5.25 roast beef sandwiches. It made a number of those present fondly remember the eateries in the basement of the Daewoo building in Seoul, where a complete lunch might cost about $1.25, providing you could point and gesture in a way the staff, who only spoke Korean, could understand. (If you couldn't, though, there was usually someone in the vicinity whose help you could enlist.)

It is, of course, impossible to acknowledge everyone who contributes to making the meetings such a success year after year, and those who have not received mention should not feel slighted. It is to the immense credit of all those unsung heroes in both the Fund and the Bank that the meetings run so smoothly each year. They make the meetings what they are.

Graham Newman

STANDING ON PRINCIPLE
AN INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES SISSON

"I was walking down the hall two years ago," Charles Sisson recalls with a wry smile, "and a fellow asked me if I would like to run for the Staff Association. I said sure, why not." It has been a tumultuous two years for the staff, and the Staff Association. As he leaves office, Charles Sisson reflects on SAC's accomplishments during his term and on his concerns for the future.

What lies ahead on the salary question?

Within our limited power to affect things, I think the Staff Association has been pretty successful these past two years. In general we have raised the level of awareness within the staff and the Board. This has given more weight to our arguments and has helped management and the Executive Directors focus on the implications of their policies.

There have been practical successes, too. One very positive development--and I think our contribution was important--was distribution of the set-aside amounts from the 1984 Compensation Review and the grandfathering provisions relating to the job grading exercise. I would also argue that we had, after long negotiations, a very positive input in the establishment of an appeals process.

There have been major frustrations, of course. The most difficult was our decision to endorse the recommendation in the 1986 Compensation Review for a lower increase for A1-A8 staff. We took the position that there is an agreed compensation system, and it is in our interest to maintain it, even if the results aren't quite what we would like. Had we not stood on principle, and just clamored for more, we would have lost the support of management when the Board voted to defer the increase. As it is, we have a very good chance the issue will be resolved before the end of the year. The efforts organized by SAC to inform Governors of Fund salary issues haven't hurt either.

I think we deserved the 1986 salary increase, and now, perhaps with some delays, we will get it. That doesn't mean there still aren't problems or that staff haven't received a reduction in real wages over the last three years, but at least the system we agreed to and thought we were operating under all along has been preserved and that, I think, is worth something.

Besides a Board reconsideration of the 1986 Compensation Review, the outcome of the report of the Joint Committee on Staff Compensation in 1987 is *the* major issue. The annual increment is important, but an adjustment of the principles guiding staff compensation could have a far greater impact on staff salaries. The recently announced delay in its recommendations until late 1987 may help us, but it is hard to tell yet. The exchange rate has really moved against the U.S. dollar in the last year, so that Fund salaries are not really competitive against European standards at this point. This should help us, but I would see Mr. de Larosière's departure as a negative development.

The key to the compensation issue remains the U.S. comparators. There seems to be a great deal of talk about widening the scope of the comparators. To me that means diluting the quality of the comparators, because the current comparators are top-flight firms. This attitude is distressing, particularly since the Articles of Agreement mandate that we hire an international staff of the highest caliber. It would be one thing if the countries all got together and said, 'ah yes, we don't need a Fund of this standard any more; circumstances have changed; we will amend the Articles.' But the focus seems to be more on ways to cut salaries than on what these cuts will cost in terms of productivity and the quality of work.

We also hear complaints that the present system of matching and sampling individual jobs is very expensive, and it would be so much cheaper and simpler to just go to a data bank, such as that operated by Hay, and match jobs on an aggregate basis. There are two practical problems, however: (1) the Hay data bank includes a lot of firms that don't have an equivalent stature to the Fund, so the matches might not be relevant, and (2) I'm still troubled by the Hay pointing as it was done here at the Fund.

I'm convinced (and I know there are people in this institution that will argue equally vehemently that I'm wrong) that there was a difference between the 1984 and 1986 exercises, and that the Hay pointing done in 1986 by the Fund was much more conservative than the one done in 1984 by the Hay Associates themselves. Now those that would argue I'm wrong would say there is an internal adjustment mechanism which corrects for this problem. Hay Associates don't just go through their data bank and compare Hay points, but have a means of (and I use this term intentionally) "massaging" the data, so that a more equitable comparison can be made between our Hay points and somebody else's Hay points. I'm sorry, but that prospect troubles me. The thought that somewhere someone applies a sort of scaling factor to determine whether I'm adequately paid doesn't reassure me that the comparison will be fair, particularly when the variation in Hay points between 1984 and 1986 is 20 percent in some cases.

There has been criticism of SAC--that it isn't realistic.

In his meeting with the U.S. staff, Mr. Dallara was directly critical of SAC; he said he had asked us for specific suggestions on what benefits, for example, could be re-examined. But I don't think it is our role to find ways to reduce the benefits of Fund staff. If there was a really sincere interest in restructuring staff salaries, and if there were exceptional and unfair benefits, then we could perhaps work together more closely. But it just seems over the years there has been a pattern of cutting and trying to cut. To work together and find some common ground only to have it subsequently undercut by further pressures doesn't seem to be a very productive way to proceed.

I don't think SAC has been unrealistic at all. SAC took a very controversial position when it supported the 1986 Compensation Survey results. We realize that political pressure to cut salaries does not emanate simply from a few people in the U.S. Treasury. These concerns are fairly widely accepted in the U.S. We also have to understand there is genuine concern in several other member countries. What we need to do is to educate our member countries so that they can appreciate the role of the Fund and quality of the work being done. In this regard, I really appreciated the references to the staff's commitment and the quality of its work in the MD's Annual Meetings speech. I think that was very helpful.

We want Fund members to understand the implications of their actions. We can't stop them from changing the Fund by changing the nature of its staff. The best we can do as a Staff Association is try to educate them and point out that there are implications of their actions. Do they really want to change the Articles of Agreement? Do they want to replicate the U.S. Civil Service at the Fund? What I hear in discussions with Executive Directors makes me think not. If people assume the decisions really are not all that important, and don't think about their ramifications for the staff and the institution ten years from now, then we are in a lot of trouble.

What do you see as the long-term implications of the job grading exercise for the staff?

The job grading exercise has been, to my mind, an attempt to do something about staff salaries. It started out as a career development exercise and got sidetracked. The staff was disappointed by this change in focus and not encouraged by the results. The proportion of downgraded staff in the parallel exercise over at the World Bank was much lower and of upgraded staff much higher, you remember. As a result of these frustrations, the number of people appealing this job grading exercise, 25 percent, is extraordinarily high.

You can argue that this percentage is high because people have nothing to lose, but this is a very conservative institution and people just don't do that sort of thing without some provocation. They are really showing some deep concern. We *should* be worrying about staff morale. I think the MD is aware of the problem. He has asked departments to respond to a memo SAC sent him earlier this summer expressing our concerns over staff morale and work levels in the Fund, and we hope this discussion will be useful in expanding the awareness of staff issues.

Then, too, throughout the job grading exercise we have been very focused on the negative side, the immediate problems with it. But what about retraining? If you enter the Fund at 27, what are you going to do for the next 30 years? Mr. Erb has indicated that the job grading exercise is a three-step process. First establish a data base, then put people in it, and finally worry about the career evolution aspect. We have gone through the first two stages, but we're still waiting for the third. And that's the most important to my mind. I would hope,

Charles Sisson addresses a mass meeting of the staff.

when all this settles down, that there will be some of the long-term advantages of career planning and job specification that Mr. Erb hoped for. The first thing to do, though, is to make sure the job grading exercise is seen to be fair; that is why the appeals system is so very important.

In all the disturbance over compensation and job grading, though, several positive steps may emerge. One particularly important one is the administrative tribunal. The Grievance Committee was a significant step forward in terms of protecting staff rights. But in terms of an independent body to review the actions of the Fund, the Grievance Committee is inadequate, and an administrative tribunal can be very, very important. An administrative tribunal would presumably have the right, for instance, to consider the action taken on the 1986 Compensation Review. I'm most hopeful we are going to have the tribunal in the near future.

There have been other areas of progress, small perhaps, but progress. We had a lot of problems over the job grading exercise, and unfortunately it was difficult to criticize that exercise without somehow criticizing Administration. But we are getting a bit further away from the job grading exercise now and Administration, to its credit, is recognizing that the staff is really under pressure and that recent developments have been hard on morale. Administration is trying to find ways to help the staff--within its need to contain costs.

Some of the revisions of the GAOs, for instance, have provided greater flexibility for the staff. In response to a staff poll that indicated a 3 to 1 majority in favor of taking the day after Thanksgiving as leave instead of Veterans' Day, the holiday schedule was changed. I should also mention the changes made in the vacancy list. It has been about three years in evolution, but announcing vacancies in the A8-A14 ranges has opened up the number of jobs known to be vacant. A pretty limited aspect of career development, you might say, but nonetheless one that provides staff members with better information on the available alternatives.

Do you have any advice for the incoming SAC?

Well, to be effective you do have to be able to speak your mind without being irresponsible and you do have to stand your ground. There is a tendency to just want more, and I think that doesn't help very much. But to have reasonable aspirations and to be unafraid to pursue them is very important.

On compensation and benefits, holding ground would be a great achievement, given the present climate. The advice given to me when I came in was that if there is so much direct pressure on compensation, perhaps the staff ought to consider alternative forms of total compensation--benefits and so on. My experience is that there's not much scope for that. But there can be some reorientation of the benefits. We have tried to work on the health benefits and a few other areas, and there can be some restructuring to improve them within overall cost containment.

So much of SAC's work is done quietly, behind the scenes, and the line to take depends on the circumstances at the time. There really is pressure on the Fund, the Fund staff. I do think staff have more freedoms than they did five or six years ago in terms of access to performance reports and recourse to the Ombudsman, Grievance Committee, and in a career sense, from the mobility program. I think all of these things have been positive steps in making the institution less rigid. But there are an awful lot of unhappy people at the moment, for a variety of reasons. I've come to realize just how important the SAC is in providing effective checks and balances and in providing the individual staff member with a voice. It's a tough job--in fact, it's a very tough job--but it's worth trying.

THE IMF'S COMPASSIONATE FUND

Though very nearly 35 years old--nearly as old the IMF itself--the Compassionate Fund is still possessed of a profile so low that many staff know little or nothing about it. Established by staff to help fellow staff in emergency situations, the Compassionate Fund has been quiescent in recent years. Diminished need? Perhaps. But it may be that the staff who might need its assistance simply do not know of its existence.

The Compassionate Fund was originally designed to provide small grants to staff faced with urgent personal needs not covered by the Fund's administrative facilities. It has been a source of emergency funds in natural disasters, helping staff, for instance, who lost property in the flooding that hit Washington after Hurricane Agnes. But in the normal course of its work the Compassionate Fund is more likely to hear, and respond to, individual cases--cases in which unforeseen circumstances temporarily overwhelm a staff member's financial resources.

The current head of the Compassionate Fund, Walter Habermeier, observes that the IMF as the employer "can make loans against security for education, for a house, and the like, but it does not make interest-free loans or gifts of needed funds, even if the money is later returned."

Certain major expenses, such as those related to illness, are usually covered by insurance. "But," Mr. Habermeier finds, "there can be other situations where there is a sudden expense due to a death in the family. There may be mismanagement of personal affairs. There could be a divorce where an enormous amount of money could be consumed. Very often these are sad stories."

"Such cases have been relatively rare in the Fund, a testament to the fact," Mr. Habermeier feels, "that Fund staff not only manage the affairs of the Fund well but also manage their own affairs very well." But staff do occasionally find themselves in circumstances beyond their control. And the Compassionate Fund is meant to help them bridge this troubled period, to help them re-establish themselves financially. The money may eventually be returned--this in fact helps replenish the Compassionate Fund's modest resources--but repayment is not a condition of the assistance except in rare cases.

The earliest proposals for a compassionate fund, Sir Joseph Gold recalls, grew out of an Executive Board review of personnel policies in 1950. The initial proposal envisaged a compassionate fund fully financed by the IMF and administered by the MD. The Board ultimately opted to improve existing benefits (including accelerated home leave in emergencies) and the idea of a compassionate fund remained dormant until 1952, when it was raised again by the then newly formed Staff Association Committee. SAC endorsed the concept of a compassionate fund, although in its initial proposal it, too, saw the fund being administered by the MD.

The June 23, 1952 SAC memorandum, which was to become the basis for the Compassionate Fund's operations, settled, however, upon three trustees--senior staff--to administer it. "This memorandum," Sir Joseph remembers, "proposed the creation of a compassionate fund with voluntary contributions from the staff. The idea of an Executive Board contribution through the budget was rejected. This should be the creature of the staff itself, contributed by the staff voluntarily, and administered by the delegates of the staff." Sir Joseph, one of the first trustees named, quickly became its most active member, and remained its leading force until well into the mid-1970s.

The Compassionate Fund was intended to be a small, informal, low-key effort and years of experience have not altered this. Both Sir Joseph and Mr. Habermeier attest to the simplicity and directness of the proceedings. To apply for assistance, a staff member need only approach one of the trustees (in addition to Mr. Habermeier, the current trustees are Gerard Teyssier and J.B. Zulu).

Staff, Mr. Habermeier notes, "can turn to any one of the trustees, by making an appointment, by phoning, or by writing a note. In some cases the Director of Administration has been alerted first, either by the staff member or by someone else. But it is always up to the staff member to take the initiative. Our first step will be to interview the staff member personally. After that, with the agreement of the applicant, the matter would be brought to the board of trustees. When we meet we have no records, we just discuss the case and we come to a conclusion on how to help. We communicate this to the person concerned. If the person agrees, I instruct the keeper of the funds, who is an accountant in the Treasurer's Department, to disburse the grant. Only a few persons in the IMF know about this. Confidence is very important."

In some instances the process itself has offered the solution. "Most of the staff who have come to us," Mr. Habermeier finds, "are happy simply to have someone give them some advice. I have had two or three situations where after our discussion the staff members involved decided they could make do on their own. There was no longer need for the money."

But there is concern that perhaps some needs are not being met. "There may be some staff," Mr. Habermeier feels, "who would rather struggle on their own than turn to their colleagues. But perhaps with a bit more awareness that such an avenue exists, and with a bit more advertising, especially for lower-paid staff, we could help those who otherwise do not come forward."

More advertising might also be needed for potential contributors. The Compassionate Fund's modest reserves are now irregularly augmented with honoraria and other payments that can neither be turned down nor retained by Fund staff. The occasional Christmas card sales or funds left over from special events--things that Sir Joseph remembers supplementing the Compassionate Fund's early resources--are no longer done. Private contributions have in the meantime grown quite scarce, perhaps again because there seems to be so little general awareness of the Compassionate Fund.

For staff who might be interested in making a contribution, Mr. Habermeier advises that the procedure, like the Compassionate Fund itself, is very simple and remarkably unbureaucratic. "Send a check to one of the trustees and it will be gratefully acknowledged."

ESCAPING THE DEBT TRAP

Easy credit, and no money down. The good life is increasingly easy to find, but so, too, is its downside. In a society that lives on credit, a good salary often translates quickly into bigger bills and an overextended lifestyle.

In recent years Staff Relations officers have seen a sharp increase in the number of staff seeking help with accumulated debts and exhausted credit. Apart from calls to the Credit Union, to explore bill consolidation and loan restructuring, there is little the Fund can do directly to help out. What it can and often does do, however, is to urge staff with significant debt problems to seek counseling.

There are a number of counseling services in the Washington metropolitan area. The Consumer Credit Counseling and Education Service is supported by the business community and is expressly interested in discouraging debtors from declaring bankruptcy. Crisis-oriented and primarily intended as a debt-consolidation service, it has branches in the District (638-6996), Maryland (231-5833), and Virginia (Fairfax 591-9020 and Alexandria 836-8772). Once bankruptcy has been averted, however, it offers little ongoing counseling--the sort of counseling that might be needed to avoid a recurrence of the spending patterns that caused the initial problem.

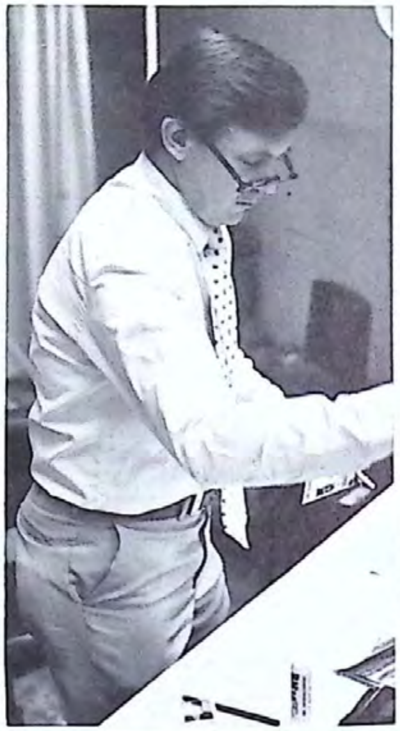
Other counseling services stress the debtor's need to change his or her lifestyle and some examine the psychological traits that lead to excessive spending and insupportable debt. The National Foundation for Consumer Credit counsels people on debt problems, approximately half of whom enter the NFCC's debt-management program. The program analyzes individual financial problems and suggests workable repayment schedules.

Debtors Anonymous, which is modeled after Alcoholics Anonymous and emphasizes group discussion and self-help, is emphatic about the importance of recognizing, and dealing with, the root causes and the compulsive nature of debt problems.

Debtors Anonymous is very active in the Washington area. Beginners' groups meet every Wednesday at St. Mary's Church (723 Twenty-Third Street NW) between 7:15 and 8:15 pm. Other regularly scheduled meetings, though not for beginners, are held at St. Mary's on Sunday evenings (8:30), the Gay Community Center (1638 R Street NW) on Friday nights (8:30); and at the N.Y. Avenue Presbyterian Church (New York Avenue and Thirteenth Street, John Quincy Adams Room) every Tuesday at noon. Information about sessions in Maryland and Virginia is available at any of these meetings.









Dynafluor

1986 MEETINGS

A MID-MEETINGS, MID-AFTERNOON ART OPENING

It did seem a bit peculiar: art, poetry, music, wine, and cheese--at three o'clock in the afternoon in the Fund. Visitors from outside eased into the situation rather effortlessly; an art opening is, after all, an art opening. But Fund staff, with Annual Meetings in full swing and nearly half the day's work still on their desks, looked a bit uncertain. Much careful deliberation was in evidence around the refreshment tables: a sober orange juice or a profligate glass of white wine? Sinful quantities of brie or just a respectful nibble? What did propriety dictate at a mid-afternoon art opening?

It did seem to dictate an unexpectedly large crowd. When the October 1 opening moved to mid-afternoon to accommodate the schedule of its principal guest, Interim Committee Chairman H. Onno Ruding, there were fears that the event might be lost amid the Annual Meetings hubbub and the normal demands of the workday. Fate, however, intervened, and curiosity about Mr. Ruding, as well as the quality of this exhibit of 15 Dutch artists, filled the hall.

Art Society President Yves Gisse, in introducing Mr. Ruding, reminded the gathering that "contrary to what you may think, this is not part of the Annual Meetings." For his part Mr. Ruding seemed genuinely pleased to have escaped the formal proceedings. He was, he said, "delighted to be at an art opening and delighted to be out of the Annual Meetings for a few minutes." "It was a pleasure," he observed, to be at a place where "you didn't have to choose your words quite so carefully."

The Dutch, Mr. Ruding noted, have a special affinity for painting and this exhibit reflected the latest step in the evolution of their art. He complimented Cathy Hemmer, the show's curator, and the Art Society for their efforts in bringing the show together. What went unsaid was that members of the Art Society had worked particularly long and hard on this exhibit. Mr. Ruding's appearance necessitated several scheduling changes and the exhibit itself was only ready for its audience because two Art Society members, Nicole Bourassa and Lawrence DeMilner, had worked until 6 am that morning.

The exhibit was jointly sponsored by the Netherlands Embassy and the Art Society. It represented the first time that the work of many of these artists could be seen in the United States. The opening presented a broad view of modern Dutch art; in addition to the painting, sculpture, drawings, and photographs, it offered poetry and music as well. Tonie Ehlen performed a short piece on the piano, and Leo Vroman recited a poem of his, "Tulips," in both Dutch and English.

The "Glass House": Artist Waldo Bien discusses the ins and outs of his work with the Art Society's special guest, Interim Committee Chairman H. Onno Ruding.

Waldo Bien, the only one of the 15 artists to attend the opening and the creator of "The Glass House," the greenhouse-like construct that recently occupied a prominent spot in the atrium, spoke intently about his work to interested guests, while two Dutch poets mingled easily among the crowd. They were about to embark on a whirlwind tour of the States--more than a half-dozen cities--and they were quite obviously delighted.

Leo Vroman admitted, very readily, that he was a resident of Brooklyn now, not the Netherlands. He had fled Holland during World War II, first to England and then to Indonesia, only to end up a prisoner of war there. Left to wend his way home after the war, he stopped off to visit an uncle in New York and was persuaded to stay on. A fiancee he had not seen for seven years joined him there and the two raised a family. Vroman is a scientist by trade, but a poet by choice, writing primarily in Dutch. (He has written a science fiction novel, too, but that, he says, could only have been written in English.)

Throughout the afternoon's formal activities a mysterious visitor--a very determined looking little lady--scratched furiously on a pad of paper. When the speech and recitals had ended, she introduced herself to Mr. Ruding and presented a somewhat astonished Interim Committee Chairman with an ink sketch of himself. Mr. Ruding graciously signed his name to it.

Another sketch found its way to Leo Vroman. He protested it was far too handsome. "Ah," she said, "I see the bump on your nose now," and amended the drawing accordingly. Pleased with this redraft, Leo, too, put his name to his sketch.

By 4:12 the crowd, Mr. Ruding, the artist, and the poets had largely vanished. Back to work.

IT'S ALL IN THE CARDS...

Homes, cars, toasters, cameras, dehumidifiers, sailboards.... The array of merchandise bought and sold each day is truly impressive. And there's more: summer homes rented in the south of France, the cabins hired in the hills of West Virginia, condos on the beach at Bethany. Free enterprise thrives; the market is alive and well and living on the concourse level of the Fund.

Given the breadth and vigor of the economic forces at work here banner headlines might be in order. But, well, the whole operation is, too self-deprecatingly casual, too disarmingly unpretentious to boast of its accomplishments. It is, after all, just a bulletin board.

In any given week, though, roughly 100 new entries grace the board: accommodations to buy, rent, or share; cars old and new; home furnishings; stereos, boat, cameras, pets, and jewelry. The variety of offerings is routinely staggering: ten-year old junkers for $495 or last year's BMW for a sum that may still turn its owner a handy profit; TV and VCR equipment that will not adapt back home; sofas that no longer suit newly redecorated living rooms; bikes that were part of now-abandoned physical fitness agendas. Given the international background, and global travels, of Fund and Bank staff, and their unusually transitory (even for Washington) lifestyles, the board is as exotic as it is full and varied. Even in a city where estate and moving sales are a refined weekend art, this bulletin board is exceptional.

The board's current offerings fall into five general categories: housing, automobiles, miscellaneous household items, services (offered and sought), and vacation rentals. The board is intended for staff, and the postings are reserved for fellow staff, or those vouched for by staff. (The Bank requires sponsoring staff to identify themselves on the front of each card, hence the curious sight of names and extensions in some instances followed by the disclaimer--"do not call this number.")

If anything, the board has been overwhelmed by its own success. Cards are posted each week and left up for a two-week period. Problems arise not because extensions are requested, but because items are sold so quickly. Items frequently sell before the two-week period is up and Staff Relations personnel regularly find themselves beseiged by staff weary of answering queries about their long-since-departed merchandise. Short of hiring a full-time bulletin board manager, then, they must leave cards up and confine themselves to weekly visits to the board--adding new cards and disposing of those that have been sold or are expired. Ah, the price of success.

THE RULES

The bulletin board's rules are simple, clearly posted, and, unfortunately, rarely observed. In the interests of Staff Relations' sanity, they are repeated here, but they also appear on the board itself:

Type or print information on 3 x 5 cards. Photocopies are not accepted.

Print your name and phone number on each card. If you do not want calls at the office, say so, and do not include your office extension. (The World Bank insists, however, that the staff person's name and extension appear on the front of each card they post.)

Photos (regular-sized prints) can accompany cards and can be returned after the posting, if name and room number are written on the back of the photo. Again, photocopies are not acceptable.

Housing ads should indicate the location of the property (whether DC, Virginia, or Maryland) and provide as much information as possible (including the price). Submit 2 cards for Fund use; an additional 2 cards if they are to be posted in the Bank as well.

Others ads: submit 1 card if it is to be posted in the Fund only; an additional 2 cards if it is to be posted in the Bank as well.

The posting period runs for two weeks. Extensions granted upon request, but new sets of cards are required.

Cards are posted on Wednesdays in the Fund (Mondays in the Bank). Absolute deadline for receipt of cards is Tuesday pm.

Cards should be mailed or hand-delivered to Jeannine Ward in Room 6-320 (X 8287).

THE IMF 1986 SOCCER SEASON

The final match: During a tense moment in the final between the IMF and Russian Embassy teams Alexander Dessart (l) takes a shot on a pass by Mario Teijeiro. The match was tied in regulation play and in overtime. It was finally decided 5-4 on the last penalty kick--the IMF missed and the Russian team scored the winning point.

1986 SEASON

IMF	OPPONENT	POINTS
2	Old Boys 1	2
0	Soviet Embassy 2	0
6	World Bank 0	2
5	Suomi 0	2
3	Falcons 2	2
2	Midtown 4	0
1	Springfield 2	0
10	Agent Orange 1	2
6	Lions SC 1	2
X	OAS Forfeit	0

TOURNAMENT PLAY

Embassy Cup	Third Round
IMF-BWRC Soccer Cup	Finals

IMF Soccer Team: First row (left to right): Carlos Cornelio, Alexander Dessart, Alex Vincart, Denio Zara (captain), Tawfik Ramtoolah, Spiro Poulis, Marc Huybrechts, Ashwani Sharma; Second row: Pascal Barbeaux, Francisco De Oliveira, Piero Ugolini, James Keister, Demetrios Galatis, Michel Dessart, Walter Engert, and Mario Teijeiro.

REAL TO REEL

Cinema is a child of the industrial age and a medium of inherently strong mass appeal. It is an art form that at once defines, and is defined by, our time. The enormous advantage a filmmaker has over other artists--the potential size of the audience--can more often than not, however, prove to be his Achilles' heel as well. For the ability to reach the masses with relative ease breeds the temptation to please the greatest number and hence seek the lowest common denominator to do so. It can lead filmmakers to judge the merits of their work in terms of the financial bottom line and ultimately to succumb to the mortalest of all sins in artistic creation, playing it safe.

This playing-it-safe attitude not only dominates the current mainstream of U.S. cinema, it also serves as the prevailing operational rule in distributing foreign films in this country. With few exceptions the foreign films given commercial release in the United States are those deemed most likely to attract a broad audience. As a result, the public is denied access to a wealth of films by independent filmmakers (i.e., filmmakers who are not bankrolled by financiers or who have not geared their films to the escapist tendencies of the average filmgoer), domestic and abroad, whose works often display audacious technical innovation in their craft (as opposed to the mere child's play of mechanical special effects), offer a challenging selection of subject matter, and provide penetrating commentaries on the human condition.

Maturity and sophistication in film appreciation do not come easy. As in all artistic endeavors, the proper appreciation of an art form requires a minimum level of literacy about it, and cinema is no exception. However, the appreciation of a good film demands much more than simple literacy from its audience. It invariably calls on their higher faculties to reason and reflect, to dispense with prejudice and examine new possibilities. But the hard work can also promise great rewards: in the enlightenment of one's humanity, in the discovery of one's hitherto buried emotions. Unfortunately, the critical basic problem is that few people have a real choice in the films they see. Films outside the mainstream of mass consumption simply do not get screened.

The International Cine Club, recently formed as a unit within the International Camera Club, hopes to take concrete steps to alleviate the problem. It intends to take advantage of the unique resources that are available, yet not fully exploited, in the Washington community by providing a forum for interested members to exhibit, discuss, and appreciate films or videocassettes of a narrative, documentary, avant-garde, or educational content.

The emphasis will be on independent productions that are not readily available commercially and on the classic works of master filmmakers from around the world. It is envisaged that regular film presentations, lectures, and other activities relating to international cinema will be scheduled at the IMF Visitors' Center or other appropriate locations. Compositions by members that are of a professional standard will also be shown.

Those interested in joining the International Cine Club, or seeking more information about its activities, can contact me (X 7481, Room 9-518) or Glennys George (X 7647) for further details. I am also interested in hearing from staff who would like to recommend films for possible screenings or who know of sources of films for the Club. An organizational meeting, and an initial film presentation, are currently planned for November. Interested staff are urged to watch for announcements.

Howell H. Zee

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL TOY FUND

An early reminder: this year's Christmas drive for the Children's Hospital Toy Fund will start in early December (deadline for collection is usually mid-December). Last year, nine boxes of new toys and several checks were given by Fund staff members and their families to the Children's Hospital. Our part in helping "Santa Claus" with gifts for young patients who have to cope with illness and separation from their families at Christmas time makes this special season all the more meaningful.

LOOKING GOOD FEELS EVEN BETTER

Those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer have come and gone--and so have all your plans for getting into shape over the summer. Tennis, biking, swimming, jogging, summer walks—fine ideas but it was just too hot or too humid, or you were too busy, too tired, or too relaxed. On top of that there were terrific family picnics, barbeques, and home leaves. So where does that leave you? Still talking about getting into shape and losing a few extra pounds?

Well, it's never too late to start! Promise yourself you will work out at least twice a week. The most difficult part of an exercise class is getting there. No matter how little you do, you will do more than if you didn't come at all. There are so many benefits to exercising that it really is worth the time and trouble, and, yes, the sore muscles.

For one thing, all that stress that you have accumulated during the day can be released in one good, hard, workout. If work is getting you down, you really can exercise away the blues. Norepinephrine, a hormone associated with mood elevation, is released in the bloodstream when you exercise. High levels of it are found in individuals who are generally happy and upbeat, and low levels in those who are depressed. This is what the so-called "runner's high" is all about.

Moreover, a great sense of accomplishment often accompanies a good workout, especially if you have won your own internal battle over why you shouldn't go to class (too tired, too much work, easier not to go). Self-esteem and self-confidence increase--you just feel good about yourself. And the better you feel about yourself, the more you take care of yourself. You start to pay closer attention to your eating, sleeping, drinking, and smoking habits. Many people join an exercise class to lose weight. While you do burn calories and increase your metabolic rate with exercise, you have to look at your eating habits as well. Dieting is difficult, but exercise helps to make it a little easier and weight loss a little quicker.

Besides getting your mind in better shape, becoming a nicer person to be around, and having a little less of the unwanted part of you around, your heart and lungs get a good workout too. Circulation improves, which in turn helps lower blood pressure by cleaning out your arteries, reducing the plaques that form on the artery walls. Your resting pulse is often lowered because a stronger heart does not have to pump as many times to get the blood flowing. Breathing is less labored when performing physical tasks. Muscle tone increases. Muscle takes up less space and burns calories quicker than fat. Clothes fit better. You feel healthier overall because your system is working better and at more optimal levels. You basically do more with less effort.

Fit Physique has been offering an exercise program at the Fund for almost four years now. Classes are challenging yet fun! Stretching is combined with aerobics and calisthenics to present a full hour workout that improves flexibility and cardiovascular endurance, and tones and strengthens your muscles. Classes are right after work Monday through Thursday from 6:10 to 7:10 pm in the Exercise Room on the Blue Level. They are open to Fitness Members only, men and women. Your first class is free, so if you are curious, give it a try. The instructor will explain the various arrangements available. Subsequent classes are $5 each or $3.50 when purchased as a 12-class coupon, which is good for an eight-week period. For more information, contact Fit Physique at 543-6100 or Linda Seal at X 7096.

Whether you join these classes or others, whether you jog, swim, bike, or choose another form of exercise, do what is most accessible for you and be consistent. As your body improves, so does your self-image. Looking good feels even better!

Dega Schembri
Fit Physique

THE UNITED WAY RAFFLE

Trips to Rio, Frankfurt, Los Angeles, Bangkok, and Tokyo are the major prizes this year in the United Way Campaign Raffle, but that's not all. There are Sunday brunches; champagne dinners; limousine service; holiday weekends; Redskins, Capitals, and Bullets tickets; radios; clocks; film processing; telephones; art; flowers; magazine subscriptions; haircuts; and one of the most sought-after status symbols in the Fund--parking on the Red Level (complete with car wash so that you won't shame the neighbors).

The Raffle will be held this year on November 20 at 12:30 in the Atrium. The event, which is definitely taking on a life of its own, is to be hosted by WKYS disk jockey Melvin Lindsey.

Kathy DeBoe and her Raffle Committee worked hard rounding up sponsors for the event. Kathy admits, though, that she has watched the Raffle's growing popularity with some misgivings. "Someone," she sighed, "recently grumbled to me that they hadn't won anything for two years now and they didn't know if they were going to contribute this year or not. I just hope people don't lose sight of the real purpose behind all this."

IN PERSONAL EMERGENCIES

Staff Relations would like to remind staff that when a a personal emergency arises, the Fund attempts to render whatever assistance may be appropriate. In many cases this requires that the Staff Relations Unit contact a staff member's designated relative or close personal friend. To do so quickly they need to have complete and current information from the emergency contact section on Personal Data Forms (ADM-120, Rev. 3, 8-1-83). The emergency contact section lists the name, current address, and telephone number (home and office) of at least two persons in the Washington area and, if relevant, two persons outside Washington, who should be contacted in case of an emergency. The completed forms are filed in Personnel Records. Unfortunately, all too frequently, critical time is lost in emergency situations because the contact information is out of date. To avoid such delays staff members should periodically check the information contained on their Personal Data Form to be sure it is current. The Personal Data Form is a Stock Room item and blank forms are available in each department.

ATTENTION READERS!

Staff News would like to hear from its readers. In addition to Letters to the Editor, *Staff News* welcomes comments on its contents. If you have suggestions for future articles (topics of interest or importance that *Staff News* should be covering or people or events that the staff might like to know more about), please call or send a note to Sheila Meehan (ext. 8293 or Room 10-525).

STAFF NOTES...

TWENTY-FIVE YEAR STAFF

Sterie T. Beza of WHD

TWENTY-YEAR STAFF

Prachuab Darmrong of SEC
A. B. Van Den Broek of OED

RETIREES

Wm. C. Hood
Olga E. Siwicky
Tun Thin
David Treffry

RESIGNATIONS

Gina Avvakoum-Britton
Alfredo Baumgarten Jr.
Borka Bogdanovic
Claudia J. Feldman
Asbjorn Fidjestol
Beatrix M. Martens
Melinda A. Maxwell
Therese H. Perera
Joanne K. Salop
Fernando Sanchez Ugarte
Peter W. Stanyer
R. Gunther Thumann

BIRTHS

To **Pamela Bradley** (EXR) and her husband Richard Pabst, a son, Brian Mitchell Pabst, on August 26, 1986

To **Owen Evans** (WHD) and his wife Patricia Stack, a son, Brendan Timothy Stack Evans, on October 17, 1986

To **P. Felicity Maroney** (OED-China) and her husband K. Timothy Maroney, twins, Kevin Desmond and Philippa Marion, on October 8, 1986

To **S. A. Piccinini** (AFR) and her husband Eric, a son, Gianpiero Alberto, on March 22, 1986

To **Subhash Thakur** (MED) and his wife, Smita, a son, Gaurav, on September 4, 1986

MARRIAGES

Margaret Fawcett (EXR) to Lucien Peters

DEATHS (RETIREES)

Robert K. Joyce
Died September 19, 1986; retired October 15, 1985

L.H.E. Bury
Died September 7, 1986; retired February 19, 1957

NEW STAFF

Ajai Chopra
an Economist with the Exchange and Trade Relations Department, is from India.

Giselle Fox-Little
a Secretary with MED, is from the UK. She had worked for Price-Waterhouse (Paris), the IFC, and the World Bank. She is active in amateur dramatics (British Embassy Players) in addition to enjoying tennis and skiing.

Julia Garfias
a Secretary with the Treasurer's Department, is Peruvian. She worked previously for the Pan American Health Organization and speaks Spanish and English.

Amelie Henry
a Secretarial Assistant to the Nordic ED, is from Sweden and had worked previously in the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs there. She speaks Swedish, English, French, and Spanish and has a four-year old son.

Karl-Heinz Kleine
Assistant to the German ED, is from Germany where he had worked for the Deutsche Bundesbank. He is married and has a child. His interests include photography and jogging.

Olli-Pekka Lehmussaari
an Economist with the European Department, is from Finland and speaks Finnish, English, and Swedish.

Shiraz H. Minwalla
a Secretary with TRE, is Pakistani. She worked for Singer and CIBA-GEIGY in Pakistan before emigrating to the US with her husband and two children. Her interests include social work as well as swimming and tennis.

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