

**FAMILY LIAISON OFFICE
M/FLO
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Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520
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March 30, 1984

To:

STAT

Attached is the revised letter I will be giving to divorcees I see regarding Women in Transition.

Please, as always, let me know if I can do anything to assist you all.

Regards,

Phyllis
Phyllis Habib
Support Services Officer

Enclosure

*Hi Betty -
Hope all is well
Ph*



Association of American Foreign Service Women
PO Box 8068
Washington, D.C. 20024

WOMEN IN TRANSITION is a group of Foreign Service women whose situation has been changed by separation, widowhood, or divorce. The group meets independently but with the support of the Association of American Foreign Service Women.

The meetings are held on the second Saturday of every month at 2:30 p.m. at the Palisades Library which is at MacArthur Boulevard and V Street in Northwest Washington.

The present focus of Women in Transition is on working to extend the legislation of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 to women who were widowed or divorced before the bill became law, but who meet the other criteria and deserve to have the benefits of that bill extended to them. Other projects of vital concern to members of the group will be addressed with equal intensity in turn.

The structure of the meetings is to have an extended coffee and conversation period both before and after the regular business meeting. During this time people can get together, come to know each other, do personal networking and give each other mutual support. All are welcome at every meeting.

We invite you to come to the meetings of Women in Transition. You are one of us already. Now feel free to join us, and become part of a supportive network of women who share with you where you have been, where you are now, and where you might be going.

To find out more about us, or simply just to talk, you can call
at

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Women in Transition

Incomplete Paper!!

Looks as if we can use
part of it.

WOMEN IN TRANSITION

To assist FS women facing divorce, as well as those already divorced, in 1979 AAFSW established the support group, Women in Transition (WIT). By attending monthly WIT meetings, FS wives whose lives had been changed drastically through divorce could talk with others who understood their problems, women with similar FS backgrounds. The women found that they had many of the same concerns---learning how to manage their homes alone (if they were fortunate enough to keep their homes), establishing credit in their own name, purchasing medical insurance, seeking employment to augment their often drastically reduced incomes, and coping on their own with troubled children.

Their backgrounds and current circumstances were similar: for the most part, they were middle-aged and older; many were in poor health; all had had long-term marriages that required their spending years overseas, following their husbands literally around the world. Many had lived through several tours in hardship countries. Although they had served their country well, they had been left poor -- in some cases, destitute -- without recognition for their service, only because their divorces had occurred before 15 February 1981, the effective date of the 1980 Foreign Service Act. As a result, they believed that they had been deserted by the Federal Government they had served throughout most of their married lives. Their conversation showed that all were under stress. And all were discouraged about their chances for secure and pleasant life in the years ahead.

Most of the WIT women had found that their social life had almost disappeared. As single women, they were excluded from many social activities they not only had enjoyed while married but also had considered part of the profession at which they had worked hard, that of diplomacy. Now in suburban America, many of the women had neighbors and other new acquaintances who were neither understanding nor sympathetic. People who had always lived stateside were ignorant of, and thus did not understand, the challenges that these FS wives had faced in their daily lives abroad: disruptions in schooling for children, unfamiliar and exotic medical problems, devastating culture shock, difficulties in maintaining adequate hygiene and nutrition in backward countries, frequent losses of established friendships, as well as broken channels of communication with families, plus the turmoil of frequently moving households and families to new and sometimes intimidating environments. And last of all, upon returning to their home country, the former spouses had encountered the unanticipated stress of reverse culture shock: their familiar country over the years had become as new and strange as the environments they had encountered in their tours abroad.

WIT provided them with an opportunity to make new acquaintances--most supportive and understanding, some who would become loyal

friends. Women who were in the process of divorce or were newly divorced could sometime receive wise counsel from others who had met and solved problems they were just encountering. All who attended gathered emotional support from women who were familiar with their predicament, who understood their problems and their needs, and who could be found nowhere else. Unattractive as the library quarters were, uncertain as to any solid assistance they would find there, the women returned each month to search for that which they needed most---friendship and recognition.

THE FOREIGN SERVICE ACT OF 1980

While WIT was organizing and holding its early meetings, AAFSW members were conferring with Congressional staff members responsible for drafting a revised FS Act. AAFSW asked that the Act be modified to include provisions for assistance for divorced and widowed FS spouses. (When passed in 1980, the FS legislation spoke of "spouses,"¹ but these were all "wives." Prior to 1972 female career officers in foreign service had been required to resign when they married. Thus, in 1979, when these legislative efforts began, there were no male dependent spouses with sufficient years of marriage -- 10 were required in the legislative drafts -- to be eligible for coverage under the proposed benefit plans.)

AAFSW members argued that all FS women had earned financial protection in their retirement years and nearly all of them needed it. Of the divorced women in the library, only those with private incomes could do without the proposed legislative remedies: rights to share in annuities and to group health insurance coverage, like the benefits already established for US Government employees.

It was possible for a FS wife to spend most of her adult life following her career officer husband around the world, loyally supporting his official duties by maintaining a healthful and gracious home, representative of the American way of life---a valuable advertisement of our democratic form of life in countries where such demonstrations were otherwise unknown, as even television was not then available. Either upon direct instruction of US Government officials, including her spouse, or through her willingness to serve voluntarily, she performed a wide variety of official and unofficial duties, while continuing to tend to her family's welfare. In many countries, her eternal vigilance concerning good hygiene was the only protection against serious illness for her family, including her spouse. She had no

¹Public Law 96-465, 94 Stat. 2071. Chapter 8, Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System, Section 814, Former spouses and Section 804, Definitions. Para(6) "former spouse" means a former wife or husband of a participant or former participant who was married to such participant for not less than 10 years during periods of service by that participant. . . .

Congressional committees held oversight responsibilities for the intelligence agencies including CIA. They would have to respond with new laws if former CIA spouses were to be provided for.

As with the FS women, the CIA women's financial problems were a major concern. Widows with marriages of shorter duration, with few--if any--years abroad, were provided with survivor annuities and health insurance options. The divorced women generally had been left inadequately provided for, although there were exceptions. They found themselves impoverished because they had been divorced, rather than left as widows, even though in many cases the divorce had not been at their instigation.

In addition, their reduced circumstances impacted painfully on the children in the family because almost without exception, the children were given to the mother to care for. The Privacy Act and the secrecy inherent in the intelligence profession impacted detrimentally on spouses' efforts to obtain alimony and child support payments. Unfamiliar with bureaucratic procedures, they--and their lawyers, as well--did not know how to go about establishing lines of communication with their former husbands. And foreign assignments themselves could take the employee beyond the reach of domestic court systems.

Some former spouses were timid about establishing a group of peers to represent divorced CIA wives. The Agency had always refused to allow an employees' wives' group to be formed although most wives were loyal and discreet throughout years of marriage. And no wife had published a revealing saga, such as, "My Life As A Spy's Wife: The Secrets I Have Known." Recognition of spokesmen, as well as recognition of the validity of the women's claims to having earned retirement security and medical coverage would be difficult to achieve without going "public" in the news media.

Thus, a major difficulty the small band of divorced wives faced in their initial organization was that of recognition, of establishing their credibility. They knew that the Federal Government did not formally recognize divorced CIA wives and their service; no legislation or government regulation identified them of their contributions to their country. The women could say they had been CIA spouses, but who would believe them?

The divorced spouses were aware that they would be making a difficult request: to reduce the anticipated retirement annuities of men who had long served in dangerous assignments to provide annuities for their former wives. In many cases, divorce had created such antipathy, that the request would be explosive. Some of the officials who would represent CIA in the legislative activities ahead were themselves divorced or contemplating divorce. Thus, their interest in any legislative proposal to benefit wives would be complicated at best. Could they force no action to be taken, although traditionally the intelligence services try to keep benefits equal to those of the other

possibility of earning her own livelihood, of establishing an employment record that would qualify her for career growth or even employment in any professional career she might have otherwise planned for herself.

Upon divorce, FS spouses frequently found that all rights to retirement and survivor benefits were given -- usually without their permission and sometimes without their knowledge -- to a second wife. While the former husbands lived with second wives in comfort in pleasant circumstances, the first wife and her children, at best, had to cope on minimal child support and, in some cases, alimony that ceased with the death of the career officer. As the laws were then written, it was possible that widows, too, sometimes discovered that without their knowledge, their husbands had eliminated them as beneficiaries from survivor annuity. As a result, the bereaved women were left in a state of shock, unprepared for employment, and in too many cases, without regular income.

When the Foreign Service Act of 1980 became law in February 1981, it specified that retirement and survivor annuity benefits were earned by all FS wives who had been married 10 years or longer to a FS Officer (FSO) on active duty. Under the new law, wives could go into a divorce court with a presumed right to share in the retirement and survivor annuity earned by the couple's service abroad. FS wives could no longer be excluded unwittingly from survivor and annuity benefits; the law would now require that their permission be given for any changes in their status on Government forms. In addition, the wives were given the opportunity for Government health insurance for which the wives would be required to pay both insurree and Government costs. Thus, although the annuities were based on government service, some FS women received them; others did not, although the service by excluded wives in many cases had been longer and more distinguished than that of the more fortunate women.

However, the Act provided no rights to such benefits for FS wives divorced before the effective date of the 1980 Act, 15 February 1981. The circumstances of the women in the library basement remained painful. The women already divorced had no legislated protection. The line of eligibility was by date of divorce alone. Arguments supporting this omission were based on the belief that in most cases the FS officers had married again and a new beneficiary had been named, meaning that there were no funds left over in which the first wife could share. In cases where the officer had not remarried, his retirement pay had not been reduced so as to provide benefits for a survivor. He had not made contributions to the Retirement Fund to keep it actuarially sound and thus able to pay out money after his death to a surviving spouse. The law did not permit survivor annuities to be given to a former spouse.

EXCLUDED WIT WOMEN

Thus, legislation effective in February 1981 provided rights to pension benefits and medical insurance to FS wives divorced after the effect date of the Act. The FS women in the library basement, however, had been divorced before then. In many instances, pension rights had been awarded to a second wife; in other instances, employees had retired on pensions unreduced to provide a survivor pension. The Law did not allow survivor annuities to be given to former spouses.

The CIA spouses in the group -- regardless of their dates of divorce -- remained without legal rights to any benefits. No one seemed interested in the problems these women faced. The agencies to which they had given their lives no longer had any interest in their welfare. Their service went unrecognized. There were no medals given in recognition of their contributions, although their former spouses were often rewarded with bonuses, medals, and commendations.

The excluded group was small. Most of the women were middle age and older, between 45 and 65 years of age. Almost all had endured traumas: divorce after long years of marriage, illnesses inadequately cared for, a surprisingly high number of babies lost in childbirth. The former wives were tired. They were discouraged. They had been defeated in their life plans. The marriages to which they had given so much had dissolved in tears and recriminations. The government that they had so proudly supported did not recognize them, refusing in many cases even to communicate with them. There was little or no evidence of support or acceptance for them anywhere. No one seemed interested in the problems they faced. Their service went unrecognized. There were no medals given in recognition of their contributions, although their former spouses were often rewarded with bonuses, medals, and commendations.

The FS and CIA women who had followed husbands on assignments around the world to posts large and small, hazardous and safe, healthy or not, found themselves in many instances provided through alimony with the barest possible income, while their former husbands had retired to live their lives in relative comfort, often with new wives who had given no years of foreign service to their country. The children of the family in almost all cases remained with the first wife, sharing her reduction in living standards. In many cases, the children were forced to do without expensive educations at the colleges or universities of their choice.

The reduced financial circumstances impacted on the youngsters in the broken families usually during years of what should have been good and therefore expensive education. Although in most cases, the fathers had the money to do so, they often neglected to provide sufficient support for their children when they needed it most. Unless the divorce decrees had been carefully written, the courts had no option but to allow the fathers to avoid parent responsibilities. The secrecy of the fathers' work and their

mobility through foreign countries complicated the already complex problems of collecting whatever alimony and child support payments had been awarded by the divorce courts.

Thus, for most of the FS/CIA women financial concerns were of the highest priority. Some of the women were already on welfare; others were surviving through the largess of church, friends, or family---in many cases, only temporary measures. In nearly all circumstances, extreme hardship could be anticipated in the future, notably upon the death of the former husband when alimony would cease. In addition, most of the women found great difficulty in obtaining health insurance coverage. Many had residual health problems eliminating them from any possibility of coverage--problems that in some instances were caused or exacerbated by life abroad. For those able to obtain individual policies, premiums could consume an entire monthly alimony payment. The employed women were slightly better off, because in some instances they received coverage through their employment. However, even some of the employed women who were working in the service jobs open to women found themselves ineligible for company benefits. And whatever coverage any of the women were able to obtain, they faced its loss either through retirement from the job world or their inability to continue to pay expensive premiums.

CIA WIVES IN TRANSITION

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In that they were unable to speak freely with wives who had not had the CIA overseas experience, the divorced CIA spouses began to gather separately for monthly meetings at the home of the

author. Because they were sensitive to security requirements, they did not form a structured group: they had no club name, they met informally at members' homes, and they kept no minutes. But the monthly meetings proved extremely useful. The peer support that the wives could offer each other was uniquely helpful because only those who had led a covert life could understand its needs and its demands on all family members. (Many of the CIA divorced women also continued to attend the WIT meetings.)

Their experiences as CIA wives had many similarities. All reported encountering stress from secrecy requirements. The need for secrecy at home and in the community sometimes resulted in estrangement from friends and family, and made achieving new friendships difficult. They asserted that it had contributed to breakdowns in communication with their husbands, which in turn, lead to their divorces. A substantial number of the former spouses said that their husbands had found that a secretary in the office provided better companionship than the older wife at home. They believed that as CIA wives they were at particular disadvantage because generally they had not been cleared to be "witting" of office business. As a result, the young secretary not only could be more attractive and more fun but also could talk entertainingly of the challenging official business at hand. The wife was left with her varicose veins and vanishing waistline to discuss the less interesting topics of what had happened at home that day: a washer breaking down or a child having trouble at school.

Like FS former spouses, most CIA divorcees had little money of their own. At time of divorce their lawyers were well aware that they could not pay for lengthy legal maneuvering. Some of the women reported that their lawyers seemed swayed by the reputation of the employing agency, to the benefit of the employees and the detriment of the divorcing wives. For example most wives were told that they had to select their legal representative from a list provided by CIA of "cleared" lawyers. Some of the women who did so were convinced that the defense they subsequently received had not been as strong as it should have been, because -- they thought -- their lawyers perhaps wanted to remain on the recommended list.

Thus, a major difficulty the small band of divorced wives faced in their initial organization was that of recognition, of establishing their credibility. They knew that the Federal Government did not formally recognize divorced CIA wives and their service; no legislation or government regulation identified them or their contributions to their country. The women could say they had been CIA spouses, but who would believe them?

In addition, they shared substantial problems in seeking to improve their everyday lives. The former CIA women found that the benefits of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 did not apply to any of them. Separate laws and implementing regulations governed the CIA Retirement and Disability System (CIARDS). Separate

Legislation to Provide for "The Gray Divorcee"

Introduction

In the dimly lighted basement of a public library in the Georgetown area of Washington, DC, the small group of unhappy, middle-aged women meeting inaccurately identified themselves as Foreign Service (FS) women. Once, they had carried such designation proudly as wives of career employees in the US agencies charged with official missions abroad. Although unpaid, the women had loyally served their country abroad. But they were such representatives no longer. They had been divorced by their husbands and it seemed to many, that their government and their country also had cast them aside.

The husbands to whom they had devoted their lifetimes of service were gone from their lives. For the most part their former mates had remarried -- to younger, more attractive women and many were now fathers of newer, younger children. The former husbands were either still working at the peak of their careers or had retired on pensions in pleasant environments. Many of the retirees had received medals and commendations that recognized their loyal service.

The small band of tired, older women could be forgiven, perhaps if they believed that they had been deserted by the Government they had served so many years. The agencies to which they had given their lives no longer were no longer interested in their welfare. Their country provided no medals for their long service. They had lived where their Government had sent them. They had fulfilled the mores of their time in the roles demanded of them as wives, mothers, hostesses, community volunteers, and "unpaid employees" by undertaking official duties at the request of US Government officials. Records of their loyal service could be found in the fitness reports of their former husbands.

The conversations of these aging women showed reflected stress. Some complained of illnesses, including exotic diseases and inadequate care. With outdated skills and aging bodies, only a few could find work, even at entry level jobs. As a result, many of the women were extremely poor, some were experiencing the indignities of needing the assistance of birth families and friends, while a few were destitute and dependent on welfare. All were discouraged about their chances for building a secure future for themselves and, in many cases, their still dependent children...

The Forum

The Association of American Foreign Service Women established "The Forum" in August 1976 to identify and to analyze topics of concern to US Foreign Service families, especially spouses (identified in almost every case at that time, as wives).*

*** Prior to 1972 female career employees in the US Foreign Service were required to resign when they married. Thus in 1979, when the the Foreign Service Act of 1980 was drafted, there were no no male dependent spouses with sufficient years of marriage for eligibility for coverage eligibility. The when the Foreign Service Act of 1980 spoke of "spouses" nearly all were wome because ten years of marriage during the active career of the husband to receive the proposed benefits.**

Legislation to Provide for "The Gray Divorcee"

When the Forum Study Group recommended "possible actions the Department of State might take to improve the working conditions, as well as the cooperation of its families," the Forum recognized the unique problems of spouses who had lost their husbands. As a result AAFSW established a study group, "Women in Transition," to research the drastic changes for dependent women encountered through retirement of the employee spouse or through divorce and/or his death.

Eventually the Forum found that the retirement of employees did not seem to cause major adjustment problems to spouses because "the transition is expected and the family unit is still intact" at the time the changes occur. Widowhood and divorce, however, were another matter, the Report stated, because the women "feel vulnerable and unprepared for life in today's society." At the same time, there was recognition that widows were treated more gently by society. Family, friends, and community services were available to assist widows in coping with their bereavement.

At the same time, there was less sympathy, few support services for divorcees, who "probably deserved what they got." The stress of "reverse culture shock" was great, increased because it was unanticipated. During their years away the familiar environment of the USS had become as unfamiliar and strange to the women as the countries where they had lived in their overseas tours. The women were strangers in their own country.

Most of the divorced women found that the social life -- so important in their former transient lives -- had disappeared. With family and friends scattered, as single women they were excluded from many of the activities they had enjoyed while married. Most found that suburban neighbors were neither understanding nor sympathetic to their situations. The stereotype of diplomatic wives enjoying lives to "white gloves, tea and cookies, and staffs of servants" was commonly held. Acquaintances who had always lived stateside were ignorant and thus unsympathetic to the challenges that the divorced women had faced in their daily lives abroad: disruptions in schooling for children, difficulties of maintaining adequate hygiene and nutrition in backward countries, frequent disruptions and loss of even briefly established friendships, as well as broken channels of communication with families, plus the turmoil of continually moving households and families to new and sometimes intimidating environments. Support systems for "displaced homemakers" could be cold and unfeeling. The returnees discovered that community services considered them to be "clients" within the welfare system.

To assist these women, AAFSW established the support group, Women in Transition (WIT). Although widows were welcome to attend the monthly meetings, almost none seemed to feel the need for such support. Divorcees, however, came as often as they could because they found other women who understood their problems, women with similar experiences at home and abroad. From personal experience, they knew their needs and could provide, as well as receive, affectionate support.

By attending WIT meetings, the divorced women discovered that their concerns were similar -- learning how to manage their homes alone and on reduced incomes (if they were fortunate enough to keep their homes), establishing credit in their own names, purchasing medical

Legislation to Provide for "The Gray Divorcee"

insurance, seeking employment to augment their drastically reduced -- even, non-existent -- incomes, and coping on their own with troubled children facing the pangs of a parent's desertion.

The emotional support the newcomers received from those who understood their problems and their needs could be found nowhere else. Unattractive as the library's basement rooms were, undertain as the women for any tangible assistance the women would find there, they returned each month to search out that which they needed most -- friendship and recognition.

Initial Aid: the Foreign Service Act of 1980

While the Transition Group was organizing and holding its first meetings, AAFSW members met with staff members of the Congressional committees with oversight responsibilities for the foreign service agencies. AAFSW representatives asked that the laws regulating the US Foreign Service be modified to include provisions for assistance for divorced and/or widowed FR spouses*, specifically pensions and health insurance coverage. AAFSW argued that Foreign Service dependent wives with their years of devoted service abroad had earned financial protection in their retirement years and nearly all of them needed it. Only those with private incomes could do without the proposed legislative remedies of annuities and group health insurance coverage, like the benefits already established for the employees themselves.

AAFSW noted that it was possible for a Foreign Service wife to spend most of her adult life following her husband around the world, loyally supporting his official duties by maintaining a healthful and gracious home, representative of the American way of life and in itself a valuable advertisement of the benefits of our democratic way of life in countries where such lifestyles were otherwise unknown. (In many of the developing countries, even exaggerated presentations of American family life were unfamiliar because television broadcasts and receiving sets were unavailable and movies available to local citizens were expensive and outdated.)

On overseas tours, either upon direct instruction of US Government officials, including the Foreign Service employee to which she was married, or through her willingness to serve voluntarily, the Foreign Service wife performed a wide range of official and unofficial duties, while continuing to tend to her family's welfare. She had no possibility of earning her own livelihood or of establishing an employment record that would qualify her for professional growth in her chosen career or provide her with increasing income and finally a pension in her own name. Language barriers, limited job opportunities, and restrictive regulations of host countries for diplomatic dependents meant that a Foreign Service spouse effectively relinquished the possibility of employment in any professional career she might have otherwise planned for herself.

Upon divorce, Foreign Service spouses found even after many years of marriage that all rights to retirement and survivor benefits were given to a second wife. The first wife and her children, at best, had to cope with minimal child support and, in most cases, alimony that ceased with the death of the career employee. As the laws were then written, it was possible that widows discovered that without their knowledge, their husbands had elected not to receive a reduction in pension and thus eliminated them as beneficiaries of a survivor annuity. As a result, the widows

Legislation to Provide for "The Gray Divorcee"

were left shocked and hurt, unprepared for employment and, in too many cases, without regular income.

In February 1981 the revised Foreign Service Act became law. It specified that pension sharing and survivor annuity benefits were earned by all Foreign Service wives who had been married 10 years or longer to Foreign Service officers during their active careers. Under the new law, wives could go into a divorce court with a presumed right to share in the retirement and survivor annuity earned by the couple's service in this country and abroad. Foreign Service wives could no longer be excluded from these benefits unwittingly; the rewritten law instead required that spouses' permission be given for any changes to their status on Federal Government forms. In addition, divorced wives were given the opportunity to receive coverage by the employing agency's group health insurance plan although the former spouses would be required to pay both insurree and Government costs.

Loopholes in Foreign Service Act of 1980

The new Act, however, provided no such rights to pension and medical insurance benefits for Foreign Service wives divorced before the effective date of the 1980 Act of 15 February 1981. Congress believed that in most cases the Foreign Service officers had married again and a new beneficiary been named. In the cases where the officer had not remarried, his retirement pay had not been reduced so as to provide benefits for a survivor. (Thus, he had not made contributions to the Foreign Service Retirement Fund to keep it actuarially sound .) In addition, the law did not provide an option for a divorced partner to be given any share in an annuity; in short, she was not eligible for an insurable interest.

As a result, the former spouses in the library basement often found that while women with service records shorter than their own had lifetime security, the "basement wives" did not. Former wives who had followed husbands on assignments around the world to posts large and small, hazardous and safe, found themselves in many instances with only the barest possible income from alimony, which grew less adequate through inflation and ceased upon the death of the employee. In contrast, the former husband and new wife, if he had one, lived in pleasant and secure circumstances during his lifetime and as a widow, the second wife could expect security in her years alone.

Because the children in the family, in most cases, remained with the former wife, their living standards, too, were often drastically reduced. In some cases, the children had to forego college and other schooling for lack of funds.

Therefore, for most of the divorced women, financial concerns were of the highest priority. Some of them were already on welfare; others were surviving through the largesse of church, friends, or family -- in many cases, only temporary measures. In nearly all circumstances, extreme hardship could be anticipated upon the death of the former husband when alimony would stop.

In addition, the "basement" women, who were for the most part unemployed found great difficulty in obtaining health insurance. Many had residual health problems eliminating them from

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1983 SURVEY OF FORMER SPOUSES OF FOREIGN SERVICE EMPLOYEES

A Summary Prepared by the American Association of Foreign Service Women

In June 1983 the American Association of Foreign Service Women sent questionnaires to 150 former spouses of Foreign Service officers. Twelve surveys were returned as nondeliverable. Sixty-five responses were received. Of the responding group 50 women had been married 10 years or had been excluded from benefits under the 1980 Act because they had been divorced before the Act's effective date, 15 February 1981.

The profile of the typical woman in the excluded group, as determined from this survey, is as follows:

She is now: 56 years old. She was
50 at the time of divorce (range 35-61). She had been married
24 years to her FS husband (range 12 to 39 years). She has spent
23 years of her marriage with the Foreign Service,
13 of these years abroad.

At the time of divorce, she had two school-age children still at home.

For nearly all of the women who responded, financial prospects are bleak.

Of the 50: 22 reported that they receive alimony, but only
2 said the amount was enough to live on.
37 are working to make ends meet.

Of the 37 who are working:

9 are employed in their profession.
7 have a good or fairly good chance for advancement.
23 have little chance for advancement.
9 have career advancement opportunities but are too old for a career.
6 report their employment is secure, while
17 have insecure or irregular employment.
2 are looking for work.
20 are earning Social Security credits;
17 are not.

Of the group of 50 respondents:

11 will receive Social Security through their husbands;
33 will not;
6 do not know if they will or not.

For the future:

27 anticipate that they will have to work always.
15 will require welfare.
2 will be able to retire if they get help from family and friends.
2 do not need to work,
5 cannot work because they are too old and one is going blind.

The husbands of these women: Had served an average of

24 years in the Foreign Service.
27 were still working—in the Foreign Service or at another job.
21 had remarried. (Only two of the responding women reported having
remarried.)
2 have died.

PROFILE OF FORMER SPOUSES OF FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS EXCLUDED
FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE ACT OF 1980

Prepared by the Association of American Foreign Service Women

The purpose of this profile is to acquaint you briefly with a group of women who were excluded from coverage of the Foreign Service Act of 1980.¹

Approximately 50 of the former spouses of Foreign Service employees who did not receive retirement and survivor annuity benefits under the Act of 1980 reside in the Washington area. The Association of American Foreign Service Women (AAFSW) has estimated a total number of 150 women nationally within this category.

From data collected in a June 1983 AAFSW survey, we have determined that these older former spouses typically had been married 24 years or more and some as long as 40 years before divorce occurred. They had spent 23 or more years working for the Foreign Service and over half of these years they lived abroad. A few of these former spouses are already widowed: only two have remarried. (See summary statement attached.)

Almost all of these women, while contributing to their husband's career, spent substantial portions of their married years raising families overseas, frequently in developing countries. The living conditions in these areas subjected them to the hazards of rigorous climate, endemic disease, inadequate medical and hospital services, and even fear and physical danger during times of indigenous political upheavals. Reported illnesses due to living abroad included hepatitis, amoebic dysentery, gangrene, and malaria.

In the Washington area alone, many of these women have health problems exacerbated by the inadequate medical care available abroad. Three are going blind, one from lack of money for a needed operation; two have Hodgkins disease, at present in remission; several have children psychiatrically disturbed by Foreign Service experiences; two have minor children with severe physical disabilities.

Many of these women served when their participation in a wide variety of official and unofficial duties was traditionally--and in many instances, officially--required. Their husbands' efficiency reports included evaluations of the wives' cooperation in fulfilling representational and community service. In 1972 a Joint State-AID-USIA Directive permitted spouses of

¹The provisions of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 were not automatically extended to a small group of older women divorced before February 15, 1981 when the Act was signed into law. Although earned equally by all former spouses of Foreign Service employees who were married 10 or more years, the pension rights provided by this Act were denied to about 150 women nationally on the basis of their date of divorce. During discussions of this Act, Congress took note of the inequities dealt to these Foreign Service spouses divorced prior to the Act and acknowledged its responsibility to address the issue of a just and fair compensation for them. This group is comprised only of women. This is because there can be no male spouses married to Foreign Service female employees for the requisite 10 years stipulated by the Act of 1980. Until 1972 women officers were forced to resign if they married.

Foreign Service officers to go abroad as private persons. They were no longer required to donate their time to mission-supporting duties. The tradition of service continued, however, even after the Directive.

A worldwide AAFSW survey has shown that American diplomatic wives have continued to fulfill--as in the past--a variety of unpaid assignments. Some wives reported voluntarily serving a total of 40 hours or more per week. Their volunteer tasks included developing an English-as-a-second-language curriculum, radio broadcasting on socio-cultural topics of the United States, organizing charity benefits, translating for visiting officials, and supporting local health and welfare organizations.

During their Foreign Service years, many of these women faced the hardship of family separation and episodes of violence. When asked to recount briefly some of the hazardous conditions they had encountered, they reported:

"Shooting, bombings, floods;"

"Riots in Peru;"

"War in Algeria, coup d'etat, bomb threats, home ransacked, other attempted nighttime break-ins at home;"

"Anti-American demonstrations in Africa, Pakistan, Yugoslavia;"

"In Brazil at height of anti-American feeling in South America, bomb thrown at Consulate General;"

"Evacuated from Lebanon during six-day war;"

"Riots in Ceylon;"

"Riots in Laos, Thailand, Argentina;"

"Coups in Korea, Morocco, and Vietnam, monk immolated himself across from the street from my child's school--soldiers, tanks, and barbed wire prevented me from reaching him--evacuated by nuns to safe place;"

"Bolivia, revolution (bomb in garden), Laos--wartime--confined."

The Foreign Service wife has special impediments to economic independence resulting exclusively from the husband's employment. Cultural, legal and linguistic barriers prevent her from working overseas. When she can work, constant international mobility usually prevents her from vesting in any sort of retirement plan. When divorced, these women are left after long years of unpaid government service abroad with no employment record, no modern skills, and no Social Security.

Most former spouses worked before their Foreign Service marriages, and most, after being divorced during midlife, have resumed working. Unfortunately, their reentry into the workforce--after perhaps 20 to 25 years of absence--commonly has resulted in low-paying jobs with limited advancement potential. Our surveys showed that women trained as teacher, geographer, journalist, translator, and actress are working as typist, file clerk, saleswoman, receptionist. Some cannot work because of health problems, and some were still seeking employment. Only a few reported that they expected to be financially able to retire.

The entry of these women into the workforce during middle age, when most employees are contemplating retirement, has precluded the possibility of their accruing enough monies to provide independently for their retirement or subsistence during old age when they are no longer physically able to work. This is especially critical since only a few of these former spouses reported that provisions were made at divorce for their old age years.

Living Home-People

The Gray Divorcée: Loss of Husband And Home After 60

By BARBARA S. CAIN

They had gathered from the back eddies of loneliness for a bimonthly support session to share their private torments, disentangle meshed emotions and unravel the story of divorce after 60, as experienced by women who had assumed that marriage was a lifetime commitment.

"I had a vision of our sunset years," Val said wistfully. "After retirement, Jim and I would settle up north in our country home. It'd be something like 'On Golden Pond' — our golden years on a golden pond. But Jim, you see, had another plan. Now he's up north with her, and I'm down here with me."

Val, who is 63, speaks for a growing number of women her age and older who have been jettisoned by their husbands after 40 or more years of marriage. The trend is more than a sociological curiosity. Government statistics indicate that about 100,000 people over the age of 55 get divorced in the United States each year. And an accelerated rate of increase is expected as people live longer, as divorce laws are liberalized and as

But while the divorce rate in the United States — running at about one million a year — is the highest in the Western world, divorce among the elderly, overwhelmingly initiated by men, has been an all-but-hidden phenomenon, undifferentiated from divorce among younger couples. "They lump us all together," complains Martha. "My daughter divorced at 33, and it was the pits for her, I well remember. But divorce for her was in no way the same as divorce for me."

right and wrong were reversed, where the language the natives spoke had no word for justice."

Amid such outrage, there often resides a more silent self-recrimination. If, as these women have long believed, "no ills befall the righteous," then what sins wrought this painful punishment? As they grope for answers, they often light upon age-old self-doubts that tend to surface during life's tribulations. Thus the woman who berates her body secretly believes that the 10 pounds she had put on were what drove her husband away.

Though not unique to late-life divorce, these mea culpas appear to be one of its hallmarks. Divorce after 50 comes with another stressful phenomenon — aging, which doles out its own indignities, infirmities and narcissistic injuries. Even before divorce disturbs the equilibrium, self-esteem has been diminished by the onset of creaking joints, sagging jowls, by phrases misheard and names forgotten.

The most striking reactions to late-life divorce are the shock, indeed outright denial, that a 40-year relationship can be severed out of hand. For weeks afterward, the women so stricken said they walked about in a somnolent state, dazed and deracinated.

When reality began to register for Jan, age 64, she would remember behavior which, though she did not realize it at the time, foreshadowed her husband's decision to leave. She would remember his suddenly beginning to dress with youthful pizzazz, coloring his silvery hair.

As the mesmeric state begins to lift, many women make frantic attempts to rescue the marriage with entreaties to discuss the alleged complaints. Others swiftly file for divorce, thus mastering a profound injury by being the rejecter rather than the rejected.

Disengaging from a 40-year partnership is a tall order. "You go through life's zigs and zags," Gertrude, age 65, reflects — "his coronary, your cancer scare, the kids' stormy teens. And after all that, how are you supposed to say goodbye? Why on earth should you have

work history of six months."

Not only will many of them be cut off from their former husbands' private retirement pensions, but they can also be cut off from medical insurance. Indeed, some divorcées remain perilously unprotected until they reach 64, when they become eligible for Medicare.

And, as attorney Susan D. Hartman, who counsels senior citizens in Michigan, points out, elderly divorcées solely dependent on their former husband's Social Security benefits are denied them when their husbands choose not to retire until age 72 (70, after Jan. 1). And when an ex-husband does retire, the divorcée is entitled to only half of his Social Security benefits, and that, because they are no longer married, amounts to only a third of the total sum shared as a married couple.

There is, too, the need for late-life divorcées to establish credit in their own names. If she is granted ownership of the family home, the divorcée will have to pay taxes and mortgage payments from taxable alimony income. Her former husband's alimony payments, however, are tax deductible. If he remarries, his wife of a few years can on his death lay claim to an inheritance his wife of four decades cannot.

Despite such adversity, some women over 60 choose to end a marriage over their husbands' protests. Those few women interviewed who chose to leave their husbands explained that divorce for them was a court of last resort. Their hand was forced, they said, by husbands who were alcoholics or tyrants or womanizers.

Because so little attention has been paid to the problem, little is yet known about what particular amalgam of forces drives couples apart after 40 years. Doubtless, some divorce at age 60-to-live-out-dreams postponed at 40. For others, divorce may be a man's swan song — the last gasp of pleasure before death. And for some, impending retirement appears to be significant. Each of the women interviewed described her husband as a hard-driving man who devoted much of his time and energy to the pursuit of a career. And each also reported that a husband's

pits for her, I will remember. But divorce for her was in no way the same as divorce for me."

Indeed, the differences are vast. Martha enunciates several to Val and the 20 others gathered at the Turner Geriatric Clinic of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor for a meeting of their Divorce After 60 support group, one of only a handful in the nation. "When my daughter divorced, she was heartbroken, to be sure," Martha continues, "but it was not the end of the world for her. She still had her children, a good job and a ton of divorced friends who 'celebrated' the end of her marriage. When I was left at 64, the children were grown and scattered. I had no job, less than no confidence, and I did not know one woman my age who was similarly dumped." Martha's generation may well be the last to be affected quite as traumatically, since the attitudes of elderly women of the future will almost certainly be vastly different.

When the generation of women born in the first quarter of this century took their vows, they saw marriage as an everlasting covenant. Divorce was a public humiliation, compounded by private torments of failure. Tanya, 62, became a virtual recluse after her husband moved out. "For younger couples, divorce is a fact of life," Tanya concedes, "but for me it was a shameful humiliating event which will leave me tarnished for the rest of my days."

Women in their 60's belong to a generation committed to altruism and not narcissism, to stoicism not hedonism. When divorce strikes, suddenly all the unwritten codes that have governed their lives are turned against them. "After my divorce," Martha reported, "I felt I had been catapulted to a

all that, how are you supposed to say goodbye? Why on earth should you have to?"

Although such complaints resemble those of recently bereaved widows, the task for the divorcée is more formidable. Unlike the widow, the elderly divorcée must live with the realization that her loss was deliberate. Her husband implicitly declared: "I will be happier living without you, perhaps with someone else." And she must disengage from a partner who continues to walk the face of the earth, often in the same town and neighborhood. "How are you supposed to let go," one woman puzzles, "when you see him at the concert, the supermarket and at the gas station, all in one day?" Many women interviewed in Ann Arbor openly stated that their husband's death would have been more merciful than his desertion.

In death, at least, the loss sets in motion rituals for the behavior of friends and relatives. Divorce, however, is a long, ambiguous process that takes months, if not years, to become final. The late-life divorcée often suffers her torment in isolation. Her friends remain silent in the name of probity. "If she wants to talk," they reason, "then she'll call me. I won't pry."

In late-life divorce, only 11.5 percent of divorcées over the age of 50 remarry. Eligible women 65 and older are less likely to remarry since they outnumber men of their age four to one and marrying younger men is less sanctioned for them than the reverse is for men.

The financial consequences of divorce can be devastating for women over 60, few of whom have worked outside their homes since before their marriages 40 or so years ago. "When we hunt for jobs," Tess explains, "we bring

man who devoted much of his time and energy to the pursuit of a career. And each also reported that a husband's decision to leave home coincided with his approaching retirement date.

There are no primers for surviving divorce after 60. Support groups such as Divorce After 60 advocate talking out the problem and getting advice about the legalities. The family, the keystone of their lives, continues to bolster their spirits and lighten their days. As one woman noted in her diary, "Marital bonds may sever, but maternal ones, never."

When asked if there were any benefits to divorce after 60, some of the women spoke of relief from tension, from suspicions confirmed and infidelities disclosed. As to what they would advise women who find themselves on the brink of divorce, they responded as with one voice: "Do everything you can to prevent it. Talk to each other. Get help. Leave no stone unturned. If everything fails, then bite the bullet!"

The tough breed of survivors in the Ann Arbor support group have converted what for many of them was at first a profound humiliation into a triumph of the spine. As one of them explained, peering over her spectacles, "We're not a bunch of pushovers, you know. We may not have our partners, we do have our pride."

Barbara S. Cain is senior clinical supervisor of interns at the Psychological Clinic of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

The New York Times
Large Type Weekly
December 27, 1982

COUPLES: The High Pri

By Diane Granat

Next time a woman drops her dishrag and claims she's not recognized for all her labors, her husband can drag out his lawn mower and unfurl a price list of his own.

The leaders of a men's-rights group argue that if a housewife is worth \$60 a week as a cook, \$12 as a laundress and \$250 as a child psychologist, then her husband can claim he's worth \$22 a week for car maintenance, \$1,080 for home security and \$13 for taking out the garbage.

It may be stretching a point, but Lou Filczer and Emil Benitez, of the American Divorce Association of Men (ADAM), insist that if a price tag can be placed on a housewife's work, a dollar value also can be assigned to traditional male work done around the house.

Filczer and Benitez recently devised a "value-of-a-husband" chart to counter the well-publicized "value-of-a-housewife" chart created several years ago by Chicago divorce attorney Michael Minton.

Minton, who calculates a home-

maker's worth in determining property settlements when a marriage dissolves, says a man would have to pay \$51,029 a year in the marketplace to buy the services his wife provides. Borrowing his reasoning, Filczer and Benitez respond that a husband is worth \$86,115 a year for his duties at home.

"They always talk about the dollar angle for women. It's about time we let people know that men are worth something, too," says Filczer, president of the 11,000-member organization based in Arlington Heights, Ill. Filczer says he uses the ADAM chart when counseling men about their rights in a divorce settlement.

After consulting employment experts and co-opting some of Minton's information, Filczer and Benitez came up with 18 duties that make a man worth \$1,656 a week — aside from any salary he earns outside the home.

Some of their examples:

For 72 hours of "home security" work, \$1,080 a week; \$22.50 a week for changing tires and fixing the car;

\$12.32 for cutting the grass; \$44.10 for work as a plumber; \$14.84 for running errands; \$17 for repairs around the house.

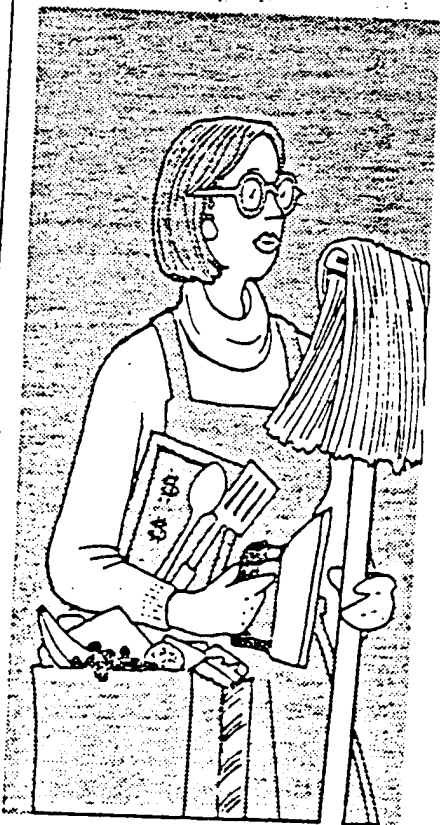
Filczer admits that the ADAM chart—which credits a man with working more hours than there are in a week because certain tasks overlap—is meant partly to be taken tongue-in-cheek to discredit Minton's assertions.

But Minton, who calls his chart the "great equalizer," is dead serious about his own calculations.

"We are using it almost daily in courts throughout the country," says Minton, who has been called a "token darling of feminism" and represents women in 90 percent of his divorce cases.

"We no longer hear in court a man saying, 'What did she do?' to contribute to a marriage. We've countered that argument by saying what she did at home has true economic value."

Minton first used his theory in 1978 to argue that the wife of a Sears executive should be compensated in a divorce settlement for the



Illustrations by Hatley Mason
—The Washington Post

Value of a Wife?

| Job performed | Hours per week | Rate per hour | Weekly value |
|---------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Food buyer | 3 | \$16.12 | \$48.36 |
| Nurse | 1 | 6.45 | 6.45 |
| Tutor | 2 | 8.06 | 16.12 |
| Waitress | 2.25 | 5.14 | 11.57 |
| Seamstress | 0.75 | 4.03 | 3.02 |
| Laundress | 3 | 4.03 | 12.09 |
| Chauffeur | 3.5 | 6.45 | 22.58 |
| Gardener | 2.2 | 4.84 | 10.65 |
| Family counselor | 2 | 56.45 | 112.90 |
| Maintenance worker | 1 | 4.03 | 4.03 |
| Nanny | 168 | 1.11 | 186.48 |
| Cleaning person | 7.5 | 4.03 | 30.23 |
| Housekeeper | 2.5 | 5.00 | 12.50 |
| Cook | 12 | 5.00 | 60.00 |
| Errand runner | 3.5 | 4.75 | 16.63 |
| Bookkeeper/budget manager | 3.5 | 8.06 | 28.21 |
| Interior decorator | 1 | 40.14 | 40.14 |
| Caterer | 1.5 | 9.68 | 14.52 |
| Child psychologist | 5 | 50.18 | 250.90 |
| General merchandise buyer | 2 | 12.54 | 25.08 |
| Dishwasher | 6.2 | 3.79 | 23.50 |
| Dietician | 1.2 | 8.53 | 10.24 |
| Secretary | 2 | 5.02 | 10.04 |
| Public relations hostess | 1 | 25.09 | 25.09 |

Weekly value: \$981.33
Yearly value: \$51,029.16

(Compiled by attorney Michael Minton)

Friday, February 26, 1982 / D5

Value of Acrimony

housework she did during the 32-year marriage. The concept was based on personal-injury lawsuits, in which lawyers attempt to place a monetary value on a wife who was, for example, killed in a plane crash.

Eight years of research and the findings of 10 major studies went into his chart, Minton says, which he updates annually for inflation. He says he consulted economists, job counselors and employment agencies to come up with data on how the average housewife with two young children spends her time.

Minton argues that a housewife is worth \$48 for three hours of food-buying each week, \$16 as a tutor, \$6.45 as a nurse, \$30 as a cleaning woman, \$40 as an interior decorator and \$10.65 as a gardener. Lovemaking isn't included on the chart, says Minton, because there's public policy against putting a monetary value on sex.

Like the ADAM chart, Minton's work week exceeds the number of hours in a week because "a woman does a number of job classifications at the same time. She may be watching the kids while washing the clothes or sweeping the floor."

Minton acknowledges that his chart allows traditional sex roles, as does the ADAM chart, but he contends a woman still does all these chores even

when she works outside the home.

"A General Mills survey found that when a woman opts to work outside the home at a second job," he notes, "the amount of time contributed to household chores by her husband and children decreases.

"Why? A man's home is still his castle and he expects the center of his wife's existence to be him and the home."

Minton has talk-showed his way across the country with his chart. "It's been called the most cut-out chart in America," he says. "It's pinned to pillows, taped to shaving mirrors and Scotch-taped to the refrigerator door."

About ADAM's counter-chart of a husband's value, Minton says, "Their chart is more whimsical. It's not in tune with reality. It's like a child with a crayon: they're drawing a picture and it's very creative, but there's no basis to it.

"Our research shows most men spend one hour and 15 minutes a day doing chores at home. Even in the so-called liberated household, where the tools are marked 'his' and 'hers,' there is no real household work done by men. And the average male only spends 36 minutes a day with his children."

Minton laughs at the ADAM no-

STYLE PLUS

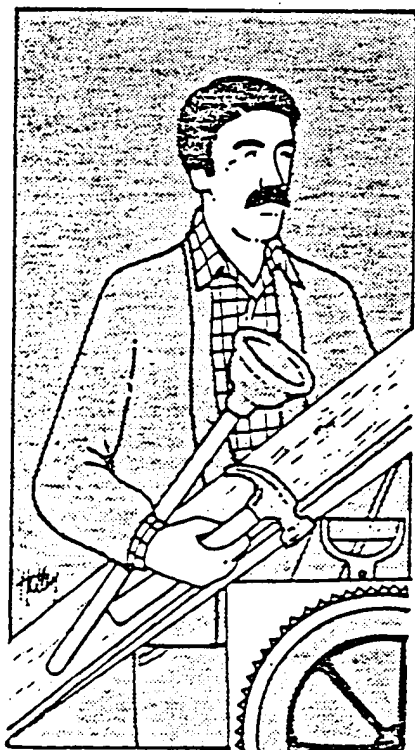
tion that a man should be credited with 72 hours weekly as a bouncer. "A man isn't even home enough to protect the home."

Filczer and Benitez have yet to introduce their chart in a courtroom, and Filczer says he doesn't expect the male version to be a major factor in property settlements. Instead, he says, they "hope to debunk the claim that a woman should be paid for her services" after a marriage ends.

"The tradeoff in a marriage is that a man produced income and a woman did her things, such as cooking and household chores. They exchange those duties as part of the contract.

"Minton says 'Now that the marriage is done, let's get some payoffs for the services.' My premise is that it's ridiculous to deal with the issue because you already got paid by the exchange of duties."

So long as divorce lawyers and judges refer to Minton's chart to figure a woman's worth, Filczer says he will continue to hand out his own version for men.



Value of a Husband?

| Job performed | Hours per week | Rate per hour | Weekly value |
|-------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Garbage disposal | 1.5 | \$8.75 | \$13.13 |
| Home security (bouncer) | 72.0 | 15.00 | 1,080.00 |
| Home maintenance | 1.7 | 5.48 | 9.31 |
| Car maintenance | 1.8 | 12.50 | 22.50 |
| Storm window changer | 0.8 | 10.50 | 8.40 |
| Grass cutter | 2.2 | 5.60 | 12.32 |
| Plumber | 2.1 | 21.00 | 44.10 |
| Carpenter | 3.1 | 12.00 | 37.20 |
| Electrician | 1.8 | 15.00 | 27.00 |
| Repairman | 2.0 | 8.50 | 17.00 |
| Landscaper | 2.3 | 5.60 | 12.88 |
| Errand runner | 3.5 | 4.24 | 14.84 |
| Chauffeur | 3.5 | 6.16 | 21.56 |
| Male nurse | 2.0 | 7.99 | 15.98 |
| Child care/sitter | 72.0 | 1.12 | 80.64 |
| Teacher | 2.0 | 7.20 | 14.40 |
| Financial Adviser | 4.0 | 7.20 | 28.80 |
| Family counselor | 7.0 | 28.00 | 196.00 |

Weekly value: \$1,656.06
Yearly value: \$86,115.12

(Compiled by American Divorce Association of Men)

Divorce Study Shows Men Get Richer

By Jay Mathews
Washington Post Staff Writer

LOS ANGELES—Equal property splits in divorces make men richer and women substantially poorer, a California study has found, buttressing nationwide efforts to include a husband's potential earnings in settlements.

The study of 3,000 divorces by a Stanford University researcher shows men improved their standard of living an average 42 percent in the first year after a divorce while the living standard for women and children dropped 73 percent when income was compared to need.

The finding has considerable economic significance at a time when more than 40 percent of U.S. marriages begun in the 1980s are expected to end in divorce and only 56 percent of American children by the 1990s are expected to grow up with both natural parents.

California appeals court judges are now considering the case of *Sullivan vs. Sullivan*, in which a divorced wife is seeking additional money from her ex-husband, a physician, to compensate for her help in putting him through medical school.

According to University of California at Davis law professor Carol Bruch, courts in several other states are also being asked to include the value of a husband's education in divorce property settlements.

Lenore J. Weitzman, a senior research associate in the Stanford sociology department who prepared the California study, wrote in a UCLA Law Review article that younger divorced women should receive larger payments to finance training for their own careers.

"Although the husband has fewer dollars than before divorce," Weitzman said, "he is not constrained to share those dollars with his former wife and children. Thus the demands on his income have diminished. . . . Many divorced men have received salary increases over the year [after their divorce], while their obligations for alimony and child support have remained fixed or diminished."

While the appeals court ponders the Sullivan case, the state government is considering changes in the law to soften the blow to women and children from divorce. Bruch, who also serves as a consultant to the California

See DIVORCE, A9, Col. 1

Equal Property Splits Found to Aid Men

DIVORCE, From A1

Law Revision Commission, said the resources of men and women after divorce "are so disparate they knock your socks off."

Bruch said the problem appears to be particularly acute in California because state law forces judges to split property 50-50. That usually forces a couple to sell their house in order to make an equal division. "It means that mothers are going to be stuck in rental housing with the kids, and it really has an effect on kids," Bruch said.

In many other states, judges have more discretion in dividing property, Bruch said, but courts outside California are also considering giving women more benefits if they have sacrificed their careers to establish their husbands in business or a profession.

In a 1980 New Jersey case, she said, a doctor's wife was awarded 20 percent of what the court determined to be the value of his medical education, to be paid in installments that increased as his earnings increased.

Weitzman's study includes a random survey of 500 divorce decrees from San Francisco and Los Angeles counties for each of three years—1968, 1972 and 1977. The project also includes interviews with 44 family law judges and 169 divorce attorneys in the two counties and with 114 recently divorced men and 114 recently divorced women in the Los Angeles area.

Weitzman said that even after 10 or 15 years of marriage, most of the couples had less than \$20,000 in combined net assets, giving a wife without a career half of a small pie. In California, Weitzman said, only one in six women receive alimony. Child support payments, when paid at all, typically do not cover half the costs of child rearing.

"For many couples who have little physical property to divide at divorce, it is likely that the monetary value of career assets will considerably exceed the value of their physical property," Weitzman said.

"I would argue that we are on the brink of a critical expansion of the tra-

ditional definition of community property. California courts will soon recognize career assets as part of the community property to be divided on divorce."

Men may help themselves by paying for further education of their ex-wives, Weitzman argued.

An Ohio State study shows women who go to school rather than get jobs after divorce eventually earn higher income and thus do not need to call on their ex-husbands' resources as much.

D.C. Woman Shot to Death; Acquaintance Is Arrested

A 24-year-old D.C. woman was shot to death late Saturday at the home of acquaintance, who has been charged with homicide, D. C. police reported.

They said Jean Jones of 1242 Girard St. NE was shot at about 11:30 p.m. in a house at 1624 Massachusetts Ave. SE.

Harry Holman, 22, of that address, was arrested and charged a short time later, police said.

Dear Ann Landers:

I found the enclosed in a craft shop in Minneapolis. I wish I knew who wrote it, and if she has any other poems I could get my hands on.—J.S. in Minneapolis

Dear J.S.:

I share your enthusiasm and hope the author will come forward. He (or she) is enormously gifted. Thanks for sharing.

COMES THE DAWN

After awhile you learn the subtle difference
Between holding a hand and chaining a soul,
And you learn that love doesn't mean leaning
And company doesn't mean security,
And you begin to learn that kisses aren't con-
tracts

And presents aren't promises,
And you begin to accept your defeats
With your head up and your eyes open,
With the grace of a woman, not the grief of a
child,

And learn to build all your roads
On today because tomorrow's ground
Is too uncertain for plans, and futures have
A way of falling down in mid-flight.
After awhile you learn that even sunshine
Burns if you get too much.
So you plant your own garden and decorate
Your own soul, instead of waiting
For someone to bring you flowers.
And you learn that you really can endure . . .
That you really are strong
And you really do have worth.
And you learn and learn . . .
With every goodbye you learn.

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WASHINGTON STAR - 18 May 1981

ERMA

By Erma Bombeck

In the Defense Of Mature Women



Every once in awhile I get a craving to see a mature woman delivering the six o'clock news.

I know I'm talking crazy, but sometimes I think if I see another silken-haired nymph with capped teeth and wet lips wrapped around the falling economy, I'll scream.

At times when I like to have died from sitting there figuring out how many ways there are to tie a scarf, I'd turn on Walter Cronkite and try to imagine him with hair parted in the middle and rolled into a bun at the nape of his neck.

One of the things people liked about Walter was that he not only delivered the news with wisdom and experience . . . he gave you the impression he was going to do something about it.

An older woman could do that

Experience could be an asset to a mature woman newscaster. Take the other night. I saw a young anchorperson . . . no more than 12 years old . . . shove a microphone into the face of a 23-year-old woman who had just given birth to five children, had four others at home, a husband out of work and she asked, "How do you feel?"

A woman over 30 would have known the answer before she asked the question.

The print media, somehow, do not indulge themselves in that kind of discrimination. We have scores of mature woman writers who wear glasses, suffer from paleness, sweat, frown, have poor posture, small eyes, buy boring coats, and don't care diddly about the weather.

I used to know a lot of women who were involved in broadcasting 10 or 12 years ago. One of them had hips. When the School for the Terminally Serious began to turn out women graduates, they were reassigned to small booths in radio stations and eventually phased out. Most of them are underground now, leading beige lives and watching their old tapes.

I'll never forget the late Totie Fields who appeared one day on the Mike-Douglas show. When a sex symbol joined them, the audience nearly went crazy. Totie walked out into the audience and shouted, "What are you applauding HER for? Every one of you in the audience looks just like me!"

STAT

 Career Development
 7 April 1986
 "Displaced Homemakers"

WIT

Members of the Association of American Foreign Service Women, as the group's name implies, are women who have served overseas as wives of US Government officials or as officials themselves. In 1975 AAFSW established a group to study the concerns of the Foreign Service Family; this group was called the "Forum." These AAFSW members sent a questionnaire worldwide, to all FS spouses. The report that resulted from the compiled responses was delivered to the Secretary of State in 1977.

One area of Forum study related to the problems of transition, encountered as FS women passed from one phase of their lives to another--- through divorce or widowhood, or by the retirement of their officer husbands. (Note: that all AAFSW members are women. Until recently there were no male dependent spouses. Female Foreign Service Officers who married before 1972 had to resign.) To provide a support network for these women, a new group was formed, called "Women in Transition." (Since its inception, it has been found that wives of retirees do not need such a support group. They can continue to rely on their spouses for emotional and financial support. Many dependent spouses leave the Washington area with their husbands.)

As a result the WIT group now is composed solely of widows and divorcees. These women have found WIT a great resource. They have many similar problems---more about these later. WIT provided them with a variety of new friends, all of them supportive and understanding, and new channels for much-needed information to put their lives back together again.

While WIT was organizing and holding its first meetings, AAFSW members were conferring with Congressional staffs responsible for drafting

a revised Foreign Service Act. AAFSW representatives asked that the new Act provide financial assistance to divorced and widowed FS spouses in the form of vested rights for retirement and survivor beneficiary pensions.

Before the 1980 Foreign Service Act became law, it was possible for a FS wife to spend most of her adult life following her career officer spouse around the world, loyally supporting his assignments by maintaining a healthful and welcoming home, representative of the American way of life. (Real "soft-sell" advertising in the developing world!) Either upon direct instruction of US Government officials (including her spouse, often the Ambassador and others) or through her willingness to serve voluntarily, she performed a wide variety of official and unofficial duties, while continuing to tend to her family's welfare. She had no possibility--because of her diplomatic status, her transient way of life--of earning her own livelihood or establishing a career and thus retirement benefits of her own.

When divorced a FS spouse found that all retirement and survivor benefits accrued to a new wife. The former wife and her children, at best, were left to cope on minimal child support and alimony that ceased upon the death of the career officer. A widow sometimes found that without her knowledge her husband had eliminated her name as beneficiary from survivor annuity government forms. As a result, she was left shock and hurt, unprepared for employment, and without regular income in her old age.

When signed into law--it became effective 15 February 1981--the Foreign Service Act of 1980 established that retirement and survivor annuity benefits were earned by Foreign Service wives and such rights, were vested in pro rata sharing based on number of years of marriage during the active career of the officer. (In the case of the CIA spouse, she was required to have accompanied her husband overseas for a period

of five years.) In a divorce court, ^{her} ~~her~~ rights could be taken away only for legal justification or she could waive them if ~~they~~ ^{she} desired. These rights could not be taken from ~~her~~ without ~~her~~ ^{her} knowledge.

However, this law and the one that followed for CIA wives, which became effective on 15 November 1982, left unprotected small groups of women who unfortunately had been divorced before the effective dates of the relevant acts and thus were excluded from eligibility to receive ~~them~~ ^{benefits}. The women and their supporters are continuing to lobby Congress for changes to Federal Law to correct this situation.

These lobbyists ^{argue} that it was the law itself that separated the "haves" from the "have nots." The idea that spouses of overseas officers have earned retirement benefits has been accepted. We hope that all who have served abroad in this capacity will eventually be covered.

Lobbying is also being conducted to maintain the hard-won rights in the face of imminent changes. These have been proposed in the revisions to the Federal Service Retirement Plans now before Congress.

In order to support these legislative efforts, AAFSW has conducted a series of surveys of the women, their experiences in service, and their current precarious financial and medical situations. A June 1983 survey showed that the typical woman (formerly a FS dependent and not yet protected by legislation) has the following profile:

She was 50 years old at the time of divorce (range 35-61).

She is now 56 years of age. She was married 24 years to her FS husband (range 12 to 39 years). She had spent 23 years of her marriage with the Foreign Service, and 13 years abroad.

At the time of divorce, she had two school-age children still at home.

For nearly all of the women, financial prospects are bleak. Of the 50 women who reported:

22 said they receive alimony, but only
2 said the amount was enough to live on.

37 are working to make ends meet, but only
 9 are employed in the profession for which they trained, and
 7 have a good or fairly good chance for advancement.

For the future, only 2 of these women anticipate that they will not need to work. For the rest:

27 anticipate that they will always have to work.
 15 will require welfare.
 2 will get by with help from family and friends.

Those lucky enough to find employment have discovered that their reentry into the workforce--after perhaps 20 to 25 years of absence--has resulted for the most part in low-paying jobs with limited advancement potential. Our surveys show that women trained as teacher, geographer, journalist, translator, and actress are working as typist, file clerk, saleswoman, receptionist. Many cannot work because of health problems, some of which were cause or exacerbated by hardships abroad. For example--spinal problems from lack of dairy ^{birth complications, including} products, ^{loss} of infants, from inadequate pre- and post - natal care, growing blindness from infections incurred abroad, damaged livers; the list was long. Children were damaged, physically and emotionally.

Asked to recount briefly some of the hazardous conditions they had encountered, they reported:

Shootings, bombings, floods.
 Riots in Peru.
 War in Algeria, coups d'etat, bomb threats, home ransacked, attempted nighttime break-ins at home.
 Anti-American demonstrations in Africa, Pakistan, Yugoslavia.
 Riots in Cylon. In Laos, Thailand, Argentina.
 Coups in Korea, Morocco, and Vietnam. Monk immolated himself across the street from child's school; soldiers, tanks, and barbed wire prevented mother from reaching him. ~~Child~~
 evacuated by nuns to safe place.
 Bolivia, revolution (bomb in garden; Laos--wartime--confined to house.

That they had earned their retirement was shown by statistics gathered in a Forum study. An Ambassador's or a Charge's wife devoted an average of 167 hours a month to official functions. The top number reported was 328 hours 30 minutes. This work time was not remunerated; it was contributed.



STAT

The time was spent not only in representational duties but also escorting official visitors, including Congressmen; community building activities such as helping newcomers, working with Girl and Boy Scouts; ^{and friendship activities of} teaching at local schools, and serving as a volunteer nursing instructor in a local hospital.

The problems encountered after divorce were numerous and challenging: learning to manage their homes alone, if they were fortunate enough to keep their homes; establishing credit in their own name--many had too little income to do so; purchasing medical insurance at terrifying rates; seeking employment to augment their reduced income; and coping on their own with children emotionally traumatized by constant change and the impact of the broken family. As single women, these former spouses found that they were excluded from many of the recreational and social activities they had enjoyed while married. Some friendships had foundered; working hours kept them from other friends and their activities.

Many had been married so long they no longer knew themselves as individuals. Their interests for many years ^{had} focussed on supporting a husband in his career, caring for their families in difficult circumstances and representing their country in so many different ways. They had returned to a strange country with little or no support network since they were outside government circles and often away from home towns.

Many of the women encountered neighbors in suburbia that were neither understanding nor sympathetic. Acquaintances who had always lived stateside were ignorant of, and thus did not ^s understand, the challenges these women had faced daily while living abroad.

The Women in Transition network provided vital support. The WIT members and other AAFSW women tried to address these problems in several ways:

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1. The legislative effort is continuing. A bill to extend the coverage of a Foreign Service Widows' Pension Plan was introduced in 1985 before the House; Congresswoman Shroeder of Colorado, the sponsor. A bill to provide eligibility to CIA divorced spouses to survivor rights and medical benefits is in draft in House Committees in 1986. And lobbying is going on to protect the already won benefits from encroachment by a revised Civil Service Retirement Plan.
2. WIT meetings include presentations on student scholarship money and how to procure it; Community services in nearby counties-- the Women's Center and New Phase Program in Montgomery County, the House of Ruth for battered women and the Displaced Homemakers Network in Washington, D.C. There is help from the State Department, which has assigned a full-time officer to the job of counselling divorced women (former dependents).
3. And finally, the women support each other. Perhaps this is the best support of all. Experiences can be shared that are *like themselves* so bizarre as to be unbelievable. And others *on* have been as foolish as to build a life without a financial foundation.

These Foreign Service and CIA women have found that life goes on. Some have made more progress toward true independence than others. Some are working; others are living with relatives. Some are facing a financially secure old age with general *on* divorce settlements and inherited wealth; some are already on welfare. Some have put the painful experiences behind them; others continue to dwell on unhappy memories. All seem to agree that life in foreign countries *was a challenge*; life here and now, a greater one!

LEGISLATIVE REPORT February 1, 1986 Transition Group

The prospect of any Congressional action which would benefit us is not good.

STAT

[redacted] may report on their conference at the State Department with Bill Bacchus in an effort to have him include us in the Department's '87 budget.

This would most probably be an attempt to include us in the "older widows" entitlement (\$670?-at present-per month) and, hopefully, to provide for the possibility of our return to the State Dept. health insurance.

The latter, of course, would be with the participant paying not only the employe's premium but that which State, as the employer now pays. While it would be cheaper than private insurance, it would still be a substantial amount. As with regular salaries and pensions the premium would be deducted from the \$670.

The budget deficit has been the main stumbling block in introduction of our legislation. The Gramm-Rudman-Hollings automatic triggers of cuts has made it just that much more difficult.

Andrea Nelson of Rep. Schroeder's staff, said that they have looked for an entitlement which already exists to which we might be attached.

The "older widows" entitlement MIGHT be such a vehicle. I am not sure what the reaction of Congress would be to including divorced wives with these very elderly widows.

I do think we need to be realistic about ANY legislation which comes through State. Even with the original bill, where we had friends at State who were in a position to push it, a substantially sympathetic Administration, and friends on the Hill, there was trouble with the Office of Management and Budget(OMB).

We do not have anyone at State who will really go to bat for us. OMB, which must approve State's budget before it goes to the Hill, turned it down for 1986, as I understand it. It is likely to be less sympathetic, if that's possible, as the 1987 budget starts its way towards introduction on the Hill because of the deficit. We are NOT a priority.

We can still try for a pro-rata or the "older widows" bill. However, you need to know that if it is the latter I cannot, in good conscience, do any work on it. Someone else will have to take over and organize the effort. I am so afraid that the final shape of the bill, should it fly, will be more of a detriment than a help. That is said knowing the desperate economic

and health conditions some of us are facing. I am convinced that it will do little or nothing to alleviate those conditions. I am even even more certain that whatever might be passed will preclude anything further getting through for years to come- if ever.

I believe strongly that we should explore the possibility of a class action suit with Edith Fierst, who is not only a long time fighter for women's equity in retirement income but an expert in the field as well. There is absolutely no valid reason why we cannot pursue both avenues.

STAT



August 23, 1984

Dear *Barbara!*

The Women in Transition will hold their first meeting of the fall season on Saturday, September 8 at the Palisades Library. The meeting will start at 3:30 with refreshments and networking. Since we do not have anyone lined up for refreshments at this time, it would be very helpful if anyone will be kind enough to bring a small number of cookies, I will bring coffee etc.

We need to talk about format and leadership for next year as well as meeting places - shall we alternate working meetings at the library with warmer at home get togethers - shall we return to the format we had when Sonya was coordinator? How can we best reestablish the cohesion we had then? Where do we go from here? What is the status of our legislation effort? How shall we proceed? Only we can answer these questions.

The Palisades Library is at MacArthur Boulevard and V street in Washington, D.C. Copies of directions are enclosed.

A list of Women in Transition will be available at the meeting for everyone who who would like to have one. The list is not fully up to date and needs constantly to be updated. Perhaps someone will be willing to take over that responsibility.

I hope that you have had a good summer.

See you at the meeting.

Best regards,


Miryam Hirsch

P.S. I will have with me the book that I bought for as a thank you for all that she has done for all of us last year and with the hope that we may continue to have her guidance this year. The book will be on the table for anyone to sign it.

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Our legislation has been introduced, and now we need your help!

First, the legislation: Congressmen Mazzoli of Kentucky and Whitehurst of Virginia have introduced legislation based on Version 2 of the State Department/Foreign Service spouses legislation. Basically, it would provide a flat payment (with subsequent cost-of-living allowances) for every eligible former spouse (those omitted from the 1982 Act because they were already divorced but who otherwise met the criteria: 10 years of marriage and 5 years service abroad). This payment would be about \$616.00 a month or about \$7,400 a year.

As drafted, the legislation also provides the option of carrying health insurance under the group rates of the employing agency, paying all costs by the wife--former wife, that is. (Structure of sentence very poor!)

The hearing will be in early September. And before that, if possible, we will need your help. Point 2: Will you write your personal history, what you did abroad that would be helpful to the agency--keeping your husband healthy, caring for home and family so he could work unimpeded and then from that anything you did operationally. Put in the color and the hardships but we are trying to tell what we did to earn a retirement. Make it longer, rather than shorter. Put in details. No one here knows what you mean saying, "It was hard to get food." Say what you could find, where it was found, what had to be done to it to get a meal on the table. There is really no right or wrong but we need the foundation of this information to establish that women served loyally and effectively abroad. Contributions to the image of democracy and this country, such as charity bazaars, English classes. There are a lot of things you could include. Please send to me directly if you want them sent through clearance--no names used--or send them directly to:

Bernie Raimo
House Select Committee on Intelligence
H-405, US Capitol
Washington, D.C.

Could you send them before the 12th, preferably by the end of August, so we can use excerpts--no names--in our testimony at the hearing. At the hearing for our original legislation, this sort of stuff held people spellbound. So please don't say "It wasn't much." Just the fact you were there, you did things to help is important. And we do so hope that we can get this legislation on its way.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to write or

to phone. I can be reached, generally after 4 p.m. at
STAT

In addition, if you would like to write to the committee,
Please do so. Chairman Boland should be addressed, and your
letter will go into the record. Get your friends to write too.
The above address will reach him.

Some of you who have done so much work on the Foreign Service
bill will be interested to know that we are continuing to meet
on that. And work will begin in November to get that legislation
going in the coming Congressional session (1985). You deserve
much credit for the distance that effort has gone, and the
work done on the FS legislation has contributed to the introduc-
tion of our own legislation.

I would like to make an especial appeal to those of you who are local but
not been able to attend meetings. If you want to help, NOW IS
THE TIME.

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Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2012/11/19 : CIA-RDP10-00750R000100310001-5
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agency, paying all costs by the wife--former wife, that is.
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As drafted, the legislation also provides the option of carrying health insurance under the group rates of the employing agency, paying all costs by the wife--former wife, that is. (Structure of sentence very poor!)

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1 June 1984

Sarah

DEAR ~~WOMEN~~ IN TRANSITION:

A hearing in the House of Representatives for our legislation, HR 5598, has been cancelled. There is a slight hope that the hearing will be rescheduled, but we believe that for this year, this session of Congress, that our bill is on hold.

As you may remember, HR 5598 was based on earlier legislation that provided survivor annuities for the widows of Foreign Service officers, who had been left in need in the late 1950s, when no adequate provisions had been made for survivor benefits. Under HR 5598 eligible Foreign Service spouses would have received \$616 monthly, with subsequent cost-of-living allowances. The eligible women would also have had the option to carry medical insurance under the group health plan of the employing agency, paying the entire premium costs themselves.

We have been told by all concerned that there is some slight chance of more action this Congressional session, but the chance is slight. Certainly, however, we are in a good position for renewing the legislative effort early in 1985, the start of the next Congress. We can then look at which concept--now introduced as HR 5197 and HR 5598--as having the best chance for success in being turned into legislation.

All of you who worked so hard with your letters and visits deserve much credit and the gratitude of the Foreign Service wives who will eventually benefit from your efforts. Thank you. The work you have all done has put us ahead significantly for the next time and will contribute to the final result, new legislation.

We have found allies in Congressmen and their staffs. We have raised their level of awareness and understanding. This will stand us in good stead in 1985! Thank you.

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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WOMEN IN TRANSITION MEETING

1984

DATE: Saturday the 9th of June

TIME: 3:15 p.m.

Subject: To discuss ways and means of improving our mutual support as Women in Transition, as former Foreign Service Women, as women in crisis and as women who are ready to reach out. We hope that you can come. If you know of someone who might like to join us, please bring her as well.

Place: Palisades Library
49th and V Streets, N.W.
Washington, D.C. Telephone 727-1369

DIRECTIONS: From Virginia: Cross over Chain Bridge. Turn right on Canal Road. Left on Arizona. Turn right on MacArthur Boulevard. Go three blocks on the right is Georgetown Day Hight School. You can see the library, which is on V Street, from MacArthur Boulevard if you look to the left.

From the District: Go past Georgetown University on Canal Road. At the stoplight just past the University, bear right (Canal Road goes off to the left) the next light, turn left; you're on MacArthur Boulevard. Go several blocks. Watch for Safeway on the right. Turn left at the Gulf Station, onto V Street. There is a parking lot in the back of the library.

From the Beltway. Take the Glen Echo exit ---- the last exit before the Potomac River as you come from Maryland, the first exit as you cross the Cabin John Bridge coming from Virginia. You're on Canal Road. Make a hairpin turn up to MacArthur Boulevard. Go toward Washington on MacArthur.

TELEPHONE CONTACTS:

Miriam Hirsch

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The Women in Transition Group met on May 12th for its regular monthly meeting at the Palisades Library. [redacted] was kind enough to fill us in on what has been happening with our legislation to explain the background of the current move and to answer all of our questions with patience and understanding. We are all grateful to her.

STAT
In spite of a broken car, [redacted] found a way to bring over delicious refreshments and the women were able to socialize in comfort before the start of the meeting. The discussion that had been planned for the meeting did not take place since ^{the} primary focus of everyone there was on ^{what} Leslie had to tell us.

We now need to move to other areas of mutual concern that have been neglected (simply because we are too small a group to splinter) in the last few months. We have to discuss ways of giving concrete support to women who are now in crisis and to take more time for the warmth of sisterhood for all of us; and to explore the ways in which we, as a small group, can become more closeknit, communicate better and work together in all of our endeavors. Perhaps at the next meeting we can do some mutual brainstorming, raise questions, choose areas of concern and begin to find solutions.

STAT
During this past month, Barbara Colby, [redacted] attended a meeting at the home of Sue Lowe to pinpoint some of the problems that are facing the women now in Crisis. They hope to report to you about that meeting and to tell you some of the ideas that came out of that meeting. These ideas may not be the same that YOU consider to be the most vital, nor may their format be the way You might choose as the best approach. So please come prepared with your ideas of priorities, issues, meeting places and frequency of meetings, improvement of the communications network and so on.

Let's brainstorm at the next meeting and begin to find ways that are acceptable to all and would be of most benefit to Former Foreign Service Women as well as to women who are now in transition.

I hope to see you there and please bring anyone who might not know about us, but might wish to be welcome.

Respectfully,
[redacted] ILLEGIB

WOMEN IN TRANSITION MEETING

DATE: Saturday, 14 April 1984

TIME: 2:30 p.m.

SUBJECT: To discuss further action on the legislative effort. To say "thank-you" to Sonia Solmssen for her years of hospitality and kindness to the members of Women in Transition.

We hope you can come. Bring another Foreign Service wife.

PLACE: Palisades Library
49th and V Streets
Washington, D.C. Telephone: 727-1369.

DIRECTIONS: From Virginia: Cross over Chain Bridge. Turn right on Canal Road. Left on Arizona. Turn right on McArthur Boulevard. Go three blocks. On right is Georgetown Day School. You can see library, which is on V Street, from McArthur Boulevard, if you look to the left.

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From the Beltway, take the Glen Echo exit-- the last exit before the Potomac River as you come from Maryland, the first exit as you cross Cabin John Bridge coming from Virginia. You're on Canal Road. Make a hairpin turn up to McArthur Boulevard. Go toward Washington on McArthur. See directions above for Chain Bridge.

TELEPHONE CONTACTS: Miriam Hirsch, [redacted]

Joy Methven, [redacted]

[redacted]

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MINUTES OF MARCH MEETING

WOMEN IN TRANSITION

The Women in Transition group of the Association of American Foreign Service Women met on Saturday afternoon, 10 March 1984, at the Palisades Library in Bethesda. The library was chosen as a meeting place because it is convenient for both Virginia and Maryland residents. WIT members agreed that daylight hours were best for finding the location. And a weekend time is best for members who are working.

Miriam Hirsch, the co-coordinator of the group, brought the meeting to order after a social period. Refreshments were provided by [redacted] among others.

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[redacted] lead the discussion of the legislative effort for the month. WIT members are seeking to have legislation passed that will provide survivor and retirement benefits for the women omitted from such coverage by the 1980 Foreign Service Act, as well as the option of carrying health insurance under the group policy of the employing agency.

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[redacted] tallied the names of Congressmen and Senators contacted by WIT members.

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Betty, who is Special Legislative Chairman for the Association of Foreign Service Women, asked that the members continue to write letters to Congressmen and Senators. If responses are not received, she said, the letters should be followed up with a phone call or another letter. If an appointment can be made to meet with a Congressional staff member, Betty asked that the WIT member contact her so as to coordinate the information given out, because it is essential that the message given by the Group is accurate, consistent, and current. Women were asked not to undertake legislative visits on their own because a disorganized lobbying effort would be rapidly counterproductive.

Discussion of strategy stressed the need to keep the relevant Congressional Committees' attention on the need for the legislation. In letters, correspondents should ask legislators to sponsor or to cosponsor our remedial legislation.

Friends and relatives near the home state offices of Congressmen can be very helpful by visiting those offices and asking for support in our name.

Any names of Foreign Service wives willing to help with the lobbying effort should be given to [redacted] or to [redacted] who is serving as WIT correspondent. She is keeping FS women around the country of our legislative activities. Libby's address [redacted] D.C. 2008. Her [redacted]

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---Minutes recorded by [redacted]

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HR-5197, Foreign Service Amendments for 1984

Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder has introduced our legislation: Provisions for retirement and survivor benefits for the women excluded from the 1980 Act because they were already divorced or because their spouses were already retired would become eligible for retirement and survivor benefits.

The bill would also give all Foreign Service spouses who are divorced or widowed before and after the effective date of the 1980 Act the option of carrying health insurance--at the group rates of the employing agency but paying the entire cost of the premiums themselves.

SAMPLE LETTER

"I am writing to you to ask your support for legislation recently introduced by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder, HR 5197 "Foreign Service Amendments for 1984." This bill would provide retirement and survivor benefits to divorced and widowed Foreign Service wives who were excluded from coverage of the 1980 Foreign Service Act because their divorces or widowhood had occurred before the effective date of the 1980 Act, 15 February 1981.

"It would also provide all divorced and widowed Foreign Service spouses with the option of carrying health insurance at the group rate of the employing agency but pay the entire cost of the premiums themselves."

x x x

The above is the information that should be included in the letter, but please feel free to rephrase and to add whatever you can. For example, information about the Foreign Service wives you know who need such help; your own circumstances, emphasizing your service to benefit the US Government, but outlining hardships and current financial situation, job circumstances, and health; your children's needs; the life they had abroad.

A note from Congresswoman Schroeder's office asks us to--

Let the letters roll!

~~Minutes~~ Minutes continued.

The AAFSW Board is now in the process of selecting a Women in Transition coordinator to replace Sonya Solmssen, who has so diligently fulfilled the role for over four years.

These minutes were drafted by the undersigned:

____ Chairman STAT
Special Committee for Legislation,
Association of American Foreign
Service Women

STAT US House of Representatives:

Foreign Affairs

(Suite 2170, phone 55021, meets first Tuesday of each month)

36

- ✓ Clement J. Zablocki, of Wisconsin.
- ✓ Dante Fascell, of Florida. *Jackie*
- Lee H. Hamilton, of Indiana.
- ✓ Gus Yatron, of Pennsylvania.
- ✓ Stephen J. Solarz, of New York. *Martha*
- Don Bonker, of Washington.
- Gerry E. Studds, of Massachusetts.
- ✓ Andy Ireland, of Florida. *Mary*
- ✓ Dan Mica, of Florida. *Martha*
- ✓ Michael D. Barnes, of Maryland. *Betty*
- Howard Wolpe, of Michigan.
- ✓ George W. Crockett, Jr., of Michigan. *Margaret*
- ✓ Sam Gejdenson, of Connecticut. *Mary*
- Mervyn M. Dymally, of California.
- Tom Lantos, of California.
- Peter H. Kostmayer, of Pennsylvania.
- Robert G. Torricelli, of New Jersey. *Margaret*
- ✓ Lawrence J. Smith, of Florida. *Mary*
- Howard L. Berman, of California.
- Harry M. Reid, of Nevada.
- Mel Levine, of California.
- Edward F. Feighan, of Ohio.
- Ted Weiss, of New York.
- Robert Garcia, of New York.¹
- William S. Broomfield, of Michigan.
- Larry Winn, Jr., of Kansas. *Martha*
- Benjamin A. Gilman, of New York.
- Robert J. Lagomarsino, of California.
- Joel Pritchard, of Washington.
- Jim Leach, of Iowa. *me*
- Toby Roth, of Wisconsin. *Mary*
- Olympia J. Snowe, of Maine. *me*
- Henry J. Hyde, of Illinois.
- Gerald B. H. Solomon, of New York.
- Doug Bereuter, of Nebraska.
- ✓ Mark D. Siljander, of Michigan. *me*
- Ed Zschau, of California.

¹ Effective only for the First Session, 98th Congress.

US Senate:

Foreign Relations

(Suite 8D-410, phone 44651, meets Tuesday)

- Charles H. Percy, of Illinois.
- Howard H. Baker, Jr., of Tennessee.
- Jesse Helms, of North Carolina.
- Richard G. Lugar, of Indiana.
- Charles McC. Mathias, Jr., of Maryland.
- Nancy L. Kassebaum, of Kansas.
- Rudy Boschwitz, of Minnesota.
- Larry Pressler, of South Dakota.
- Frank H. Murkowski, of Alaska.
- Claiborne Pell, of Rhode Island.
- Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of Delaware.
- John Glenn, of Ohio.
- Paul S. Sarbanes, of Maryland.
- Edward Zorinsky, of Nebraska.
- Paul E. Tsongas, of Massachusetts.
- Alan Cranston, of California.
- Christopher J. Dodd, of Connecticut.

All of these Congressmen and Senators can be addressed:
U.S.. Capitol, Washington, D.C.

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(9 May 1984)

Olive
DEAR MEMBER OF ~~WOMEN~~ W in T IN TRANSITION:

Just a note to let you know where the W in T legislation is at:

For the past few days we have had a series of rapid actions, but again we are waiting to see what further developments there will be. Perhaps a review of the whole legislative effort to date is in order.

As you will remember, perhaps, we started in September 1982, when Patty Ryan, former Forum chairman and supporter of the 1980 legislation, had to leave for an overseas assignment with her husband. Mary Melrose, legislative liaison For AAFSW, resigned in early 1983 when she took a fulltime job.

To replace them, Marilyn Mauch, Peggy Henry, and I undertook a series of meetings to draft materials. We also met with Ginny Schlundt, general counsel of the International Operations Subcommittee staff, to gather much needed information and guidance.

Since then I have undertaken much of the responsibility for the current legislative effort; Marilyn and Peggy have continued to help as they have had time. I was appointed Chairman for a special AAFSW committee for this legislation in the summer of 1983.

At monthly W in T meetings and a series of working meetings at my home, we planned and developed the legislative effort. The working meetings at my home were attended by women who had signed up at the W in T meetings; they had stated they would be willing to serve on a steering committee. As Steering Committee members found themselves too busy to undertake assignments, others came along to help. Eventually, it was found that the steering committee meetings were generating negative criticism, and they were dropped. We continued passing information along and asking for help at monthly meetings. We also initiated a series of meeting announcements that contained minutes of the preceding meeting so that all W in T members could be kept informed of developments even though they might not come to the meetings.

Since then, many hard workers have carried on the legislative effort. By writing letters, attending meetings regularly, maintaining telephone contacts and in general, donating their time and effort, these women became knowledgeable in the message to be delivered to the Hill, and we asked them to go along on Congressional visits and eventually to make visits while training others. Thus, our lobbying effort grew.

In this way, we sought to follow the advice we had been given early in the campaign by Senate staffers: that we not waste time on the Hill with long visits, inaccurate information, extraneous chatter. We have tried to gear all lobbying to getting the message out accurately, completely, consistently.

Our secondary goal has been to construct an image of responsible, careful women who can work together, with each other and with the legislative staffers who were willing to see us, who have been generous with their support and expert in their assistance, and without whom no legislative effort can go forward. In this way we hoped that not only this but future AAFSW legislative efforts would be helped.

Our legislative effort culminated last week in the possibility of a House hearing. At a hastily called meeting with AAFSW Board members, we decided to "go for it." We drafted a statement for AAFSW President Sue Parsons to read, solicited two AAFSW members to respond to questions at the hearing, and we were ready to participate in the brief pro-forma (possibly 10-minutes) hearing proposed for Tuesday, 8 May 1984.

The hearing was cancelled. We hope that a hearing can be held in another week or so, but chances are good that it may be another Congressional session---in early 1985---before further developments occur. Under Congressional rules, our hearing must be held by May 15th.

Bill No: HR 5598
The proposal that was to be considered at the hearing was based on a 1976 law, rather than the 1980 Act. It would have provided a payment

of \$616 per month for each eligible divorced spouse--this meant more annuity for some women, less for others, than they had anticipated. The medical benefits remained as drafted. The advantages to the proposed legislation was the State Department would support it, if possible. This support did not--or at least, has not yet--come through. More work needs to be done by relevant government agencies. We hope that this work will be done shortly and that we can go forward in this Congressional session.

We of W in T owe a great debt of gratitude to AAFSW President Sue Parsons and Forum Chairman Sue Lowe for their dedication in the preparation of the hearing statement, as well as their support throughout this legislative effort. for their efficiency in getting the statement typed. And Leslie Dorman and Barbara Colby for their wise guidance and enthusiastic support for the recent activity and throughout the campaign. More thanks go to all of you who have worked so hard throughout the legislative effort. Your letters have been the foundation of our campaign; they were the reasons doors were open to us; they have generated support throughout the Government.

I know that our legislative effort will go forward to success. We have worked hard; we have good support. There is every reason to be hopeful!

Thank-you for a good job, well done!

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The legislation is beginning to move--how far it will go is still to be determined--but we are starting. It is being worked on in Congressman Mica's office, will be put on a list of priority items along with other amendments for State Dept, AID, and the Olympics. We right now are contacting members of the International Operations Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. I'll enclose a list of the members.

Once we have talked with each of them, we will go on to meeting with the House Foreign Affairs Committee members--the other members of the Committee who are not on the subcommittee.

At the same time, we are talking with Senatorial staff to see what can be done there. Hopefully we can get legislation going simultaneously there.

We do appreciate the work you are doing from where you are. If you could continue to write, write to those you have not heard from, reiterate your need and the fact that you have served your country. We're bearing down hard on the service. As a constituent your letter bears more weight. Perhaps you could say you have friends and family in his state. Anyway, if we can concentrate on the House and Senate Foreign Affairs (Relations) Committees, we will do the best, we've been told.

We are meeting once a month--the Women in Transition group that is part of the Association of American Foreign Service Women. There is a good turnout each time. The Association is being strongly supportive. Board members are helping us with our lobbying efforts and some of the costs of mailings are being picked up.

An example of the effectiveness of our letterwriting campaign is our recent visit to Senator Mathias' office last week. He is a conservative in viewpoint so we weren't too sure of our reception but his staff said the surge of letters had convinced him that something needs to be done and he will be supportive. The staff aide congratulated us on our good organization! So even if you are not getting answers directly, your work is bearing fruit.

We need to continue to writing, however, hopefully to get commitments from the involved Congressmen. Some of you who are working through local legislators are also being very effective. Our committee members are from states where retirees retire to, so we should be able to gather grassroots support. Please get friends and relatives to write--not once but over time, several times from each. We'll try to keep you informed of our progress. Then if our correspondents state that they are aware of the progress being made, the Congressional staffs will know that their efforts are recognized and appreciated.

We are such a small group that each member will have to do yeoman's

- 2 -

work if the legislation is to go through. I think with concentrating our efforts, saying the same things (as in the FACT Sheet and other materials we've sent you), and keeping the letters coming that we have a good chance of going forward.

As you know, the legislation as drafted provides for medical benefits; divorced and widowed spouses can pay for their medical insurance at group rates. This means that some of you who are going without coverage will be able to have it, and those of you who are paying for individual policies will be able to reduce costs for insurance under the group rates.

STAT

[redacted] has been a good scout and mailed letters to you. She'll be writing again. This month, she's getting over foot surgery, and I wanted to add notes to each of you in this note. We are grateful for your support. Please know that it is helping. And we do need you to continue. Respond to answers if you get them. Write again if you don't. Friends and family members in other states can write to their Congressmen who are on the Committees or to yours. Let's concentrate and unify our efforts. We hope a broader approach may not be necessary. If we have to write to Congress as a whole, we'll advise. For now, lets concentrate on the relevant Committees.

Again, thanks for the good work.

We are looking for some Foreign Service spouses who would be willing to be interviewed for newspaper columns and radio/TV talk shows. The substance would be primarily on work done abroad to assist the mission of the US Government with as much local color as possible from the foreign environments. Some personal stuff would have to be included, to establish the fact that one is divorced, number of children, and years of education that have had to be coped with, as well as one's own difficulties in seeking an appropriate job. But the primary thrust would be the overseas experience. From your letters, I think that you would be a good resource. Would you be willing to do so?

We have as a first opportunity, Judy Mann of the Washington Post who writes a column filled with human interest stories. She is interested in talking with two or three wives. Names would be used, at least to her editor. And she would like to put names in her column. Would you agree to be interviewed by telephone by her? Her column is syndicated and it would give us good exposure at a time when we need to building interest in our cause.

As I say, the primary points to be made would be your support of the government mission, how you earned the retirement we hope to get. It would be an attempt to overcome the stereotype of FS wives that we sit around drinking tea and summoning white-jacketed servants with the tinkle of a bell.

We are getting some responses from all your efforts. Please keep them up.

We always are glad to hear from you. Will try to keep you informed with minutes of our meetings and other news as it develops. Love hearing by phone from you. The AAFSW is supporting our efforts financially and by lobbying. Will try to get some phoning costs included and then will be able to be in touch directly.

Meanwhile, it's great to hear from you. Appreciate all your efforts! Please keep them up.

MINUTES OF MARCH MEETING

WOMEN IN TRANSITION

The Women in Transition group of the Association of American Foreign Service Women met on Saturday afternoon, 10 March 1984, at the Palisades Library in Bethesda. The library was chosen as a meeting place because it is convenient for both Virginia and Maryland residents. WIT members agreed that daylight hours were best for finding the location. And a weekend time is best for members who are working.

Miriam Hirsch, the co-coordinator of the group, brought the meeting to order after a social period. Refreshments were provided by [redacted] among others.

STAT

[redacted] lead the discussion of the legislative effort for the month. WIT members are seeking to have legislation passed that will provide survivor and retirement benefits for the women omitted from such coverage by the 1980 Foreign Service Act, as well as the option of carrying health insurance under the group policy of the employing agency.

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[redacted] tallied the names of Congressmen and Senators contacted by WIT members.

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Betty, who is Special Legislative Chairman for the Association of Foreign Service Women, asked that the members continue to write letters to Congressmen and Senators. If responses are not received, she said, the letters should be followed up with a phone call or another letter. If an appointment can be made to meet with a Congressional staff member, Betty asked that the WIT member contact her so as to coordinate the information given out, because it is essential that the message given by the Group is accurate, consistent, and current. Women were asked not to undertake legislative visits on their own because a disorganized lobbying effort would be rapidly counterproductive.

Discussion of strategy stressed the need to keep the relevant Congressional Committees' attention on the need for the legislation. In letters, correspondents should ask legislators to sponsor or to cosponsor our remedial legislation.

Friends and relatives near the home state offices of Congressmen can be very helpful by visiting those offices and asking for support in our name.

Any names of Foreign Service wives willing to help with the lobbying effort should be given to [redacted] or to [redacted] who is serving as WIT correspondent. She is keeping FS women around the country of our legislative activities.

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[redacted] address is [redacted] Her telephone number is [redacted] evenings.

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---Minutes recorded by

[redacted]

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HR-5197, Foreign Service Amendments for 1984

Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder has introduced our legislation: Provisions for retirement and survivor benefits for the women excluded from the 1980 Act because they were already divorced or because their spouses were already retired would become eligible for retirement and survivor benefits.

The bill would also give all Foreign Service spouses who are divorced or widowed before and after the effective date of the 1980 Act the option of carrying health insurance--at the group rates of the employing agency but paying the entire cost of the premiums themselves.

SAMPLE LETTER

"I am writing to you to ask your support for legislation recently introduced by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder, HR 5197 "Foreign Service Amendments for 1984." This bill would provide retirement and survivor benefits to divorced and widowed Foreign Service wives who were excluded from coverage of the 1980 Foreign Service Act because their divorces or widowhood had occurred before the effective date of the 1980 Act, 15 February 1981.

"It would also provide all divorced and widowed Foreign Service spouses with the option of carrying health insurance at the group rate of the employing agency but pay the entire cost of the premiums themselves."

x x x

The above is the information that should be included in the letter, but please feel free to rephrase and to add whatever you can. For example, information about the Foreign Service wives you know who need such help; your own circumstances, emphasizing your service to benefit the US Government, but outlining hardships and current financial situation, job circumstances, and health; your children's needs; the life they had abroad.

A note from Congresswoman Schroeder's office asks us to--

Let the letters roll!

WOMEN IN TRANSITION MEETING

DATE: Saturday, 10 March 1984

TIME: 2:30 p.m.

SUBJECT: To select new Women in Transition coordinator. To discuss regular meeting locations. To plan further action on the legislative effort. Members will report on their correspondence with Congressmen.

We hope you can come. We need you!

PLACE: Palisades Library
49th and V streets
Washington, D.C. Tel: 727-1369.

DIRECTIONS: From Virginia: Cross over Chain Bridge. Turn right on Canal Road. Left on Arizona. Turn right on McArthur Boulevard. Go three blocks. On right is Georgetown Day School. You can see library, which is on V street, from Mac Arthur Boulevard, if you look to the left.

From the District: Go past Georgetown University on Canal Road. At the stoplight just past the university, bear right (Canal Road goes to the left). At the next light, turn left; you're on McArthur Boulevard. Go several blocks. Watch for Safeway on your right. Turn right at the Gulf Station.

From the Beltway, take the Glen Echo exit-- the last exit before the Potomac Rive as you come from Maryland, the first exit as you cross Cabin John Bridge as you come from Virginia. You're on Canal Road. Make a hairpin turn up to McArthur Boulevard. Go towards Washington on McArthur. See directions above for Chain Bridge.

TELEPHONE CONTACTS: Miriam Hirsch,
(For any questions)

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WOMEN IN TRANSITION MEETING

DATE: Saturday, 11 February 1984

TIME: 2:30 p.m.

SUBJECT: To select new Women in Transition coordinator. To discuss regular meeting locations. To plan further action on the legislative effort. Members will report on their correspondence with Congressmen.

We hope you can come. We need you!

PLACE: Palisades Library
49th and V streets
Washington, D.C. Tel: 727-1369.

DIRECTIONS: From Virginia: Cross over Chain Bridge. Turn right on Canal Road. Left on Arizona. Turn right on McArthur Boulevard. Go three blocks. On right is Georgetown Day School. You can see library, which is on V street, from Mac Arthur Boulevard, if you look to the left.

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From the Beltway, take the Glen Echo exit-- the last exit before the Potomac Rive as you come from Maryland, the first exit as you cross Cabin John Bridge as you come from Virginia. You're on Canal Road. Make a hairpin turn up to McArthur Boulevard. Go towards Washington on McArthur. See directions above for Chain Bridge.

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TELEPHONE CONTACTS: Miriam Hirsch,
(For any questions)

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY MEETING

WOMEN IN TRANSITION

The Women in Transition group of the Association of American Foreign Service Women met on Saturday afternoon, 11 February 1984, at the Palisades library in Bethesda. The purpose of the meeting was to review work accomplished thus far and work yet to be done on the legislation to be proposed by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder of Colorado. The legislation will provide retirement and survivor benefits to the Foreign Service wives who were excluded from these benefits under the Foreign Service Act of 1980 because they were already divorced or widowed.

Miriam Hirsch, the new co-coordinator of the group, brought the meeting to order after a social period. Refreshments were provided by [redacted] Miriam reported on the work of the writing group which is preparing materials for the legislative campaign. [redacted] as well as [redacted] are serving on this group.

[redacted] distributed copies of a sample letter that those attending the meeting could use to write their Congressmen. Also distributed were samples of petitions that those present agreed to get signed and returned to [redacted] chairman of the special legislative committee for the Association of American Foreign Service Women.

The meeting continued with reports by those attending of their work in contacting members of Congress, particularly those on the Foreign Affairs Committees in the House and Senate, asking for passage of remedial legislation.

[redacted] spoke of their meetings with Congressional staffers in the offices of Congressmen Solarz, Mica, and Winn. All were supportive. Congressman Mica of Florida is particularly important to the campaign because he has replaced Congressman Fascell as Chairman of the International Operations Subcommittee, which is where our legislation will be handled.

[redacted] who is helping with the lobbying effort, brought large charts to show contacts that have been made with members of the Committees. By listing supporters and showing where contacts still need to be made or resistance overcome, the charts will be extremely helpful in planning future lobbying efforts. As those at the meeting reported on their contacts, the record was made on these charts.

[redacted] reported on meetings with the staffs Senator Percy and Jepson, as well as Ginny Schlundt, General Counsel on the International Operations Committee staff. She received expressions of support and encouragement.

Betty asked that all Women in Transition continue to write letters, to recontact by letter or telephone the Congressional offices from which answers had not been received to see if interviews could be scheduled.

could be scheduled. As responses are received, it would be extremely helpful if Betty could be informed of the substance of the response.

Discussion of strategy stressed the need to keep the relevant Congressional Committees' attention on the need for the legislation, reserving the big push for the time when the Bill is introduced. Betty pointed out that the Bill would not be introduced unless we can continue our efforts to have them do so. In letters, correspondents should ask legislators, especially those on relevant Foreign Affairs Committees, to sponsor or cosponsor this remedial legislation. Prospective Congressional sponsors should contact Congresswoman Schroeder and Andrea Nelson, legal counsel in Congresswoman Schroeder's office, for details.

Friends and relatives near the home state offices of Congressmen can be very-helpful by visiting those offices and asking for support in our name.

Juliette Irwin, the new co-chairman, with Miriam, was also introduced. Both chairman will fill the role of coordinator, replacing Sonia Solmssen, who has served loyally and well for four years.

It was decided that the next meeting would be held at the same time and place on March 10, because so many Women in Transition members found location and time convenient.

Names of members willing to give their personal histories were solicited, and these names will be given to Judy Mann of the Washington Post for publicity. Any other members willing to do so should give their names to [redacted]

STAT

Any names of Foreign Service wives willing to help with the legislative effort should be given to [redacted] for an informal newsletter mailed out monthly. [redacted] has assumed the role of correspondent and is keeping these women informed so that they, too, can help by correspondence and personal visits to Congressional home offices.

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- [redacted] meeting
recorder

STAT

1/26/84

Betty--

I am sending out the following material
to the out-of-town list you sent:

Covering letter from me (in case you don't
like it you won't have to take the blame).
I'm enclosing a copy.

January minutes

List of House For. Affs. members

List of Senate For. Rels. members

Sample letter to Congress.

* * * * *

The material in this envelope is what
I have finished and which I told you I
probably wouldn't be able to xerox.
Please note that on page 2 of the Statistica
Profile in the "future prospects" para.
I have had to change the first item from
19 to 17 to make the total add up to 34.
It would be easy enough to change it back
if you prefer.

There are 2 more documents for me to type
but both have a page missing: Projected
Number of Women to Benefit from the
Requested Legis.--pg. 2. missing.

FS Wives: Life Abroad (Years of Service,
The Survivors etc.)--p. 3 is missing.

PS at this point the school xerox
is broken - I'll try to find

Page Denied



Association of American Foreign Service Women
P.O. Box 8068
Washington, D.C. 20024

January 25, 1984

Dear Friend:

We have tried to locate as many women as we can living outside the D.C. area who may have an interest in the enclosed information but who do not know about it. If you do have an interest, we urge you to join us in our attempt to have legislation passed (probably in April) which will extend the benefits of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 to those who were excluded.

The attached sample letter to Congressmen and Senators gives the basic information you need and could serve as the basis for a letter of your own. Write your own congressmen and senators, get your friends to write theirs on your behalf, enlist the help of any clubs or organizations you belong to who might be willing to write also (particularly on letterhead stationery!).

If you will be in the D. C. area in February, you would be more than welcome at our next meeting on the 11th.

We want to hear from you so that we can build a mailing list that will reach as many women who need help as possible. If you know of other women outside the Washington area who should be on our list, please send their names and addresses to

[Redacted]

STAT
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Sincerely,

[Redacted]

Member, Steering Committee

STAT

[Redacted]

STAT



Association of American Foreign Service Women
P.O. Box 8068
Washington, D.C. 20024

PROFILE OF FORMER SPOUSES OF FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS EXCLUDED FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE ACT OF 1980

The purpose of this profile is to acquaint you briefly with a group of women who were excluded from coverage of the Foreign Service Act of 1980-- who they are, their lives abroad, their employment status, and their efforts in seeking creative responses to the economic and social realities of divorce.¹ As this profile shows, without corrective legislative change enabling them to receive their pro rata share of retirement and survivor benefits earned through their contributions during marriage, many may be forced to ask their families for help or rely on public resources.

Approximately fifty of the former spouses of Foreign Service employees who did not receive retirement and survivor annuity benefits under the Act of 1980 reside in the Washington area. The Association of American Foreign Service Women (AAFSW) has estimated a total number of 150 women nationally within this category. Based on data collected from surveys of the Women in Transition group, these older former spouses typically had been married twenty-five years or more and some as long as thirty to forty years before divorce occurred.² They had usually spent twenty or more years working for the Foreign Service, and for seventy percent or more of these years they lived abroad. A few of these former spouses are already widowed; only a few have remarried.

¹ The provisions of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 were not automatically extended to a small group of older women divorced before February 15, 1981, when the Act was signed into law. Although earned equally by all former spouses of Foreign Service employees who were married ten or more years, the pension rights provided by this act were denied to about 150 women nationally on the basis of their date of divorce. During discussions of this Act, Congress took note of the inequities dealt to these Foreign Service spouses divorced prior to the Act and acknowledged its responsibility to address the issue of a just and fair compensation for them. This group is comprised of women only. This is because there can be no male spouses married to Foreign Service female employees for the requisite ten years stipulated by the Act of 1980. Until 1972 women officers

Profile - AAFSW

-2-

Almost all of these women, while contributing to their husband's career, spent substantial portions of their married years raising families overseas, frequently in developing countries. The living conditions in these areas subjected them to the hazards of rigorous climate, endemic disease, inadequate medical and hospital services, and even fear and physical danger during times of indigenous political upheavals. Reported illnesses due to living abroad included hepatitis, amoebic dysentery, gangrene, and malaria. In the Washington area alone, many of these women have health problems exacerbated by the inadequate medical care available abroad. Three are going blind, one from lack of money for a needed operation; two have Hodgkin's disease, at present in remission; several have children psychiatrically disturbed by Foreign Service experiences; two have minor children with severe physical disabilities.

Many of these women served when their participation in a wide variety of official and unofficial duties was tradition and, in many instances, officially required. Their husbands' efficiency reports included evaluations of the wives' cooperation in fulfilling representational and community service. In 1972 a Joint State-AID-USIA Directive permitted spouses of Foreign Service officers to go abroad as private persons. They were no longer required--officially or unofficially--to donate their time to mission-supporting duties. The tradition of service continued, however, even after the Directive. Our surveys showed that diplomatic wives continued to fulfill, as in the past, a variety of unpaid assignments. Some wives reported serving voluntarily a total of forty hours or more per week. Their volunteer tasks included developing an English-as-a-second-language curriculum, radio broadcasting on socio-cultural topics of the U. S., organizing charity benefits, translating for visiting officials, and supporting local health and welfare organizations.

were forced to resign if they married.

² The Women in Transition group, a part of the AAFSW, is a Washington-based group which provides a peer support network primarily for divorced women and widows of Foreign Service employees.

Profile - AAFSW

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During their Foreign Service years, many of these women faced the hardship of family separation and episodes of violence. When asked to recount briefly some of the hazardous conditions they had encountered (wartime, riots, etc.), they reported, for example, "Shooting coup, bombing, flood, wartime"; "Riots in Peru"; "War in Algeria, coup d'etat, bomb threats, home ransacked, other attempted nighttime break-ins at home"; "Anti-American demonstrations in Africa, Pakistan, Yugoslavia." "In Brazil at height of anti-American feeling in South America, bomb thrown at Consulate General"; "Evacuated from Lebanon during six-day war"; "Riots in Ceylon"; "Riots in Laos, Thailand, Argentina"; "Coups in Korea, Morocco and Vietnam; monk immolated himself across the street from my child's school--soldiers, tanks, and barbed wire prevented me from reaching him--evacuated by nuns to safe place"; "Bolivia, revolution (bomb in garden), Laos--wartime--confined."

The Foreign Service wife has special impediments to economic independence, resulting exclusively from the husband's employment. Cultural, legal and linguistic barriers prevent her from working overseas. When she can work, constant international mobility usually prevents her from vesting in any sort of retirement plan. When divorced, these women are left after long years of unpaid government service abroad with no employment record, no modern skills, and no Social Security. Most former spouses worked before their Foreign Service marriages, and most, since their divorces during mid-life, have resumed working. Unfortunately, their reentry into the workforce after perhaps twenty to twenty-five years of absence has commonly resulted in low-paying jobs with limited advancement potential. Many of these former spouses, although college trained years ago, must reenter the workforce in entry level jobs. Our surveys showed that women trained as teachers, geographers, journalists, translators and actresses, are working as typists, file clerks, saleswomen, receptionists. Some cannot work because of health problems, and some were still seeking employment at the time of our survey. Only a few reported that they expected to be financially able to retire. Their entry into the workforce during middle age, when most employees are contemplating retirement, has precluded

Profile - AAFSW

-4-

the possibility of their accruing enough monies to provide independently for their retirement or subsistence during old age when they are no longer physically able to work. This is especially critical since only a few of these former spouses reported that provisions were made at divorce for their old age years.

While life in the Foreign Service is stimulating and has undeniable rewards of personal growth, travel, and world-wide friendships, the attractions of these desirable facets fade as these women who served so many years are apt to pay for these benefits by penury in their later years.

STATISTICAL PROFILE OF FORMER FOREIGN SERVICE WIVES EXCLUDED FROM BENEFITS OF THE 1980 FOREIGN SERVICE ACT.

In June, 1983, AAFSW sent questionnaires to 110 former spouses of FS officers. 12 surveys were returned as nondeliverable. 46 responses were received. Of the responding group, 34 had been excluded from eligibility for benefits under the 1980 Act.

The profile of the typical woman in the excluded group, as determined from these responses, is as follows:

- 56 years old now.
- 49 years old at time of divorce with two school aged children still at home.
- 23 years married to her FS husband.
- 19 of the 23 years were with the Foreign Service.
- 11 of the 23 years were spent abroad.

For most of the 34 in the excluded group, financial prospects are bleak:

- 17 receive alimony.
- 2 of the 17 said the amount was enough to live on.
- 31 are working to make ends meet.

Of the 31 who are working:

- 7 are employed in their profession.
- 6 have a good, or fairly good, chance for advancement.
- 12 have little chance for advancement.
- 4 have career advancement opportunities but are too old for a career.
- 5 report their employment is secure.
- 9 have insecure or irregular employment.
- 2 are looking for work.

- 18 are earning Social Security credits;
- 11 are not.

Statistical Profile

-2-

Of the group of 34 respondents:

- 1 will receive Social Security through her husband;
- 15 will not;
- 17 do not know whether they will or not.

The group of 34 reported their future prospects as follows:

- 17 anticipate that they will have to work always.
- 10 will require welfare.
- 2 will be able to retire if they get help from family and friends.
- 2 do not need to work.
- 2 cannot work because they are too old, and one is going blind.

Of the 46 FS officers to whom the respondent women were formerly married:

- 17 are still working.
- 18 have remarried. (Only 1 of the women reported having remarried).
- 24 years was the average amount of time spent in the Foreign Service.

1/25/84

WOMEN IN TRANSITION

Minutes of January, 1984, Meeting

Guests at the January meeting of Women in Transition were Betty Atherton, wife of the new Foreign Service director, Ambassador Roy Atherton; Barbara Colby, wife of former CIA director, William E. Colby; Leslie Dorman, former AAFSW president; and Mary Kay Johnson, member of the AAFSW Board.

The main topic of the meeting was the legislation to be proposed by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder of Colorado to provide retirement and survivor benefits for the Foreign Service spouses excluded from coverage of the 1980 Foreign Service Act, because they had been divorced or widowed before the effective date of the Act, February 15, 1981. As drafted, the legislation will provide all divorced and widowed FS spouses with an option to buy health insurance under the group health plan of the State Department. Each woman would pay the full amount, but the group plan would mean lower, more affordable health costs. Some Women in Transition members currently are having to do without medical coverage because they cannot afford the high premiums of an individual policy.

As drafted, the legislation proposes that the funding to provide retirement and survivor benefits for the excluded group of women will be drawn from the Foreign Service Retirement Fund, not in the name of a Foreign Service officer but in the name of the divorced dependent spouse. Costs will be met from funds allocated by Congress to the Fund for this purpose.

Women at the meeting reported on the letters they had sent to Congressmen, soliciting support for Congresswoman Schroeder's proposal. Responses to such letters have been slow, but the women plan to follow up their correspondence with requests to meet with Congressional staff members. Letters from constituents seem to have a greater impact, suggesting that names of friends or relatives residing in a Congressman's district should be mentioned, if possible, in all letters. And, of course, letters sent by friends and relatives from a Congressman's district are invaluable.

STAT Miriam Hirsch, [redacted] volunteered to serve on a writers' committee to prepare sample letters and other informational materials for the campaign. Miriam, who agreed to serve as chairman, suggested preparing telegrams to be sent to all members of Congress when the legislation is under active consideration.

STAT STAT It was voted that the next meeting would be held at the same time, 2:30 p.m., and the same place, Palisades library, on February 11, 1984. [redacted] [redacted] will coordinate refreshments.

It was also agreed that any direct contacts with Congressmen and staffers would be coordinated through our legislative chairman. This will ensure a uniform, accurate message delivered to as many persons as possible. It will also help build an image of women working together in responsible cooperation for

W.I.T., Jan. '84 Minutes

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the common good.

The AAFSW Board is now in the process of selecting a Women in Transition coordinator to replace Sonya Solmssen who has so diligently fulfilled the role for over four years.

STAT
STAT Telephone contacts for Women in Transition are: Miriam Hirsch, [redacted]
and [redacted]

These minutes were drafted by the undersigned:

[redacted] Chairman
Special Committee for Legislation,
Association of American Foreign Service
Women.

STAT

WOMEN IN TRANSITION

Minutes of January, 1984, Meeting

Guests at the January meeting of Women in Transition were Betty Atherton, wife of the new Foreign Service director, Ambassador Roy Atherton; Barbara Colby, wife of former CIA director, William E. Colby; Leslie Dorman, former AAFSW president; and Mary Kay Johnson, member of the AAFSW Board.

The main topic of the meeting was the legislation to be proposed by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder of Colorado to provide retirement and survivor benefits for the Foreign Service spouses excluded from coverage of the 1980 Foreign Service Act, because they had been divorced or widowed before the effective date of the Act, February 15, 1981. As drafted, the legislation will provide all divorced and widowed FS spouses with an option to buy health insurance under the group health plan of the State Department. Each woman would pay the full amount, but the group plan would mean lower, more affordable health costs. Some Women in Transition members currently are having to do without medical coverage because they cannot afford the high premiums of an individual policy.

As drafted, the legislation proposes that the funding to provide retirement and survivor benefits for the excluded group of women will be drawn from the Foreign Service Retirement Fund, not in the name of a Foreign Service officer but in the name of the divorced dependent spouse. Costs will be met from funds allocated by Congress to the Fund for this purpose.

Women at the meeting reported on the letters they had sent to Congressmen, soliciting support for Congresswoman Schroeder's proposal. Responses to such letters have been slow, but the women plan to follow up their correspondence with requests to meet with Congressional staff members. Letters from constituents seem to have a greater impact, suggesting that names of friends or relatives residing in a Congressman's district should be mentioned, if possible, in all letters. And, of course, letters sent by friends and relatives from a Congressman's district are invaluable.

STAT Miriam Hirsch, [redacted] volunteered to serve on a writers' committee to prepare sample letters and other informational materials for the campaign. Miriam, who agreed to serve as chairman, suggested preparing telegrams to be sent to all members of Congress when the legislation is under active consideration.

STAT STAT It was voted that the next meeting would be held at the same time, 2:30 p.m., and the same place, Palisades library, on February 11, 1984. [redacted] [redacted] will coordinate refreshments.

It was also agreed that any direct contacts with Congressmen and staffers would be coordinated through our legislative chairman. This will ensure a uniform, accurate message delivered to as many persons as possible. It will also help build an image of women working together in responsible cooperation for

W.I.T., Jan. '84 Minutes

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the common good.

The AAFSW Board is now in the process of selecting a Women in Transition coordinator to replace Sonya Solmssen who has so diligently fulfilled the role for over four years.

Telephone contacts for Women in Transition are: Miriam Hirsch, [redacted] and [redacted]

These minutes were drafted by the undersigned:

[redacted] Chairman
Special Committee for Legislation,
Association of American Foreign Service
Women.

STAT

N.B. For your convenience and use, below is a list of the congressmen and senators who would be involved in the passage of any bill addressing the future of Women in Transition. All letters to them may be addressed to the U.S. Senate (or House of Representatives), U. S. Capitol, Washington, D.C. 20515.

Foreign Affairs

(Suite 2170, phone 55021, meets first Tuesday of each month)

Clement J. Zablocki, of Wisconsin.
Dante Fascell, of Florida.
Lee H. Hamilton, of Indiana.
Gus Yatron, of Pennsylvania.
Stephen J. Solarz, of New York.
Don Bonker, of Washington.
Gerry E. Studds, of Massachusetts.
Andy Ireland, of Florida.
Dan Mica, of Florida.
Michael D. Barnes, of Maryland.
Howard Wolpe, of Michigan.
George W. Crockett, Jr., of Michigan.
Sam Gejdenson, of Connecticut.
Mervyn M. Dymally, of California.
Tom Lantos, of California.
Peter H. Kostmayer, of Pennsylvania.
Robert G. Torricelli, of New Jersey.
Lawrence J. Smith, of Florida.
Howard L. Berman, of California.
Harry M. Reid, of Nevada.
Mel Levine, of California.
Edward F. Feighan, of Ohio.
Ted Weiss, of New York.
Robert Garcia, of New York.¹

William S. Broomfield, of Michigan.
Larry Winn, Jr., of Kansas.
Benjamin A. Gilman, of New York.
Robert J. Lagomarsino, of California.
Joel Pritchard, of Washington.
Jim Leach, of Iowa.
Toby Roth, of Wisconsin.
Olympia J. Snowe, of Maine.
Henry J. Hyde, of Illinois.
Gerald B. H. Solomon, of New York.
Doug Bereuter, of Nebraska.
Mark D. Siljander, of Michigan.
Ed Zechau, of California.

¹ Effective only for the First Session, 96th Congress.

Foreign Relations

(Suite 8D-419, phone 44651, meets Tuesday)

Charles H. Percy, of Illinois.
Howard H. Baker, Jr., of Tennessee.
Jesse Helms, of North Carolina.
Richard G. Lugar, of Indiana.
Charles McC. Mathias, Jr., of Maryland.
Nancy L. Kassebaum, of Kansas.
Rudy Boschwitz, of Minnesota.
Larry Pressler, of South Dakota.
Frank H. Murkowski, of Alaska.

Claiborne Pell, of Rhode Island.
Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of Delaware.
John Glenn, of Ohio.
Paul S. Sarbanes, of Maryland.
Edward Zorinsky, of Nebraska.
Paul E. Tsongas, of Massachusetts.
Alan Cranston, of California.
Christopher J. Dodd, of Connecticut.

Address here

The Honorable XXXXXX
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable XXXXXX
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Congressman XXXXX:

Dear Senator XXXXX:

May I bring to your attention

the very real need for legislation, which is to be proposed by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder of Colorado in the near future. This remedial legislation will provide retirement benefits for the widowed and divorced spouses of Foreign Service Officers who were omitted for reasons of political compromise from coverage of the Foreign Service Act of 1980. This small group of generally older women were declared ineligible to receive retirement benefits because their divorces or widowhood had occurred before the effective date of the Act, 15 February 1981, or because their former husbands had retired before that date.

We hope you agree that these women, like their more fortunate diplomatic sisters, have earned retirement security through their years of service to their families and to their government while abroad. We believe the omitted group is uniquely deserving because they served abroad before 1972, when they were required--officially and by tradition--to fulfill a variety of mission-supporting duties.

These women had long records of service. Under both the 1980 Act and the legislation to be proposed, no former FS spouse can receive a retirement benefit unless she has been married at least 10 years.

Throughout their long-term marriages, these women's share of the family income was used to build the retirement fund for which they were identified on government forms as beneficiaries. Their diplomatic status, as well as their many responsibilities, prohibited their paid employment and prevented their earning a retirement annuity in their own name.

A recent survey by the Association of American Foreign Service Women shows that this finite group is small, about 150 women. Statistics for the group show the median and average years for marriage 23, for the period of marriage while the husband was in the Foreign Service 19, and for the years of the wife's service abroad 11. These women's median and average age is 56 years.

We ask that you sponsor/cosponsor the legislation that Congresswoman Schroeder will soon sponsor. Should you or any member of your staff desire further information and/or to meet with us to discuss the matter further, we should be happy to do so.

Thank you for whatever help you can give us in this matter.

Sincerely,

(If you can, mention that you have friends and relatives in the area he represents, even acquaintances in towns in his locale will help. Ask those you know to write him.)



Association of American Foreign Service Women
P.O. Box 8068
Washington, D.C. 20024

January 25, 1984

Dear Friend:

We have tried to locate as many women as we can living outside the D.C. area who may have an interest in the enclosed information but who do not know about it. If you do have an interest, we urge you to join us in our attempt to have legislation passed (probably in April) which will extend the benefits of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 to those who were excluded.

The attached sample letter to Congressmen and Senators gives the basic information you need and could serve as the basis for a letter of your own. Write your own congressmen and senators, get your friends to write theirs on your behalf, enlist the help of any clubs or organizations you belong to who might be willing to write also (particularly on letterhead stationery!).

If you will be in the D. C. area in February, you would be more than welcome at our next meeting on the 11th.

We want to hear from you so that we can build a mailing list that will reach as many women who need help as possible. If you know of other women outside the Washington area who should be on our list, please send their names and addresses to

[Redacted]

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Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

Member, Steering Committee

[Redacted]

STAT

Sample letter:

The Honorable -----
U. S. House of Representatives (or Senate)
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman (or Senator) -----

May I bring to your attention the very real need for legislation which is to be proposed by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder of Colorado in the near future. This remedial legislation will provide retirement benefits for the widowed and divorced spouses of Foreign Service Officers who were omitted for reasons of political compromise from coverage of the Foreign Service Act of 1980. This small group of generally older women were declared ineligible to receive retirement benefits because their divorces or widowhood had occurred before the effective date of the Act, February 15, 1981, or because their former husbands had retired before that date.

We hope you agree that these women, like their more fortunate diplomatic sisters, have earned retirement security through their years of service to their families and to their government while abroad. We believe the omitted group is uniquely deserving because they served abroad before 1972 when they were required, officially and by tradition, to fulfill a variety of mission supporting duties.

These women had long records of service. Under both the 1980 Act and the legislation to be proposed, no former FS spouse can receive a retirement benefit unless she has been married at least ten years.

Throughout their long-term marriages, these women's share of the family income was used to build the retirement fund for which they were identified on government forms as beneficiaries. Their diplomatic status, as well as their many responsibilities, prohibited their paid employment and prevented their earning a retirement annuity in their own name.

A recent survey by the Association of American Foreign Service Women shows that this finite group is small, about 150 women. Statistics for the group show the median and average years for marriage twenty-three, for the period of marriage while the husband was in the Foreign Service nineteen, and for the years of the wife's service abroad eleven. These women's median and average age is fifty-six years.

We ask that you support the legislation that Congresswoman Schroeder will soon sponsor. Should you or any member of your staff desire further information and/or to meet with me (us) to discuss the matter further, I (we) should be happy to do so.

Thank you for whatever help you can give us in this matter.

Sincerely,

WOMEN IN TRANSITION MEETING

DATE: Saturday, 11 February 1984
TIME: 2:30 p.m.
SUBJECT: To select new Women in Transition coordinator. To discuss regular meeting locations. To plan further action on the legislative effort. Members will report on their correspondence with Congressmen.

We hope you can come. We need you!

PLACE: Palisades Library
49th and V streets
Washington, D.C. Tel: 727-1369.

DIRECTIONS: From Virginia: Cross over Chain Bridge. Turn right on Canal Road. Left on Arizona. Turn right on McArthur Boulevard. Go three blocks. On right is Georgetown Day School. You can see library, which is on V street, from Mac Arthur Boulevard, if you look to the left.

From the District: Go past Georgetown University on Canal Road. At the stoplight just past the university, bear right (Canal Road goes to the left). At the next light, turn left; you're on McArthur Boulevard. Go several blocks. Watch for Safeway on your right. Turn right at the Gulf Station.

From the Beltway, take the Glen Echo exit-- the last exit before the Potomac Rive as you come from Maryland, the first exit as you cross Cabin John Bridge as you come from Virginia. You're on Canal Road. Make a hairpin turn up to McArthur Boulevard. Go towards Washington on McArthur. See directions above for Chain Bridge.

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TELEPHONE CONTACTS: Miriam Hirsch, [redacted]
(For any questions) [redacted]

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WOMEN IN TRANSITION MEETING

DATE: Saturday, 7 January 1984

TIME: 2:30 p.m.

SUBJECT: To select new Women in Transition coordinator. To discuss regular meeting locations. To plan further action on the legislative effort. Members will report on their correspondence with Congressmen.

We hope you can come. We need you!

PLACE: Palisades Library
49th and V streets
Washington, D.C. Tel: 727-1369.

DIRECTIONS: From Virginia: Cross over Chain Bridge. Turn right on Canal Road. Left on Arizona. Turn right on McArthur Boulevard. Go three blocks. On right is Georgetown Day School. You can see library, which is on V street, from Mac Arthur Boulevard, if you look to the left.

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TELEPHONE CONTACTS: Miriam Hirsch,
(For any questions)

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MINUTES OF NOVEMBER MEETING

WOMEN IN TRANSITION

The Women in Transition group of the Association of American Foreign Service Women met on Monday evening, November 28, 1983 at the home of Sonia Solmssen in Bethesda. The purpose of the meeting was to review work accomplished thus far and work yet to be done on the legislation to be proposed by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder of Colorado. The legislation will assist the Foreign Service wives who were excluded from retirement and survivor benefits under the Foreign Service Act of 1980 because they were already divorced or widowed.

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[redacted] chairman of a special legislative committee for the Association of American Foreign Service Women, initiated a review of progress to date, after Sonia had brought the meeting to order. Betty distributed copies of a discussion draft of legislation prepared by the Legislative Counsel of the US House of Representatives from material submitted by Congresswoman Schroeder. (The draft does not yet have a number as it has not gone to the floor of the House.) The wording of the bill asks for "extension of benefits for this special group of women." This avoids the use of the word "retroactive" benefits, a concept voted down in Congress at the time the 1980 Act was passed. The benefits referred to are retirement and survivor benefits as provided for by the 1980 legislation. The new draft legislation also has a provision for group health options for all Foreign Service spouses.

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In her presentation, Betty commended the work of [redacted] in producing the draft of "the profile of FS ex-spouses" and "the statement of concern," as well as preparing the survey questions and coordinating a meeting of Transition women with Bill Baccus, the State Department personnel officer who was concerned with the 1980 legislation and is interested in the current legislative effort.

Betty also reported on meetings with staff members for Senators Percy and Sarbanes. These staffers advised Transition women to coordinate their timing and their presentation of material to Congressmen and to convey a uniform message. Other legislative staff who were visited offered their support.

A significant offer of support reported by Betty was that offered by Special Assistant to President Reagan, Mrs Dee Jepson, and her recent replacement, Carolyn Sundseth. Both women were warmly supportive. Mrs. Jepson said she would ask her husband, who is in the Senate, to sponsor a bill there. Sue Parsons, AAFSW President, accompanied Betty to this meeting.

In her presentation to the Transition group, Betty expressed her concern that consensus in the group was lacking, reflected by continuing criticism from some Transition members of the legislative effort. Those present at the meeting agreed it is essential to

close ranks in order to mount a successful effort at this time, which is crucial to bringing the legislation to the floor of the House when Congress reconvenes in February and then to assure that the Bill is enacted.

Discussion of strategy stressed the need to keep the relevant Congressional Committees' attention on the need for the legislation, reserving the big push for the time when the Bill is introduced. Meanwhile, members of the Transition group should concentrate on asking legislators, especially those on relevant Foreign Affairs committees, to sponsor or cosponsor remedial legislation.

Prospective Congressional sponsors can contact Congresswoman Schroeder and Andrea Nelson, legal counsel in Congresswoman Schroeder's office, for details. (A list of Committee members is available from [redacted].)

Visits to Senators and Congressmen in their home State offices can also be very productive during the holiday Congressional recess.

Other matters discussed at the meeting were the need to select a coordinator to replace Sonia, who has served for four years, and also to select meeting places. It was decided that the next meeting will be held at 2:30 p.m., Saturday, January 7, 1984, at the Palisades Library on MacArthur Boulevard, Washington.

Dolores Lewis, who sent out the last mailing, volunteered to continue handling the job. (Postage is provided by the AAFSW.)

Also discussed were referrals to good lawyers for divorce.

Also discussed was the need for personal information for publicity in the press. Personal histories (with or without names) would be useful for newspaper and periodical articles. Anyone who can help with this should send them to [redacted]

Miriam Hirsch and [redacted] have volunteered to be telephone contacts for the Women in Transition Group. Miriam's telephone number is [redacted]

- - - [redacted]
meeting recorder

STAT



December 30, 1983

Dear Friends:

Now that Christmas is over and the new year is upon us, it is time to seriously consider what 1984 holds for the CIA Women In Transition group. Our January meeting is scheduled for the second saturday in the month (1/14/84) at 3:15 PM at the address above. Anyone needing directions or a ride, please call me at

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The AAFSW Women In Transition will be meeting on Saturday, the 7th of January, and I have enclosed a notice which includes directions. It is very important that we support the AAFSW's legislative efforts and I urge you to attend their meetings and to participate in their lobbying activities.

One thing that all of us can do is to write letters. An informative article (from the most recent AAFSW Newsletter) is enclosed. It explains the need for every one of us to write to our congressmen on behalf of Congresswoman Schroder's proposed legislation currently in committee.

Please encourage your friends and relations to write to their congressmen and to the members of the Foreign Affairs Committees (list enclosed) as well. The members of the House committee need to be encouraged to approve (and even to co-sponsor) Ms. Schroder's proposal so that it can be taken to the floor of the House. The members of the Senate committee should be asked to sponsor similar legislation of their own.

Our letters don't have to be masterpieces. We need to tell our representatives and senators that:

1. there is a small group of women who were left out of the 1980 Foreign Service Act (P.L. 96-465) which provided rights for retirement and survivor benefits for the spouses of Foreign Service employees who were widowed or divorced after marriages of 10 years or longer.
2. we are talking about older women for the most part--women who have spent many years overseas in the service of our country. (You might give a few examples from your own experience of the sorts of things these women have done and the lives they have led.) Point out that some are ill and unable to work and
3. even those with decent jobs can never work long enough to accumulate sufficient pensions to retire and live decent lives.

4. many have no pension prospects or health insurance. Some are on welfare.
5. we would like the congressmen to support (possibly even co-sponsor) Congresswoman Schroder's proposed legislation which was introduced into the Foreign Affairs Committee this past November.

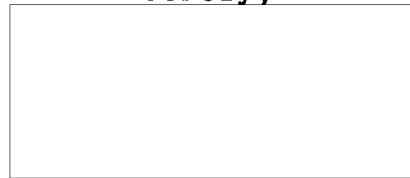
Use your own words and your own experiences. We want to avoid all sounding exactly the same, but you can certainly copy your letter over and over to to send it to different congressmen and senators.

Please write as many letters as you can over the next eight weeks and encourage your friends, neighbors and relatives to do so as well. **If we want pensions and affordable health insurance, this effort is what is required of us.** Many people are working very hard for this legislation. It is vital that we support their efforts.

You may receive responses to your epistles. Betty would appreciate copies of these letters since they will help the Task Force to assess the attitudes of the Congress--both pro and con.

I look forward to seeing you on the 7th and on the 14th.

Sincerely,



enclosures:

AAFSW-WIT Minutes
AAFSW NEWSLETTER article
List of Foreign Affairs Committee members

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*December Steering
Committee*

We are planning a Legislation Steering Committee meeting at 3 p.m. on Saturday, 10 December 1983, at my house (directions below). Can you come? We'd like to have you!

We'll be talking about what needs to be done before Congresswoman Schroeder presents the legislation--she's planning to do that in February 1984. So time is short.

Please bring your ideas, any responses you've had to letters, any questions about the legislation. We need your input.

It will be a short meeting but an important one! Please try to come.

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*Nov 28
meeting*

Where the legislative effort is at! The events abroad have slowed Congressional action on our proposed legislation. An interview this week with Andrea Nelson, counsel, in Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder's ^{office} says that they hope to present the legislation by November 18, 1983. Should events abroad---and we are working with foreign affairs committees---slow these plans, the legislation will be presented in February 1984.

Andrea suggests that we write to our Congressional representatives, saying, "I am your constituent." Before the bill is introduced, we can write "Why don't you amend the 1980 Foreign Service Act? Won't you sponsor legislation to do so?" Then continue that this bill will help me, a resident in your district. I am hurting, and I have earned retirement protection. It is important to identify yourself as a Foreign Service spouse so as not to be confused with other groups.

We have met with the new person handling women's issues in the White House, Carolyn Sundseth. She is replacing Mrs. Dee Jepson, Senator Jepson's wife, who has resigned to help her husband campaign for reelection. She was very encouraging, as was Mrs. Jepson, who has promised to have her husband help us in the Senate. We need someone there to present an amendment to the 1980 Foreign Service Act. Bill S-1136 was presented by Senator Charles Percy of Illinois on 26 April 1983. It's sitting in the committee on Foreign Relations (Affairs) that he chairs. We should get letters to him, asking that he move the bill, with an amendment in it for us. Have any relatives in Illinois? (I have one and am writing her tonight.)

It is not too late to have an amendment introduced in the Senate. Before the bill goes to the floor. However, if it goes to the floor without us, we can be added when the bill goes to conference to resolve differences in the House and Senate versions. As Andrea explained it, we will be in a stronger position if both House and Senate propose an amendment in our favor.

The House bill is with the Legal Counsel of the House for final drafting. It should be completed within a week or 10 days. It too has been slowed by the events abroad.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee:

Sen. Charles H. Percy (R IL), Chairman

[The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member are ex officio members of all subcommittees.]

MAJORITY: [9 R.] Sen. Charles H. Percy (R IL); Sen. Howard H. Baker, Jr. (R TN); Sen. Jesse A. Helms (R NC); Sen. Richard G. Lugar (R IN); Sen. Charles McC. Mathias (R MD); Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R KS); Sen. Rudy Boschwitz (R MN); Sen. Larry Pressler (R SD) and Sen. Frank H. Murkowski (R AK).

MINORITY: [8 D.] Sen. Claiborne Pell (D RI); Sen. Joseph R. Biden (D DE); Sen. John H. Glenn (D OH); Sen. Paul S. Sarbanes (D MD); Sen. Edward Zorinsky (D NE); Sen. Paul E. Tsongas (D MA); Sen. Alan Cranston (D CA) and Sen. Christopher J. Dodd (D CT).

WOMEN IN TRANSITION MEETING

DATE: Monday, 28th November 1983

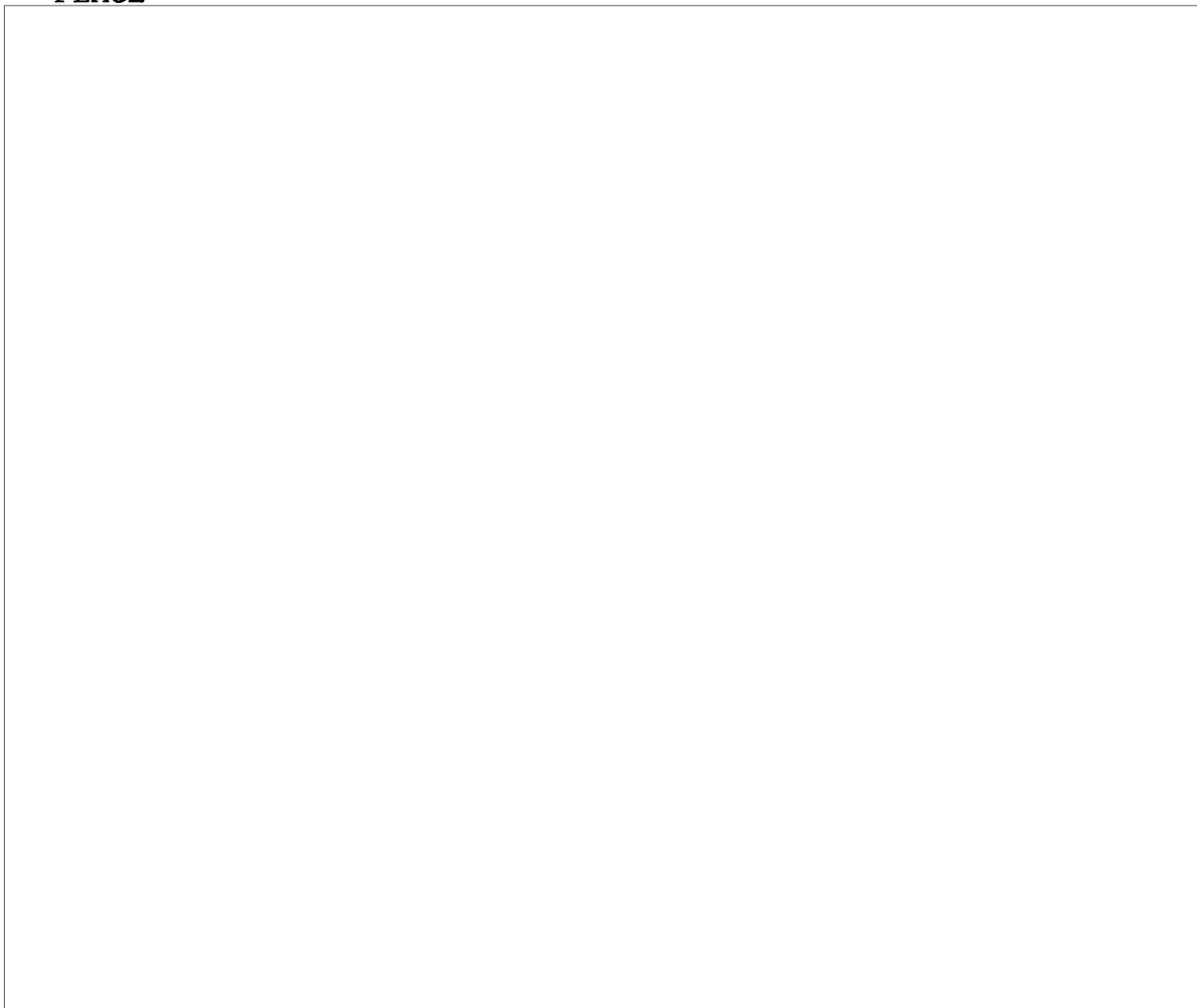
TIME: 7.00 p.m.

SUBJECT: To select new Women in Transition coordinator.
To meet new membership chairman. To choose
regular meeting locations. To discuss the
legislative effort now in process.

We hope you can come. We need you!

PLACE Sonia Solmssen

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benefits, as well as health insurance options for all Foreign Service spouses. By showing strong support for the proposal now, we will have the best chance for getting it out of committee in both House and Senate with as many benefits as possible.

We are having a planning meeting tomorrow to set up a working schedule on getting publicity and letter writing going, as well as some lobbying. For the last, we have to be well prepared as women dropping casually by busy offices without adequate preparation can be a detriment instead of a help. So we are trying to get those who want to lobby prepared as well as possible. Meanwhile, the letters should be going to Congress and should continue to go to Congress so that the legislation comes up in committee, goes to the floor, is voted upon, goes to conference, and goes back for final acceptance on the floors of both houses.

Some women have been told to wait until the bill has a number before writing. Some letters should be written, some publicity should be obtained to ensure that the bill is presented so that it can have a number/

We have prepared materials to brief workers. If you have not already received Fact Sheet, Reasons to Provide Benefits, Historical Background, Legal Precedents statements, as well as Congressional committee names and sample letters, we should be glad to send them to you. Please write to me at:

STAT



STAT

I am usually home evenings between 5 and 9 p.m. So a telephone call should reach me at [redacted] No one else is home so no charge at all if you don't get me.

I very much appreciate the good letters that some of you have sent. The information in this communication is based on some of those letters. For those of you who have already written to Congressmen, please continue to write them. Try to get a dialogue going, to show that you are concerned seriously and permanently, that we really sincerely want their help. So please keep writing.

We have a chance but our chance will be better if all of us work on it. We're too few in number to rely on the work of only some of us. We shall go forward one step at a time and keep trying. We'll let you know as events develop.

We would appreciate very much any suggestions you have from us. If you hear for example of someone strongly in our favor--or strongly negative--so we can be in touch with him directly. The messages you get will be helpful to us if we know what Congressmen are saying and thinking.

We have good support from AAFSW members. Please be in touch with the ones you know of.

WOMEN IN TRANSITION MEETING

DATE: Monday, 28th November 1983

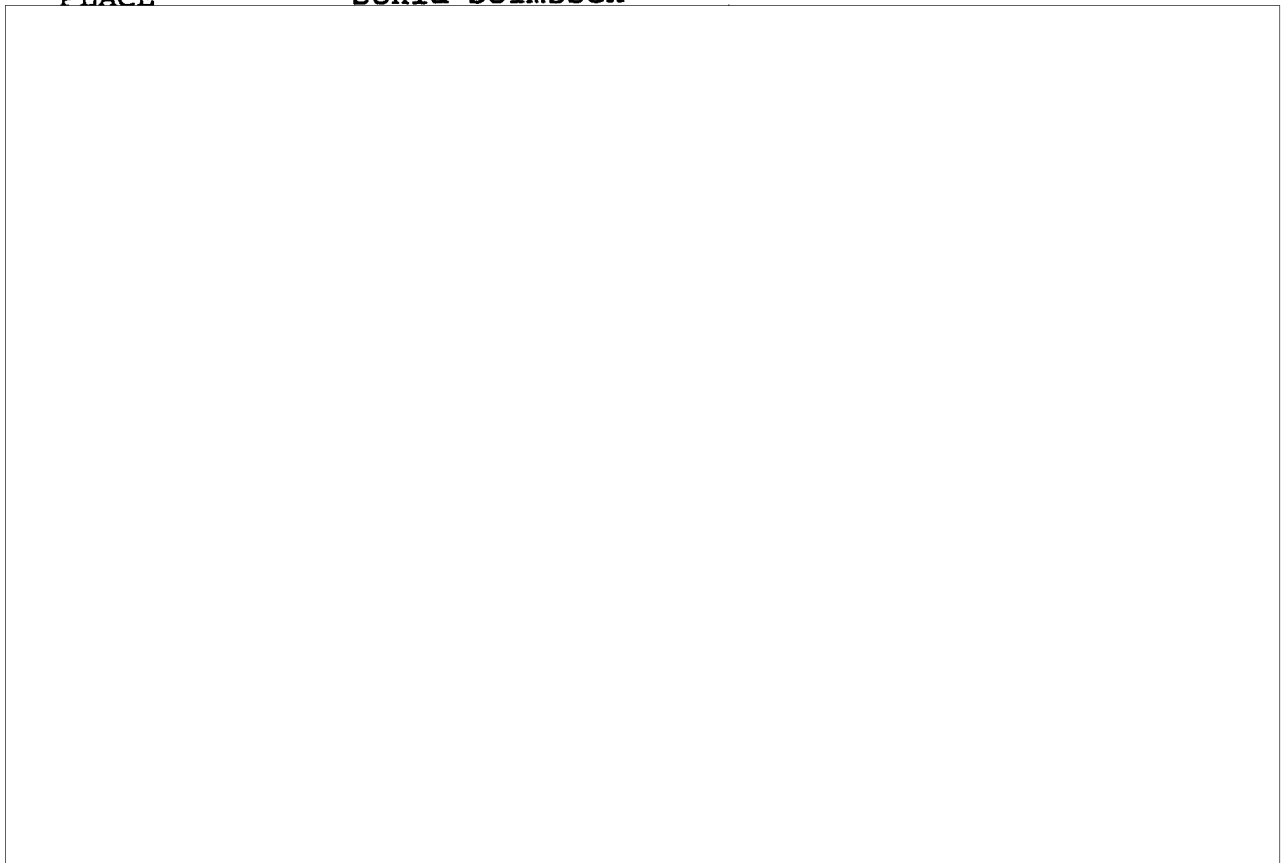
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To meet new membership chairman. To choose
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Where the legislative effort is at! The events abroad have slowed Congressional action on our proposed legislation. An interview this week with Andrea Nelson, counsel, in Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder, says that they hope to present the legislation by November 18, 1983. Should events abroad---and we are working with foreign affairs committees---slow these plans, the legislation will be presented in February 1984.

Andrea suggests that we write to our Congressional representatives, saying, "I am your constituent." Before the bill is introduced, we can write "Why don't you amend the 1980 Foreign Service Act? Won't you sponsor legislation to do so?" Then continue that this bill will help me, a resident in your district. I am hurting, and I have earned retirement protection. It is important to identify yourself as a Foreign Service spouse so as not to be confused with other groups.

We have met with the new person handling women's issues in the White House, Carolyn Sundseth. She is replacing Mrs. Dee Jepson, Senator Jepson's wife, who has resigned to help her husband campaign for reelection. She was very encouraging, as was Mrs. Jepson, who has promised to have her husband help us in the Senate. We need someone there to present an amendment to the 1980 Foreign Service Act. Bill S-1136 was presented by Senator Charles Percy of Illinois on 26 April 1983. It's sitting in the committee on Foreign Relations (Affairs) that he chairs. We should get letters to him, asking that he move the bill, with an amendment in it for us. Have any relatives in Illinois? (I have one and am writing her tonight.)

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Sen. Charles H. Percy (R IL), Chairman

[The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member are ex officio members of all subcommittees.]

MAJORITY: [9 R.] Sen. Charles H. Percy (R IL); Sen. Howard H. Baker, Jr. (R TN); Sen. Jesse A. Helms (R NC); Sen. Richard G. Lugar (R IN); Sen. Charles McC. Mathias (R MD); Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R KS); Sen. Rudy Boschwitz (R MN); Sen. Larry Pressler (R SD) and Sen. Frank H. Murkowski (R AK).

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PLACE Sonia Solmssen

STAT



mid November
1983

Dear Friend

Sorry to be so late in getting information off to you about where the legislative effort is at! The events abroad have slowed Congressional action on our proposed legislation. An interview this week with Andrea Nelson, counsel, in Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder says that they hope to present the legislation by November 18, 1983. Should events abroad---and we are working with foreign affairs committees---slow these plans, the legislation will be presented in February 1984.

Andrea suggests that we write to our Congressional representatives, saying I am your constituent. Before the bill is introduced, we can write "Why don't you amend the 1980 Foreign Service Act? Won't you sponsor legislation to do so. Then continue that this bill will help me, a resident in your district. I am hurting, and I have earned retirement protection. It is important to identify yourself as a Foreign Service spouse so as not to be confused with other groups.

We have met with the new person handling women's issues in the White House, Carolyn Sundseth. She is replacing Mrs. Dee Jepson, Senator Jepson's wife, who has resigned to help her husband campaign for reelection. She was very encouraging, as was Mrs. Jepson, who has promised to have her husband help us in the Senate. We need someone there to present an amendment to the 1980 Foreign Service Act. Bill S-1136 was presented by Senator Charles Percy of Illinois on 26 April 1983. It's sitting in the committee on Foreign Relations (Affairs) that he chairs. We should get letters to him, asking that he move the bill, with an amendment in it for us. Have any relatives in Illinois? (I have one and am writing her tonight.)

It is not too late to have an amendment introduced in the Senate. Before the bill goes to the floor. However, if it goes to the floor without us, we can be added when the bill goes to conference to resolve differences in the House and Senate versions. As Andrea explained it, we will be in a stronger position if both House and Senate propose an amendment in our favor.

The House bill is with the Legal Counsel of the House for final drafting. It should be completed within a week or 10 days. It too has been slowed by the events abroad. The attached draft of an article for the AAFSW newsletter tells you generally what it proposes. Some of it may have to be deleted to accommodate people who are not in favor of it. So we are asking for as much as we can possibly hope to get. Retirement and

benefits, as well as health insurance options for all Foreign Service spouses. By showing strong support for the proposal now, we will have the best chance for getting it out of committee in both House and Senate with as many benefits as possible.

We are having a planning meeting tomorrow to set up a working schedule on getting publicity and letter writing going, as well as some lobbying. For the last, we have to be well prepared as women dropping casually by busy offices without adequate preparation can be a detriment instead of a help. So we are trying to get those who want to lobby prepared as well as possible. Meanwhile, the letters should be going to Congress and should continue to go to Congress so that the legislation comes up in committee, goes to the floor, is voted upon, goes to conference, and goes back for final acceptance on the floors of both houses.

Some women have been told to wait until the bill has a number before writing. Some letters should be written, some publicity should be obtained to ensure that the bill is presented so that it can have a number/

We have prepared materials to brief workers. If you have not already received Fact Sheet, Reasons to Provide Benefits, Historical Background, Legal Precedents statements, as well as Congressional committee names and sample letters, we should be glad to send them to you. Please write to me at:



STAT

I am usually home evenings between 5 and 9 p.m. So a telephone call should reach me at [redacted] No one else is home so no charge at all if you don't get me.

STAT

I very much appreciate the good letters that some of you have sent. The information in this communication is based on some of those letters. For those of you who have already written to Congressmen, please continue to write them. Try to get a dialogue going, to show that you are concerned seriously and permanently, that we really sincerely want their help. So please keep writing.

We have a chance but our chance will be better if all of us work on it. We're too few in number to rely on the work of only some of us. We shall go forward one step at a time and keep trying. We'll let you know as events develop.

We would appreciate very much any suggestions you have from us. If you hear for example of someone strongly in our favor--or strongly negative--so we can be in touch with him directly. The messages you get will be helpful to us if we know what Congressmen are saying and thinking.

We have good support from AAFSW members. Please be in touch with the ones you know of.

HOWARD H. BAKER, JR.
TENNESSEE

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

July 12, 1985

STAT



STAT

Dear 

Thank you for your June 24 letter concerning legislation which would provide retirement benefits to divorced and widowed spouses of Foreign Service Officers who were not covered by the Foreign Service Act of 1980.

The House Committee on Foreign Affairs is expected to take the lead on this issue in hearings tentatively scheduled for September 1983 and/or February 1984. At that time, witnesses will be called to discuss this and other issues with a view to amendment of the Act. I appreciate having your views on this issue and look forward to an opportunity to review a legislative proposal.

Sincerely,



Howard H. Baker, Jr.

HHBJr:lpz

Committee on Foreign Affairs (House) *Asterisk means member of
International Operations Subcommittee

Democrats

* Rep Dante B. Fascell, D. Fl, Chairman of Subcommittee
Clement G. Zablocki, Wis, Chairman of Committee
* Gus Yatron, PA
* Stephen J. Solarz, NY
Dan Mica, Fl
Michael D. Barnes, MD
Howard Wolpe, MI
* George W. Crockett, Jr., Mich
Sam Gejdenson, CT
Mervyn M. Dymally, CA
Tom Lantos CA
* Peter H. Kostmayer, PA
Robert G. Torricelli, NJ
* Larry Smith, FL
Howard L. Berman, CA
Harry M. Reid, Nevada
Mel Levine, CA
Edward F. Feighan, Ohio
Ted S. Weiss, NY
Robert Garcia, NY

Republicans

William S. Broomfield, Michigan
Larry Winn, Jr. Kansas
* Benjamin A. Gilman, NY
Robert J. Lagomarsino, CA
* Joel Pritchard, Washington
Jim Leach, Indiana
Toby Robb, Wisconsin
Olympia J. Snow, Maine
Henry J. Hyde, Illinois
Gerald B.H. Solomon, NY
Douglas K. Bereuter, Nebraska
* Mark D. Siljander, Michigan
Ed Zschau, CA

Committee on Foreign Relations (Senate)

Democrats

Claiborne Pell, R.I.
Joseph R. Biden, Del.
John H. Glenn, Ohio
Paul S. Sarbanes, MD
Edward Zorinsky, NE
Paul E. Tsongas, Mass.
Alan Cranston, CA
Christopher J. Dodd, CT

Republicans (Majority)

Charles H. Percy, Ill.
Howard H. Baker, Jr.
Jesse A. Helms, NC
Richard G. Lugar, Indiana
Charles McC. Mathias, MD
Nancy L. Kassebaum, Kansas
Rudy Boschwitz, Minn
Larry Pressler, So. Dak.
Frank H. Murkowski, Arkansas

STAT



November 2, 1983

Dear Friend:

Several weeks ago a small group of us got together to share some of our concerns and to discuss the the direction which we would like for our Women in Transition group to take.

We talked about the fact that many former wives do not yet know about Title VI and its provision for their ex-husbands to include them for survivor annuities. (This is particularly distressing since November 15, 1983 is the cut off date for this benefit.)

The title VI provision could be extended for another year. The House Select Committee for Intelligence has the power to do this and if you wish to write to them and encourage them to do so the address is:H 405, The Capitol, Washington DC 20515.

The subject of new legislation came up and we agreed that we wished to support the AAFSW and their Women in Transition in doing all that is possible to lobby for Congresswoman Patricia Schroder's proposed legislation which would provide pensions for the former wives of FS officers divorced before their law went into effect. It is felt that, once such legislation is enacted for the Foreign Service, it will be possible to make a case for the Agency to follow suit (much as was done with Title VI). Congresswoman Schroder's legislation contains a provision for health insurance.

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If you would like to take a look at the proposed legislation, please contact [redacted] and she will send you a copy as soon as it is available.

We talked about how to reach other women like ourselves--the former Agency wives who are scattered about the country (and around the world)--so that we could share our mutual concerns. And we decided to continue with our monthly social get together and to encourage the formation of small, more localized interest groups. Any ideas which you might have on these matters would be appreciated.

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The next meeting of our group will be at my home at [redacted] on Saturday, November 12 from three to six o'clock. The phone number is [redacted] should you need directions.

Since everyone is so busy in December we will probably not meet again until Saturday, January 14, 1984.

Sincerely,

STAT



11 October 1983

Dear Foreign Service spouse:

For those who came to the meeting of Women in Transition on September 20:

We were glad to see you!

For those who did not come:

We want to bring you up to date!

For everyone:

We'd like to tell you---

About efforts to help the Foreign Service wives divorced or widowed before the Foreign Service Act of 1980 and therefore were excluded from receiving retirement and survivor annuities.

CLASS ACTION PROPOSED

The speaker at the last meeting was Edith Fierst, a lawyer who did much valuable work in support of the 1980 Act. At the meeting, Ms Fierst proposed a legal class action to recover survivor rights for the spouses excluded from coverage by the 1980 Act. Women at the meeting agreed to work with Ms Fierst in pursuing this court action. She will undertake the case on a contingency basis: she will be paid only if the lawsuit is successful. Meanwhile the only costs are minor operating costs.

Ms Fierst has already been successful in helping Civil Service and Railroad Workers' wives receive survivor benefits.

CATCH-UP LEGISLATION.

Our catch-up legislation (to help the excluded group of wives) has been delayed by the excitement in Congress over the downed Korean plan and the war in Central America. Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder from Colorado will present the bill in Congress after the first of the year. As drafted, the bill provides financial security for the excluded women--as well as, hopefully, the option to purchase medical insurance at group rates.

Andrea Nelson, legislative aide to Congresswoman Schroeder, asks that we give our support through letters and visits to Congressmen--both actions to be made after the bill is introduced. At that time, the legislation will be given a Public Law Number that will make the bill easier to identify in all our contacts.

LETTERS

Start now to get the job done. Contact everyone--friends, relatives, any willing volunteers--have them ready to write supporting letters when the bill is introduced. (Sample letter is enclosed.) Write your letters now. Mail them when the Bill is on the floor.

A list of Congressmen is enclosed. Select those who represent you.

or your correspondents. Their address is simply: US Capitol, Washington, D.C.

NEXT MEETING

Please come to the next meeting MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1983, at 7:30 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Boulevard, McLean, Virginia. We plan to talk about publicity. We'd like your suggestions, including names and addresses of people and publications or other media.

Directions from Maryland: Cross Chain Bridge, immediately turn right at the light. This is Route 123, also known as Dolley Madison Boulevard. Go straight ahead about one mile or a bit more. Church is on your left. You'll have to turn around at the next break in the median strip.

Directions from Virginia: From George Washington Parkway, take the exit to McLean. You are on Dolley Madison Boulevard. Go about 1/4 mile. It's only a little bit past Kirby Road. Church is on your left.

Or at Tyson's Corner, go toward McLean on Route 123, also called Dolley Madison Boulevard. After passing most of the McLean turn-offs, watch for Church on your right. If you see Kirby Road on your right, you've gone too far.

SAMPLE LETTER

I am writing to ask for your support for legislation to assist the divorced and widowed spouses of Foreign Service officers who were excluded from the retirement and survivor benefits provided to FS spouses by the FS Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-465). These women have earned such protection through their years of service abroad for the US Government. Only the fact that their divorce or widowhood occurred prior to the effective date of the Act, 15 February 1981, or that their husbands had already retired kept them from receiving these benefits--benefits that they had earned through their service, equal to that of their more fortunate FS sisters.

(The above is the information that should be in the first paragraph, but please rephrase it and add whatever you can. It's your letter! For example, information about the FS wives you know who need such help; your own circumstances, emphasizing your service to the US Government (this is very important) but outlining hardships and current financial situation, job if any, and health; your children's needs; the life they had abroad.)

Include the number of the new legislation when we have it.

24 September 1983

Dear Friend--

STAT The next Saturday afternoon gathering will be at the home of
[redacted]
at 3:15 p.m., October 1st. We hope you can come and bring ideas about where you'd like to see the group go and what you'd like to see it do. Also, would you be willing to volunteer to serve as secretary or treasurer?

I will no longer be able to meet with the group, because I am finding that my time is filled with my second job and my work on the Foreign Service legislation--catch-up legislation for retirement benefits for divorced and widowed spouses omitted from coverage by the 1980 Foreign Service Act that provided retirement and survivor annuity benefits. If the FS bill goes through, we can be fairly confident that an amendment to help all of us will follow.

You are invited to attend the meetings of the Women in Transition group, Association of American Foreign Service Women, to be held twice monthly, alternating between Virginia and Maryland. I'll drop you a card when the place for the next meeting is confirmed. You've done work that is very valuable in the legislative effort, and it would be great if you could continue to help.

I am sorry I won't be seeing you in our own small group. But you can be sure I'll be calling on you when our legislation gets going. And I hope to see you at a meeting of the AAFSW group soon!

Sincerely,

[redacted]

STAT

WOMEN IN TRANSITION MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, 20th September 1983

TIME: 7.00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Catch up legislation for FS Divorcees omitted from 1980 Act coverage is IN PROCESS. Please come to hear about it and learn how you can help.

Other subjects will be discussed by representatives from the FLO office.

PLACE Sonia Solmssen

STAT



26 September 1983

Dear Foreign Service spouse:
For those who came to the meeting of the Women in Transition ^{on September 27}
~~last Tuesday~~ night:

We were glad to see you!

For those who did not come:

We want to bring you up to date!

For everyone;

We'd like to tell you---

About efforts to help the Foreign Service wives divorced or widowed before the Foreign Service Act of 1980, who therefore were excluded from receiving retirement and survivor annuities.

CLASS ACTION PROPOSED

The speaker ~~last Tuesday~~ ^{meeting} was Edith Fierst, a lawyer who did much valuable work in support of the 1980 Act. At the meeting, MS Fierst proposed a legal class action to recover survivor rights for the spouses excluded from coverage by the 1980 Act. Women at the meeting agreed to work with Ms Fierst in pursuing this court action. She will undertake the case on a contingency basis: she will be paid only if the lawsuit is successful. Meanwhile, the only costs are minor operating costs.

Ms Fierst has already been successful in helping Civil Service and Railroad wives receive survivor benefits in similar circumstances.

CATCH-UP LEGISLATION

Our catch-up legislation (to help the excluded group of wives) has been delayed by the excitement in Congress over the downed Korean plane and the war in Central America. Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder from Colorado will present the bill in Congress any day now. As drafted, the bill provides financial security for the excluded women--as well as, hopefully, the option to purchase medical insurance at group rates.

Andrea Nelson, legislative aide to Congresswoman Schroeder, asks that we give our support through letters and visits to Congressmen--both actions to be made after the bill is introduced. At that time, the legislation will ~~bill will~~ be given a Public Law number that will make it easier to indentify in all our contacts.

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Senator

Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator

Very shortly you may, I believe, be considering legislation (brought in the house by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder of Colorado) to remedy provisions of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 which omitted retirement benefits for widows and divorced spouses of Foreign Service Officers who had become widowed or divorced before the effective date of the Act or because their former husbands had retired before that date.

This is one group of people of whom one can truly say that their numbers will not increase - in contrast to much legislation before Congress where the numbers of those benefitted grow larger and larger.

This is also a group whose members need the remedial legislation badly because they were widowed or divorced in the years before Foreign Service spouses were considered to be "individuals" who might have separate careers. Rather, they were required, both officially and by tradition, to fulfill many duties supporting the American missions abroad. And they have done this at least ten years before the divorce or the death of the husband, because under the 1980 Foreign Service Act, and under the proposed legislation, no former FS spouse can receive a retirement benefit unless she had been married at least ten years.

I know some of these women and I know that they live in difficult, often desperate financial conditions. During their marriages, their share of the family's income helped to create the retirement fund for which they were identified, on government forms, as beneficiaries. Their diplomatic status kept them from paid employment and prevented their earning a retirement annuity in their own names.

Permit me to quote from a recent survey by the Association of American Foreign Service Women, of which, as you know, I am a member,

... this finite group is small, about 150 women. Statistics for the group show the median and average years for marriage 23, for the period of marriage while the husband was in the Foreign Service 19, and for the years of the wife's service abroad 11. These women's median and average age is 56 years. . . ."

Please do give this proposed legislation your serious consideration if you are not already actively supporting it.

Sincerely yours,

Where the legislative effort is at! The events abroad have slowed Congressional action on our proposed legislation. An interview this week with Andrea Nelson, counsel, in Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder says that they hope to present the legislation by November 18, 1983. Should events abroad---and we are working with foreign affairs committees---slow these plans, the legislation will be presented in February 1984.

Andrea suggests that we write to our Congressional representatives, saying, "I am your constituent." Before the bill is introduced, we can write "Why don't you amend the 1980 Foreign Service Act? Won't you sponsor legislation to do so?" Then continue that this bill will help me, a resident in your district. I am hurting, and I have earned retirement protection. It is important to identify yourself as a Foreign Service spouse so as not to be confused with other groups.

We have met with the new person handling women's issues in the White House, Carolyn Sundseth. She is replacing Mrs. Dee Jepson, Senator Jepson's wife, who has resigned to help her husband campaign for reelection. She was very encouraging, as was Mrs. Jepson, who has promised to have her husband help us in the Senate. We need someone there to present an amendment to the 1980 Foreign Service Act. Bill S-1136 was presented by Senator Charles Percy of Illinois on 26 April 1983. It's sitting in the committee on Foreign Relations (Affairs) that he chairs. We should get letters to him, asking that he move the bill, with an amendment in it for us. Have any relatives in Illinois? (I have one and am writing her tonight.)

It is not too late to have an amendment introduced in the Senate. Before the bill goes to the floor. However, if it goes to the floor without us, we can be added when the bill goes to conference to resolve differences in the House and Senate versions. As Andrea explained it, we will be in a stronger position if both House and Senate propose an amendment in our favor.

The House bill is with the Legal Counsel of the House for final drafting. It should be completed within a week or 10 days. It too has been slowed by the events abroad.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee:

Sen. Charles H. Percy (R IL), Chairman

[The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member are ex officio members of all subcommittees.]

MAJORITY: [9 R.] Sen. Charles H. Percy (R IL); Sen. Howard H. Baker, Jr. (R TN); Sen. Jesse A. Helms (R NC); Sen. Richard G. Lugar (R IN); Sen. Charles McC. Mathias (R MD); Sen. Nancy L. Kassebaum (R KS); Sen. Rudy Boschwitz (R MN); Sen. Larry Pressler (R SD) and Sen. Frank H. Murkowski (R AK).

MINORITY: [8 D.] Sen. Claiborne Pell (D RI); Sen. Joseph R. Biden (D DE); Sen. John H. Glenn (D OH); Sen. Paul S. Sarbanes (D MD); Sen. Edward Zorinsky (D NE); Sen. Paul E. Tsongas (D MA); Sen. Alan Cranston (D CA) and Sen. Christopher J. Dodd (D CT).

28 July 1983

TO:

STAT

Just a few words to tell you where we're at on the legislation project. We know that remedial legislation will be proposed after Labor Day by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder, we think it will be close to what we have asked for--pro-rata, based on the officer's retirement, with cost of living allowances cranked in from time of divorce, but the money coming from somewhere else than the retirement fund. Medical insurance will be made available to the former wives, but they must pay for all of it. Since one set of figures we've had was about \$28 dollars a month, this may be a help.

The fall-back position would be a "Social Security" like payment which would be much less--about \$400 to \$450 a month. I do not know if this would be in addition to Social Security or would such be Social Security coverage, a concept that was proposed during the initial debates for the 1980 Act.

These concepts have not yet been finalized. We have talked to Schroeder's staff asking that the maximum benefit be proposed and that the medical coverage---an extension of the State Department policy, so the group rate would be as small as possible--be half paid for, as it is with the retirees.

However, the Congressional people know what is possible and feasible. Still we have talked about these points and expressed our preferences. Perhaps the personal histories that demonstrate absolute levels of poverty for our women will encourage them to be as generous as possible in pegging the levels of retirement benefits.

Thus after Labor Day, we expect to see the legislative process begin.

What can you do?

Write letters. Have your friends write letters. Have your family write letters. It's most effective to have constituents of the individual Congressmen write letters. But wherever they come from, they do raise the level of awareness about the problem.

I will enclose the names of the committees with whom we are working. These are the ones to be written to first. But other Congressmen can help by lending their support to the bill while it is in process. And of course, they will have to approve its final passage.

Our retirement benefits proposal will be part of a package of laws the State Department is interested in. And wants. So that

will help with passage. *We will have its title & number in Sept*

If you get responses, will you drop me a copy preferably but at least a report on what is said so we will know where our support is and where the negative is being expressed.

If any of you can come to Washington to lobby in person, please do. I have room. It would be fun to have you! And meet you! Think about it!

Committee on Foreign Affairs (House) *Asterisk means member of International Operations Subcommittee

Democrats

- * Rep Dante B. Fascell, D. Fl, Chairman of Subcommittee
- Clement G. Zablocki, Wis, Chairman of Committee
- * Gus Yatron, PA
- * Stephen J. Solarz, Fl
- Dan Mica, Fl
- Michael D. Barnes, MD
- Howard Wolpe, MI
- * George W. Crockett, Jr., Mich
- Sam Gejdenson, CT
- Mervyn M. Dymally, CA
- Tom Lantos CA
- * Peter H. Kostmayer, PA
- Robert G. Torricelli, NJ
- * Larry Smith, FL
- Howard L. Berman, CA
- Harry M. Reid, Nevada
- Mel Levine, CA
- Edward F. Feighan, Ohio
- Ted S. Weiss, NY
- Robert Garcia, NY

Republicans

- William S. Broomfield, Michigan
- Larry Winn, Jr. Kansas
- * Benjamin A. Gilman, NY
- Robert J. Lagomarsino, CA
- * Joel Pritchard, Washington
- Jim Leach, Indiana
- Toby Roth, Wisconsin
- Olympia J. Snow, Maine
- Henry J. Hyde, Illinois
- Gerald B.H. Solomon, NY
- Douglas K. Bereuter, Nebraska
- * Mark D. Siljander, Michigan
- Ed Zschau, CA

Committee on Foreign Relations (Senate)

Democrats

- Claiborne Pell, R.I.
- Joseph R. Biden, Del.
- John H. Glenn, Ohio
- Paul S. Sarbanes, MD
- Edward Zorinsky, NE
- Paul E. Tsongas, Mass.
- Alan Cranston, CA
- Christopher J. Dodd, CT

Republicans (Majority)

- Charles H. Percy, Ill.
- Howard H. Baker, Jr.
- Jesse A. Helms, NC
- Richard G. Lugar, Indiana
- Charles McC. Mathias, MD
- Nancy L. Kassebaum, Kansas
- Rudy Boschwitz, Minn
- Larry Pressler, So. Dak.
- Frank H. Murkowski, Arkansas

will write again



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Dear Friend:

We are trying to get favorable consideration for legislation that will give retirement benefits to divorced and widowed Foreign Service spouses excluded from coverage by the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-465). (As you probably know, the women who were excluded were divorced or widowed prior to 15 February 1981, as well as those whose husbands retired prior to that date.)

As one who will benefit from this proposed legislation, will you help us? We will try to make minimum demands on your time, but the help of everyone possible is essential for our success. A few letters, perhaps some visits to Congressional offices with other wives, getting friends and relatives to write letters--this will be our campaign.

If you have not already received our informational materials, please call me during the evening, at They explain the legislation we are requesting and why we think it has been earned.

On the other side of this sheet are some suggestions for the very brief letter we hope you will write, as well as the names of the Congressmen we suggest that you send them to. But please feel free to write to other members of Congress and have friends and family write, too.

It would be so wonderful for all of us to face our retirement years financially secure!

Thank you.

Sincerely,

STAT

SAMPLE LETTER

I am writing to ask for your support for legislation to assist the divorced and widowed spouses of Foreign Service officers who were excluded from the retirement and survivor benefits provided to Foreign Service spouses by the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-465). These women have earned such protection through their years of service abroad for the US Government. Only the fact that their divorce or widowhood occurred prior to the effective date of the Act, 15 February 1981, or that their husbands had already retired kept them from receiving these benefits--benefits that they had earned with service equal to that of their more fortunate Foreign Service sisters.

(The above is the information that should be in the first paragraph, but please rephrase it and add whatever you can. It's your letter! For example, information about the Foreign Service wives you know who need such help; your own circumstances, emphasizing your service to benefit the US Government (this is very important) but outlining hardships and current financial situation, job--if any, and health; your children's needs; the life they had abroad.)

Please write to one or more or all of the following members of the International Operations Subcommittee of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee in the House, where the bill will be proposed: (Address: US capitol, Washington, D.C.)

Majority

Dante B. Fascell, Chairman, Florida
Gus Yatron, Pennsylvania
Stephen J. Solarz, Florida
George W. Crockett, Jr., Michigan
Peter H. Kostmayer, Pennsylvania
Larry Smith, Florida

Minority

Benjamin A. Gilman, New York
Joel Pritchard, Washington
Mark D. Siljander, Michigan

If you have family and friends in the home states of these men, will you ask them to write, too? They can give invaluable support to our cause. Will you let us hear what responses you get? Please

STAT

DRAFT

AAFSW
newsletter
sent 25 July

Members of the Women in Transition group *are* lobbying on Capitol Hill. They are seeking Congressional support for legislation that will provide retirement benefits to Foreign Service spouses omitted from coverage by the Foreign Service Act of 1980. These women were excluded because they were widowed or divorced or because their husbands had retired before the effective date of the Act, 15 February 1981.

Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder of Colorado will propose remedial legislation in September. Congressman Jim Leach of Iowa will be a co-sponsor. As now proposed, the bill will give the group of excluded women retirement benefits like those awarded by the 1980 Act. But the monies will not come from the Foreign Service retirement fund; perhaps they will be paid from *general government revenues*.

Many contacts with Representatives, with Senators, and with members of their professional staffs will be needed once the legislation is under consideration by the International Operations Subcommittee of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee of the House and still more will be needed as the legislation moves through the Congressional process in the House, [^]the Senate, and hopefully, to final passage.

All AAFSW members can help support the Transition Group's cause--

1. By providing information about retirement benefits given by other countries to their Foreign Service spouses. (Such benefits demonstrate that foreign governments recognize the worth of services given by diplomatic spouses. Parallel legislation is always "easier to sell" than is original legislation.)
2. By writing letters, by visiting members of Congress.
3. By getting friends and family members to do the same.

(Especially valuable contacts can be made by residents
of Congressmen's home states.)

Informational papers have been drafted and are available to anyone
who would find them helpful:

1. Fact Sheet explaining the legislation requested and how
it has been earned
2. Brief History of the Transition Group and the requested
legislation
3. Statement of Concern, explaining the problem and its
proposed remedy
4. Sample letter to be sent to members of Congress

Anyone wishing more information, or anyone wishing to volunteer to
support the ^{is vital} legislative project can call...

Any divorced and widowed Foreign Service spouses who are
interested in joining the Women in Transition group should call the
membership chairman, Sonya Solmssen

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Association of American Foreign Service Women
P.O. Box 8068
Washington, D. C. 20024

In the midst of a marital separation or divorce? We may be able to help a little.

The Association of American Foreign Service Women sponsors a support group for separated or divorced Foreign Service wives in the Washington area. You need not be a member of AAFSW to attend.

The periodic meetings, held on a rotating basis in homes of participants, provide a chance to meet other Foreign Service wives and exchange useful information. We help you keep up to date on legal or regulation changes which may affect you. Also, occasional speakers have addressed us on a wide range of subjects: financial planning; how to choose a lawyer and what to expect of her/him; the emotional cycle of the separation/divorce process; what your children are feeling and what you can do to help; and information on how to obtain a scholarship or loan for yourself or your children.

The paramount benefit, however, is the emotional support that comes from a group of women who both understand foreign service life and are experiencing or have experienced a similar personal crisis.

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30 June 1983

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A brief report on the Congressional visits I made yesterday, accompanied by an old friend. We first spoke with Andy Fienstein and the new liaison for women's programs in Pat Schroeder's office. The gist is that legislation will be proposed after Labor Day!

A visit to Jim Leach's office informed us that he would co-sponsor the bill.

Visits to Senator Rudy Boschwitz (my home town rep) and Congressman Barnes of Md. earned us support from both men.

The legislation will be proposed that women receive a pro-rata share of retirement benefits as do other more fortunate Foreign Service wives. I am not clear that it will be given upon divorce or upon retirement although we discussed this point. It was not resolved. The bill may also include a proposal that women be covered with Medical benefits, but they must pay for all of it. The fall back position is Social Security-like payments which would result in payments per month of \$400 to \$450. About half, we estimate, what women would receive under pro-rata shares, on the average.

The timing is speeding up. It is important that the surveys be completed, tabulated, and forwarded (the results) to Treasury for statistical projections. All concerned were impressed that we were forward looking enough to be doing this. Is it possible to get the results off by mid- to late July, at the latest? That will give a bare two months for the statistical work to be done and we have been told, as you know, that the work will take "substantial time."

Think you'll be happy that we are so far along.

As to visiting Congressmen, nearer the time of legislation is better. But I don't think bad if an initial contact is made now "because legislation is to be proposed and we want to keep (you) informed" and then follow-up visits and correspondence to keep the contact aware of the progress of our legislation.

More later.

Oh, yes, letters have been sent to each member of the Foreign Affairs Committees in House and Senate and the Post Office and Civil Service Committee. We hope you'll get some off, too, and have friends do so, too. Residents of the Congressmen's states do most good, and timing is similar to that given for visits.

28 June 1983

Dear Former Foreign Service Spouse- - -

We are writing to ask if you will help us in our effort to have remedial legislation passed--legislation that will provide retirement annuities for those of us not covered by the Foreign Service Act of 1980. This Act, as you may already know, vested FS wives with a pro-rata share of a FS Officer's retirement and survivor benefits. The FS wives who were widowed or divorced before the effective date of the Act, 15 February 1983, or whose husbands had retired before that date were excluded from coverage by the Act and thus were not eligible to receive such benefits.

Some members of the Women in Transition Group, Association of American Foreign Service Women, are soliciting Congressional support for legislation to correct this inequity. We are enclosing a Fact Sheet outlining our request, as well as the several reasons why this legislation is necessary. (We would appreciate your comments on what it says.)

The basis for our action is that we believe Foreign Service spouses have earned retirement benefits through their service to their country, diplomatic mission, and family. Do you agree? If so, we hope that you will fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us as rapidly as possible. We will not use your name in any way---but the information you send us will be vitally important to our cause. Please feel free to send any additional information you would like us to have. The survey takes about 20 minutes to complete. We hope you will find time to fill it out and return it to us today.

Please return your complete survey to:

If you have any questions, you may call:

If you know other divorced or widowed Foreign Service spouses who would be helped by our proposed legislation, will you send us their names or have them write to us? The larger and more complete the data base we have, the stronger our case will be.

All FS spouses, friends, and family members can help us if they are willing to write letters to--or visit--members of Congress. We will be glad to provide names and addresses, as well as a sample letter, if you will contact us.

We shall be very grateful for your help. We hope we will be able to keep you informed of your progress and eventual success--when all FS spouses who have served in the far corners of the world can face their retirement years with dignity and confidence.

Thank-you.

April 7, 1983

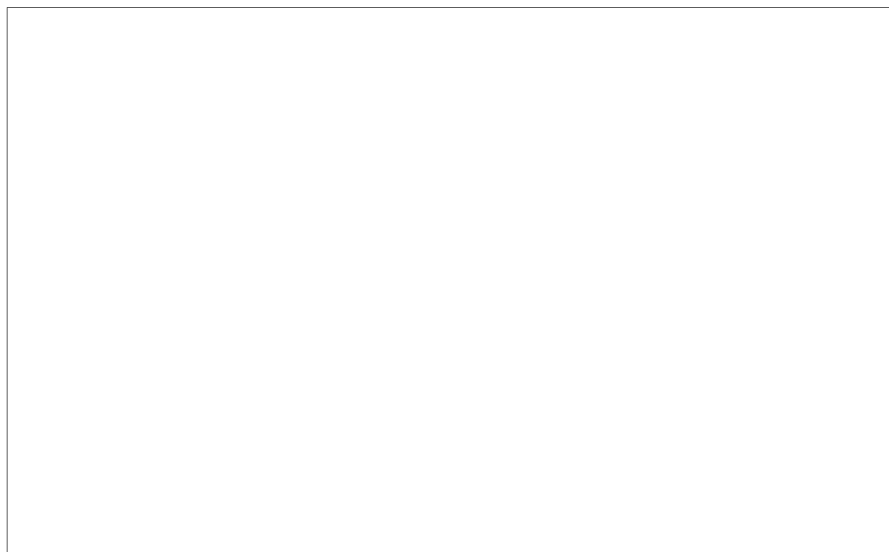
Dear Member of Women in Transition:

Many things happened at our March 28th meeting at which [redacted] role-played a lobbying visit to the Hill. For those of you who were there, as well as for others who couldn't meet with us that evening, Mary suggested that we set aside one day for a group of us to visit our respective Congresspersons and present information about former wives not included under the Foreign Service Act of 1980. Mary has tentatively set aside April 27th for the Hill date. If you wish to participate at that time, it would require your making an appointment with the professional staff of your Congressperson for that day. For further information, call [redacted] during the day at [redacted]

At the meeting, others expressed a desire to meet with their Congressperson at individually selected times or to locate a partner to join them for the Hill visit. If you need a telephone list of Women in Transition members, or need to find a partner, please contact one of the resource persons listed below.

In addition, a group of us have gathered some materials to leave with your Congressperson's office when you visit and to give you some background data. These materials include a statement regarding our group of former spouses (which is to be included as a part of the Record of the Oversight Committee for the 1980 Act), as well as a "question and answer" fact sheet, a legislative history, and a profile of spouses divorced before February 15, 1981. Also, we have Mary's guide to a Hill visit and brief "talking points." Please call if you would like copies of these materials.

We need help in zeroxing these materials and distributing them. If you are able to assist in these tasks or if you would like more information about the March meeting, please do not hesitate to call:



STAT

The Women in Transition group has met several times recently to discuss legislation to be proposed in the near future by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder of Colorado. The legislation, as now drafted, would provide retirement and survivor benefits for Foreign Service wives ~~excluded~~ from coverage of the 1980 Foreign Service Act (P.L. 96-465) because they had been divorced or widowed before the effective date of the act, 15 February 1981. Also being considered for inclusion in the new bill are provisions for health benefits at group rates--the group rates of the agency employing the officer/spouse. This would mean that women who now are unable to afford medical coverage will be able to buy their own insurance policies. This is particularly important for ^{these generally older} Foreign Service women, many of whom have residual health problems caused or exacerbated by their years of service abroad.

To urge passage of this legislation, Women in Transition members have been in contact--by letters and through visits--with members of Congress. They have received encouragement that the years of service given by ^{these} Foreign Service women to their country will not go unrecognized.

All AAFSW members can lend support to this very important effort by writing their own Representatives and Senators and by having friends and relatives write, too. Constituents' letters carry much more weight than those sent by a lobbying group.

(An adequate address is the Congressman's name, U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C. A more complete address can be obtained by phoning the official's office, using the Congressional number 202-224-3121.)

The Women in Transition group would also like to receive the names of anyone who would be willing to lobby on Capitol Hill. Members of the legislative committee will be happy to provide informational materials and training, as needed.

Any AAFSW member who has information about benefits that foreign governments provide their Foreign Service spouses is asked to send the information to who is serving as membership chairman. Her address is

All interested AAFSW members are invited to attend the monthly meetings of the Women in Transition group. Information on time and place can be obtained through The meetings provide peer support to women facing major changes in their lives because of the loss of a spouse--through death or divorce.

MINUTES OF THE APRIL MEETING

STAT This month we lack the consistently excellent minutes prepared by [redacted] who is the Special Legislative Chairman of the Association of Foreign Service Women and who is working non-stop on the legislation. We will incorporate the remarks she would have made in the mailing following the next meeting.

In the meantime, I ask you to refer to the minutes of the March meeting since the message she gave us then continues to hold true. We must continue to be active on behalf of bill HR5197 and to coordinate our efforts with her and to keep her informed of our responses. If you wish to help with the actual lobbying effort, let her know about it.

STAT Sonia Solmssen was honored for the four years of service she had given to the group as its coordinator and hostess. [redacted] presented her with a beautiful gift that she had purchased for her in the name of the entire group. Sonia responded with thanks, and spoke of her wishes to keep the mutual support aspect of the group as strong as the lobbying efforts have also to be. She hoped that the group would be able to continue to serve both functions.

Miryam Hirsch, Coordinator of W.I.T. and Chairman of the Writers' group, asked the members to consider a telegram bank to be used instantaneously when Betty gives the word. Miryam also urged the membership to give thought to the structure of the group for the coming year. Discussion on this will take place at the next meeting to the degree that time permits.

STAT [redacted] contributed the beautiful flower centerpiece for the table. We thank her and all those who have contributed flowers and refreshments so far. We urgently need new volunteers for this important aspect of hospitality. Please let Miryam know what you can volunteer.

Respectfully,
Miryam B. Hirsch

Miryam B. Hirsch

21 March 1983

May we bring to your attention for consideration at the forthcoming Foreign Service Oversight Hearings the plight of a small group of former wives of Foreign Service officers. We are hopeful that---

1. The discussion of the issue of "spousal annuity" can be included in the Foreign Service Oversight Hearings and eventually into the Record of the Hearings,

2. An actual legislative change can be made in the Foreign Service Act of 1980 to include this small class of women whose rights are identical to those won and enjoyed by their diplomatic sisters divorced after February 15, 1981, but who were excluded in the enactment for purposes of compromise.

We believe that another year must not pass during which the rights of these women have not been discussed and recorded, and have not received the attention of the Subcommittee.

As representatives of the support group, Women in Transition, Association of American Foreign Service Women, we would like to submit this statement concerning the interests and circumstances of these women for the Subcommittee's consideration of, and possible intervention in, their welfare. Should circumstances permit that action be taken on our proposal, we shall be happy to provide any further information or assistance that would be helpful.

Sincerely,

Dear Friend

Sorry to be so late in getting information off to you about where the legislative effort is at! The events abroad have slowed Congressional action on our proposed legislation. An interview this week with Andrea Nelson, counsel, in Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder says that they hope to present the legislation by November 18, 1983. Should events abroad---and we are working with foreign affairs committees---slow these plans, the legislation will be presented in February 1984.

Andrea suggests that we write to our Congressional representatives, saying I am your constituent. Before the bill is introduced, we can write "Why don't you amend the 1980 Foreign Service Act? Won't you sponsor legislation to do so. Then continue that this bill will help me, a resident in your district. I am hurting, and I have earned retirement protection. It is important to identify yourself as a Foreign Service spouse so as not to be confused with other groups.

We have met with the new person handling women's issues in the White House, Carolyn Sundseth. She is replacing Mrs. Dee Jepson, Senator Jepson's wife, who has resigned to help her husband campaign for reelection. She was very encouraging, as was Mrs. Jepson, who has promised to have her husband help us in the Senate. We need someone there to present an amendment to the 1980 Foreign Service Act. Bill S-1136 was presented by Senator Charles Percy of Illinois on 26 April 1983. It's sitting in the committee on Foreign Relations (Affairs) that he chairs. We should get letters to him, asking that he move the bill, with an amendment in it for us. Have any relatives in Illinois? (I have one and am writing her tonight.)

It is not too late to have an amendment introduced in the Senate. Before the bill goes to the floor. However, if it goes to the floor without us, we can be added when the bill goes to conference to resolve differences in the House and Senate versions. As Andrea explained it, we will be in a stronger position if both House and Senate propose an amendment in our favor.

The House bill is with the Legal Counsel of the House for final drafting. It should be completed within a week or 10 days. It too has been slowed by the events abroad. The attached draft of an article for the AAFSW newsletter tells you generally what it proposes. Some of it may have to be deleted to accommodate people who are not in favor of it. So we are asking for as much as we can possibly hope to get. Retirement and

benefits, as well as health insurance options for all Foreign Service spouses. By showing strong support for the proposal now, we will have the best chance for getting it out of committee in both House and Senate with as many benefits as possible.

We are having a planning meeting tomorrow to set up a working schedule on getting publicity and letter writing going, as well as some lobbying. For the last, we have to be well prepared as women dropping casually by busy offices without adequate preparation can be a detriment instead of a help. So we are trying to get those who want to lobby prepared as well as possible. Meanwhile, the letters should be going to Congress and should continue to go to Congress so that the legislation comes up in committee, goes to the floor, is voted upon, goes to conference, and goes back for final acceptance on the floors of both houses.

Some women have been told to wait until the bill has a number before writing. Some letters should be written, some publicity should be obtained to ensure that the bill is presented so that it can have a number/

We have prepared materials to brief workers. If you have not already received Fact Sheet, Reasons to Provide Benefits, Historical Background, Legal Precedents statements, as well as Congressional committee names and sample letters, we should be glad to send them to you. Please write to me at:



STAT

I am usually home evenings between 5 and 9 p.m. So a telephone call should reach me at [redacted] No one else is home so no charge at all if you don't get me.

STAT

I very much appreciate the good letters that some of you have sent. The information in this communication is based on some of those letters. For those of you who have already written to Congressmen, please continue to write them. Try to get a dialogue going, to show that you are concerned seriously and permanently, that we really sincerely want their help. So please keep writing.

We have a chance but our chance will be better if all of us work on it. We're too few in number to rely on the work of only some of us. We shall go forward one step at a time and keep trying. We'll let you know as events develop.

We would appreciate very much any suggestions you have from us. If you hear for example of someone strongly in our favor--or strongly negative--so we can be in touch with him directly. The messages you get will be helpful to us if we know what Congressmen are saying and thinking.

We have good support from AAFSW members. Please be in touch with the ones you know of.

HOWARD H. BAKER, JR.
TENNESSEE

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

July 12, 1983

STAT



Thank you for your June 24 letter concerning legislation which would provide retirement benefits to divorced and widowed spouses of Foreign Service Officers who were not covered by the Foreign Service Act of 1980.

The House Committee on Foreign Affairs is expected to take the lead on this issue in hearings tentatively scheduled for September 1983 and/or February 1984. At that time, witnesses will be called to discuss this and other issues with a view to amendment of the Act. I appreciate having your views on this issue and look forward to an opportunity to review a legislative proposal.

Sincerely,



Howard H. Baker, Jr.

HHBJr:lpz

Committee on Foreign Affairs (House) *Asterisk means member of International Operations Subcommittee

Democrats

- 1 * Rep Dante B. Fascell, D. Fl, Chairman of Subcommittee
- Clement G. Zablocki, Wis, Chairman of Committee
- * Gus Yatron, PA
- * Stephen J. Solarz, NY
- 2 Dan Mica, Fl
- Michael D. Barnes, MD
- Howard Wolpe, MI
- 3 * George W. Crockett, Jr., Mich
- Sam Gejdenson, CT
- Mervyn M. Dymally, CA
- 4 Tom Lantos CA
- * Peter H. Kostmayer, PA
- Robert G. Torricelli, NJ
- 5 Larry Smith, FL
- Howard L. Berman, CA
- Harry M. Reid, Nevada
- 6 Mel Levine, CA
- Edward F. Feighan, Ohio
- Ted S. Weiss, NY
- 7 Robert Garcia, NY

Republicans

- William S. Broomfield, Michigan
- Larry Winn, Jr. Kansas
- 4 * Benjamin A. Gilman, NY
- Robert J. Lagomarsino, CA
- * Joel Pritchard, Washington
- 9 Jim Leach, Indiana
- Toby Robb, Wisconsin
- Olympia J. Snow, Maine
- 10 Henry J. Hyde, Illinois
- Gerald B.H. Solomon, NY
- Douglas K. Bereuter, Nebraska
- 11 * Mark D. Siljander, Michigan
- Ed Zschau, CA

Committee on Foreign Relations (Senate)

Democrats

- 12 Claiborne Pell, R.I.
- Joseph R. Biden, Del.
- John H. Glenn, Ohio
- 13 Paul S. Sarbanes, MD
- Edward Zorinsky, NE
- Paul E. Tsongas, Mass.
- Alan Cranston, CA
- 14 Christopher J. Dodd, CT →

Republicans (Majority)

- Charles H. Percy, Ill.
- Howard H. Baker, Jr.
- 15 Jesse A. Helms, NC
- Richard G. Lugar, Indiana
- Charles McC. Mathias, MD
- 16 Nancy L. Kassebaum, Kansas
- Rudy Boschwitz, Minn
- Larry Pressler, So. Dak.] 14
- # Frank H. Murkowski, Arkansas

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The attached was the subject of conversation at our CIA Women's Group meeting last Saturday. A committee, headed by [redacted] will work with Edith. The timing is such that Edith hopes to be able to file the case in January. After working with the group, I suspect the process will take longer.

STAT

The legislation is to be proposed at any time. It is drafted and information has been received from Treasury that the long-term cost for each beneficiary will be \$200,000, figuring the average age of the woman as 56 and the age of the pensioned officer at 59. Robert Hull of State Department Personnel said that his suggestion is for two bills, with medical benefits in one bill and the pension in another, as the health insurance is under a government-wide program and he would see OPM as strongly opposing. (After reading the statement in last Sunday's paper (yesterday, that is) I agree with him.)

I am concerned about what my position should be: Keep the two groups going--one as a separate peer support group that later on can work for CIA retroactive legislation; the other as a committee for the lawsuit, with both groups meeting separately but sharing many of the same members.

Or will the two groups be regarded as one--and that one confrontational with the Agency--and I would do best to get out now?

I've told my contact in Security that I would like to meet with him and will talk with him along the guidelines that you give me.

As always, I shall be very grateful for whatever help you can give me. I want to do the ethical thing. I have given to the group, but as a peer support group, it is limping. And it might be best to recess it for a while until [redacted] can come back and get younger women involved.

STAT

Again, thank-you. I'll be home all evening tonight and tomorrow.

Women in Transition Seek Lobbying Support

The Women in Transition group has met several times recently to discuss legislation to be proposed in the near future by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder of Colorado. The legislation, as now drafted, would provide retirement and survivor benefits for Foreign Service wives excluded from coverage of the 1980 Foreign Service Act (P.L. 96-465) because they had been divorced or widowed before the effective date of the act, 15 February 1981.

Also being considered for inclusion in the new bill are provisions for health benefits at group rates - the group rates of the agency employing the officer spouse. This would mean that women who now are unable to afford medical coverage will be able to buy their own insurance policies. This is particularly important for these generally older Foreign Service women, many of whom have residual health problems caused or exacerbated by their years of service abroad.

To urge passage of this legislation, Women in Transition members have been in contact—by letters and through visits—with members of Congress. They have received encouragement that the years of service given by these Foreign Service women to their country will not go unrecognized.

All AAFSW members can lend support to this very important effort by writing their own Representatives and Senators and by having friends and relatives write, too. Constituents' letters carry much more weight than those sent by a lobbying group.

(An adequate address is the Congressman's name, U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C. A more complete address can be obtained by phoning the official's office, using the Congressional number 202-224-3121.)

The Women in Transition group would also like to receive the names of anyone who would be willing to lobby on Capitol Hill. Members of the legislative committee will be happy to provide informational materials and training, as needed.

Any AAFSW member who has information about benefits that foreign govern-

ments provide their Foreign Service spouses is asked to send the information to

[Redacted] STAT

All interested AAFSW members are invited to attend the monthly meetings of the Women in Transition group. Information on time and place can be obtained through

[Redacted] The meetings provide pe support to women facing major changes STAT their lives because of the loss of a spouse—through death or divorce.

December 1983

AAFSW

Association of American Foreign Service Women
P.O. Box 8068
Washington, D C. 20024

will help with passage.

If you get responses, will you drop me a copy preferably but at least a report on what is said so we will know where our support is and where the negative is being expressed.

*The address is US Capitol
Washington D.C.*

Committee on Foreign Affairs (House) *Asterisk means member of International Operations Subcommittee

Democrats

- * Rep Dante B. Fascell, D. Fl, Chairman of Subcommittee
- ~~Clement J. Zablocki, Wis, Chairman of Committee~~
- * Gus Yatron, PA
- * Stephen J. Solarz, NY
- Dan Mica, Fl
- Michael D. Barnes, MD
- Howard Wolpe, MI
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- Sam Gejdenson, CT
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- Tom Lantos CA
- * Peter H. Kostmayer, PA
- Robert G. Torricelli, NJ
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- Harry M. Reid, Nevada
- Mel Levine, CA
- Edward F. Feighan, Ohio
- Ted S. Weiss, NY
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- Larry Winn, Jr. Kansas
- * Benjamin A. Gilman, NY
- Robert J. Lagomarsino, CA
- * Joel Pritchard, Washington
- Jim Leach, Indiana
- Toby Robb, Wisconsin
- Olympia J. Snow, Maine
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- Paul E. Tsongas, Mass.
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- Jesse A. Helms, NC
- Richard G. Lugar, Indiana
- Charles McC. Mathias, MD
- Nancy L. Kassebaum, Kansas
- Rudy Boschwitz, Minn
- Larry Pressler, So. Dak.
- Frank H. Murkowski, Arkansas

WOMEN IN TRANSITION MEETING

DATE: Saturday, 7 January 1984

TIME: 2:30 p.m.

SUBJECT: To select new Women in Transition coordinator. To discuss regular meeting locations. To plan further action on the legislative effort. Members will report on their correspondence with Congressmen.

We hope you can come. We need you!

PLACE: Palisades Library
49th and V streets
Washington, D.C. Tel: 727-1369.

DIRECTIONS: From Virginia: Cross over Chain Bridge. Turn right on Canal Road. Left on Arizona. Turn right on McArthur Boulevard. Go three blocks. On right is Georgetown Day School. You can see library, which is on V street, from Mac Arthur Boulevard, if you look to the left.

From the District: Go past Georgetown University on Canal Road. At the stoplight just past the university, bear right (Canal Road goes to the left). At the next light, turn left; you're on McArthur Boulevard. Go several blocks. Watch for Safeway on your right. Turn right at the Gulf Station.

From the Beltway, take the Glen Echo exit-- the last exit before the Potomac Rive as you come from Maryland, the first exit as you cross Cabin John Bridge as you come from Virginia. You're on Canal Road. Make a hairpin turn up to McArthur Boulevard. Go towards Washington on McArthur. See directions above for Chain Bridge.

TELEPHONE CONTACTS: Miriam Hirsch,
(For any questions)



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Good to hear from you. We are continuing to move along. The legislation should be introduced on Tuesday, March 20, in the House, by Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder. We are pleased about that. But it means that there is still much work to be done. We have been advised to keep on the way we are going, relying on letters to Congressmen and Senators, as constituents wherever possible but keeping the level interest high so that the steps of processing the legislation will go forward.

We are being told that our group is doing a fine job, well organized, really effective. Think much of the credit goes to those of you around the country who are sending in letters and contacting local offices of Representatives and Senators. Please keep up the good work.

For now, we are not going the media way. It seems as if we can go low-key, we will not stir up a lot of "me-too" comment from other divorced wives' groups. We just want to point out that the concept of Foreign Service spouses earning their retirement was established in the first legislation. Now all we want to do is point out that there is this small group of women who were omitted for legislative convenience and now it is time to write legislation to correct that omission, right an injustice. Therefore, we hope that you will keep the media contacts to a minimum but concentrate on contacts with Congress directly or through influential friends and relations. How many of you know ambassadors.

I'll include some of our recent materials to keep you up to date. If you don't hear from us monthly, please let us know, we're trying to keep you informed. And since we all are doing it when we have time and hand-to-hand, things sometimes go astray but we mean to keep in touch with all of you.

Good to hear from you and we'll write again!

SAMPLE LETTER

I am writing to ask for your support for legislation to assist the divorced and widowed spouses of Foreign Service officers who were excluded from the retirement and survivor benefits provided to Foreign Service spouses by the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-465). These women have earned such protection through their years of service abroad for the US Government. Only the fact that their divorce or widowhood occurred prior to the effective date of the Act, 15 February 1981, or that their husbands had already retired kept them from receiving these benefits--benefits that they had earned with service equal to that of their more fortunate Foreign Service sisters.

(The above is the information that should be in the first paragraph, but please rephrase it and add whatever you can. It's your letter! For example, information about the Foreign Service wives you know who need such help; your own circumstances, emphasizing your service to benefit the US Government (this is very important) but outlining hardships and current financial situation, job--if any, and health; your children's needs; the life they had abroad.)

Please write to one or more or all of the following members of the International Operations Subcommittee of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee in the House, where the bill will be proposed: (Address: US capitol, Washington, D.C.)

Majority

Dante B. Fascell, Chairman, Florida
Gus Yatron, Pennsylvania
Stephen J. Solarz, Florida
George W. Crockett, Jr., Michigan
Peter H. Kostmayer, Pennsylvania
Larry Smith, Florida

Minority

Benjamin A. Gilman, New York
Joel Pritchard, Washington
Mark D. Siljander, Michigan

If you have family and friends in the home states of these men, will you ask them to write, too? They can give invaluable support to our cause. Will you let us hear what responses you get? Please send to

[Redacted box]

STAT
STAT

Dear Friend:

We are trying to get favorable consideration for legislation that will give retirement benefits to divorced and widowed Foreign Service spouses excluded from coverage by the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-465). (As you probably know, the women who were excluded were divorced or widowed prior to 15 February 1981, as well as those whose husbands retired prior to that date.)

As one who will benefit from this proposed legislation, will you help us? We will try to make minimum demands on your time, but the help of everyone possible is essential for our success. A few letters, perhaps some visits to Congressional offices with other wives, getting friends and relatives to write letters--this will be our campaign.

If you have not already received our informational materials, please call me during the evening, at [redacted] They explain the legislation we are requesting and why we think it has been earned.

On the other side of this sheet are some suggestions for the very brief letter we hope you will write, as well as the names of the Congressmen we suggest that you send them to. But please feel free to write to other members of Congress and have friends and family write, too.

It would be so wonderful for all of us to face our retirement years financially secure!

Thank you.

Sincerely,

P.S. Please let us know what you hear: [redacted]

STAT
STAT

*Retirement Changes
from page 1*

- Why destroy a healthy fund merely to extend for one more year the ailing Social Security fund? The federal government did not contribute its share for the first 35 years of its existence. Why make another fund pay for that mistake? If the Foreign Service fund loses new contributors because they have to contribute to Social Security instead, the Foreign Service fund will be exhausted in 40 years.
- The Foreign Service is more like the military (which is exempt from these proposals) than it is like the Civil Service. It is similar to the military in that it provides its own tough recruitment and selection out process and that its retirement system is an integral part of its personnel system. Civil Service retirement is not related to its hiring and retention policies.
- Just three years ago, Congress studied the entire Foreign Service personnel system and made needed changes. The entire system designed in the Foreign Service Act of 1980 would be destroyed by the changes.
- There is no evidence that these changes are needed. Our Foreign Service trust fund is solvent and under the present system will last for 75 to 100 more years.
- Under the present system, a spouse receives 55% of the employee's pension as a survivor annuity. This annuity could be cut in half under the new system.
- The present retirement fund has been cited as the reason not to grant pay comparability to private industry. If the retirement annuity is to be cut, then salaries should be raised.
- Recruitment and retention of Foreign Service nationals working in our missions overseas will be drastically reduced since the prime incentive now for staying is the Civil Service pension one would receive upon retiring.

Address all correspondence to congressmen in care of the House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., 20515 and to senators in care of the U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. Any congressman's or senator's office can be telephoned through the U.S. Capitol operator, (202)225-3121.

Legislation on Pension-sharing

[redacted] AAFSW President, will testify before the Subcommittee on International Operations of the House Foreign Affairs Committee on various amendments affecting Foreign Service families, including the pension-sharing provision. The Subcommittee is considering amendments to the Foreign Service Act of 1980 as part of the FY84 budget authorization for the Department of State. AAFSW is interested in including former spouses who were left out when the pension-sharing provision was originally written.

AAFSW has been attempting to educate Congress in recognizing this oversight. Once the FY84 authorization bill comes to the floor of the House for consideration, we want to have enough congressmen adequately briefed on this urgent need, so that an amendment to the Act would succeed. Letters need to be written now. Calls and visits to staff aides need to be planned. The Women in Transition Network is considering an all-day trip to the Hill to present their views. Those interested in participating should call [redacted]

Those wishing to write to a representative may want to include the following points:

- The group is finite. As of now, 65-70 former spouses have been identified. Because the entire Foreign Service community is relatively small, it is estimated that the final total would not exceed 200.
- Because so few former spouses are involved, the cost would be small. In addition, Congress already has recognized the vested right to an appropriate share for any Foreign Service spouse who was divorced subsequent to the Act. Those divorced prior to the enactment of the Act, who performed the same services overseas, with fewer outside opportunities to earn mon-

Reaching Out to Youth

The Volunteer Clearinghouse of Washington, D.C. is searching for high school and college students who want to enhance their learning by volunteering. The Clearinghouse is seeking students to work in a variety of areas such as social worker aides, recreation aides or office workers. Those interested in horticulture, helping kids and older people, or just helping in general are also needed.

The staff at the Clearinghouse will help find a volunteer job that is right for you. Call them at 638-2664.

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ey toward retirement, should thus have the same right to a pension share. The cost to the federal government in payments of an annuity, would be far less than the welfare costs that the federal government might be forced to pay to some who might become destitute later in life.

- We do not wish to deprive a present wife of any survivor annuity. We wish payments to be made similar to the way shares are provided under Social Security.
- Social Security is not presently being received by most of these spouses because few paid into Social Security. Their only source of income is what alimony they have been granted and what income they can earn in the relatively few years they have left to work.

It is important that this information be brought forward now. When writing a congressman or senator it is helpful to describe one's unique circumstances. Tell him how many years you were married, how many years were spent overseas, what services were performed, what health problems were contracted by yourself and family, the hardships undergone and any other facts that demonstrate the worthiness of help.

Donations Welcome for Bookfair 83

Books, stamps and art objects are needed for BOOKFAIR 83. Although this year's donations have kept pace with those of other years, daily sales in the Bookroom have diminished our stock. Fiction, non-fiction, hard cover and paperback books are in great demand. AAFSW members are urged to search their shelves to make early donations.

Overseas members are asked to be alert for inexpensive, decorative art objects as well as special issue stamps and first-day covers.

The Bookroom has become a popular stop-off place for book browsing and buying after lunch. The Bookroom, located in Room 1524, next to the Cafeteria, is closed Wednesday, but is open every other day of the week from 2 to 3 p.m.

For more information or to arrange for home collection, room Supervisor [redacted] STAT