

POSTING SERVICES CENTRE UPDATE (continued)

to discover that our mailing list shows no address or an out-of-date one. Spouses, see page 20 to add your address to our mailing list or to update it. Employees, we need to rely on you to let your spouses know how they may receive information of interest and concern to them in a timely and direct fashion — please ensure this by taking your copy of *Liaison* home with you.

Our formal evaluations are generally positive with respect to specific workshops and programs, and we don't even mind the "beefs" we get — they help us to do better next time around. We live in a world of budget cuts and spending freezes, re-organizations and workforce adjustments, so our best efforts may not always produce perfection, but we aim high and try hard to help as many people as we can.

But we wonder. With all the input we get about what we *should* do, there seems to be an enormous disparity between what we are told are the needs of our clientele and the response of that clientele to what we are told will fulfill those needs. One explanation which occurs to us is that foreign service personnel pride themselves on their adaptability, and feel that seeking assistance in adapting to the stress of relocating, in coping with family needs or in intercultural communication would be an admission of a lack of that ability to adapt. Medical evacuations and repatriations for psychological reasons happen only to personnel who are not fit for the foreign service and should never have been selected for the assignment in the first place, right? Wrong! Nervous breakdowns are a comparative rarity in non-hardship posts, right? Wrong! Fitness and hardship have

little to do with it. Expectations and preparedness have everything to do with it. There are, in fact, fewer evacuations/repatriations for psychological reasons from *hardship* posts than from *non-hardship* posts, because personnel destined for the hardship posts tend to find out more about where they are going, expect less and prepare themselves accordingly. So, heed the Oracle of Delphi and Lord Baden-Powell: Know Thyself and Be Prepared! □

COMMUNITY LIAISON

DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH SPOUSES

If you are not yet on our mailing list and would like to be, please complete the form on page 20 and return it to ABB.

If you already participate in this program, you will have received the following since the last issue of *Liaison*:

March 31, 1987 — distribution: National Capital Region (1986-87/09).

— A reminder of the workshops for spouses being offered this spring.

□ A DAY OFF □

"So, you want the day off. Let's take a look at what you are asking for.

There are 365 days per year available for work. There are 52 weeks per year in which you already have two days off per week, leaving 261 days available for work. Since you spend 16 hours each day away from work you have used up 170 days, leaving only 91 days available. You spend 30 minutes each day on coffee break. That accounts for 23 days each year, leaving only 68 days available. With a one-hour lunch period each day, you have used up another 46 days, leaving only 22 days available for work. You normally spend 2 days per year on sick leave.

This leaves only 20 days available for work. We are off for five holidays per year, so your available working time is down to 15 days. We generously give you 14 days vacation per year which leaves only one day available for work and I'll be damned if you're going to take that day off" □