

PENELOPE (PENNE) BABCOCK LAINGEN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mrs. Laingen accompanied her husband, Ambassador Lowell Bruce Laingen, on his State Department Assignments in Washington, DC and abroad.

Personal Background

- Born in Michigan
- Randolph Macon College
- George Washington University
- Married William Bruce Laingen 1957

The role of the Foreign Service wife

- Unhappiness with 1972 Directive on Spouses
- Change in responsibilities of wives of Ambassadors
- Treatment of junior wives
- “Radical chic” views
- Dangers of excess privilege
- Supporting the “policy line”
- “How to be an Ambassador’s wife” manual
- Spouse Report
- The “dragon lady” ambassador’s wife
- Washington separation allowance
- No more wives’ “efficiency reports”
- Tandem assignments
- Present lack of “partnership”
- “Married to the Ambassador”, not “the Ambassador’s wife”
- Women’s Action Group (WAO)
- 1985 Spouse Report
- Family Liaison Office (FLO)
- Letter to State Magazine
- Foreign Service Associates
- Junior and senior officers’ wives role
- Role of the husband in marriage

Washington, DC, 1957-1960

Karachi, Pakistan, 1960-1964

- American Women’s Club charitable activities
- Health problems
- Living difficulties
- Environment
- Visit of Jackie Kennedy

Washington, DC, 1964-1966

Washington, DC, 1967-1968

Kabul, Afghanistan, 1968-1970

American Women's Club activities

Local hospital assistant

Washington, DC, 1971-1976

Red Cross Driver

Church and school activities

Founder, Family liaison Action Group (FLAG)

Philanthropic organization activities

Many activities with the Association of American Foreign Service Wives (AAFSW)

State Department meeting on FSO wives' at post

Hierarchy among spouses

Valetta, Malta, 1977-1979

Head, charitable and social organizations and activities

Honorary Member of Maltese Societies

FLO

Community Liaison Officer

Comments on "new" role of wife of Ambassador

Local customs and diplomatic protocol

Washington, DC, 1979-1981: Husband at Teheran Embassy

Chargé (Ambassador) Laingen held hostage in Teheran

Personal views of Iran

Hostage crisis

Iran Hostage Task Force Center

Family Liaison Action Group (FLAG)

Yellow ribbon campaign

Public attitude re hostage crisis

Personal feeling of responsibility

Failed rescue attempt

Restrictions on foreign travel of wives of hostages

Liaison with State Department

Handling the media

Publication of message to President Carter

Family

Politics

Responsibilities to families of hostages

Anger and despair

Personal diary

Hostages in Lebanon

Need for leadership

Lack of State Department support

Georgetown Symposium
Spouse Report
Chapman Cox Foundation financial support
Hostages' welcome home
Iran Working Group
"Uncaring" trend

Washington, DC; 1981-1986
Post Career Counseling Course