Tab F

Clinton Library Photocopy

BETSEY WRIGHT cc for Shalala on Tues

To handle

To Carol Rasco

This just got forwarded to me please handle

BW
3/9/93

Clinton Library Photocopy

Jeffrey M. Friedman
James R. (Ron) Weddington

Shari L. Nichols
Kirk W. Tate

F&W

Friedman & Weddington, Attorneys, L.L.P.

502 W. 13th Street
Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 477-9641
Fax: (512) 320-8312

file

January 6, 1992

Betsey Wright
Director for Public Outreach
Transition Team
P. O. Box 615
Little Rock, AR 72203

Dear Betsey,

Enclosed is a "letter" to your boss, which I am going to try to get published. If I am unsuccessful, I may try to raise the money to print it as an ad in The N. Y. Times and other places.

Sarah and I have been discussing the notion of our setting up a non-profit corporation to license and distribute R U 486. Being non-profit would eliminate the need for products liability insurance, which is a major hang-up for a company thinking about marketing a new drug.

It's possible that such an endeavor could be the vehicle for a number of birth control efforts. Something's got to be done very quickly. 26 million food stamp recipients is more than the economy can stand.

Congratulations on your work for Clinton. It's good to see a UTYD doing good. I hope the new President can find the time to deal with the issues I raise in my letter. Please give it to him if you get a chance.

Sincerely,

Ron

Ron Weddington

Clinton Library Photocopy

Jeffrey M. Friedman
James R. (Ron) Weddington

Shari L. Nichols
Kirk W. Tate

Friedman & Weddington, Attorneys, L.L.P.

502 W. 13th Street
Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 477-9641
Fax: (512) 320-8312

Dear President-To-Be Clinton,

Some years ago another Southern Governor, when asked about the possibilities for prison reform, supposedly said something to the effect of, "Well, I don't think we're going to get very far until we get a better class of prisoner."

Well, I don't think you are going to get very far in reforming the country until we have a better educated, healthier, wealthier population.

Face it, you know that anything that even resembles the programs of Democratic Presidents in the past is going to make you a one term President. Reagan spent all our money on bombs and even if there were money for programs such as pre-natal health care, job training and day care centers it would be years before we would see any dramatic results. And, as anyone who follows education can see, more money doesn't necessarily translate into better educated kids.

But you can start immediately to eliminate the barely educated, unhealthy and poor segment of our country. No, I'm not advocating some sort of mass extinction of these unfortunate people. Crime, drugs and disease are already doing that. The problem is that their numbers are not only replaced but increased by the birth of millions of babies to people who can't afford to have babies.

There, I've said it. It's what we all know is true, but we only whisper it, because as liberals who believe in individual rights, we view any program which might treat the disadvantaged differently as discriminatory, mean-spirited and...well...so Republican.

Clinton Library Photocopy

In 1989, 27 percent of all births were to unmarried mothers, a huge percentage of whom were teenagers. If current trends continue, soon a majority of the babies born will be born into poverty and one half of the country cannot support the other half, no matter how good our intentions.

I am not proposing that you send federal agents armed with Depo-Provera dart guns to the ghetto. You should use persuasion rather than coercion. You and Hillary are a perfect example. Could either of you have gone to law school and achieved anything close to what you have if you had three or four or more children before you were 20? No! You waited until you were established and in your 30's to have one child. That is what sensible people do. For every Jesse Jackson who has fought his way out of the poverty of a large family there are millions mired in poverty, drugs and crime.

If Ronald Reagan could use the media to convince the American public that a trillion dollars of borrowed money needed to be spent to combat the "Evil Empire," then you ought to be able to persuade people to only have children when they are able to afford them. Point out that only people like George Bush who inherit money can pay for more than one or two kids in today's economy. (And even then, some of the kids grow up to do embarassing things like loot savings and loans.)

You made a good start when you appointed Dr. Elders, but she will need a lot of help. You will have to enlist the aid of sports and entertainment stars to counteract the propaganda spread by church officials seeking parishioners, generals seeking cannon fodder and businessmen seeking cheap labor that, throughout the ages, has convinced the poor that children are necessary to fulfillment as a person.

It wouldn't hurt to point out that while only 11.1 percent of three person families are below the poverty level, 20.2 percent of six person families and 28.6 percent of families of seven or more are poor. (1992 Statistical Abstract of the United States, p. 459)

Clinton Library Photocopy

And, having convinced the poor that they can't get out of poverty when they have all those extra mouths to feed, you will have to provide the means to prevent the extra mouths, because abstinence doesn't work. The religious right has had 12 years to preach their message. It's time to officially recognize that people are going to have sex and what we need to do as a nation is prevent as much disease and as many poor babies as possible.

Condoms alone won't do it. Depo-Provera, Norplant and the new birth control injection being developed in India are not a complete answer, although the savings that could be effected by widespread government distribution and encouragement of birth control would amount to billions of dollars.

No, government is also going to have to provide vasectomies, tubal ligations and abortions...RU 486 and conventional abortions. Even if we make birth control as ubiquitous as sneakers and junk food, there will still be unplanned pregnancies. There have been about 30 million abortions in this country since Roe v. Wade. Think of all the poverty, crime and misery ...and then add 30 million unwanted babies to the scenario. We lost a lot of ground during the Reagan-Bush religious orgy. We don't have a lot of time left.

You could do it, Mr. President-To-Be. You are articulate and you've already alienated the religious right with your positions on abortion and homosexuals. The middle-class taxpayer will go along with this plan because it will mean fewer dollars for welfare. The retirees will also go along because because poor people contribute very little to Social Security.

And the poor? Well, maybe if we didn't have to spend so much on problems like low birth weight babies and trying to educate children who come to school hungry, we might have some money to help lift the ones already born, out of their plight.

Clinton Library Photocopy

The biblical exhortation to "Be fruitful and multiply," was directed toward a small tribe, surrounded by enemies. We are long past that. Our survival depends upon our developing a population where everyone contributes. We don't need more cannon fodder. We don't need more parishioners. We don't need more cheap labor. We don't need more poor babies

Very truly yours,

Ron Weddington

P.S. I was co-counsel in Roe V. Wade, have sired zero children and one fetus, the abortion of which was recently recounted by my ex-wife in her book, A Question Of Choice. (Grosset/Putnam, 1992) I had a vasectomy in 1969 and have never had one moment of regret.