

Staff News

Senior Management Branches Out

THE appointments by the Managing Director of three Deputy Managing Directors (Stanley Fischer, Alassane Ouattara, and Prabhakar Narvekar) represent the first major change in the structure of the Fund's senior management since 1949, when the position of Deputy Managing Director was established. The appointments are designed to strengthen the management of the institution, which has carried an increased burden of responsibilities for a greatly enlarged membership in recent years. Working under the direction of the

Managing Director, each of the Deputy Managing Directors has the authority to chair Executive Board meetings and maintain contacts with officials of member governments and Executive Directors, the media, and other institutions.

Fischer is the First Deputy Managing Director. In this capacity, he will maintain general oversight on all issues facing the institution. In addition, he has specific responsibilities in the areas of research, policy development, and policy advice to national authorities. He is also responsible for systemic issues and multilateral surveillance;



*From left to right are
Alassane Ouattara,
Stanley Fischer, and
Prabhakar Narvekar*

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relations with G-7 and other specified countries; statistics and data management; the Fund's financial structure; organizational issues, including work practices and technology; internal audit and review; the Staff Retirement Plan and Pension Committee; the Fund's space utilization and building strategy; and oversight of official travel.

Fischer's appointment was effective September 1, 1994. He is a U.S. national, and prior to his appointment in the Fund he was Professor of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He received his B.Sc. (Econ) and M.Sc. (Econ.) from the London School of Economics and obtained his Ph.D. in economics at MIT in 1969. He was Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago until 1973, when he returned to MIT as Associate Professor in the Department of Economics. He became Professor of Economics in 1977, and has held visiting positions at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Hoover Institution at Stanford. From January 1988 to August 1990, he served as Vice President (Development Economics) and Chief Economist at the World Bank. Fischer has also held consulting appointments and has published extensively.

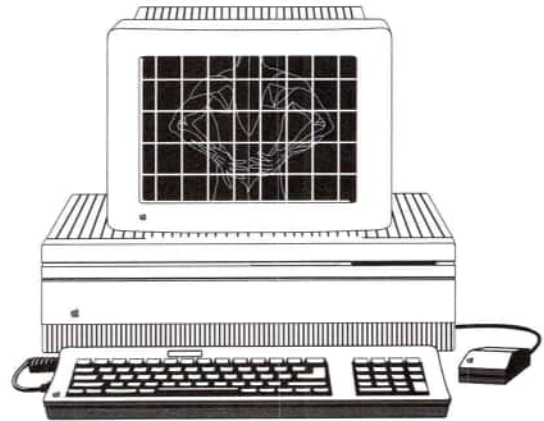
Ouattara's appointment as Deputy Managing Director was effective July 1, 1994. He has responsibility for relations with specified countries; issues relating to use of Fund resources; technical assistance and training (the IMF Institute); matters related to the resident representative program; the Fund's budget; and external relations. Ouattara, a national of Côte d'Ivoire, studied at the Drexel Institute of Technology and the University of Pennsylvania, where he received his Ph.D. in economics. Ouattara is no newcomer to the Fund, having spent 5 years as an Economist in the African

Department (1968-1973), and 4 years (1984-1988) as its Director. In the intervening period, he worked with the Central Bank for West African States (BCEAO), where he was appointed Vice-Governor in 1983. He returned to the BCEAO as Governor in 1988, was appointed Chairman of the Economic Committee of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire in 1990, and later that year served as Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire until December 1993.

Narvekar's appointment as Deputy Managing Director was also effective July 1, 1994. He has responsibility for relations with specified countries; issues relating to bilateral surveillance; personnel policies and practices, compensation and benefits policies, relations with the SAC, and internal communication; administrative services; general oversight of relations with the World Bank and other international and regional organizations; and annual meetings arrangements. Narvekar is a national of India and has been Special Advisor to the Managing Director since August 1991. He is well-known to the staff because of his long service as a Fund staff member. He holds degrees in economics from Bombay University and Columbia University, and he also studied at Oxford University. Narvekar joined the Fund in 1953, held various positions in the Asian and European Departments, and was appointed Director of the then-Asian Department in 1986.

The Managing Director indicated in his July 26, 1994 memorandum to staff that the division of responsibilities among the three Deputy Managing Directors cannot be—and does not attempt to be—exhaustive; decisions on who should handle matters not specifically identified will, initially at least, be taken by the team as a whole on a case-by-case basis. Each will be available, as needed, to deal with all aspects of the management of the institution.

Minimizing Terminal Afflictions



IS YOUR workstation at the IMF, quite literally, making you sick? Do you suffer from headaches, backache, blurred vision, or eyestrain? If so, you might need to take a look at your work environment to see what needs attention and take steps to improve it. Not only will you be doing your health a favor, but your productivity will improve—no bad thing in light of the increasing volume of work required of all Fund staff!

What is Ergonomics?

Ergonomics is the science of designing the workplace, machines, and work tasks—keeping in mind the capabilities and limitations of the human body. It's a subject that's becoming more popular with Fund staff who are experiencing problems related to working long hours at their desks. Danielle Ali, the

environmental/ergonomics specialist on the nursing staff of the Health Services Department (HSD), indicates why these problems occur. "Ten years ago, offices were not equipped with computers. Staff interacted more with other colleagues and were physically more active in order to perform their tasks. Now in this age of technology, when everything is at hand's reach, employees are more sedentary. However, the level of stress has increased with the years, and when an employee has to perform in an uncomfortable working environment, physical ailments arise."

With regard to physical ailments, particularly those related to ergonomics, Ali says that HSD started gathering information about a year ago. "In 1993 about 500 concerns were heard from Bank and Fund staff," she says. It's probable, however,

that many more ergonomics-related problems go unreported. "Staff usually continue to function with their discomfort and only occasionally do they complain," she notes. Some ailments staff have complained of, however, are backaches, sore necks, sore shoulders, wrist pain, and eyestrain. "I have experienced sore wrists from typing and back problems from extended sitting," says Caroline Van Rijckeghem, an economist in FAD. Even elbows have posed a problem. Massa Lansannah, a staff assistant in MED says, "The elbows are left hanging and if there is excessive typing, it inflames the tendons in the fingers." This problem is often exacerbated where staff members have no armrests on their chairs.

Back Discomfort

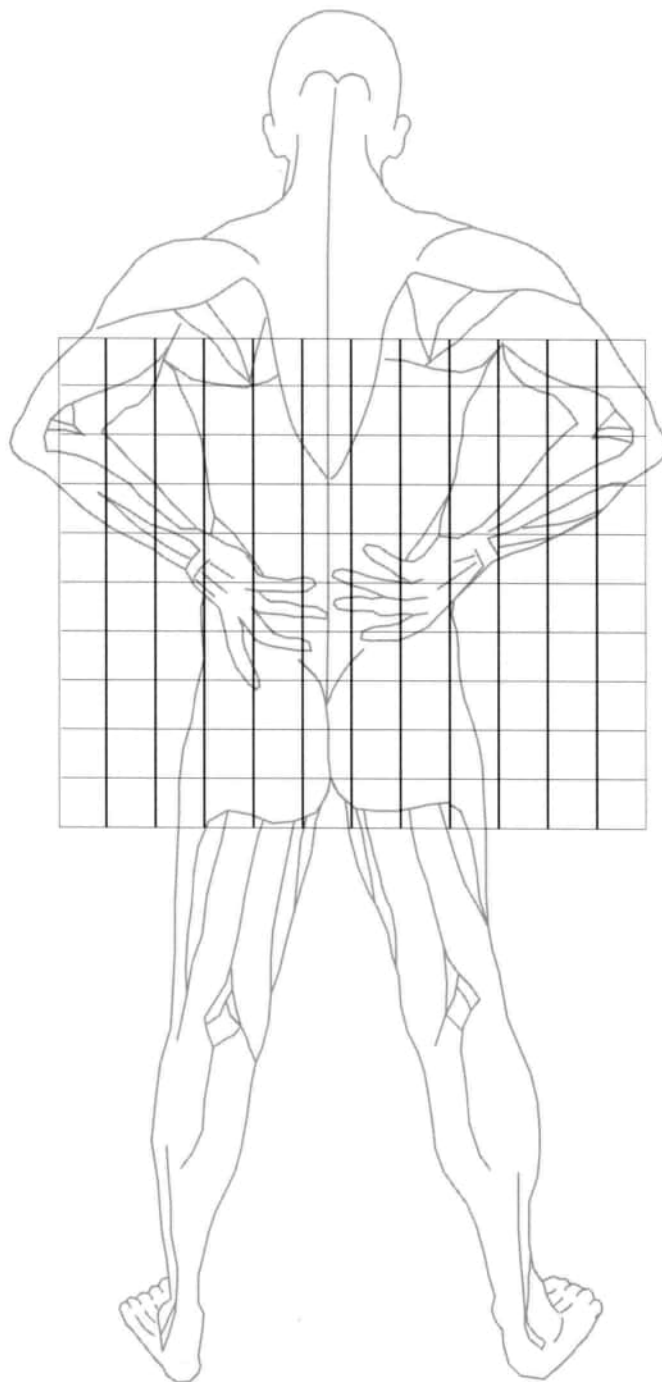
Regarding the problem of backache, Joan Allen, B.A., M.U.A., who runs the Ergonomics Management Systems in Washington D.C. (and who conducted a World Bank lunchtime seminar a few years ago), explains how this can happen. "Backache occurs because the human body was not meant to stay still for long periods of time. When it does so, the muscles get locked into a constantly contracted state that results in sore shoulders and a sore neck from the build-up of lactic acid that can't escape."

Her advice is to get up and walk around at frequent intervals. Dr. Liam Keane, the Fund's environmental health and safety advisor, adds that you can exercise your neck and shoulders just sitting at your desk. To do this, he suggests, drop your head forward and move it from side to side, then circle your shoulders, first one at a time, then both together. Do this clockwise at first, then counter-clockwise to get the maximum benefit.

In addition to the above exercises, Ali suggests that changing the chair itself may provide a solution to backache and she notes that, "95% of staff who experience problems are relieved with the Fund's standard Harter chair."

The chairs now issued to staff were, in fact, chosen as the result of several months of research. "We did a survey in 1992 to find the most comfortable chairs," says

Mary Beth Hakeem of the Facilities Department. "We selected five, bought several of each type, and sent them to departments. The two that were chosen—the Harter and the Krueger—were selected for their comfort, flexibility, and adjustability."



The Fund realized that no one line of chair would fit the needs of all its staff, so both the Krueger and Harter chairs are now considered "Fund standard." If neither of these is adequate for your needs, however, you can get the Rudd chair or even the knee-pad-cum-stool type of chair on production of a doctor's certificate.

"If someone submits a special requisition with a doctor's certificate, we will get them a Rudd chair. If that is not suitable, a special requisition could be filled in for a more specialized chair. This would be subject to HSD's approval (through the Staff Benefits Division) and the budget of the Facilities Section," says Hakeem. "The individual should have a sense of the type of chair they need, because we will only buy one," she points out, but adds, "People can take their chairs with them when they move."

In most cases where a special need arises and HSD agrees, the request for special chairs is granted, since the Fund is concerned for the well-being of staff. As Patsy Coffey, who acts as the liaison officer between the Fund and HSD on these matters, stresses, "Our staff members are our most important resource and we have an obligation to ensure that they have a safe place to work."

While the Fund is aware of and tries to be proactive in all ergonomics related areas ("The Fund has always been sensitive to ergonomics as an issue," says Hakeem), many members of staff are

not themselves aware that certain accessories are available to help ease problems related to ergonomics. This is unfortunate since, as Eugene Cole, a Software Support Expert in BCS puts it, "Ignorance with regard to proper technique and availability of equipment comes at a high price," Dr. Bernard Demure, the Occupational Health Specialist at HSD, conducted a Workstation Assessment Survey in August 1993 and found that extra accessories available to alleviate ergo-nomics related problems were not normally being used. "The use of additional devices for the VDT station, like a wristrest or a footrest, is not common."

Wrist Problems

Items such as wristrests have proven useful to many staff members, and these can be easily requisitioned from Facilities. "The wrist pad helps some," says Cole, who has suffered from repetitive stress disorder in his wrists. Elaine Buckberg, an EP in SEA, has also experienced mild carpal tunnel syndrome, and she has taken some measures to improve it. "I use a wrist pad with my computer keyboard to keep my wrists flat—otherwise I'm immediately uncomfortable." For some staff, however, who live with other ailments like arthritis, hand and wrist pain can be so severe that they have to take medication.

It's worth noting that while wristrests are helpful once a problem occurs, Dr. Keane believes they are unnecessary for most staff if the workstation is set up correctly in the first place.

Where staff members do experience wrist pain, Allen says this can be caused by the force with which they hit the keys. Too great an impact affects the tendons, wrists, and joints and can lead to stress in the hands, particularly where a limited number of movements is required by a small muscle group (as happens when you

type). To prevent this strain as you hit the keys, Allen suggests not allowing the heels of your hands to rest on the edge of the keyboard. Instead, keep them raised at a level that feels comfortable for you.

In addition, make sure your wrists are flat and not too flexed (caused by a keyboard that is too high or too low), or worse still, twisted, as happens when you're short of space and your keyboard is off to one side. With so much of the Fund's work being done directly on the computer, staff members at all levels are experiencing hand and wrist problems. Whether this is due to how they type, the way the workstation is set up, or even to a heavy workload, is not clear. As Kirsten Fitchett, a Research Officer in PDR, puts it, "I don't know if the pain in my right wrist is due to the workstation design, the workload, or a combination of both!"

Carpal tunnel syndrome is another, more serious, problem which may result from a combination of the above factors. The tendons that operate the fingers carry on up the arm (you can see how far by holding your arm half way between elbow and hand and wiggling your fingers). These tendons are like pulleys running over your wrists. "Too much movement causes swelling and friction, and your wrists get sore," says Allen. "In some cases this can lead to carpal tunnel syndrome." Signs to watch out for include tingling in the fingers, and hands getting sore at night when you've stopped working.

The position of the keyboard itself has been shown to exacerbate this problem of carpal tunnel syndrome. "A poor inclination of the keyboard generates a poor wrist angle while typing, and is a risk factor which may result in carpal tunnel syndrome," says Dr. Demure.

Eyestrain and Headache

Eyestrain and headaches are other

common ergonomics-related problems staff have experienced. One research assistant in an area department who has been looking at a computer monitor all day long for years is having to take visual therapy for her failing eyesight. This will last for 45 minutes twice a week and continue over 25 weeks. She has been told by an optometrist that if she quit her job her eyesight would improve! Another staff member, Marjorie Williams-Smith, a staff assistant in AFR, suggests that staff members who have difficulty with the overhead lights could "use an angle-poise lamp without the "blanket" of fluorescent light."

You can help prevent eyestrain by occasionally looking away from whatever you're focusing on. Or try staring at your index finger as you bring it toward your nose.

Another possibility for those staff members who wear eyeglasses is to have a UV coating put on the lenses by an optometrist. Judith Norkaitis, a staff assistant in EUH, had the procedure done and says "It has helped me when I spend a lot of time working on the computer. The guard can even be added to plastic frames for those without prescription lenses."

Allen says that one small piece of good news in all this is that if you use the computer less than 5-6 hours a day, your chances of getting the associated aches and pains is considerably reduced. More than this, however, and you'll need to take stock of your work environment to reduce your chances of succumbing to work-related problems. A well-designed workstation, on the other hand, according to Dr. Keane, means you can work problem-free for hours.

And obtaining this well-designed workstation might be easier than you think. A common problem of too much glare, for instance, is often caused by people putting their computer terminals in front of a window, or by seating

themselves between the window and the workstation, with the light coming in from behind. This is not a good idea, since apart from the glare, this set-up can increase eyestrain. A much better solution is to have the computer or screen at right angles to the window and if there are overhead lights, to place the computer between rows of lights in order to reduce glare from above. Also, don't forget to tilt the screen downwards until it's at a comfortable level. This action alone can quite substantially reduce glare levels. Obviously, in your workplace you may not be able to control all of these factors or have much space to play around with, but making even one of these changes can help considerably.

Other Factors

In addition to the problems posed by the layout of the workstation, new research also shows that taking the traditional two short breaks a day (mid-morning and mid-afternoon) can be counterproductive because you can still end up exhausted at the end of the day. Instead of taking two 15-minute breaks a day, you may benefit from taking hourly mini-breaks of a maximum of 3 minutes each, to relieve occupational stresses and strains.

Allen says, "This way, the treatment is preventative. When you take short breaks like this every hour, you get to the symptom before it gets out of hand. In the long run, you end up being more productive."

Simple exercises you can do at your desk to maintain this productivity include "palming," a technique by which you cover your eyes with the palms of your hands to cut out light and rest the eyes. For tired hands, arms, and shoulders try this. Stretch both hands well out in front of you with the backs of the hands together. Slowly rotate the hands inward toward each other. Feel the tension come right out of your neck and shoulders!

Another small change you can make is to be aware of where you place your document holder (your lap, by the way, is not a good document holder—it puts your spine out of alignment and gives your backache!). The holder should be at the same height as the computer screen. Don't forget your chair height too. Feet should be able to rest on the floor, not left dangling in the air. Or get a footrest, which can be requisitioned from Facilities.

It's important in all this not to forget that some work problems are readily rectified, and we can't blame everything that's negative on the Fund's office environment! Getting up and moving around to reduce lactic acid buildup, cutting down on caffeine to reduce nervous energy, and taking short breaks by doing work away from the computer to rest your eyes are all easy measures to take and will reduce overall stress on the body.

Other areas to look at when it comes to ergonomics include placing frequently used items close at hand. One assistant director whose phone sat at the opposite end of her desk from her computer terminal had to keep reaching across the desk every time it rang. By the end of each day, she had a sore neck and shoulders from constantly twisting and reaching.

Where possible, it's always better to prevent ergonomics-related problems rather than wait until you have to treat them. You can do this to some extent by becoming aware of the flexibility of your office furniture. In many cases, however, staff are simply not sure of how best to adjust their workstations. Perhaps a training scheme session as recommended by Dr. Demure could help to set this problem straight. "On the whole, work conditions are good in the IMF because of the adjustability of the furniture. This is the strong point, but also the weakness, as staff too frequently do not know how to adjust their workstations. To improve this

situation, HSD obviously needs to implement systematic workstation assessment and workstation adjustment training programs," he advises.

"Staff need to understand how flexible the furniture is," agrees Hakeem. Ali reiterates the point: "The key is ergonomics awareness for a good working environment."

Staff with special problems, or those who need more assistance with the design of their workstations and adjustment of furniture, can approach Ali directly. She is available to counsel individual staff members on a variety of issues related to ergonomics, and to suggest improvements. "I evaluate the workstations, advise staff, and recommend the appropriate chair, as well as making recommendations pertaining to tasks and work area," she says. Ali can be reached on 458-0822.

One administrative assistant in EU11, Pamela Padmore, has found Ali's advice and recommendations invaluable. "I was having severe neck and shoulder pain on the left side and called the health room who sent the ergonomics nurse over. She suggested separating the NEC/MultiSync and the IBM PS2. I found that I was looking up when I typed as I wear bifocals and this resulted in the neck strain. Lowering the NEC and positioning the keyboard stand, together with the Harter chair, have really helped me."

In addition to contacting Health Services, staff in need of further information or with additional queries can contact the Facilities Section at Extension 38741.

As Allen says, "When employers and staff learn about ergonomics, the good news is that complaints about a bad working environment go down dramatically."

Sheila O'Connor

Michael Gray Remembered

Michael Gray, a Senior Computer Systems Officer and Project Manager of BCS' Paradox team, died on March 2, 1994. A memorial ceremony for friends and family was held on August 21, 1994—which would have been Mike's 48th birthday—in Smokey Mountain Park in Tennessee, where his ashes were scattered.

Frank Maranto, Division Chief in the Systems Production Division, recalls: "Mike joined the Fund in 1969 as a programmer/analyst in the then Bureau of Statistics. He had previously been with the U.S. Department of the Navy. His principal reason for selecting the Fund was that a multicultural and assistance-providing organization was much more in line with his own personal philosophy than was the U.S. military. I think that if there were one word which best characterizes Mike, it would be intense. In everything he did, Mike's inner drive provided a self-motivation which required little outside incentive. He stretched to give his all, both at work and in his personal life. As a staff member, he was extremely dedicated and served as a fine example both to his co-workers and to staff who reported to him. Like all of his friends and co-workers, I continue to miss Mike's presence."

Mike's colleagues in BCS share Frank's sense of loss. Jack Fulmer writes, "Michael was an extremely dedicated professional who took pride in the quality of his work assignments. On the other hand, no matter how busy he was, he would always take time to help a colleague with a problem or to offer advice on a professional or personal issue. Michael always had a certain twinkle in his eye that was an inspiration to others and that seemed to convey his quiet confidence during periods of stress that everything would work out fine. He was a devoted family man who dearly loved his wife and children. Camping in the outdoors and helping with his sons' social activities

were two of his favorite pastimes. He enjoyed the quality time he spent with his wife on their evenings out for dinner and dancing. He succeeded in achieving that delicate balance between work demands and home life."

Alan Svetlik adds, "Of Mike's many endearing and multifaceted qualities, some of the ones that I respected most were his willingness to help others, his desire to be fair to everyone, his deep sense of responsibility to his work at the Fund, his love of

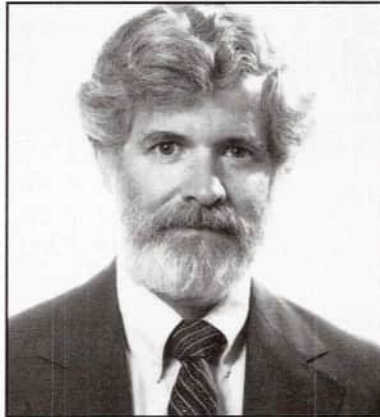
nature, his support for conservation efforts, and his extensive vocabulary."

Sukeshini Rao recalls Mike's strong skills as a team leader: "As manager of the Paradox team, Mike was dedicated, hardworking, and very professional. He will be remembered for his efforts to be a real advocate for his team members. He recognized potential in his staff and gave them challenging assignments. He also took a personal interest in the careers of all his team members, and

helped further many careers in the Bureau of Computing Services."

David Bailey, a long-time personal friend, adds: "I knew Mike Gray for 34 years and considered him my best friend. He was a person who was always focused on other people, especially those from other cultures. I believe this is one of the reasons he was so excited about working at the Fund. In conversations with Mike, it was clear he cared deeply about the many friends he made through his work. The stories he shared with me about these friendships made me feel like I knew many of his friends even though we may have met only once or twice. It is clear the Fund felt the same way about Mike through the support which was provided at his memorial service, and the kindness and consideration shown to his family and me in the difficult period which has followed. We would like to express our thanks to you."

Mike's colleagues and friends



Fund Recruitment in Europe

The story from an American in Paris

IN 1992 the Fund decided to base a recruitment officer in Paris on an experimental basis, in response to the need for an accelerated overall recruitment of staff to fill new budget positions and the particular need to identify and draw on European recruitment sources more intensively. Susan Jones, Senior Personnel Officer, reports on her pioneering role in this position during the past two years.

For many years, the Fund's Office in Europe (the "Paris Office") has carried out an active recruitment function among its many other activities. While traditionally recruitment missions were conducted from Headquarters to the countries of Europe, the Paris Office always handled the many telephone inquiries and requests from European nationals for application and recruitment

information. In addition, the Office has always organized the panel interviews for EP candidates coming from European and African countries, which are held in Paris two or three times each year. These interviews, chaired by a visiting member of the Economist Committee from Headquarters, rely on the active participation of the economists and support by the administrative staff in the Office.

The Paris Office has taken on an even more visible recruitment presence in Europe since 1992, when the Administration Department attached a Personnel Officer position to the Office. When the posting was initiated, in April 1992, recruitment of staff into the Fund was breaking all previous

Pictured below are representatives of the 15 participating organizations conferring on a variety of recruitment issues.

On the facing page, Peter Swain, Chief of the Staff Development Division, and Ron McGinnes, Chief of Personnel Policies at OECD, exchange views.



records. While during 1988-90, the Fund had recruited an average of 137 new staff members, by 1992 that number more than doubled, to 279 new recruits. To ensure that we met both this overall recruitment challenge and the equally important goals of nationality and gender balancing across the staff, we stepped up efforts in Europe. Despite the generally slack employment picture in Europe, we saw that the European market for macro-economists was becoming quite competitive, due to the new opportunities for challenging work and the aggressive recruiting efforts by the EC, the OECD, the World Bank, and the "new kid on the block," the EBRD. All of these organizations had a permanent recruitment presence in Europe, and we had to entrench ourselves into this market.

This "entrenchment" took on a number of aspects. Most important, placing a full-time recruiter in Paris for a two-year "trial run" allowed us to plan many more recruitment missions than had been undertaken previously from Headquarters, both in terms of cost savings and time scheduling. We had

to increase our visibility in the market quickly, and this meant attending the major economic conferences in Europe, traveling on mission to different countries on a monthly basis, and taking advantage of the expertise of former Fund staff who were working in Europe. One focus of this effort was to emphasize recruitment in regions typically underrepresented on the Fund staff—Germany, Italy, Scandinavia, and Spain—as well as to bring in staff from the new Fund member countries—Switzerland, the Baltic States, and the States of the Former Soviet Union. In the last two years we have launched over 20 recruitment missions from the Paris Office and interviewed over 1,000 candidates.

Our contact base grew quickly as our mission schedule proceeded. In the past two years, we have built up a base of contact institutions spanning nearly 300 universities, research "think tanks," and central government agencies. In Western Europe, it has been relatively easy to identify the best universities and the strongest curricula; but in Eastern European countries,

where some universities are just introducing graduate-level training, the search process is much more time-consuming. For example, on a recent recruitment visit to the Baltic States, we conducted relatively few interviews, and spent more time simply learning about the current level of university instruction. A large part of the contact process also involves "educating" professors and government officials about the kinds of candidates we seek, so that they can identify potential candidates for us in the future.

As our contact network grows, we find more efficient methods of searching for specific candidates, especially for noneconomist positions that can be costly to advertise. For example, when we visit leading business schools in Europe, we sometimes find economist candidates, but more often find very talented candidates in areas such as human resources management, auditing and accounting, information systems, and journalism. We have also developed a directory of former Fund staff, which we use to get "leads" about different types of candidates in the private sector.

In our effort to create a better gender balance in the Fund, it has been quite encouraging to find a large percentage of female candidates in European universities and central governments. We have started to create a list of female professional associations in Europe that we are in contact with as well. For example—believe it or not—we are in regular contact with the President of the Finnish Association of Female Economists!

Our efforts in Europe are beginning to bear fruit. For example, in this year's Summer Intern Program, 40 percent of the interns are European nationals. Moreover, our recruitment missions have also yielded slightly higher percentages of female candidates than we have seen in the North American market, particularly for economist candidates.



Of course, recruitment in Europe has certain obstacles. For one, there is no formal "job market" for graduating students as exists in North America, so students have a much more difficult time getting information about careers and using the services of a "placement officer." Second, while English is becoming more widely spoken in Europe, many candidates are not sufficiently fluent to take an interview in English, and this is necessary to work in the Fund. Third, there are strong institutional drawbacks for candidates to interrupt their current job stream to relocate to Fund headquarters: external mobilities are not always favorably regarded in civil service; cultural and family norms sometimes discourage mobility; and spouse careers and children's education are disrupted. Not to mention the sometimes sordid portrayal of Washington, D.C. in the European press!

Naturally, our "competitors," the other international organizations recruiting in Europe, face some of these same constraints. For this reason, it has made sense for us to collaborate and share information whenever possible with our counterparts in these organizations. In the past, this sort of collaboration was more sporadic and unsystematic, so we began by making courtesy calls to the organizations situated in cities where we were on recruiting missions. In this way, we established an informal information network, to take advantage of synergies where they existed, to refer candidates to the most appropriate organization for their skills, and to compare personnel policies.

Probably the most important link in this informal network has been with the World Bank; sharing offices with the Bank makes it very easy to trade contact information and candidates' files. In particular, the first Chief of Recruitment in Europe for the World Bank, Luis Olivares, was a true pio-

neer six years ago in the European market, and gave us a lot of good advice when we started up.

Out of these informal networks, the IMF Paris Office hosted in June 1993 a Conference of International Organizations Recruiters. Starting on a modest scale, we sponsored a one-day conference that included the European recruiters from about ten international organizations. Repeating a good idea, in June this year, the IMF and World Bank Paris Offices co-sponsored the Conference, which grew to include 15 organizations and 30 participants, and included major agenda items on recruitment, staff development, and women's issues. The attendance list looked like alphabet soup: the BIS, EBRD, EC, GATT, OECD, and UNESCO, among many other organizations. There was a lively exchange of views on issues including recruitment challenges in Eastern Europe, recruitment of dual-career couples, internal and external staff mobility, work-family arrangements, and policies to enhance career prospects for female staff.

Without a doubt, the direct presence of a recruiter in the European market has enabled us to actively compete for the best European nationals to bring to the Fund staff. As mentioned, this position was first looked upon as an "experiment," but the experiment is now in its third year—through May 1995—to pave some of the inroads we have cut in this market. As the saying goes, "showing up is worth 90 percent," and now the Fund is showing up all over Europe, side by side with recruiters from the other major organizations.

While the recruitment pace in the Fund is not quite as hectic as the past three years—as consolidation continues to be the guiding principle of the recruitment outlook—there will still be an important need to keep replenishing a complement of economists and other professionals that is now

considerably larger than it was just a few years ago. The emphasis on gender balance and nationality distribution is also a major factor. Given the early results of the trial run, our visible recruitment presence in Europe for the next few years is a vital part of this overall strategy. This is especially imperative as the economies of Europe start to grow again, and as organizations in Europe more actively recruit the best and the brightest staff at all levels, of both genders, from many different countries.

Luckily, while recruitment missions are going out frequently from the Paris Office during the academic season, we have a chance to catch our breath during the summer months and prepare for the autumn onslaught of new missions. During this "slack" time, it has also been possible for the recruiter to make a small contribution to the main work of the Paris Office, to attend some OECD meetings and report back to relevant departments at headquarters, and occasionally to make presentations to visiting public groups about the Fund and its activities. This is a very small *remerciement* to the staff of the Paris Office, where strong endorsement of the recruitment challenge has been provided by Director Joaquin Ferrán and Deputy Director Jacques Baldet, with the active operational support of Ghislaine Roche, Frederick Boguet, and Allyson Spaeth, to name a few.

The IMF Paris Office is well-placed and well-staffed to face many challenges in the next few years, the recruitment challenge among them. This American in Paris feels very fortunate indeed to work here!

Susan Jones

Marine Corps Marathon: IMF Second in 1994?

The Decision to Run

WOULD YOU ever challenge your mind to prepare your body to run 26 miles and 385 yards? Are you crazy enough to train in the extremes of Washington's weather: humidity and heat through to rain, ice, and snow? Would you train on hills for the ultimate challenge of your life, the Marine Corps Marathon? Is physical fitness the only ingredient? No, every runner has his or her secret recipe. Last year, the top IMF runner began his morning by eating baby food for breakfast! Was it the banana flavor that gave the extra stamina? With adult food, what results would you obtain?

It's never too late to begin. Last year a 79-year-old woman completed the distance in 5 1/2 hours. And she began running at age 73! You don't have to wait until you retire from the Fund to start!

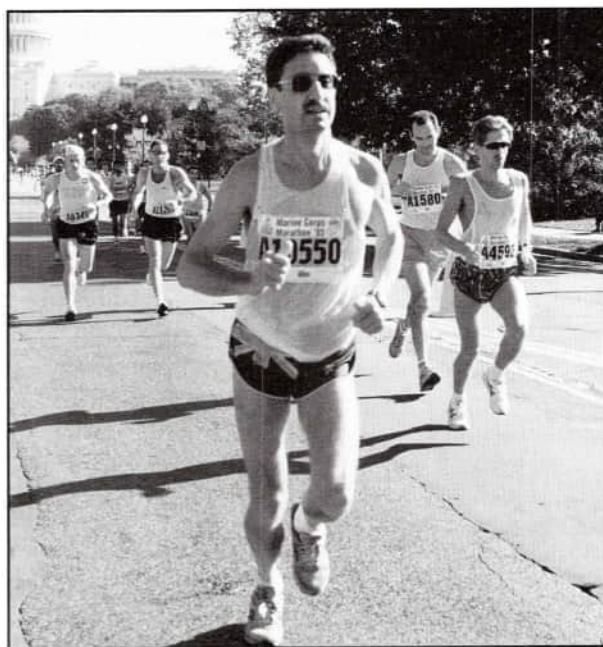
When running the Marine Corps Marathon, you glimpse the Pentagon, Georgetown, the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, Capitol Hill, the downtown museums, the Jefferson Memorial, Hains Point. Already dead? Well, the Arlington Cemetery is close by the finish near the Iwo Jima memorial.

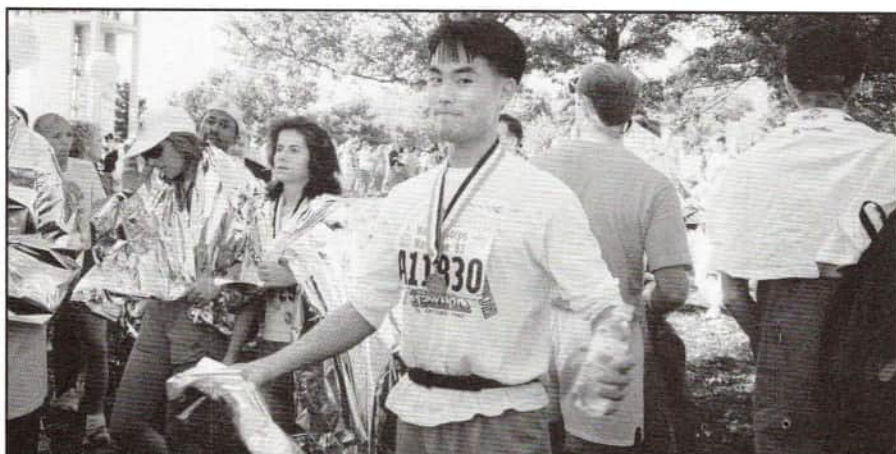
In October 1993, an IMF team entered for the first time and finished second in the Open category of the fourth largest marathon in the United States, in which over 15,000 runners had registered. The IMF team members were Dominique Bariod (overall winner of the marathon, in 2 hours 24 minutes), Ian Lienert (2:54), David Naismith (3:07), and Gene Park (3:28). The top three team members averaged less than

6.5 minutes per mile and finished only 15 seconds per mile behind the winning HILL-TOP team.

Three of the four team members are staff members: Ian Lienert is a senior economist in the IMF Institute; David Naismith was the chauffeur for Mr. Erb, and now for Mr. Fischer; and Gene Park is a research assistant in the Statistics Department. Long-distance runners soon get to know each other. The Fitness Center is one meeting place, although this has become more difficult since more staff have moved to International Square. By word of mouth, the "Who's Who" of the IMF running world is soon made known. But with differing work schedules and preferences for training times,

Ian Lienert pushes on toward the finish line in the 1993 Marine Corps Marathon





Gene Park enjoys a well-deserved drink at the finish line.

it was impossible for the 1993 team to organize long-distance training runs together.

It will not be every year that the International Mileage Friendship team will be lucky enough to include the overall winner. And never again will the race results be so controversial. Dominique Bariod was Ian's cross-country ski instructor in France in January 1992; the idea for his participation in Washington's Big Race was discussed in a mountain hut in the Le Jura region, near Geneva.

The Role of Journalists

On Tuesday October 26, 1993, after 30 hours of decisionmaking, the *Washington Post* declared: "Bariod is Awarded Marathon: Cutting Corners

Doesn't Cost Victory." The Marines had led Dominique to the podium after the race and would have given him the winner's cup had it not been for the intervention of the *Washington Post* journalist. This led to a sharp debate as to whether cutting corners, an acceptable practice in Europe, should be accepted on American soil (in this case, the streets of D.C. and northern Virginia). The *Washington Times* reported that Dominique had gained perhaps 86 feet in the 138,435 foot course and that the organizers had added 138 feet to the course to account for corner-cutting. That's why Dominique's victory was gained with no unfair advantage over the second and third placed runners who had cut corners too! This year, the Marines

will mark the course more clearly. Nonetheless, if you have an urgent need during the race, make sure you re-enter the trail exactly where you leave it.

People's Marathon

The Marines deliberately keep the race low profile. For the winners, there are no Mercedes Benz cars, no sponsors to provide half a million dollars in prize money, as in New York. But the Marines will provide you with runners' magic drinks (Gatorade) to keep up the energy level, as well as water and medical services, and a few faithful spectators will provide moral support as you head out toward Hains Point, the loneliest part of the course, alongside the Potomac River.

You could be one of the first-time marathoners in 1994. Last year, more than 50 percent of the runners had never completed a 42 kilometer circuit. All 50 states of the United States were represented, plus 42 other countries. For additional information for the Big Race on October 23, call the Marine Corps Marathon Office, (703) 640-2225/2720.

Ian Lienert

FUND FACTS AT A GLANCE

In 1993, as of December 31, . . .

- the average age of the staff was 43.0 years
- the average length of service was 10.6 years
- 371 staff members were promoted
- 197 staff members transferred to different departments
- on average, staff used 86% of their accrued annual leave
- the average sick leave usage was 5.5 days
- 229 new staff members were recruited
- total staff (regular and fixed-term) numbered 2,183
- 9,184 applications for employment were received
- total contractual appointees numbered 542
- 54% of the staff were male, and 46% female
- 124 nationalities were represented on the staff

The CFA Franc Devaluation: Long Prelude to a Dramatic Decision

THE ROAD to the CFA franc zone's decision to devalue its currency has been an exceptionally dramatic one. For almost four decades after the exchange rate of the CFA franc was fixed at two French centimes in 1948, there was virtually no serious and sustained questioning of the parity. With the serious deterioration in the zone's terms of trade since 1986, however, speculation increased and debate intensified among officials, academics, international agencies, and journalists. Still, the announcement of the devaluation, effective January 12, 1994, was a stunning one. "The announcement was the culmination of a long process of reflection among these countries, coupled with patient, analytical work, diplomacy, discretion, and efficiency on the part of the Fund staff," remarked Mamoudou Touré, Counsellor and Director of the African Department.

The dramatic decision to devalue the CFA franc by 50 percent was clearly not taken lightly. For more than a decade, numerous, but increasingly futile, efforts had been made by the CFA franc countries to stave off declining competitiveness through internal adjustment. As the terms of trade continued to deteriorate, the array of effective options dwindled markedly. A consensus was built slowly around using devaluation as the key to broad-based adjustment. Ultimately, observed Evangelos Calamitsis, Deputy Director of the African Department, the problems had grown so intractable that a devaluation was unavoidable.

Much has been written about the importance of that decision and its impact on a vital segment of Africa. But perhaps the most fascinating aspect of it was the lengthy, low-



key, diligent prelude to the decision. In the end, 14 nations of the African CFA franc zone, with the support of France, took an historic step. How they arrived at that point, in agreement, is perhaps the real drama.

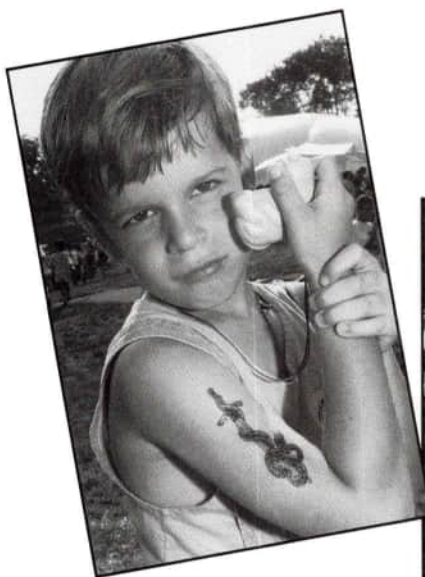
The Early Discussions

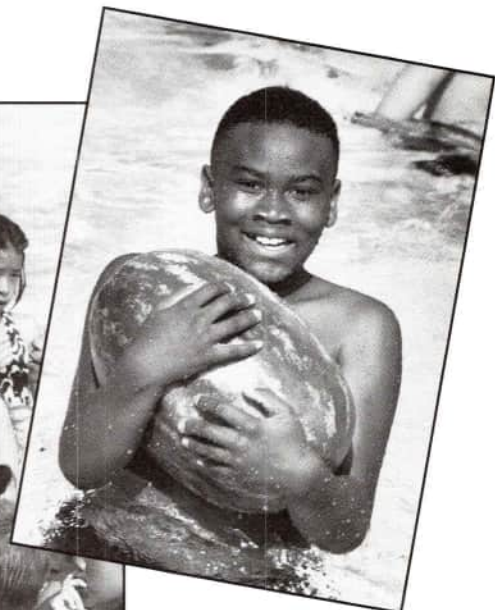
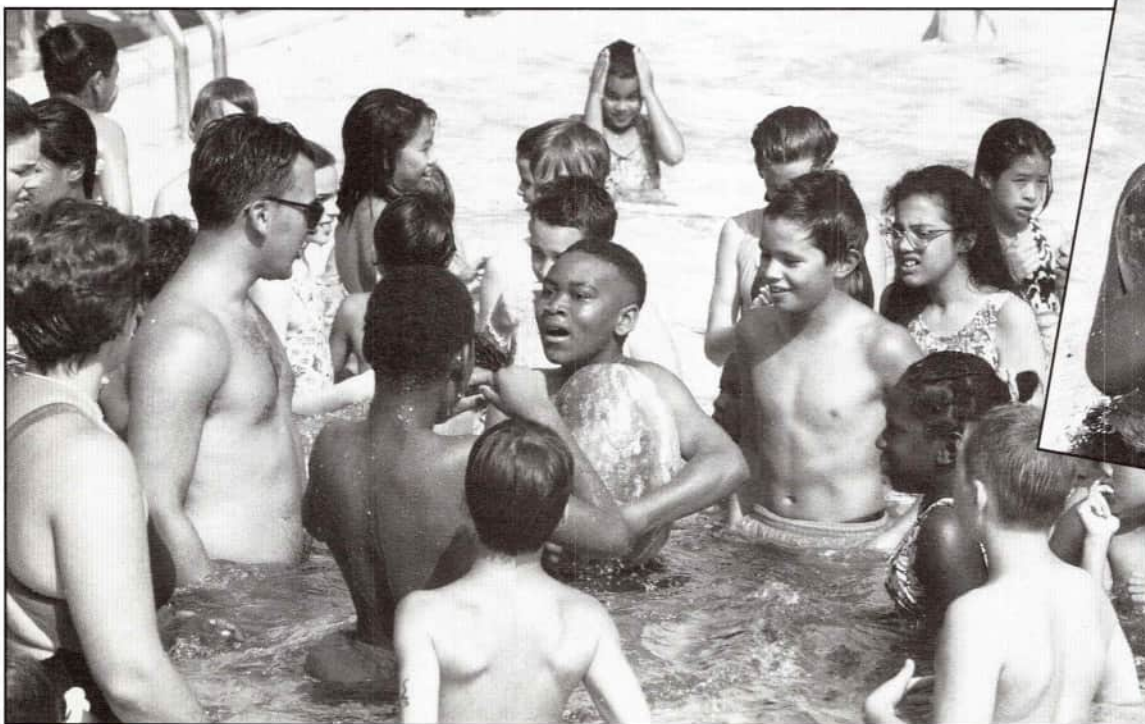
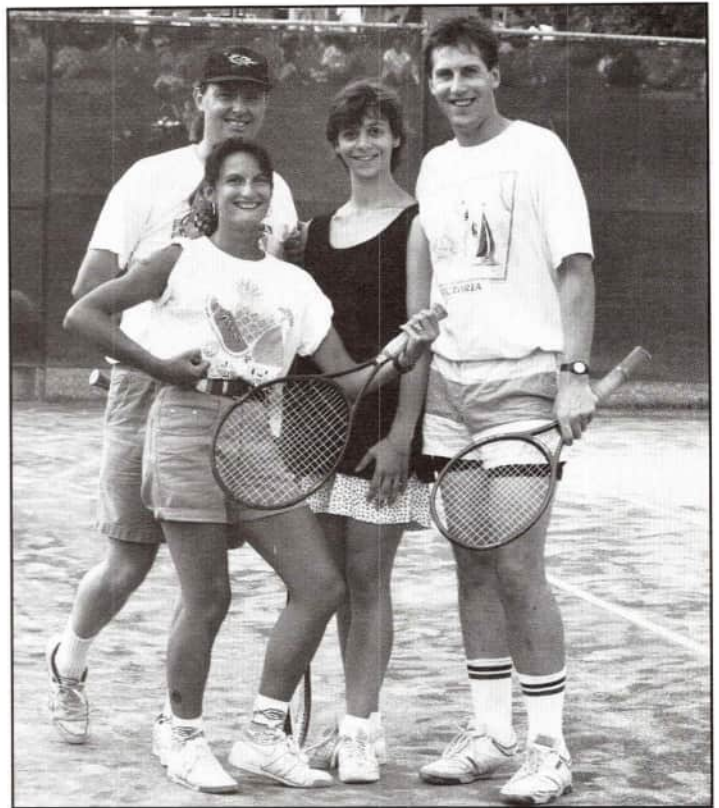
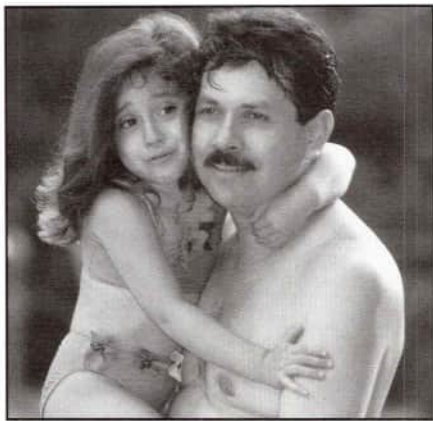
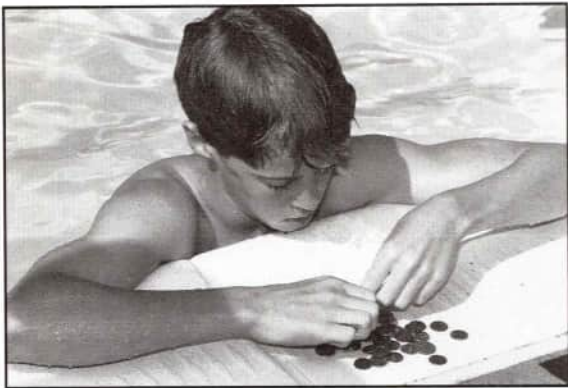
In the Fund, the first serious and sustained discussions of a possible devaluation took place in the late 1980s. These highly confidential exchanges involved only the most senior staff of the African Department and the Managing Director. Michel Camdessus came to serve as the convener of a core group that would include Touré; Calamitsis; Christian François, Senior Advisor; and Pierre Dhonte, Senior Advisor. By the early 1990s, this nucleus had expanded to include Christian Brachet, Senior Advisor;

The core group (left to right): Pierre Dhonte, Christian François, Mamoudou Touré, and Evangelos Calamitsis. Core group members missing from the photo are Anupam Basu, Christian Brachet and Jean Clément

Continued on page 16

Summer Picnic 94





Continued from page 13

Anupam Basu, Senior Advisor in PDR; Jean Clément, Assistant to the Director in AFR; and eventually the chiefs of the AFR divisions covering the CFA franc countries.

These years served as a lengthy preparatory period. The Fund staff had to be ready and responsive, but await an uncertain decision. It would be called upon to move swiftly and assuredly, but with little advance notice and with great trust placed in its utter discretion. Few exchange rate exercises in the Fund's history would rival it for complexity and intensity.

Initially, the question the core group asked itself was whether the CFA franc countries could successfully revive their economies and achieve financial viability without a devaluation. As the answer looked more clearly to be no, the discussion shifted to the size of the devaluation needed. What financing would be required? What social measures would be needed to alleviate the impact on the poorest? "We wanted to debate these issues fully and yet be discreet," Calamitsis said. "We had to disappear from our offices at times, only to be asked by colleagues where we'd been."

There was real worry over the shock such a devaluation would cause in economies that had known extraordinarily little inflation. But as the CFA franc zone's external competitiveness nose-dived and the financial imbalances mounted, the rising concern was not whether to devalue but how to get the increasingly inevitable devaluation right. Inadequate devaluation would produce the shock without the pay-off—the least welcome prospect. There was talk, too, of the "right time"

for a devaluation, but the timing was largely beyond the Fund's control.

Internally, the Fund staff's energies were focused on gathering and refining data and constructing scenarios without arousing suspicion or speculation. Once the discussions moved from the theoretical to the practical and the core group wanted to examine the impact of



The AFR division chiefs responsible for CFA franc zone countries played an important role. Pictured are Emilio Sacerdoti and Paul Acquah. Others--Amor Tahari, Innocent Diogo, and Reinold van Til--were on mission

a possible devaluation, the scenarios grew more detailed. Touré recalls that division chiefs and Clément worked tirelessly on the design of supporting policies to accompany a devaluation. The Managing Director kept an attentive eye on the progress of these "CFA franc exercises." What, he would constantly ask, do the scenarios indicate for economic growth?

No Decision Yet...

When the heads of state of the CFA franc countries met in Dakar in the summer of 1992, the "soup began to boil," François noted. But despite heady rumors, nothing happened. Devaluation was discussed, but no agreement was reached.

The reluctance to act in 1992, however, did not still the debate or stall an

emerging consensus on the need for devaluation. The process was, and would remain, an iterative one. All parties were acutely aware of the risks, but increasingly conscious of the inadequacies of other measures alone. "It was as though you began the process with 15 wise people," Calamitsis recalled. "All initially believed that a devaluation wouldn't be necessary. But their number decreased to 12, and then 10, and then 5. In the end, no one could see a way out unless the adjustment effort included a change in parity."

Toward Action

In 1992, the staff became increasingly open in its assessment of what it believed was required. As the discussion moved into 1993, the wording of staff reports remained cautious but contained clearer references to a "more comprehensive approach to adjustment." As more attention came to be focused on a possible CFA

franc devaluation, various parties questioned whether the matter should not be more openly debated. François explained that "it was essential that the market be kept guessing. A wide discussion of a parity change could exacerbate speculation and capital flight. Hence, the need for utmost discretion."

The Desk Perspective

When the scenarios were first broached with the staff in the early 1990s, they were presented as an academic exercise. Options would be left open. The discretion would pay off. Over the course of several years and numerous sensitive junctures, there would be no leaks.

The end of 1992 marked the beginning of a grueling year for the staff. They would be asked to prepare and

constantly update alternative medium-term scenarios in addition to their regular work. The scenarios would be used, Amor Tahari, Chief of Sahel Division I, said, to convince the highest national authorities of the need for a comprehensive approach to adjustment. The tedious and time-consuming work of constructing and updating these scenarios fell to desk economists, some of whom were skeptical of their usefulness.

Paul Acquah, Innocent Diogo, Emilio Sacerdoti, Tahari, and Reinold van Til—the division chiefs involved—stressed that the staff were under a lot of pressure, and the point of the exercise was not always clear. The confidentiality surrounding exchanges between high officials in national governments and senior officials in the Fund only heightened the staff's frustration. Division chiefs, together with Clément, had to draw out the creativity they sought from desk analyses and yet impose a certain degree of coordination. The grueling demands, Acquah and Diogo found, produced a degree of "productive friction." For much of 1993, the division chiefs had alternately to soothe frayed nerves and press for additional work.

The uncertain time frame necessitated constant preparedness, and constant revisions. Division chiefs realized they had to keep their staffs alert and involved. "Drift, excitement, and frustration all mingled together," Acquah said, describing the edgy mood among staff. Keeping the database ready constituted a kind of psychological preparedness. Whenever there was a CFA franc zone meeting, division chiefs recalled, there was the sense that "this may be it."

The fall of 1993 saw a rising tempo and increased urgency in AFR's work. The IMF sent a mission—and in some cases, several missions—to each of the CFA franc countries. Senior staff accompanied each mission. The division

chiefs quickly realized that things were "getting hot." In most cases, the senior staff on these missions spent considerable time with heads of state and finance ministers discussing strategies. Throughout the intensifying dialogue, AFR kept a low profile but remained, François said, "extremely active," with the missions committed to explaining what a comprehensive adjustment strategy might mean for the productive sector, labor markets, and prices, as well as its social impact.

A Decision

The next likely venue for a discussion of a devaluation would be the January 10-11 meeting of the heads of state and government of the CFA franc countries in Dakar. The Managing Director had been invited; Touré and Calamitsis would accompany him. In advance of the meeting, the Fund shared the results of the most recent scenarios with senior officials in the CFA franc countries.

On the eve of the Dakar meeting, the heads of state asked the Fund for a frank assessment. Should they devalue? And if they took that leap, what role would the Fund, the World Bank, and France play in support of their adjustment effort? The Managing Director pledged the Fund's immediate and full assistance, once strong and credible policy packages were put in place.

The heads of state sought to revive their economies; growth was uppermost in their minds. They weighed the potential benefits of a devaluation in that light and reflected upon the alternative policy scenarios discussed with Fund missions. Hours before the meeting was to begin, however, several heads of state remained undecided. They needed to listen to the views of their colleagues the following day.

France, which had agonized over the inflationary impact and the strains a decision on devaluation might place

on the unity of the franc zone, had come to believe the devaluation was now both necessary and inevitable. France would thus play a critical role at this juncture, advising the African CFA members to undertake comprehensive adjustment programs without further delay.

On January 11, the heads of state of the CFA franc countries arrived at a consensus that was impressive both in its decisiveness and in the efficiency with which the political process of consensus building had evolved to a common decision. The devaluation was announced. Camdessus assured the heads of state that the Fund's staff would be mobilized immediately. Within ten days, missions were in the field in virtually all countries. January became, as Calamitsis remarked, a month of maximum mobilization in the African Department. Everyone who worked on the CFA franc countries would be in the field or on the phone with those in the field.

Into Action

The state of perpetual uncertainty was over. The Managing Director called prospective mission chiefs and AFR's most senior staff into his office and told them that the devaluation had to be backed by comprehensive programs without delay. "We were like soldiers being dispatched to the field," Acquah said. At headquarters, Calamitsis manned the phones, and Touré quarterbacked the troops. The swirl of activity spread to PDR, FAD, and MAE, as well as other departments. All departments reviewed letters of intent and staff reports on an emergency basis.

In the field, everyone realized the importance of moving rapidly. "It was essential that the Fund and the Bank be seen as delivering on their promises," Tahari noted. "The preparatory work helped us a great deal. We were able to move very fast without jeopardizing

quality." The work would be very demanding—20-hour days became the norm—and some staff members had back-to-back missions. Technology offered crucial support, providing translations and comments directly to staff in the field.

"Social safety nets received a great deal of attention," Tahari said. "We wanted to effectively address the social issues to help cushion the impact of the devaluation on the poorest, and we wanted to do so in a very transparent fashion. Most national budgets incorporated separate lines for social safety nets. The authorities very much appreciated the Fund's sensitivity to these issues."

The devaluation stunned the citizenry of these countries, but also created a strong sense of purpose in the national officials, who recognized the importance of explaining to the general public the rationale for the entire operation. In most countries, the critical negotiations with trade unions went exceedingly well, with all sides assuming a sense of responsibility for the success of the adjustment effort. "Trade unions became convinced," Basu observed, "that too high a wage increase would cause bankruptcies. A lot of civil servants also became preachers for the cause."

The authorities of the CFA franc zone countries were anxious to see their own country among the first to agree on a program with the Fund. They looked upon the programs as rallying points for their people—clear evidence that the adjustment process had begun and had external support. They also saw themselves as members of a special brotherhood; they were constantly in contact with their counterparts in other countries, and conscious of the very high stakes involved.

Enthusiasm also ran high among the Fund staff, particularly for those staff whose country work had been constrained by previous economic and po-

litical bottlenecks. Within AFR, the exchange of information was intense, with weekly meetings of Group II (mainly French-speaking African countries) and scrutiny of every back-to-office report and mission debriefing. Much of the corridor talk centered on how various negotiations, or programs, were faring. Division chiefs and front office staff placed particular importance on spotting early signs of slippage. There had been implementation problems in the past; the staff was anxious to avoid anything that suggested business as usual.

The goal was to bring 14 programs to the Executive Board within three months—an unprecedented timetable that would require the cooperation and commitment of a large part of the organization. Pre-existing security problems (Congo), problems with financing assurances (Equatorial Guinea), and the absence of an elected government (Togo) delayed the process for some member states, but by the end of April, 11 of the 14 countries had programs approved by the Board. The most difficult issues proved to be pricing policies, the adjustment of taxes and tariffs, and social measures. Where governments had prepared for the devaluation, things moved rapidly.

François noted that the first phase, which ended in early summer, "was broadly successful in most countries." Even where fiscal problems had arisen (particularly on the revenue side), other areas of the economy had performed well—a tribute to the positive effect of getting the exchange rate right.

Calamitsis still marvels at the intensity and complexity of the process. "I have been through delicate negotiations with many countries, but the intricacy of working with 14 countries as a group was extraordinary. Do you know how difficult it is to reach consensus among 14 parties? But the CFA franc countries wished to maintain their solidarity, and this basic

principle of cooperation was safeguarded." It was, Basu added, "the most historic cooperative effort I've ever seen."

For the national governments, it is an operation that they cannot afford to have fail. For the Fund, it is an opportunity to help reverse almost a decade of decline in an important part of the continent. Though it is far too early to say the battle is won, since a number of difficulties remain, the Fund's core group is cautiously optimistic. The most extreme fears of inflation taking hold have not materialized.

Calamitsis stresses, however, "the critical importance of nurturing these programs through 1994 and the next two years." François adds that the focus will shift increasingly to growth issues, most vitally on how to ensure a more efficient environment for the private sector. Devaluation alone is no panacea. "But if these countries can liberalize their markets and get their governments to be more efficient and supportive of the private sector, including rebuilding infrastructure and strengthening human resources," Basu said, "there is reason for optimism. It has worked in Asia, and there is no reason why it cannot work in Africa over time."

Several AFR senior staff involved in the lengthy prelude and the hectic implementation stage point to the Managing Director as the key figure in the process. "I don't see how the heads of state and government of the CFA franc countries would have agreed without him," one said. "The Managing Director has functioned as Africa's main advocate," another senior staff member commented. "It's been encouraging to work with the Managing Director. He has a clear vision, an optimism, and a tenacity that I admire. I believe he did for Africa what no one else would do."

Sheila Meehan

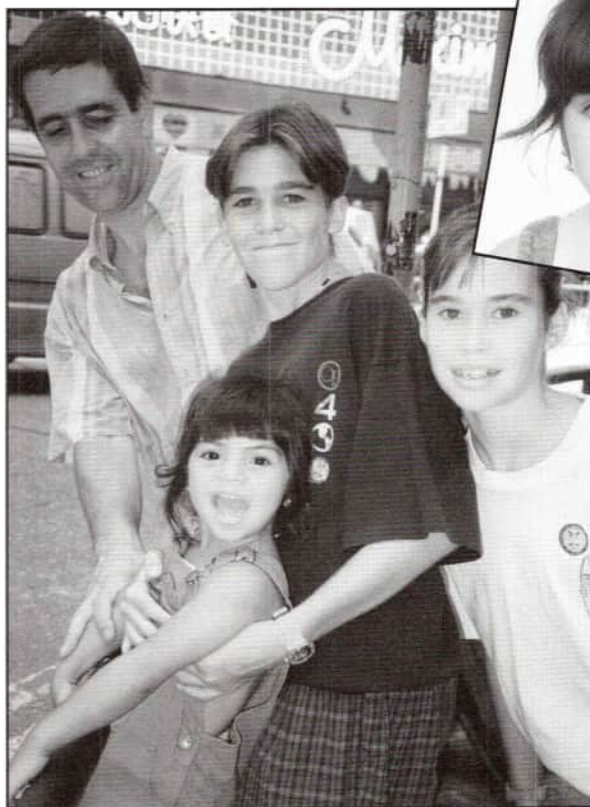
Adoption (Long-Distance Style)

WE HAD often thought of adopting a child, but we had never actively done anything about it. We have two lovely children of our own, Thomas and Chloe; we have a large house full of toys, and we live in comfortable circumstances compared to most of the rest of the world. Blessed with so many advantages, the thought of sharing it all with a less fortunate little person greatly appealed to us.

In the past, we had mentioned it as an idea to Thomas and Chloe and they thought it was "neat." Thomas and Chloe are now 14 and 12 years old, respectively. They both go to the Washington International School, where the student body is very much like a mini-World Bank or Fund. Among their friends there are many children who are adopted or have adopted siblings, so the concept of bringing a child from overseas into the family was not foreign to them.

One day early in 1990, while having lunch with Rosita Vera-Bunge, I mentioned how we had always liked the idea of adopting. She told me her friend, Alicia Jiménez, who also works in the Fund, had recently adopted a little boy from Nicaragua and how thrilled they all were. A few days later I called Alicia. She gave me a very clear run-down of the documentation required by the Nicaraguan authorities and informed me that the cost of adopting there was limited mainly to lawyer's fees and was nothing exorbitant. I wrote down all the requirements, none of which seemed impossible to meet, and then discussed it with my husband.

One of the first indications that dealing with Nicaragua was not going to be smooth sailing was when I called and asked them to



send me an application form. The woman I was talking with thought I was joking. Mail service? No, that doesn't work in Managua. Instead, she dictated all the detailed questions; I was to create my own form and write a convincing little essay as to why we wanted to adopt a Nicaraguan child. She also insisted that I send photographs of my children as, she said, they liked to match children physically with families. I was reluctant to do this as my children are fair haired; the thought of finding a fair-haired child in a Nicaraguan orphanage seemed to be a long shot, to say the least. Throughout

the process, we learned to say "yes" to all their requests, even if they were ultimately to prove impossible.

In May 1990, Rosita's husband took our "application form" to Managua, together with all the required documents. The documentation was delivered to a wonderful Chilean, Nelly Lazo, living in Nicaragua who had already helped two other families with their adoptions (Alicia Jiménez, and a Dutch family living in Managua). She was kind enough to deliver the application to the Instituto Nicaragüense de Seguridad Social y Bienestar (INSBI) in Managua for consideration.

At this point our long wait began, punctuated only by monthly phone calls to Managua to find out what progress, if any, was being made. The calls were most frustrating, as the relevant people were never in, or they would be in "mañana," or perhaps never again as they had become political pariahs. I spoke literally with dozens of people and was on cordial terms with most of them. However, it always seemed to be the responsibility of someone else to take a decision, and my file was always at the bottom of the heap as preference was invariably given, so I was informed, to internal adoptions. Also, there was talk of the Nicaraguan adoption law that stipulated that foreigners could only adopt a sick child. A child, indeed, so sick that treatment could only be found overseas. At this point we began to get cold feet. What was their definition of sick? Some kinds of sickness we could cope with, but some others would be unacceptable as we felt it would not be fair to our family as a whole. We had hoped to adopt a healthy child and had not anticipated anything of this nature. In October 1990, INSBI's adoption committee finally met and was able to review our

file. We were deemed suitable and our adoption application was approved.

Alicia and her husband, Lucho, were very supportive and encouraging throughout. Lucho (who works for OAS and undertook frequent missions to Nicaragua) helped by enquiring as to the status of the application each time he was in Managua. The reply was always the same: there were no children available for overseas adoption that fulfilled the requirements of Nicaraguan law. In addition, we were told that part of the problem was that we wanted a baby and that an older child might be easier to find. We also wanted a girl; if we would accept a boy

*"Opinions varied:
some said we shouldn't
dream of adopting a
baby in such condition,
others that we should
go ahead as children
are very resilient"*

perhaps things might move faster, etc.

While in Nicaragua in mid-1991, Lucho was kind enough to stay on an extra day at the end of his mission to visit the orphanage run by INSBI, as he wanted to see for himself if there were any babies available for adoption. Babies there were aplenty, but only one caught his eye as he knew she would fulfill the requirements of the Nicaraguan adoption law. The baby he saw was a diminutive black-eyed girl, aged six months, who had recently been abandoned in a hospital. She was in a pitiful state, weighing no

more than 7lbs, but her eyes were bright and alert. She had been very sick with pneumonia and stomach problems, and seemed to spend her time equally between hospital stays and the orphanage. Both the hospital and the orphanage had negligible resources and were unable to cope with such a malnourished child and her special needs. Lucho came back all excited about his find. We had mixed feelings. On the one hand, we thought that this would be our only chance of adopting in Nicaragua. However, we were concerned about any long-term effects of the extreme malnutrition. Opinions varied: some said we

shouldn't dream of adopting a child in such condition, others that we should go ahead as children are very resilient. In the balance was the life of the baby—but would she be able to recover and lead a normal, healthy life?

I called INSBI before we went on home leave in August and said that we would go ahead as long as the child could be seen by an independent pediatrician to ensure that there would be no long-lasting problems caused by the malnutrition. They thought that we were being most unreasonable, and that we should take a decision there and then. Did we or did we not want to adopt? They suddenly became very keen on us adopting this child, and this rather surprising increase in their enthusiasm only served to make us more wary.

While we were away on home leave, we talked to Thomas and Chloe about the little girl in Managua. We said we were thinking of adopting her. We tried to be very cautious as the baby had not yet received the medical clearance we needed. We explained to them that she had had a very rough start and would not be able to do the things that normal babies of her age

do, but that if they agreed, and if the medical examination proved that she would have no long-lasting problems, then we would go ahead with the adoption. Thomas and Chloe were absolutely thrilled. When were we going to get her? Could they come too?

Upon our return to Washington in early September, I found that INSBI had been ringing off the hook. "The child is yours," they said, completely ignoring our stipulation about an independent pediatrician. They informed us that we needed to travel to Managua as soon as possible and spend some months there bonding with the baby. Spend some months in Managua? This was out of the question. We both have full-time jobs and two children in school.

At this rate, we were clearly going nowhere. A visit was obviously required and my husband, Steven, decided to go. The objective was to have the baby seen by an independent doctor and, depending on his evaluation, begin the paperwork with lawyers and judges. Could it be done in a week? We would see. At this point, the orphanage put pressure on INSBI to move quickly as they felt the baby, who by now was again in hospital, wouldn't make it if she remained institutionalized for much longer.

The Lazos were a tower of strength, and Steven set up base at their house. In five days, and putting 500 kms. on a hired car without leaving Managua, the baby was taken to the doctor and for a battery of tests, baby paraphernalia was purchased for her, and a nurse hired—all with comparative ease. The legal process proved more difficult, since the three lawyers Steven was referred to were unfamiliar with the new adoption law and had no experience with adoptions. After lengthy discussions—and one major argument—a fourth lawyer, who seemed most competent, was found on Steven's last day in Managua. How long would it take?

"One month," was the lawyer's answer, to get the judge to pronounce, register the birth, and issue a Nicaraguan passport. In the meantime, the baby left the orphanage and went to stay with the Lazos.

A month to the day, we called to find everything was done. The baby now had all her adoption papers in order, a brand new Nicaraguan passport with her new name—Miranda—and an exit visa. Now for her G-IV visa! Paradoxically, her entry status to the United States was one of the easiest parts. With a fax from the World Bank (my husband's employer), the U.S. Consulate in Managua quickly and courteously issued the G-IV, and Miranda was all set to travel to the United States to join her new family.

I went to fetch Miranda at the end of November 1991. I celebrated her first Thanksgiving with her in Managua. This American holiday has now taken on a special significance for our family. She was exceedingly pale and tiny, covered in a skin rash and what little hair she had had been worn off the back of her head from lying unattended on a plastic mattress. As Lucho had said, she did have wonderfully alive black eyes. The journey from Managua to Washington was very emotional—I held this tiny little girl in wonder at being entrusted with such a precious charge. Miranda never cried once; I was the one choked up with emotion throughout the flight.

We arrived at National Airport late in the evening, and Steven was there to meet us. Miranda fell asleep in her car seat on the way home, but did not make any fuss when we arrived and woke her up. Thomas and Chloe had planned a special welcome. They had dressed up in all their finery, had filled the house with balloons, and had made a beautiful welcome banner. Miranda was very relaxed amid all their excitement and just lay contentedly in their arms. It was as if she knew that her

journey had now come to an end. Like Prospero's daughter, she had survived the tempest and was now in her very own brave new world. We all thought she was lovely. That night we put Miranda to bed and she did not stir until she awoke the next morning, all smiles. Looking back it all seems to have been so easy, to have gone so smoothly. And yet we were still to go through the worst week of our lives. I took Miranda to a wonderful Cuban pediatrician in D.C. who painstakingly read through all the scribbled details of her vast hospital file. He searched and searched for clues that might give some indication as to why she was in such poor condition. He said the degree of malnutrition was very serious indeed. The human body stops all unnecessary growing and activity when severely undernourished, and Miranda's had done just that. It was several months before her nails began to grow and almost six months before her hair grew over the bald patch at the back of her head. She didn't sit up by herself till she was over a year old. Initially, we paid weekly visits to the doctor who monitored her progress very closely. To eliminate any possible genetic problems, he sent Miranda to a geneticist at Children's Hospital for a full genetic screening. At Children's she spent hours being prodded, clinically observed, and prodded some more by a host of geneticists. After they had taken copious notes of their observations, a panel of doctor's met to discuss her case.

When I called to find out the results of their investigations, I was devastated to learn that some of the specialists thought Miranda had Down's syndrome. The doctor I spoke to suggested that perhaps over the next few weeks we might like to take Miranda in to Children's for a further blood test which would be definitive. Within an hour we were back at the hospital for the blood test. The result,

however, would take ten days! We were numb with anxiety. We waited and waited for the longest week of our lives. Finally, the phone rang and it was Children's Hospital. The doctors were wrong! The results were back and Miranda's chromosome count was in tip top shape.

Miranda has been a most wonderful addition to our family. Thomas and Chloe love her dearly, and she is extremely affectionate. I don't think Thomas has ever felt at all jealous of

her; on the contrary, he is most protective and loving. Chloe, on the other hand, perhaps felt somewhat displaced as she had been the only girl and the youngest member of the family. However, the age difference is so great that there has never been any real competition other than for our time and attention.

Now three and a half years old, Miranda has caught up physically with her peers. She is a very attractive and charming little girl—our Mayan

princess. Last month she taught herself to swim at Bretton Woods! She has been slightly delayed in her speech development, which is quite a common problem with children who do not receive the necessary stimulation in their first year, but with the help of a speech therapist she is doing marvelously in both English and Spanish. She is noisy and busy and a bundle of joy. Her pediatrician thinks she is a miracle. We know she is.

Rosalind Oliver



Pictured at the recent Bretton Woods Commission Conference in Washington, D.C., are six of the veterans of the original Bretton Woods conference. They are, from left to right, Aron Broches (The Netherlands); Mahmoud Saleh El Falaky (Egypt); Edward M. Bernstein (United States); Jacques J. Polak (the Netherlands); Burke Knapp (United States); and Victor L. Urquidi (Mexico). Two other veterans (Felipe Pazos of Cuba and Raymond F. Mikesell of the United States) also attended the Commission conference but were not present for the photo.

Letters to the Editor

All about trees . . .

I have a very romantic feeling about trees in D.C., and I wonder what has happened to the old trees (especially the lovely dogwoods) now that the Phase III construction is underway? Who owns the trees around the headquarters building—the Fund or the D.C. government? Who takes care of them? What about the life cycle of the trees in the atrium? Has any thought been given to planting one or more trees (perhaps birch trees similar to the ones in New Hampshire) around or in front of the downtown headquarters building to commemorate the Fund's 50th anniversary?

Manuelle S. Diamond

Mary Beth Hakeem, Chief of the Facility Design and Renovation Unit, responds:

Many of us in Facilities share your sentiments. After caring for the landscaping over the years, it was hard for us to see these beautiful trees destroyed to make way for Phase III. When the issue came up on what should be done with the trees, a plan was developed to save as many of the trees as possible. Thirty-nine trees, as well as most of the shrubbery in the way of Phase III, were relocated to BWRC. According to our maintenance contractor, the landscaping left behind for the demolition crews would have been destroyed in the removal process.

The Fund owns all of the trees around the headquarters building within the planter beds; the willow oak trees near the street are owned by the District of Columbia. The Fund is technically responsible for maintaining only its own trees, but we end up "helping out" on the willow oaks as well.

The original landscaping in the atrium, installed when the building was built in 1972, was replaced for the first time last year. We have been pleased with the positive reactions from the staff, in particular to the fishtail palm tree. Under our present maintenance program, the new interior trees are expected to live about twenty years.

Planting a tree to mark the 50th anniversary is an interesting idea. Unfortunately, we will be removing trees for the next several years to make way for the new Phase III landscaping around the entire block, so it just wouldn't be practical to plant new ones now. Moreover, New Hampshire birch trees apparently do not survive well in Washington's climate. However, staff may be interested to know that the pink stone around the base of the headquarters building and the planter beds is, in fact, Conway pink granite from New Hampshire!

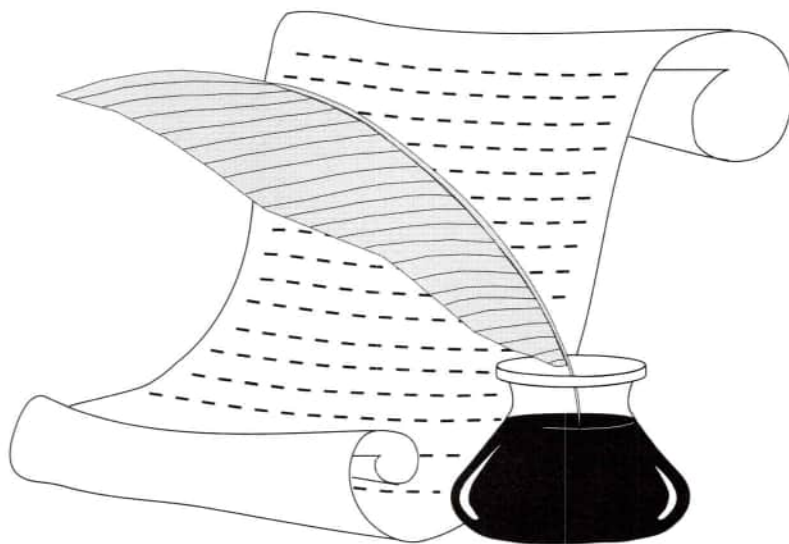
The Fund's phone directory

Before the phone directory was recently updated, one had to go through 13 supplements to get a staff member's phone or room number. Would it be possible to somehow put staff information on line—either in the E-mail where users' names appear or in the office systems bulletin board?

June Lavin

Cathy Harty, of the Telecommunications Unit, responds:

In the foreseeable future, staff may indeed have access to the telephone directory over the network. Various means to accomplish this have been investigated by ADM over the years and the fundamental roadblock has been the slow evolution to PC-based databases. Because the directory must be printed off the Locator System from data stored on the UNISYS mainframe, technical downloading problems from the UNISYS have made it virtually impossible for telephone directory data to be merged with—for example—the electronic bulletin board. However, the good news is that the present Locator database is in the process of moving to a new PC-based system that should enable the telephone directory to be accessible over the network, in addition to hard copy, perhaps within a year or so.



30-Year staff

Madge C. McLaren

25-Year staff

James E. Born
Aarno O. Liuksila
Tarja Papavassiliou
Joaquin P. Pujol
Slawka I. Pylyshenko

20-Year staff

Catherine O. John
James B. Kaiser
Michael Galen Martin
Richard L. Renfield

Separations

C. Victor Callender
Henri M. M. Claassen
Uwe Wolfgang Corsepius
Keith C. Creightney
Rolf Danielson
Joslin S. Deeks
Willem G. L. Evers
Mordechai Fein
Antonio S. Franco
Celia Gallardo-Nelson
M. D. Socorro Heysen
Bernard Holland
Catherine A. Kimmins
Tokoko Kurose
Graham J. Mathews
Susan J. Minton-Beddoes
Alexandros Mourmouras
Hirochika Nishikawa
Sheila A. Odell
Susan Del C. Olgati
Chris John Richardson
Murray A. Seeger
Takeo Shikado
Mark P. Taylor
Jose V. Valderrama
Jean-Claude Villemonteix

Transfers

Z. Abdallah Bakhshuwein to the Office of the Deputy Managing Director from African Department

Mandana Dehghanian to European II Department from Statistics Department

Naguib Abu-zobaa to African Department from Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Madagascar)

Luis Eduardo R. Borenzstein to Central Asia Department from Research Department

Adrienne Cheasty to Fiscal Affairs Department from European II Department

Mandana Dehghanian to European II Department from Statistics Department

Melanie Ann Dieckman to Central Asia Department from European II Department

Mohamed A. El-Erian to the Office of the Deputy Managing Director from Middle Eastern Department

Luis Eduardo Escobar to Western Hemisphere Department from Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Ecuador)

Mario Garza to Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Bolivia), from Western Hemisphere Department

Thomas T. Gibson to Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Ethiopia), from African Department

Anita L. Jupp to Western Hemisphere Department from European I Department

Godfrey Kalinga to Treasurer's Department from African Department

Kalpana Kochhar to Policy Development and Review Department from Central Asia Department

Vincent R. Koen to Research Department from European II Department

Wayne E. Lewis to Western Hemisphere Department from African Department

Alan T. MacArthur to Middle Eastern Department from Policy Development and Review Department

Rakia Moalla-Fetini to Middle Eastern Department from Policy Development and Review Department

Rogelio Morales to Western Hemisphere Department from Policy Development and Review Department

Lan Anh Nguyen to Middle Eastern Department from Fiscal Affairs Department

Athina Nickitas-Etienne to External Relations Department from the Bureau of Language Services

Michael C. Niebling to African Department from Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Bolivia)

Lynge Nielsen to Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Moldova), from European II Department

Erik C. Offerdal to Policy Development and Review Department from Fiscal Affairs Department

Elena Polyak to Joint Vienna Institute from Administration Department

Thilakaratna Ranaweera to Secretary's Department from IMF Institute

Robert K. Rennhack to Western Hemisphere Department from Policy Development and Review Department

David O. Robinson to Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Kyrgyz Republic), from European II Department

Miguel Aldo Savastano to Research Department from Secretary's Department

Jenaro D. Simpson to Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Honduras), from European II Department

Samba Thiam to Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Senegal), from African Department

Rosa Ines Vera-Bunge to Research Department from Secretary's Department

Delano Villanueva to IMF Institute from Middle Eastern Department

Jian-Ye Wang to European II Department from Policy Development and Review Department

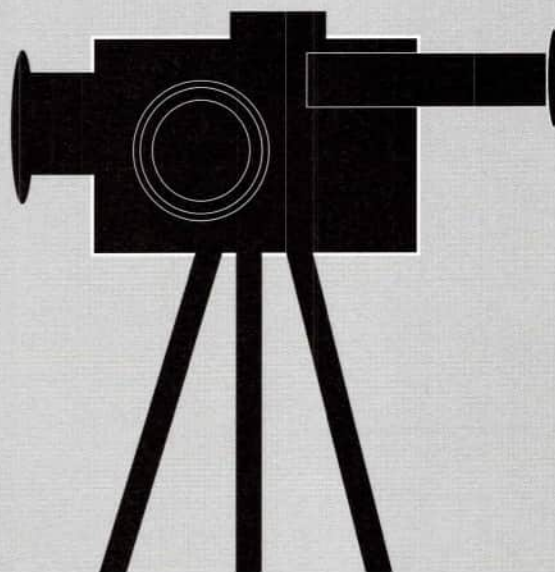
Peter J. Winglee to Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (China), from Central Asia Department

Prosper A. Youm to Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Madagascar), from African Department

Basil B. Zavoico to Support Group, Resident Representatives and Advisors (Estonia), from European II Department

EXR has recently produced a video, entitled "The IMF at 50," designed to offer a broad picture of the history and present role of the Fund. The video aims to educate and inform the public about the work of the Fund through the medium of a professionally produced, informative, and lively program. Broadcast copies are being distributed worldwide and have already been sent to television networks in almost 50 countries.

In addition to English, "The IMF at 50" has been produced in Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. It is available in 28- and 12-minute versions. Staff may borrow VHS copies of the English version from the Staff Development Center (6-312).



*T*he following poem may appeal to the many staff members who struggle so admirably with English as their second language, as well as to those who were fortunate enough to have

“mastered it” when they were five!

The poem is reproduced here with apologies to its creator; *Staff News* was unable to identify the original author.

Brush up your English

*I take it you already know
Of tough and bough and cough and dough?
Others may stumble, but not you,
On hiccough, thorough, lough, and through.
Well done! And now you wish, perhaps,
To learn of less familiar traps?*

*Beware of heard, a dreadful word
That looks like beard and sounds like bird.
And dead; it's said like bed, not bead -
For goodness' sake don't call it "deed"!
Watch out for meat and great and threat
(They rhyme with suite and straight and debt).*

*A moth is not a moth in mother,
Nor both in bother, broth in brother,
And here is not a match for there;
And then there's dose and rose and lose -
Just look them up - and goose and choose,
And cork and work and card and ward,
And font and front and word and sword,
And do and go and thwart and cart . . .*

*Come, come, I've hardly made a start!
A dreadful language? Man alive,*

New Staff

September 1994



Mauricio G. Bourdin

Uruguayan, is a Staff Assistant, EUII. Educated at Catholic University of Uruguay, he previously served as a Budget Assistant with FIAT. His interests include traveling, classical and folk music, electronics, computers, languages, and spending time with his family.



Maureen Burke

a U.S. national, is a Staff Assistant, MED. She holds a B.A. in French from Washington University (St. Louis), and lists dance and piano among her interests.



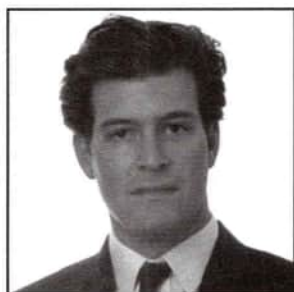
Joana D. Cannon

Brazilian, is a Staff Assistant, BCS. Educated at the University of Rio de Janeiro, she was previously with the World Bank. Her interests include the beach, aerobic dancing, outdoor activities, and spending time with her daughter.



Gustavo Canonero

Argentinian, is in the Economist Program (EUI). He holds a Ph.D. from MIT, and lists among his interests literature, photography, soccer, and music.



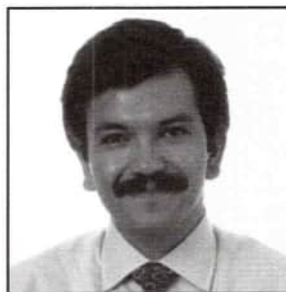
Joshua Charap

a U.S. national, is an Economist, PDR. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, and previously served as an Economist with the EBRD.



Coral P. Chevalier

from Trinidad & Tobago, is a Translator, BLS. She holds a Ph.D. (Comparative Literature) from the Sorbonne, studied at the Institute of Political Studies in Paris, and was previously with UNESCO and the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago.



Alfredo Cuevas

a Mexican national, is in the Economist Program (WHD). He was educated at Princeton University, and his special interests include movies, classical music, and literature.



Salim M. Darbar

an Indian national, is in the Economist Program (MED). Educated at Tulane University in New Orleans, he lists music and tennis among his interests.



Alicia Garcia Herrero

Spanish, is in the Economist Program (WHD). Educated at Bocconi University and at Kiel Institute of World Economics, she enjoys meeting people from different countries, traveling, and visiting museums. She is interested in literature, classical music, and ballet.



Brenda Gonzalez-Hermosillo

Mexican, is an Economist, MAE. She was educated at the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, and at the University of Western Ontario. She was previously a senior economist at the Bank of Canada.



Sarmad Khawaja

Pakistani, is an Economist, STA. Educated at Quaid-e-Azam University in Pakistan and at the Institute of Economics in Moscow, he previously served with the Institute of Social Studies and the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics. His interests include music and spending time with his family.



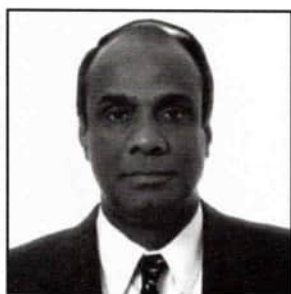
Cheng Hoon Lim

Malaysian, is in the Economist Program (SEA). She received her B.A. from Smith College, and her M.Phil. and Ph.D. from Cambridge University.



Paulo Mauro

Italian, is in the Economist Program (EUI). He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University, and was previously a Summer Intern in the World Bank. He lists tennis as his special interest.



Herbert V. Morais

Malaysian, is an Assistant General Counsel, LEG. He holds Master's and Doctoral degrees in international law from Harvard University, and was previously Assistant General Counsel in the Asian Development Bank and as Chief Counsel in the World Bank.



Jayanthi M. Nakkara

Indian, is a Staff Assistant, Joint Library (ADM). Educated at Calicut University, she was previously a secretary at the Embassy of India. Her interests include badminton, sewing, and gardening.



Sanjaya Panth

a national of Nepal, is in the Economist Program (EUII). He received his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, and prior to joining the Fund he taught economics at Columbia University.



Sebastian Paris Horvitz

Chilean, is an Economist, WHD. Educated at the University of Paris Dauphine, he was previously an Economist at the Centre d'Etudes Prospectives et d'Informations Internationales in Paris.



Mai Ngoc Pham

a U.S. national, is a Computer Systems Officer (BCS). She received her B.S. and M.S. from George Washington University, and includes travel, skiing, and photography among her interests.



Thierry Pujol

French, is an Economist (EUI). Educated at Mines de Paris, ENSAE, he was previously Head of Fixed Income Derivatives at CDC. His interests include movies and squash.



Krishna Srinivasan

Indian, is in the Economist Program (TRE). He holds an M.A. from the Delhi School of Economics and a Ph.D. from Indiana University. He previously served as Assistant Professor at Indiana University and as a consultant in the World Bank. He enjoys racquetball, basketball, and tennis.

Staff News Joins the Network!

A designated E-mail box—STAFFNEWS—has recently been established, so you can now use E-mail to send in your letters to the Editor, as well as to transmit any comments and suggestions you may have.