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Your Culture—the Only One?

by Anita Bask, H. Jr. 6

It is unusual for a citizen of any country, living in the year 1962, never to have heard a foreign language or to have seen a member of a race different from his own.

With modern communication and transportation facilities what they are, it takes only a matter of hours to know about happenings on the other side of the earth.

But there still remain problems in relaying messages.

I come from a little country, Finland, where people—4.5 million of them—are speaking a language different from any other in the world. In communicating with other lands, we must use a language foreign to us.

At home, I am employed by agricultural central organizations, working in their public relations office. We must use Swedish on the Scandinavian level, English or German for European contact. Finnish trade organizations need Spanish and French. Knowledge of at least three languages, therefore, is required.

During the summer of 1960, I participated in a conference of the Union of European Agricultural Journalists in Cambridge, England. There the question of the information service of two large organizations was brought up. Discussed were the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Union of European Agricultural Producers (CEA).

Bulletins compiled by them were heavily criticized by editors of leading European agricultural publications. Scandinavian countries and Germany were receiving information from FAO about rice, cocoa, and sugar-cane production, articles about plants which could not even be grown in their climates. CEA had tried to get these countries interested in some problems of French wine production.

Even the most valuable material is not worthwhile for all nations to use.

The other main criticism of the publications was their technical wording. Without special training in agricultural economics, politics, and production techniques, people could not interpret them.

Weights and measures is another point of conflict when messages are being conveyed beyond national borders. Have you ever tried to convert hectares, kilometers, liters, and tons to acres, miles, gallons, and short or long tons? When you have that problem solved, operate with two or three foreign currencies, and see how long it takes to get anywhere. Standardization is a real weak spot.

These are only a few of the ways in which nations fail to get their messages across. It is worthwhile to remember, however, that world problems would not be solved by converting everyone to the American way of life.

We, in Finland, like people of all countries, love our own land. We are ready to sacrifice much to maintain it.

Mrs. Gwen Matthews Sieck, Iowa State student from Madras, India, gave her opinions on how to get along best internationally. Speaking before a group of home economics students and faculty at the Home Economics Recognition Dessert, Mrs. Sieck stated the following points as necessities:

Appreciation of and respect for other cultures. Each country has developed its culture over a period of hundreds of years. She does not appreciate the comment, "How funny!" or "How peculiar!" when a foreign person observes her way of doing things.

Understanding the religions of the world. There are twelve major religions now in existence, each with widely diverse tenets. It is impossible to know about all of these, but to realize that other people hold beliefs differing from your own is a big step in the right direction.

Knowledge of customs and their meanings. Take the way a man and woman walk down the street. In Germany, the woman is on the left, the man, on the right. This is a precaution so that the man has his right hand free at all times to protect the woman.

In India, the woman walks behind the man. This does not mean that the man is acting superior, but that he, in years gone by, was responsible for cutting a path for both of them.

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In Norway, the woman walks nearest the street. This is a carry-over from the time when garbage was discarded from windows and the man, by walking on the inside, was the likely victim for any falling objects.

And, of course, there is the United States' custom where the man is always on the side of the street to protect the woman from getting splashed as the "horses and buggies" slosh by.

So where can we begin? College is a good place, where foreign students and faculty members carry with them the cultures from which they have come.

Reading and studying — newspapers, magazines, books, television, radio — is a way of increasing your knowledge.

Preparing professionally is another point. Who knows which of us will be an ambassador and communicator among countries, either by contact with people at home or abroad?

Finally, sincere interest in other people is important. It is the nature of humans to want others to be interested in them, and co-operation is easier when all people are actively thinking about what they can contribute to one another and just calmly waiting for what they will receive in return.

**BOOK NEWS**

**What to Cook for Company**
by LENORE SULLIVAN

An unusual cookbook, in new dress, and with new format and contents, will be encored this week from the Iowa State University Press when "What to cook for Company" by Lenore Sullivan makes its second-edition bow.

The book is called a "treasury of superb food" by reviewers. The dishes have a "gourmet touch but a down-to-earth approach" that is achieved from the way every-day foods are combined — with imagination, respect, and delight — into delectable, distinctive dishes to please family and friends. Many new recipes have been added to older specialties carried forward.

The 903 recipes are for all occasions and cover the full range of entertainment possibilities, with particular attention paid to company casseroles — those popular special dishes that hostesses find easy to prepare and take pride in serving.

Each recipe in "What to Cook for Company" has passed Miss Sullivan's professional, meticulous scrutiny. From the appetizers, savories, cocktails, soups and accompaniments that open the book to the "Grand Finale" that includes desserts, cakes and frostings, cookies and small cakes, and pies and tarts, they have survived rigorous testing and refinement — in ingredients, directions (that are easy-to-follow), and taste.

"What to Cook for Company" may be obtained from bookstores or from the Iowa State University Press for $4.95.

**How to Write for Homemakers**
by LOU RICHARDSON
and GENEVIEVE CALLAHAN

Sparkling pointers on ways to reach Mrs. Homemaker effectively highlight the new "How To Write for Homemakers," released this week by the Iowa State University Press.

"We believe," say authors Lou Richardson and Genevieve Callahan, "that our book will be a truly useful book for many years to come. It is a book not only for the home economics student, and the young-home-economist-new-on-the-job, but for all editors, copy writers, and photographers who work with home economists . . a book for anyone and everyone who hopes to reach homemakers through words and pictures."

The authors outline practical suggestions in how-to-do-it style for photography and art work; booklets and leaflets; demonstrations; educational films and slides; and the writing of letters, resumes, memorandums, cookbooks and other textbooks, publicity, advertising, and magazine articles.

The importance of looking for new ideas and adapting old ones creatively is emphasized. Copy reading and proofreading are included, along with more than 65 professional tips on lighting and other problems connected with food photography.

Copies of the book may be obtained from the Iowa State University Press for $4.95.

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