

Office of European Programs
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Department of State
Washington, D.C.

We, the undersigned, are Americans in Yugoslavia this year under the Fulbright-Hays Act. Partially because of the political climate and partially because of the administrative personnel, we generally find ourselves distressed for one reason or another. This is not to say that we have not had good and valuable experiences, but we all have had critical and difficult periods which could have been avoided had we been given adequate information and official assistance by both the Americans and Yugoslavs on the Yugoslav-American Fulbright Commission here.

Below is a brief listing of the kinds of difficulties we have encountered:

(1) According to the booklet sent to us entitled "Terms and Conditions of the Fulbright-Hays Grant" under the heading "Grant Benefits (Item 7-A Transportation)," it is stated:

Reservations and payment for transportation provided under this grant will be made by the Commission and no action should be taken by the grantee to obtain transportation by himself.

As the time of our departure to Yugoslavia drew nearer, however, and we had received no travel confirmations from the Commission, we were indeed compelled to make our own travel arrangements to Yugoslavia. It was only at a later date that we found out we had been, contrary to the above statement, expected to make these arrangements on our own. Hopefully, in the future the Commission will make clear to grantees exactly what they are and are not to do with regard to travel plans.

(2) Confusion also existed as to the amount of excess baggage to be covered by the Commission. Some of us who flew here received vouchers covering less than the stated allowance for the overweight luggage. This created last minute problems for those of us who planned to bring necessary reference books and materials.

(3) The Commission was informed of exact arrivals, but made no effort to meet or contact students or professors in our group. We (many of us knowing little or none of the language) were forced to eventually locate them in their Belgrade offices.

(4) Only after requests did we receive home telephone numbers and addresses of the Commission's operations staff here. In a program such as ours, we feel that such information should have been made available immediately upon our arrival, to provide us with contacts in case of emergencies.

(5) According to a 1973 law stated in the booklet entitled "Information on Yugoslavia for American visitors" given to us by the American Embassy here, sponsoring Yugoslav institutions and enterprises are now responsible for obtaining the residence permits for guest scholars, students, researchers, and employees. We ourselves received the necessary paper for the official registration here, but most of us were not informed about the registration procedure and proper stamping. When confronted with our confusion, the Commission, in fact, gave us incorrect information as to addresses, etc.. When, after hit and miss attempts, we finally located the proper police station, our belated registrations were awkward to explain. Several of us were also given incorrect information about car registration which created more complications and confusion.

(6) Many of us are in inadequate housing, and often we must pay several times more rent than the Yugoslavs for identical facilities. Contrary to what we were lead to believe in the "Information Booklet" about living accommodations, the Commission has provided little or no help in acquiring housing.

(7) Contrary to "Grant Benefits (Item 7-E Health and Accident Insurance)" in "Terms and Conditions of Fulbright-Hays Grant", we have not received claim forms and other necessary insurance documents, or even basic information about the extent of our health insurance while here in Yugoslavia.

(8) The "Information Booklet" states that the U.S. Embassy medical facilities, including the resident physician, would be available for our needs with specific limitations. However, we were later informed that we could not see the Embassy physician for any reason.

(9) Academic advisors and colleagues are often not available and frequently, if contacts are made, indifferent. The Commission appears to be poorly informed on the academic faculties and facilities in Yugoslavia, and virtually no effort has been made to aid many of us in

making proper contacts. It must be pointed out that some of us have been fortunate to meet one or more associates who have been helpful in innumerable ways. However, the meeting of Yugoslav friends and colleagues was usually the result of circumstances and not because of any official assistance.

(10) According to official Fulbright regulations, it was stated that full competence in Serbo-Croatian was not needed to fulfill the requirements for the Fulbright to Yugoslavia. It was even suggested that language courses could be provided here. When asked about the possibility of such language help the Commission stated that local language training was not available or possible. There is, however, a fine Institute of Foreign Languages located in Belgrade that offers various level courses for foreigners which we discovered on our own. There is no reason why information about this institute was not given to us by the Commission, again, upon arrival.

(11) The stipends, while theoretically adequate, nevertheless require many of us to draw on dollar reserves from home. This is because we have neither the PX, etc., privileges of the U.S. diplomatic corps, nor do we have access to wage-priced housing or dormitory facilities as do other Yugoslavs and foreigners.

(12) Because the Fulbright Commission does not provide us with official identification cards (as, for example, international scholars, researchers, etc.), we are often refused library privileges, such as borrowing books, taking our materials into the reading rooms of libraries in order to use dictionaries, etc.. The cost of buying books in order to carry out proposed projects is extremely high, therefore, use of the libraries is imperative. It would seem logical that some form of administrative assistance could be forthcoming in these matters.

There are many other small problems that could have been easily avoided with the proper planning and programming. There should have been better basic information available before we arrived or immediately upon arrival, covering such things as laundry facilities, use of credit cards, use of International Student ID's, etc.

We believe that this part of the world has much to offer

in its peoples, cultures, and natural resources, yet under the current situation we sense that there is an "unhealthy" exploitation of Fulbrighters here and an erosion of the cooperative spirit with which we arrived.

We ourselves are grateful for the Fulbright opportunity and sincerely wish for its continuation and improvement in the future.

<u>Name</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
David Papier	Titoograd	ESX. Program U. of Michigan - Ann Arbor
B. Z. Siegel	Kotor - Belgrade	Director Biology Program University of Hawaii Honolulu, Hawaii
Naomi Berkhowitz	Belgrade	U. of Washington, Seattle Dept. Slavic Languages & Literature
Paul Roberts	Novi Sad	English Language Institute Oregon State University
Breta Little	Skopje	U. of N. Carolina, Chapel Hill Linguistics
Mary Hines	Nis	N.Y.U. - Assist. Prof. English

copy of this was sent to Georgina Louvocky - Yugoslav-American
And one was sent to Sen. Fulbright Commission for Ed. Exch.