

CUSO - AN ALTERNATIVE

AN ALTERNATIVE - CUSO
by Elizabeth Shears

If you are graduating this year, this is the time of decision-making and the weighing of alternatives. One of those alternatives is an overseas posting with CUSO.

Don't be deluded by the name. CUSO does not mean young, idealistic university graduates 'doing their bit' in developing nations. Instead, it means highly-skilled individuals participating in the field of development.

Each year, several hundred Canadians fill positions in developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Western Pacific. The requests CUSO receives are in response to overseas Governments and agencies, and for the most part, are for periods of two years. A high proportion of CUSO workers are university graduates, some of them

new graduates. They go in a wide range of occupations: Accountants, Business Development Officers-Civil Engineers and Technologists, Teachers, Nutritionists, Home Economists, Nurses, Doctors, Foresters, and Farm Managers.

CUSO can't offer regular salary reviews and increases because they do not pay you, the requesting government does--roughly equivalent to a national with your job, which is enough to live on comfortably and do some travelling. Accommodation is provided by the overseas country and is usually close to your place of work. Depending on the job, the rent may be free or subsidized.

CUSO picks up the bill for your travel and settling in at your post. Some programs have in-country language training and orientations. CUSO pays your way back at the end of your contract and gives you a resettlement

allowance in Canada.

Before you leave for your posting, CUSO will orient you to the culture and climate you are going to, and give some special training (e.g. teacher training) needed to do the job.

CUSO also pays for insurance--medical and life-- and makes arrangements to defer loans for those with them.

Your main concern working overseas, as it would be in Canada, is to perform your job competently, but you will be living in a foreign culture, and personal qualities such as initiative, adaptability, sensitivity, and a sense of humour will go a long way toward making your stay enjoyable and worthwhile. Living and working with people of another culture can provide an awareness and insight that can't be gained any other way, if you allow yourself to become involved.

Maurice Perry, an Education graduate in 1978, is working with CUSO as a teacher in

Nigeria. Another teacher who recently returned is Marion White, who also worked in Nigeria. My husband and I worked together in Ghana for two years before I came to UPEI to do a Science degree in Home Economics. We both found our experience there very worthwhile, and we hope we contributed as much as we received in terms of awareness and personal growth.

CUSO wants your involvement. The time has long past when a CUSO worker's contribution to Tanzania, or Belize, or any other developing country affected only that country. Two years spent in development overseas is spent in the betterment of the global community.

The person to contact on campus is Suzanne deJong at the Campus Manpower Office. My husband is Chairman of the PEI CUSO Committee. He may be contacted: c/o AV Dept., Holland College, Weymouth Street, Charlottetown, P.E.I. CIA 4Z1 (tel. 892-4191 Local 170)

ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN A GRAVEYARD

By Maureen Hartman

To commemorate St. Patrick's Day, 1980, several members of the UPEI staff presented The Weaver's Grave by Seumas O'Kelly at the Chaplaincy Centre. Adapted for dramatic reading by Brendan O'Grady, it related the story of old men and the search for the weaver's grave.

The illustrations from the second edition by Jack B. Yeats were very well adapted to slide format, and the traditional Irish music

created an authentic atmosphere of "the Irish graveyard". J. Ivan Dowling must be commended for his role as story teller, as must Olga MacDonald for her part as the widow, and J. T. Place, M. F. Hennessey, and J. J. Coyle, for their functions as the old men. All voices amazingly adopted an Irish lilt just for the presentation.

If you missed The Weaver's Grave, there is a tape of it in the library, but be forewarned: a touch of the magic of St. Paddy's Day will be gone.

Eyewitness Account

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Matt Maychak

Describing scenes of horror, an eyewitness of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, who has toured refugee camps in Pakistan and Iran, came to Carleton University to ask Canadians to support Afghans resisting the Soviets.

Tarik Kurayshi told about 75 listeners that it is impossible for him to convey the "sad, agonizing and painful" suffering he saw.

"What shall I tell you?" he said. "That I saw dead bodies, children without shoes with frostbitten feet, wives without husbands, brothers without sisters, that I saw people with their bodies burned, limbs amputated?"

"Unless you know the stab in your own chest, you will not know its intensity, its magnitude."

Kurayshi said Afghans who have fled their country live without adequate medical care in camps in neighbouring Pakistan and Iran.

He said the Afghan climate is as cold as Canada's, but as many as nine refugees huddle together in small canvas tents that have no floors.

Kurayshi said the refugees left without regrets because the Soviets will not allow Afghans to practise their Islamic religion.

"I saw impassive, indifferent faces and I also saw faces with a burning rage for revenge," he said. "But I saw no tears. This is what sets the Afghans apart from other refugees in the world."

Kurayshi, born in northern Pakistan on the Afghan border, came to the United States in 1971. The editor of a

monthly magazine published for and by Muslim students in North America, Kurayshi spent a week in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan in December.

Mobin Shorish, an Afghan professor now in the United States, joined Kurayshi in condemning the Soviet invasion.

He said the Soviets have massacred 250,000 Afghans and forced another million to flee to refugee camps.

"It paints a picture of people who are the barbarians of the twentieth century," Shorish said.

"Sovietization is crucifixion."

"If there is not some form of moral outrage expressed against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, my people will vanish," Shorish added.

Kurayshi and Shorish, and the Muslim students' associations who are sponsoring their trip, want Canadians to urge their government to boycott the Moscow Olympics and give money and arms to the Afghan rebels.

They said a refugee fund has been established.

"If you do not help Afghanistan now... in the long run you've invited the Russian oppression on yourselves," Shorish said.

Kurayshi said the Afghan "freedom fighters" can beat the Soviets if given missiles and anti-tank guns.

He called the West "sick" and accused North Americans of being unaware and selfish.

"Afghans," he said, "know how to die."

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