

June 25, 1970

Mr. Karl L. Mahler  
USAID/E - EXO  
c/o American Embassy  
Quito, Ecuador

Dear Karl:

I shall try to catch you at your present address before you go on to Santiago. I am a poor correspondent, but have talked with your wife on several occasions and asked her to pass on the word. Before talking about you, please extend my warmest regards to Wes and Brigitte Emery. My only complaint with them is that, as I have often told her, Brigitte does not have a twin sister. Please ask them to stay in touch and I shall try to do the same.

I have been in intermittent touch with Bill Meeks and am generally familiar with the extraordinary enthusiasm expressed on all sides for the future placement of Karl Mahler. As nearly as I can figure out, you will either end up in Guatemala or Ecuador. While ideally you would wish, naturally enough, to have all options covered, we at VTC must man the shop. As you know, I have always been most pleased with your contribution here, and the thought of losing you has never been a happy one. Nevertheless, in your own career interests, you should, I believe, make the moves which you have been contemplating. It seems pretty clear that you will be offered an assignment in Latin America. Getting such an assignment on your record would not prevent you from going back to Viet-Nam at some future time, but would make you a member of the AID club in a way that you are not now. I therefore believe that your best interest is to become a Latin American, and only because of this our best interest is to fill your job when and if we can. We have not done so yet, but I am hopeful that we may be getting a good FSO in the near future. This is still very much up in the air. Your options with us will stay open as long as it remains that way. Should we not fill the slot, and should you not get the Latin American assignment, then, of course, we would want you back in your old capacity. We should stay in touch with each other until the situation clarifies on both sides.

Regarding the Maxwell Seminar, I would not approve that if you were returning to us since we have too much pressure on us in the Basic Course at this time. The present class numbers about 70 and the one after it will be the same. On the other hand, if you become a Latin American, then your attendance at the Maxwell Seminar would be subject to their convenience. AID has a contract with Syracuse and is considerably embarrassed, according to my information, by failure to come up with an appropriate number of students. We sympathize with AID's problem but would not release you for that purpose if you still belonged to us, much as we would like to. I understand the program is a good one.

You may know that I was offered the Deputy Mission Director job in Quito in 1965, but went to Tunisia instead. So far, history has not repeated itself, and I am not under any consideration for the job that I know of. At this point, I am not sure what my reaction would be if it were offered. What does the Director think?

Please write soon again. If my own experience is any guide, TDY tours are difficult. One has an uprooted feeling and lives out of a suitcase, and there is usually much more work than satisfaction involved. At least that was my recent experience in Bangkok. I am most pleased that you have made a big hit with the Mission, but I knew you would and so predicted in your Evaluation Report.

All the best,

Sincerely,

Ogden Williams  
Coordinator  
Viet-Nam Training Center

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