

□ FOR SPOUSES WHO WANT TO BECOME BILINGUAL □

Since the end of the 60's thousands of public servants have taken French and English courses, as a second language, through schools managed by the Public Service Commission. All in Ottawa are conscious of the bilingual nature of the country and government.

What is little known, however, even by members of the Foreign Service, is the existence of a language training program for spouses of rotational employees in the Department ! As far back as 1968, the Department decided that representatives of the Canadian government, both husband and wife, should provide a bilingual impression of the country while performing their duties abroad. To this end, External Affairs received Treasury Board approval to recruit a French teacher, who was Mrs. Madeleine Caron.

The program has evolved since a few wives took the first course with Mrs. Caron. Soon after its inception Mrs. Caron had to hire other language

teachers contractually as a result of the great interest in the program. Mrs. Caron was at "l'avant-garde": through her efforts, some spouses' talents were effectively used. These contracts allowed them to continue to work without compromising their rotational life-style. Although, Mrs. Caron retired some three years ago, she has not been forgotten by many spouses.

With the arrival of employees from Immigration, Trade and Commerce and CIDA starting in 1982, the program has scope has expanded. In 1985-86, for example, 75 spouses, both men and women attended second language classes in Ottawa. There were a total of seven groups, during the day and evening, at three different levels with a total of five different teachers.

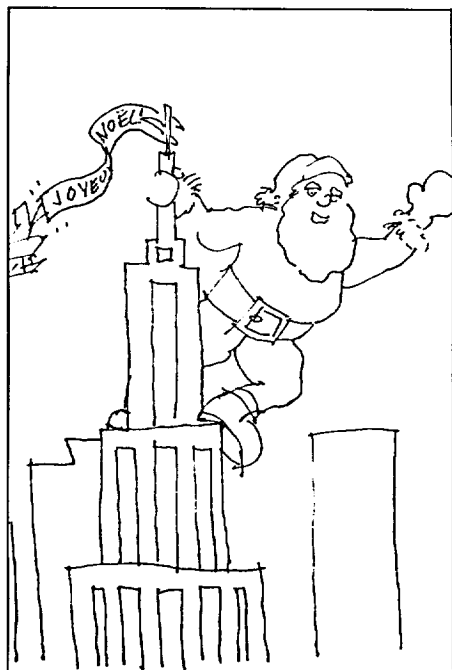
One can as well receive language training during a posting. Over the past year, 93 spouses took advantage of the offer.

Furthermore even though not an objective of the program participants of these courses who are interested in obtaining an official evaluation of their second language knowledge, can do so through the Department upon completion of the intermediate course. Last year a few took advantage of this offer and received good results.

Another "secondary effect" of these courses is the possibility of meeting other persons with similar lives and problems. It assists in fighting and defeating culture shock while abroad (or in Ottawa...)

To obtain additional information about the program do not hesitate to contact Nicole Coulombe. She would be pleased to assist you in any manner possible □

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Drawing: Jean Damecour

EDITOR'S NOTE

No matter where you are, Africa, Asia, South America or Ottawa, once again it was Christmas for everyone.

You probably went through different experiences from one post to another. Santa might have been Black for some kids; he might have spoken a different language for others and in Ottawa, he travelled from Shopping Centre to Shopping Centre. And for you, how was it? We tend to accumulate calories and spendings in proportion with the distance separating us from our families: too much or not enough.

Although this is not really a special Christmas issue, you will find some appropriate articles for the circum-

stance. As editor of *Liaison*, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy New Year abroad or in Ottawa □

Sylvie Gauvin

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