



LETTERBOX

We all have unique interests in the benefits and support packages of the foreign service. That we should focus on areas that touch us personally is, indeed, natural. In my own case I have a great concern for our foreign service children. The article in the July 88 edition of Liaison, titled "Adolescents Abroad - video review", was of particular interest to me and raised several points I would like to share.

We adults are firmly entrenched in our Canadianism. However, our youngsters need a great deal of support to develop the same feeling of identity.

In our experience, the return to Ottawa after a series of postings was the most difficult adjustment for our older children. Youngsters make allowances in their adjustment to situations abroad because they are Canadian. Yet when these "Third Culture Kids" return home they must confront the reality that they are not as Canadian as they thought, and they are strangers in their own land.

My husband is presently posted in Nairobi, but there are strong indications

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that we will be returning to Canada in the summer of '89. Our 15 year old daughter has not lived in Canada since 1981, and she views the move to Ottawa as yet another foreign posting. In anticipation of the inevitable difficulties, we are searching for ways to make the move more positive.

Videos, such as the one described in this article, are a great help to youngsters facing the dual hardships of growing up and repeatedly adjusting to new environments. Ottawa may be, in the minds of our young people, just another such situation. Perhaps consideration could be given to producing a distinctly Canadian video for our youngsters on teenage life in Ottawa: the schools, how kids dress, extra-curricular activities, the ambience that is distinctly Ottawa (chip wagons, skating on the canal...).

I welcome your comments or queries on this issue.

Yours truly
G. Molloy.

LIAISON is published by
the Department of External Affairs
Posting Services Centre ABC
(613) 995-9781

Editor: Elizabeth Campbell-Pagé
ISSN 0825 1800

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