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<http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov>

Bruce Laingen Papers: A Guide to His Papers at the Jimmy Carter Library

Collection Summary

Creator: Laingen, L. Bruce (Lowell Bruce), 1922-

Title: Bruce Laingen Papers

Dates: 1979 to 1999

Quantity: 8 linear feet, 8 linear inches; 19 containers

Identification:

Accession Number: 09-01
National Archives Identifier: 4051467

Scope and Content:

This collection contains material reflecting Bruce Laingen's experience while held hostage as the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires in Iran when the embassy was overrun by student protesters. The collection contains correspondence, invitations to speaking events, schedules, flyers, statements, newspapers, news clippings, articles, his personal diary, State Department to and from telex messages, and audio cassettes, and artifacts. The materials also relate to his post hostage return and the many events he participated in as a special guest and speaker concerning foreign relations and terrorism.

Creator Information: Bruce Laingen

Bruce Laingen was born August 6, 1922 on a farm near Odin Township and Butterfield in southern Minnesota. He graduated from St. Olaf College, studied at the National War College, and received a M.A. in International Relations from the University of Minnesota. During World War II, Laingen served in the U.S. Navy, and in 1949 he joined the U.S. Foreign Service. He served at posts in Germany, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and was then appointed Ambassador to Malta by President Gerald Ford in 1977.

Laingen was then sent back to Iran as the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires in June 1979, after Ambassador William H. Sullivan and Chargé d'Affaires Charlie Naas were relieved of their posts by President Jimmy Carter. On November 4, 1979, the U.S. embassy was overrun by student protesters following the Iranian Revolution. Sixty three hostages were taken at the embassy, while Laingen and two others were seized at the Iranian Foreign Ministry Office. Mrs. Laingen tied a yellow ribbon about the oak at their home during the crisis that started a yellow ribbon movement to support the release of the hostages. These yellow ribbons are still used today to show support for U.S. troops.

Bruce Laingen and 51 hostages were released on January 20, 1981, following 444 days of captivity. Laingen remains the last American head of mission to Iran, as direct bilateral diplomatic relations between the two governments were severed following the seizure of the embassy and have not been restored.

After his ordeal, Laingen was awarded the State Department's Award for Valor along with several other recognitions. The Library of Congress holds his correspondence with Joel Hettger in their manuscript division.

Bruce Laingen's next position was that of Vice President of the National Defense University, a post traditionally held by a senior diplomat. He retired from the Foreign Service in 1987 after 38 years of service.

Restrictions:

Restrictions on Access: These papers contain documents restricted in accordance with applicable executive order(s), which governs National Security policies, applicable statutes/agency restrictions, and material which has been closed in accordance with the donor's deed of gift.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction: Copyright interest in these papers has been donated to the United States Government. Some of the records may be subject to copyright restrictions (i.e. newspapers, publications, etc.). Researchers should contact the publisher for further information.

Related Material:

Related materials in this repository: Domestic Policy Staff; Robert Ode Papers; Richard Morefield Papers

Related materials in other repositories: Minnesota Historical Society

Separated material: 45 RPM albums and audio cassettes have been transferred to the Library's Audio-Visual Department; artifacts have been transferred to the Library's Preservation Section

Index Terms:

Limited to major topics under each category
Persons: Bruce Laingen

Organizations: National Defense University

Subjects: Hostages; Foreign Relations; Terrorism

Places: Iran, Middle East

Types of Material: Correspondence, event schedules, flyers, statements, newspapers, news clippings, articles, diary, telex messages.

Administrative Information:

Preferred citation: [Type of Document], [Names of Sender and Recipient or Title of Document], [Date], [Collection Title], [Series Title], [Folder Title], [Box Number], Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

Acquisition information: These donated historical materials were received under provisions of the instrument of gift that Bruce Laingen signed October 16, 2008.

Processing information: This collection was opened in November, 2016.

System of Arrangement:

The records of the Bruce Laingen Papers contain three series:

Series Title	National Archives Identifier
Bruce Laingen's Subject Files	4051469
Bruce Laingen's Audio Visual Files	41009384
Bruce Laingen's Artifact Files	41009542

Detailed Description of the Collection

[Bruce Laingen's Subject Files](#)

Scope and Content: Containers 1-13. This series was opened in 2016. This series consists of correspondence, invitations, event schedules, news clippings, newspapers, and welcome home cards from school children. The newspapers and articles illustrate the voluminous headlines and articles from major newspapers including the Tehran Times during the crisis. In addition, the series contains Bruce Laingen's daily diary while held hostage, and telex messages to and from the State Department. Although, the majority of material in the series consists of arrangement details for speaking engagements, very few of the speeches given are included. Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

[Bruce Laingen's Audio Visual Files](#)

Scope and Content: Container 1. This series was opened in 2016. This series contains several 45 rpm records of songs and messages dedicated to the hostages from various artists across the country. Also included are audio cassettes of recordings of various events, entertainment, and speeches from the pre and post release of the hostages. Unarranged.

[Bruce Laingen's Artifacts](#)

Scope and Content: Containers 1-5. This series was processed in 2016. This series contains numerous plaques, oversized city proclamations, banners, and signed posters presented to Bruce Laingen in appreciation of his many services to the U.S. during and after the Iran hostage crisis. Unarranged.

[Return to series list](#)

[Return to Collection Summary](#)

Container List

Bruce Laingen's Subject Files

Container 1

Article - Candle Light Village on Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, D.C., 9/80
Attended Events - ASAE 64th Annual Meeting - Minneapolis, Minnesota, 8/2-5/84
Attended Events - Bolling Air Force Base - Prayer Breakfast, 2/15/85
Attended Events - Center for the Study of the Presidency - St. Louis Missouri and Des Moines, Iowa, 5/8-10/84
Attended Events - Center for the Study of the Presidency - St. Louis, Missouri, 12/8/84
Attended Events - Cleveland and Akron, Ohio - Cleveland Council on World Affairs and Akron Rotary Club, 1/22-23/85
Attended Events - Coffeerville Community College - Humanities Project Lecture Series, 9/11-12/84
Attended Events - College Park Rotary Club - College Park, Maryland, 2/6/85
Attended Events - Conference of Chief Justices - Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri, 7/1/84
Attended Events - Conversation at Oatlands - Leesburg, Virginia, 7/21/84
Attended Events - Cornell University Lecture Series, 10/88
Attended Events - Cumberland Valley Foreign Policy Group - Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, 5/4-6/84
Attended Events - Daughters of American Revolution National Defense and Veteran's Day Luncheon - Andrews Air Force Base Officers Club, 11/8/84
Attended Events - Department of Defense - National Defense University Field Studies - Iceland, Switzerland, Finland, Austria, 3/31-4/14/84
Attended Events - Detroit Club Committee on Foreign Relations, 2/29/84
Attended Events - Exchange Club - Capitol Hill, 2/8/84
Attended Events - Gannon University - Erie, Pennsylvania, 3/8-10/84
Attended Events - Guest Appearance on Panorama Show, Channel 5 - Washington, D.C., 11/28/84
Attended Events - Hahnemann University - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 6/7/84
Attended Events - Hebrew Union College - Cincinnati, Ohio, 1/20-21/85
Attended Events - Irish Fellowship Club - Chicago, Illinois, 12/14/84
Attended Events - Jefferson Society of the University of Virginia - Charlottesville, 11/30/84
Attended Events - Kent School - Kent, Connecticut, 2/10-11/84
Attended Events - Kiwanis Club of Leisure World - Silver Springs, Maryland, 9/14/84
Attended Events - Lutheran Social Services Choir - Washington, D.C., 2/10/85
Attended Events - Maryland Sons of the Revolution - Green Springs Inn near Baltimore, Maryland, 2/25/84
Attended Events - Marymount College of Virginia Seminar, 10/6/84
Attended Events - McNair Officer's Club - Senate Youth Program, Washington, D.C., 1/31/84
Attended Events - McNair Officer's Club - Senate Youth Program, Washington, D.C., 2/5/85
Attended Events - Military Order of the World Wars - Washington, D.C. Chapter, 10/11/84
Attended Events - National Association of Private Psychiatric Hospitals - Palm Springs, Florida, 1/17/84

Attended Events - National Association of Wholesaler Distributors Meeting - Acapulco, Mexico, 1/10-14/85
Attended Events - National Prayer Breakfast - USA Engineer Center and Fort Belvoir, 2/17/84
Attended Events - National Prayer Breakfast - USMC Barracks, D.C., 12/14/84
Attended Events - National Sojourners Bethesda Club, 3/11/87
Attended Events - National War Club Wives Club Lecture Series - Ft. McNair, 12/12/84
Attended Events - Nova University Alumni Association, Ft. McNair Officers Club, 10/17/84
Attended Events - Omaha, Nebraska and Minneapolis, Minnesota, 10/30/84-11/4/84
Attended Events - Pittsburg, Tennessee - Episcopal Churchman of Tennessee, 8/24-26/84

Container 2

Attended Events - Prayer Breakfast, Naval District of Washington, D.C., 2/7/85
Attended Events - Prisoners of War / Missing in Action Recognition Day, Ft. Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, 4/14/84
Attended Events - Reserve Components National Security Components, Pensacola, Florida, 1/26-29/85
Attended Events - Reserve Components National Security Course, Los Alamitos, California, 11/15-18/84
Attended Events - Reserve Components National Security Course, Pensacola, Florida, 2/3-6/84
Attended Events - Rotary International, Nashville, Tennessee, 4/25/84-5/1/84
Attended Events - Second Company United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, 3/19/85
Attended Events - Sixtieth Annual PNPA Convention - Hershey, Pennsylvania, 9/12/84
Attended Events - Soviet Symposium Mercersburg Academy, 4/87
Attended Events - St. John's Episcopal Church, Washington, D.C., 2/26/84
Attended Events - St. Olaf College - Vision Campaign, 4/87
Attended Events - Symposium at Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania, 2/14/85
Attended Events - Treasury Executive Institute, Washington Conference Center, 11/29/84
Attended Events - Tuckahoe Women's Club, Richmond, Virginia, 1/9/85
Attended Events - United Methodist Church, Chevy Chase, Maryland, 2/25/84
Attended Events - Virginia Press Association Cavalier, Oceanfront, Virginia, 7/13-14/84
Attended Events - Washington Center, Washington, D.C., 1/16/85
Attended Events - West Florida Regional Medical Center, Pensacola, Florida, 5/19-24/84
Attended Events - Westminster Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Virginia, 2/27/85
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 1/86-12/86
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 1/87-3/87
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 4/87-8/87

Container 3

Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 9/87-12/87
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 1/88-2/88
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 3/88-4/88
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 4/88-7/88
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 8/88-12/88
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 1989 [1]

Container 4

Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 1989 [2]
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 1989 [3]
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 1990
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 1991
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 1992
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 1993
Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 1994-1995

Container 5

Completed Speeches - Speaking Engagement Correspondence, 1996-1999
Drawing by Les G. Hunt - Frankfurt, West Germany - "Welcome Back to Freedom," 1/81
Flash Message - Entering U.S. Airspace, 1/19/81
Foreign Service Magazine - Bruce Laingen Article, "Ten Years Ago," 11/89
Hostages "Welcome to West Point," Celebration - New York, 1/27/81
Important Policy Papers on India and Pakistan in the Sixties and Seventies, from the State Department
Interview on Globe Watch - University of North Carolina, 2/25/85
Laingen's Diary, 11/79
Laingen's Diary, 12/79
Laingen's Diary, 1/80
Laingen's Diary, 2/80
Laingen's Diary, 3/80
Laingen's Diary, 4/80
Laingen's Diary, 5/80
Laingen's Diary, 6/80
Laingen's Diary, 7/80

Container 6

Laingen's Diary, 8/80
Laingen's Diary, 9/80
Laingen's Diary, 10/80
Laingen's Diary, 11/80
Laingen's Diary, 12/80
Letters of Appreciation for Speeches, 1983-1986
Michael Barrett Correspondence
NBC "Today Show - Ask Washington, Biznet Studio, 1/20/84
New York City Trip - Farewell to Ken and Pat Taylor, 1/26-27/84
New York Times - "The Hostages' Story," 2/4/81
News Clippings - Beginning and End of Crisis [1]
News Clippings - Beginning and End of Crisis [2]
News Clippings - Collected in Tehran
News Clippings - Featuring Laingen Family

Container 7

News Clippings - From all over the Country, 1/81 [1]

News Clippings - From all over the Country, 1/81 [2]
News Clippings - Front Pages from all over the Country, 1/81 [1]
News Clippings - Front Pages from all over the Country, 1/81 [2]
News Clippings - Front Pages from all over the Country, 1/81 [3]

Container 8

News Clippings - International Herald Tribune, 11/79
News Clippings - International Herald Tribune, 12/79
News Clippings - International Herald Tribune, 1/80
News Clippings - International Herald Tribune, 2/80
News Clippings - International Herald Tribune, 3/80
News Clippings - International Herald Tribune, 6/80
News Clippings - International Herald Tribune, 7/80
News Clippings - Los Angeles Times, 12/79
News Clippings - New York Times, 1/25/81
News Clippings - New York Times, 1/81

Container 9

News Clippings - Reactions to Rescue Attempt, 4/80
News Clippings - Tehran Times, 10/80-11/80
News Clippings - Tehran Times, 12/80
News Clippings - Tehran Times, 1/81
News Clippings - Washington Post, 12/80
News Clippings - Washington Post, 1/81 [1]
News Clippings - Washington Post, 1/81 [2]
News Clippings - Washington Star, 1/81

Container 10

News Clippings, 11/79 [1]
News Clippings, 11/79 [2]
News Clippings, 12/79 [1]
News Clippings, 12/79 [2]
News Clippings, 1/80
News Clippings, 2/80
News Clippings, 3/80

Container 11

News Clippings, 4/80
News Clippings, 5/80
News Clippings, 6/80
News Clippings, 7/80
News Clippings, 8/80
News Clippings, 9/80
News Clippings, 12/80

Container 12

News Clippings, 1/81 [1]
News Clippings, 1/81 [2]
News Clippings, 1/81 [3]
Newspapers Sent with Letter to the Hostages from the Los Angeles Times, 1/21/81
Newsweek Magazines, 12/79 and 11/80
Persian Gulf in American Security, 10/5/83
Political Cartoons on the Hostage Crisis, 1979-1981
Prayer Services for the Hostages (Programs)

Container 13

Proclamations from Cities and States [1]
Proclamations from Cities and States [2]
Telex Messages (Declassified) from Bruce Laingen to the State Department, 11/79
The New Yorker Magazine - David Dunlop Newsom's "Eye of the Storm" Articles," 6/80
Time Magazines, 11/80-2/81
Valentine Cards from School Children
Welcome Home Cards from School Children
WorldNet Interview with Bruce Laingen, 1999

[Return to series list](#)

Bruce Laingen's Audio Visual Files

Container 1 of 1

Twenty-eight 45 RPM Records - (Containing Songs and Messages Dedicated to the Hostages from Various Artists across the Country)
Twenty-four Audio Cassettes - (Containing Recordings of Events, Entertainment, and Speeches from the Pre and Post Release of the Hostages in Early 1981)

[Return to series list](#)

Bruce Laingen's Artifact Materials

Container 1

Plaque - American Military Engineers
Plaque - Environmental Protection Agency, 5/4/88
Plaque - Coast Guard Institute, Oklahoma City
Plaque - Delta Phi Epsilon Alpha - Georgetown University
Plaque - Naval District, Washington - 1985 Prayer Breakfast, 2/7/85

Container 2

Plaque - The Exchange Club of Capitol Hill
Plaque - Veterans United for a Strong America, Lifetime Membership, 10/19/85
Plaque - George Rush, Major, USAF - "Welcome Home," 11/4/79
White Christmas Wreath with Yellow Ribbon

Container 3

Plaque - The Fallston High School, Fallston, Maryland - Appreciation of Service, 1/7/82
Plaque - The Mt. Vernon Chapter of the Retired Officers Association - Appreciation of Service, 6/15/83
Plaque - 688th Reviewing Officer - Recruit Graduation Review - Naval Training Center, Orlando, Florida, 9/3/82
Plaque - From Your Friends at Rheine - Main Air Base, Germany
Plaque - Washington Chapter of Association of Government Accountants, 9/88
Plaque - Chesapeake Chapter of American Society of Military Comptrollers - American Patriot Award, 5/3/88
Plaque - Classification and Compensation Society - Bruce Laingen as Featured Speaker at 15th National Conference, 12/8/87

Container 4

Plaque - Department of Justice - Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) - Fourth International Symposium on Terrorism at FBI Academy, 6/30-7/2/81
Plaque - American Society for Public Administration, National Capital Area Chapter - for Bruce Laingen's Participation in the 18th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C., 1/12-12/88
Plaque - National Forensic League for Encouragement and Support, 1997
Plaque - Military Affairs Council at the 1987 Armed Forces Luncheon - to Bruce Laingen as Keynote Speaker, Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce
Plaque - On behalf of the 1987 Depot Maintenance Seminar - Elysburg, Pennsylvania
Plaque - Washington Coast Guard Officers Association, 5/23/85
Plaque - National Conference of Chief Justices - for Bruce Laingen's Participation and Support, Lake Ozark, Missouri, 8/84

Container 5

Bridgeton City, New Jersey - Proclamation to the Americans Held Hostage by the Gov't of Iran, 1/26/81
Welcome Home Proclamation from Texaco
City of New Britain Honorary Citizen Award to Bruce Laingen, 1/20/81
Senate Joint Resolution Number 183 Commending the 52 Americans Formerly Held Hostage from the Commonwealth of Virginia, 2/6/81
Welcome Back Proclamation from the City Council of the City of Sierra Madre, California, 2/2/87
Welcome Home Poster from the Charlotte Area Businesses of the Carolinas
Senate Resolution Number 118 from the State of New York Commemorating the 1st Anniversary of the Reunion of those Held Hostage, 1/25/82
Legislative Resolution Number 24 from the State of New York, Presented during the Freedom Day Celebration, 1/25/82
Proclamation from the City of Palmdale, California on Freedom Day, 1/26/81
Proclamation to Bruce Laingen from the City of Kansas City, Missouri, 1/25/82
Scrapbook "A Hoosier Welcome to Rick Kupke and 51 other Americans, 1/29/81
Three Iran Revolution Posters
Miscellaneous Posters

Several Large Posters, with Signatures by Children at Various Places Welcoming the Hostages Home
Several Cloth Banners Celebrating the Hostages Return

[Return to series list](#)

[Return to collection summary](#)

Last modified: January 24, 2017