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Chapters in Action

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Chapters in Action -



GERMAN BANK EMPLOYEE VISITS PAN AMERICAN SHIP

Anne Vietzen, seen at the wheel of a Boeing Strato Clipper, was one of two German women leaders who spent seven months in this country to observe Americans and America. San Francisco Chapter of ASWA cooperated with the U.S. Department of State by sponsoring the San Francisco visits of Anne and Dr. Hildegard Seelheim. In fact, they cooperated so well that Dr. Seelheim asked if it would be possible to be sponsored by ASWA in every city she planned to visit.

The two women whose San Francisco visits were sponsored by the ASWA chapter began their visits to America in the fall of 1953. Dr. Seelheim studied the United Nations at Columbia University and Miss Vietzen studied international affairs and political science at the University of Denver.

They then began a statewide study tour designed to complete their American experiences and to give them an opportunity to see how we live and work. Our government believes that helping people of other countries gain an understanding of the basic principles governing American life in the political, economic, social, cultural and educational fields will help "to counteract the vicious lies about the United States and its objectives, as perpetrated by the Communists and to build a positive psychological force around which the free world and freedom-loving people everywhere can rally."

Both visitors are professionally interested in business and accounting. Miss Vietzen works in a bank in Stuttgart. The main objective of her visit was to study political organizations for young people and methods of interesting young women in political affairs. Dr. Seelheim, here to study the United Nations, its organizations and administration, is employed by the Government of the Province of Westphalia at Munster, doing reports on statistics, the budget and questions of administrative reform.

San Francisco Chapter organized a fine program jor the visits of both women. A complete and separate program was arranged for each, as their visits were not concurrent. They met and held discussions with top city and public officials, university and college professors and civic leaders. They attended court sessions, city supervisors' meetings, and the chapter's own study groups. Dr. Seelheim spoke at a dinner meeting of the chapter and was interviewed by the city's four leading newspapers at a press conference. Miss Vietzen appeared on a popular radio program. Their programs included visits to American industries and strictly social affairs with chapter women and other American women. Included in the social affairs was an informal weekend at a cabin at Donner Lake. Various members of San Francisco chapter served as hostesses and guides for the exchange women during the fourteen days of the visits.

Did they gain an insight into the American way of doing things? Dr. Seelheim's comments to a San Francisco newsman in discussing the current citizens' fight to save the cable cars from the government axe are enlightening. "In Germany," she said, "We have a saying, I am only a little sausage," meaning the individual citizen is far away from the government. Americans are more optimistic. They make petitions, That is really democracy. It is impressive."