

1305

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 28, 1996 FEB 28 P6:29

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

ANTHONY LAKE

CAROL RASCO

SUBJECT:

Coercive Family Planning and Asylum

Purpose

To obtain an Administration position on proposed legislation relating to coercive family planning and asylum.

Background

Current situation: Under current asylum law, which Justice has defended, victims of abusive family planning practices in China do not generally qualify for asylum. For this reason, and at your direction, we instituted in 1994 an administrative regime that provides protection from return for claimants who were victims of coercive family planning practices in the past or have a credible fear that they would suffer severe mistreatment if returned.

Smith Amendment and State Authorization Bill: The House version of the State Department Authorization Bill contains an amendment offered by Representative Chris Smith that makes victims of coercive family planning eligible for asylum. The bill is in conference, and we may be asked for our view.

We have three options:

First, we could oppose the Smith Amendment but indicate that our current procedures provide adequate protection and make Smith unnecessary.

Second, we could indicate that we have no objection to the Smith Amendment.

Third, we could indicate that we support Smith.

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

Discussion of the Options

State and Justice strongly support maintaining the current administrative regime and opposing Smith. They argue that enactment of Smith would send a signal to would-be smugglers and spur a large increase in smuggling, severely taxing INS, Coast Guard and local law enforcement resources in California and other coastal and border states. Moreover, they argue that the availability of judicial review under a statutory regime would permit claimants to delay repatriation as their cases wend their way through the courts.

State and Justice also believe that the legislation is unnecessary and redundant given the current administrative regime we have implemented, which provides roughly the same level of protection from return that the Smith Amendment would provide.

Proponents of the Smith Amendment argue that it would represent a strong affirmation of the Administration's opposition to coercive family planning, an issue that the First Lady raised prominently in Beijing. It would also provide successful claimants with the opportunity to become permanent residents in the United States. (We have asked the Congress to empower the Attorney General to provide permanent resident status to those who are granted protection under our administrative regime, and we expect that Congress will provide such authority shortly.)

It is not clear that enacting Smith would cause a large increase in smuggling, as both State and Justice predicted that the administrative protections we are now providing would spur such an increase, which does not appear to have happened. (On the other hand, legislation would be far more publicly visible and thus could prompt a greater response from the smugglers.) It is also unclear that the availability of judicial review will create additional incentives for the smugglers. Even without the Smith Amendment, asylum-seekers from China already seek judicial review and have been successful in delaying their repatriations.

RECOMMENDATION

We believe that our position against coercive family planning weighs heavily in favor of our supporting the Smith Amendment and justifies the risk of some increase in smuggling activity (which we would seek to monitor and address through continued efforts to break up the smuggling rings). For this reason, we recommend you approve option 3, support of the Smith Amendment.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

February 26, 1996

The Honorable William J. Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We, as individuals or representatives of major U.S. organizations, were honored to participate on behalf of the United States in several international conferences at which world-wide consensus was achieved on key human rights issues.

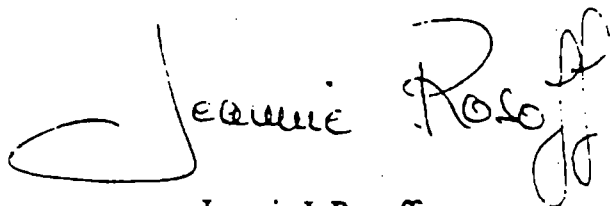
The Cairo Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Conference on Women were notable for the degree of consensus among the world's governments that the empowerment of women, respect for their human rights and their integration at all levels of economic and social life are essential to achieve sustainable development. These commitments to gender equality, if realized, would ensure that human numbers are balanced with the planet's finite resources and that the human toll of unwanted pregnancies, disease and illness is reduced. They are essential elements of the United States support of families worldwide.

We are, therefore, appalled by the actions taken by the Congress in passing the fiscal 1996 foreign aid appropriations bill -- as an amendment to the January 26 Continuing Resolution -- which would have the effect of destroying the U.S. international family planning program run by the Agency for International Development. We have communicated to the leadership of the House and the Senate our determination to see these actions reversed.

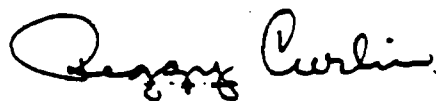
We know that you resisted these destructive actions for a very long time. Nevertheless, we appeal to you and the Administration to do all in your power to mitigate the harm which is bound to be done to the program in the short run and, at the same time, to communicate forcefully to the American public the severe implications that a handful of mean-spirited and short-sighted members of Congress have forced upon all of us.

For ourselves, we pledge to continue to work to see the United States hold to the policies and commitments it made, under your leadership, in Cairo and Beijing.

Sincerely,



Jeannie I. Rosoff
President
The Alan Guttmacher Institute



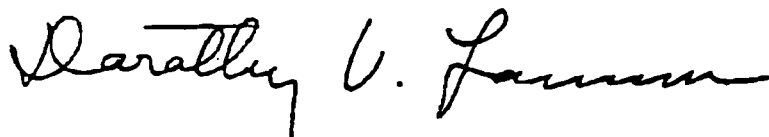
Peggy Curlin
President
Center for Development and
Population Activities (CEDPA)



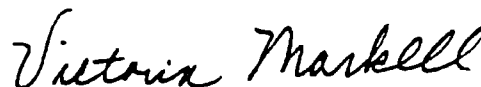
Adrienne Germain
Vice President
International Women's Health Coalition



Sister Dorothy Ann Kelly



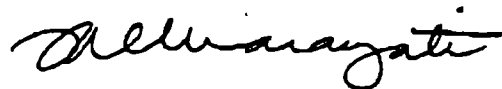
Dorothy Lamm
Denver Post Columnist



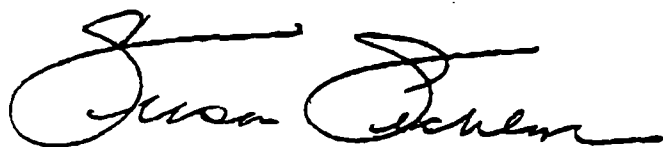
Victoria Markell
Vice President
Population Action International



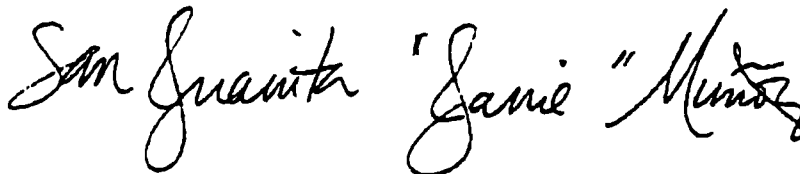
Bella Abzug
Co-Chair
Women's Environment &
Development Organization (WEDO)



Laila Al-Marayati, M.D.
President
Muslim Women's League



Susan Sechler
Director
Pew Global Stewardship Institute



San Juanita "Janie" Munoz



Patricia A. Waak
National Audubon Society

cc: The Vice President
Secretary of State
Undersecretary for Global Affairs Department of State
Administrator, Agency for International Development

Organizational Affiliation for Identification Only

February 26, 1996

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We, as representatives of major U.S. organizations committed to women's reproductive rights, are appalled by the recent actions taken by Congress that will have the effect of decimating the U.S. international family planning program and we are writing to urge you to join us in condemning this assault on the health of women. Early last year, the House leadership sought to kill the domestic family planning program (Title X of the Public Health Service Act), but fortunately that effort went down to defeat on the floor of the House of Representatives. Having failed there, they turned their attention towards the international program.

We recognize and appreciate your unwavering opposition to compromising the fundamental principals of the U.S. international family planning program. As you are well aware, the far right in Congress held all foreign aid funding hostage for three months into the current fiscal year, demanding re-imposition of the Reagan-era "Mexico City" policy, also known as the international "gag rule." Having failed in their effort to destroy the program indirectly, they moved to kill it outright by starving it of funds. If there was any doubt that many of those who are most vehemently against abortion are also against family planning, the record now speaks for itself. We must be prepared to defend *all* federal family planning programs, national and international.

As the price for obtaining a fiscal 1996 foreign aid appropriations bill, and averting another government shutdown, funding for the overseas family planning program was cut from \$547 million in fiscal 1995 to \$72 million in this fiscal year. Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Mark Hatfield pointed out that this "calamitous formulation" will almost certainly lead to more unplanned pregnancies, more abortions, and more maternal deaths and it is even "antithetical to the pro-life position." We strongly agree with his conclusions that "All the antiabortion speech this Chamber can tolerate will not reduce the number of pregnancies as swiftly or as surely as our support for voluntary family planning".

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
February 26, 1996
Page Two

We, therefore, appeal to you and your Administration to do all that you can within the bounds of current law to maintain an effective overseas family planning program. At the same time, we ask for your leadership to make sure that Congress understands that these short-sighted policies do not reflect the goals and values of the American people, and we pledge to work with you to reverse this ill-considered course of action.

Sincerely,

Jackie DeFazio, President, American Association of University Women
Laura W. Murphy, Director of Washington Office, American Civil Liberties Union
Fernando M. Trevino, Executive Director, American Public Health Association
Frances Kissling, President, Catholics for a Free Choice
Janet Benshoof, President, The Center for Reproductive Law and Policy
Eleanor Smeal, President, The Feminist Majority
Jodi Jacobson, Co-Director, Health and Development Policy Project
Kate Michelman, President, National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League
Julia R. Scott, President, National Black Women's Health Project
Judith M. DeSarno, President/CEO, National Family Planning and
Reproductive Health Association
Marcia D. Greenberger, Co-President, National Women's Law Center
Kathryn J. Rodgers, Executive Director, NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund
R. James LeFevre, Interim Co-President, Planned Parenthood Federation
of America, Inc.
Jane M. Johnson, Interim Co-President, Planned Parenthood Federation
of America, Inc.
Robin Chandler Duke, National Chairperson, Population Action International
Werner H. Fornos, President, Population Institute
Carl Pope, Executive Director, Sierra Club
Jeannie I. Rosoff, President, The Alan Guttmacher Institute
Judith L. Lichtman, President, Women's Legal Defense Fund
Diane Dillon-Ridgely, President, Zero Population Growth

pc: Brian Atwood, Administrator, USAID

Fiscal 1996 Funding for International Population Assistance

What Happened?

The House of Representatives, under a renewed threat to shut down the government, forced the Senate to acquiesce to, and the President to sign, its version of a Continuing Resolution to extend funding to federal programs that are still without a regular appropriation through March 15, 1996.

Attached to the CR was funding—for the remainder of the fiscal year—for foreign assistance, including the humanitarian assistance programs of the Agency for International Development, with an overall budget cut in the order of 25%. The legislation, however, singles out the family planning/reproductive health/population program for special and disastrously harsh treatment.

- No funds can be made available until after July 1, 1996. Since AID has been unable to release any "population" funds since the beginning of the fiscal year (October 1, 1995), this means that the program will be deprived of support, altogether, for three quarters of fiscal 1996.
- For the remainder of this fiscal year, and for fiscal 1997 in its entirety, the funds can only be allocated month by month and on an equal-amount basis
- Even after those restrictions, the program's budget is to be cut by 35%, in excess of the Agency's overall reduction.

The net effect of all of the above is a reduction in the family planning/reproductive health/population budget from \$547 million in 1995 to \$72 million in 1996.

How did this happen?

In the currently chaotic situation in Congress, a small, determined and well-placed group of members can exercise a disproportionate amount of power. While their individual motivations surely varied, it is fair to say that many had demonstrated their hostility to family planning and reproductive health programs over the years, objected to US participation in the Cairo and Beijing conferences and opposed their recommendations.

On the other hand, while most members of Congress (as does the public at large) support these programs domestically and internationally, they are often not very knowledgeable about the issues, and they are easily distracted by rhetoric and preoccupied with other matters. Key members of both parties in the Senate, a valiant handful of Democrats and Republicans in the House, and the White House resisted the assault on the international family planning program for many, many months. In the end, their responsibility to keep the government open and functioning had to prevail.

What now?

In the political arena, few set-backs need to be permanent, or long-lasting. What Congress does, Congress can undo, or amend. The President has the "bully pulpit," and the Administration has the power to mitigate some of the harm.

The same allies who fought so hard for the program are still there, and they are not likely to abandon their convictions. The great majority of members—and the general public—were clearly not even aware of the issues. The detailed provisions were negotiated at the eleventh hour and they, and their implications, are not easily explained or understood. Most members, and the public, know little of the deep hostilities which have, historically, motivated attacks on family planning and women's reproductive health programs, and they can hardly be expected to readily grasp the implications of (purposely) arcane funding provisions in the absence of media coverage and correct interpretation of the facts.

In short, the situation is dire but, at least partially, retrievable—and it must be retrieved.

THE WASHINGTON POST

Friday, February 2, 1996

JUDY MANN

Extracting Their Pound of Flesh

Congressional opponents of family planning scored a major victory last week by passing legislation that will strangle U.S. support for international contraceptive services.

Led by House Republicans and backed by the Christian Coalition and other right-wing groups that oppose abortion, these efforts ironically will lead to an additional 200,000 illegal and unsafe abortions, according to Nils Daulaire, deputy assistant administrator for policy and child health policy adviser at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Damage to family-planning programs will be far more extensive than it appeared from early news reports about the temporary budget agreement. The legislation will decrease by 35 percent the amount of money available to spend on international family-planning programs—that is, it will cut the budget by nearly \$200 million. USAID will not be permitted to spend any of its appropriation for family planning until July 1, nine months after the start of the fiscal year, which, in Daulaire's words, will cause a "tremendous disruption in services." It is the only international assistance program that is restricted in this way. After July 1, spending cannot exceed 6.7 percent per month of the total appropriated, which means that only a small amount of the whole will actually be spent before Oct. 1, when a new fiscal year begins.

Daulaire projects that as many as 5,000 more women will die over the next year as a result of unsafe abortions and mistimed pregnancies, and that roughly 500,000 additional births will result, putting further stress on child-survival programs that are strained already. Further, he says, the piecemealing restrictions imposed by Congress will increase administrative costs by four to five times, costing U.S. taxpayers \$750,000 to \$1 million more.

Most of the campaign against family planning has been carried out in the guise of preventing U.S. foreign aid funds from paying for abortions, although that practice has been banned since 1973. This current fight began last year when House Republicans voted for a measure sponsored by Rep. Christopher H. Smith (R-N.J.) that would have prevented any foreign nongovernmental organization from receiving any U.S. family-planning money if it attempted to provide information about abortion or lobby its own government to change regulations regarding

abortion. The Senate refused to go along with the Smith language, the White House said it would veto any bill with this language, and a stalemate on the whole foreign aid package ensued.

Pressure to get a foreign operations appropriation bill mounted steadily after Oct. 1, when checks to Israel and Egypt weren't delivered, foreign aid missions weren't getting their funding, their contractors weren't being paid and population programs weren't being funded at all, according to Victoria Markell, vice president of Population Action International, a nonprofit, research-based advocacy organization that receives no federal funding.

The Smith language was cut out of the final bill last Thursday in the face of growing public outrage over the prospect of yet another government shutdown. "The ideologues had to come up with some formulation that will restrict population-planning spending as much as they could," Markell says. Neither the Senate nor the White House wanted the blame for another government shutdown.

"It's such an attack on women and children," Markell says. "How in the world can you pretend to care about child survival when we know that women and mothers are going to die without access to family planning?" She cites a World Health Organization statistic that 90 percent of children in developing countries who lose their mothers in delivery will die by their first birthday. "We know that if women have fewer children, the children they have live longer and are healthier and everyone benefits."

"One of the key priorities of our family-planning program is to reduce abortions worldwide," Daulaire says. Yet when it became clear that the Smith language gutting family-planning services would not pass, "they decided that the way to extract a cost was by severely restricting AID's ability to provide family-planning services around the world. They understood very clearly that this language would mean not just a 35 percent reduction in funding but was really much harsher."

What is clear from this exercise is that the conservative Christian bloc of House Republicans is targeting international contraceptive and family-planning services, not just abortion services. And the people who will suffer are women and children in the poorest parts of the world. Is that the Christian way?

Sen. Mark Hatfield on the FY 1996 International Family Planning Debacle

Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Mark Hatfield (R-OR) has made two Senate floor speeches expressing his outrage about the "compromise" that he and the rest of the Senate were forced to accept as the price for averting another partial government shutdown and enabling enactment of the FY 1996 foreign aid appropriations bill. Below are excerpts from his statements.

- *"This is a near calamitous formulation of these programs, and it may very well provoke a result entirely antithetical to the 'pro-life' position."* (1/26/96)
- *"I cannot for the life of me understand the action of the House. I believe it is wrong. It puts a gun to our heads...I speak as a pro-life Senator."* (1/26/96)
- *"What we did is bar access to family planning services to approximately 17 million couples, most of them living in unimaginable poverty. We opened the door to the probability of at least 14 million unintended pregnancies every year, tens of thousands of deaths among women ... and the probability of at least 4 million more abortions that could have been averted if access to voluntary family planning services had been maintained."* (2/6/96)
- *"The family planning language in [the CR] is not pro-life, it is not pro-woman, it is not pro-child, it is not pro-health, and it is not pro-family planning. It inflicts the harm of a profound misconception on very poor families overseas who only ask for help in spacing their children through contraception, not abortion."* (2/6/96)
- *"All the antiabortion speech this Chamber can tolerate will not reduce the number of pregnancies as swiftly or as surely as our support for voluntary family planning."* (2/6/96)

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CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

February 6, 1996

last year. They pleaded with Congress. They pleaded with the Republican Congress: "Take action right now because it is going to be easier to do it now than it will be in the year 2001 or 2002 when it is just about ready to go under." This had not been anticipated to occur until 1997.

What we learn now through the newspapers, the chief actuary giving this report last year, is the Medicare hospital trust fund lost \$35.7 million. In other words, it took in that much less than we had anticipated.

He was not sure when part A would be depleted, but he did say that it could be earlier than 2002.

In any case, according to the actuary, this recent finding does not help the trust fund. It gives more insecurity to the people on Social Security and it, of course, emphasizes what we were trying to say when we passed this Balanced Budget Act of 1995 which saved Medicare.

So I hope that the President comes around to a point of view of cooperating with the Congress to a greater extent than he has on the saving of Medicare, because this is one time the Republican Congress is way ahead of the White House.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATFIELD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Oregon.

FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM

Mr. HATFIELD. Mr. President, 2 weeks ago, the Senate was compelled to pass H.R. 2880, the Balanced Budget and Downpayment Act, to avert another Governmental shutdown. As I observed on the day of consideration, we did so under great duress, being forced to set aside our right and duty to amend the legislation.

Of particular concern to me remains the harsh treatment given to the Agency for International Development's family planning program. Though it was known at the time that the formulation of this account was nearly calamitous, closer examination of the provision has revealed that the situation is far worse than had been imagined at that time.

The provisions that passed the Senate and the House halts family planning assistance programs until July 1 of this year. Following July 1, funding may be provided at 65 percent of the fiscal year 1995 level, apportioned on a monthly basis for 15 months.

What this means is that only 14 percent of what was available for obligation in fiscal year 1996 for family planning will be available for obligation this entire fiscal year—14 percent.

None of us would normally tolerate a cut of this magnitude, made without the benefit of any debate, particularly on a program which enjoys such strong bipartisan support. And yet we did it.

Stated differently, and more important, what we did is bar access to family planning services to approximately 17 million couples, most of them living in unimaginable poverty. We opened the door to the probability of at least 14 million unintended pregnancies every year, tens of thousands of deaths among women and nearly a million deaths among infants and young children annually. Indeed, we embrace the probability of at least 4 million more abortions that could have been averted if access to voluntary family planning services had been maintained. This is what we did.

These numbers, which are calculated through statistics from organizations like UNICEF and the World Health Organization are as disturbing as they are astounding, particularly to those of us who are faithfully and assertively pro-life. To doubt these numbers may bring temporary relief to people of conscience, but doubters should consider the experience of families in the former Soviet Union where family planning services have been unavailable for decades.

The abortion rate in Russia spans from a conservative estimate of 4 abortions per woman to a shocking high of 12 abortions for some women over their reproductive years. Since there have been virtually no, and I suggest that you underscore when you are listening as well as when I speak, no planning services available in Russia, abortion has become the chief method of birth control.

The framers of the family planning language in H.R. 2880 ensured, perhaps unintentionally, that the gruesome experience of Russian women and families will be replicated throughout the world starting now.

In each of the last two foreign operations appropriations bills, I have made sure that adequate money has been devoted to starting family planning programs in Russia. Similar programs in Hungary have shown a 60-percent reduction in the abortion rate there, 8 years after the introduction of family planning. We had hoped for such success in Russia, but now the future is uncertain.

The family planning language in H.R. 2880 is not prolife, it is not prowoman, it is not prochild, it is not prohealth, and it is not profamily planning. It inflicts the harm of a profound misconception on very poor families overseas who only ask for help in spacing their children through contraception, not abortion.

Some of our colleagues appear unaware that the prohibition on funding abortions with U.S. foreign aid money has been in place since 1973. AID's excellent family planning program, widely recognized as the most efficiently run in the world, has taken a strict and

conservative interpretation of this prohibition, and seeks instead to prevent abortions by offering alternatives. Demand has always exceeded supply, and unmet needs continue to grow.

We urgently need to correct the mistake we made in H.R. 2880. We need to restore, with rhetoric and with resources, support to AID's family planning program. For those of us who take a prolife position, this is the most effective way to reiterate our profound opposition to the practice of abortion. All the antiabortion speech this Chamber can tolerate will not reduce the number of unintended pregnancies as swiftly or as surely as our support for voluntary family planning.

I intend to do what I can to rectify this situation as soon as possible, and urge my colleagues to join in this effort.

AGRICULTURAL MARKET
TRANSITION ACT

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, as the Nation's farmers look ahead to the new planting season, I rise today in support of moving forward on much-needed farm bill legislation.

Over the past year, I have met with farmers, businesses, bankers, and community leaders across Minnesota. They have told me of the urgent need to develop a farm bill which will show them the direction farm policy will move over the next couple of years.

Clearly, our farmers and agribusinesses deserve a reasonable and responsible roadmap of the Nation's long-term agricultural policy. If Washington continues to delay action, decisions about planting, equipment purchase, fertilizer and seed sales, and credit hang in the balance. And as a result, our agricultural economy will suffer.

This current predicament is a perfect example of how Government interference in the area of agriculture has taken its toll on the productivity of our farmers, agribusinesses, and the other sectors of our economy which depend on them.

By expanding the role of Government so deeply into the business of farming, Washington has taken much of the decisionmaking authority away from the real experts—those who have planted, plowed, and harvested for generations—and handed it over to bureaucrats, some of whom are thousands of miles away from America's heartland.

I have always said with pride that Minnesota's farmers are among the most productive in the world. Historically, Minnesota agriculture has ranked first in sugarbeet production, third in spring wheat and sunflower production, fourth in barley and oat production, sixth in corn production, third in swine products, and as a turkey processing. Of course, Minnesota has always been among the Nation's leaders in milk and cheese production. It is also quickly becoming a leading exporter of raw and value added products.

The Radical Right's Real Agenda: Eliminate Family Planning

With the January 26th enactment of the current Continuing Resolution, the right-wing faction of the House scored their most impressive victory in their campaign against women's reproductive health and rights -- they effectively wiped out funding for the U.S. international family planning program.

Blocked in their efforts to abolish Title X (the domestic family planning program) or to restore the Reagan-era international gag rule (the "Mexico City" policy), they went after the politically more vulnerable international family planning program, singling it out for deep, unconscionable cuts, which both the Senate and the Administration were forced to accept, or else face a third government shutdown. At stake in all of this is the health -- indeed, the very lives -- of women, children and families throughout the world.

- This is an attack on women everywhere, at home and overseas. In the most fundamental way, it seeks to undermine women's ability to take charge of their own lives and health care needs.
- House extremists have committed the ultimate hypocrisy: their stealth attack on family planning -- which enables women to avoid resorting to abortion in the first place -- only sentences women in the developing world to more unwanted pregnancies and thus, more abortions.
- Family planning is a part of most couples' daily lives and should be, at a minimum, the common ground upon which both sides of the abortion issue can agree. In the words of pro-life Senator Mark Hatfield (R-OR), "All the antiabortion speech in this chamber can tolerate will not reduce the number of pregnancies as swiftly or as surely as our support for voluntary family planning" (Senate floor statement, 2/6/96).
- The right wing's relentless campaign against family planning is antithetical to their own rhetoric on the family. Enabling couples to plan when to have children and how many is at the very core of promoting personal responsibility and "family values."
- When a mother's health suffers, so does that of her children. The so-called "pro-family" faction, by exacting deep cuts in the program, has virtually ensured that more of the world's families will experience firsthand the tragedy of maternal and/or infant death.
- By championing "child survival" programs while simultaneously gutting family planning assistance, the radical right has made clear their disregard for women: save the children, but let the mothers fend for themselves. They just don't get it. Child survival and family planning programs go hand-in-hand; taken together, these programs promote the well-being of the entire family.

February 8, 1996

The Honorable Newt Gingrich
 Speaker of the House
 United States House of Representatives
 H-232 Capitol Building
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

We, as individuals or representatives of major U.S. organizations, recently participated on behalf of the United States in several international conferences at which worldwide consensus was achieved on key human rights issues.

We are, therefore, appalled at the actions of the House of Representatives and its leadership in taking steps that could have the effect of destroying the family planning program of the Agency for International Development. The facts speak for themselves: in singling out this program for extraordinary budget cuts – from \$547 million in 1993 to \$72 million in 1996 – and special, punitive funding restrictions, the House dealt a grievous blow to the health and welfare of women, children and families worldwide. Furthermore, it put in question the good faith of the United States participation and commitments at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo (1994), the Social Summit in Copenhagen (1995) and the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995).

For women, the ability to decide whether or when to have children is key to their health and well-being. To deprive them of this ability is to condemn them to repeated and often hazardous childbearing or to lead them to have recourse to abortion usually under dangerous conditions. In both cases women's lives are lost that could have been saved.

For children, to be born in a family ready and able to care for them adequately should be a birth right, and it is essential to their ability to thrive and even to survive. Depriving their parents of the help that could have made this birthright a reality is devastating and cruel indeed.

For families, the right and responsibility to bring children into the world and to see them grow up healthy, adequately fed and educated enough to enable them to participate fully in the economic and social life of their communities is central to their very existence. To deprive them of this right, to undermine that responsibility is a blow, an attack on families everywhere.

We cannot urge you strongly enough to rectify this action which can only do irreparable harm to millions of innocent children, women and couples.

Sincerely,

cc: Minority Leader
 Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
 Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Appropriations

Meeting

- OMB -
- AID -
- DPC -

Gordon Adams

Debby Fine

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Fly

Travel

*cc [unclear]
 [unclear] - Ann Hu*

February 8, 1996

The Honorable Robert Dole
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230 Capitol Street
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Majority Leader:

We, as individuals or representatives of major U.S. organizations, recently participated on behalf of the United States in several international conferences at which worldwide consensus was achieved on key human rights issues.

We are, therefore, appalled at the action taken by the Congress as part of the January 26th agreement on the fiscal 1996 foreign aid appropriations bill. It targets the family planning program of the Agency for International Development essentially for destruction by imposing extraordinary budget cuts on it -- from \$547 million in 1995 to \$72 million in 1996 -- and for other special, punitive funding restrictions. In doing so, it dealt a grievous blow to the health and welfare of women, children and families, worldwide. Furthermore, the Congress put in question the good faith of the United States participation and commitments at the Conference on Population and Development in Cairo (1994), the Social Summit in Copenhagen (1995) and the Conference on Women in Beijing (1995).

For women, the ability to decide whether or when to have children is key to their health and well-being and to deprive them of this ability is to condemn them to repeated and often hazardous childbearing or to lead them to have recourse to abortion usually under dangerous conditions. In both cases women's lives are lost that could have been saved.

For children, to be born in a family ready and able to care for them adequately should be a birthright, and it is essential to their ability to thrive and even to survive. Depriving their parents of the help that could have made this birthright a reality is devastating and cruel indeed.

For families, the right and responsibility to bring children into the world and to see them grow up healthy, adequately fed and educated enough to enable them to participate fully in the economic and social life of their communities are central to their very existence. To deprive them of this right, to undermine that responsibility is a blow, an attack on families everywhere.

We cannot urge you strongly enough to reconsider this action which can only do irreparable harm to millions of innocent children, women and couples. Especially in light of the fact that the Senate long fought and resisted House efforts to cripple the U.S. international family planning program, we urge you, even at this late date, to rectify this current situation which would create so much unwarranted pain and suffering.

Sincerely,

cc: Minority Leader
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Appropriations

February 8, 1996

The Honorable William J. Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We, as individuals or representatives of major U.S. organizations, were honored to participate on behalf of the United States in several international conferences at which world-wide consensus was achieved on key human rights issues.

The Cairo Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Conference on Women were notable for the degree of consensus among the world's governments that the empowerment of women, respect for their human rights and their integration at all levels of economic and social life are essential to achieve sustainable development. These commitments to gender equality, if realized, would ensure that human numbers are balanced with the planet's finite resources and that the human toll of unwanted pregnancies, disease and illness is reduced. They are essential elements of the United States support of families worldwide.

We are, therefore, appalled by the actions taken by the Congress in passing the fiscal 1996 foreign aid appropriations bill -- as an amendment to the January 26 Continuing Resolution -- which would have the effect of destroying the U.S. international family planning program run by the Agency for International Development. We have communicated to the leadership of the House and the Senate our determination to see these actions reversed.

We know that you resisted these destructive actions for a very long time. Nevertheless, we appeal to you and the Administration to do all in your power to mitigate the harm which is bound to be done to the program in the short run and, at the same time, to communicate forcefully to the American public the severe implications that a handful of mean-spirited and short-sighted members of Congress have forced upon all of us.

For ourselves, we pledge to continue to work to see the United States hold to the policies and commitments it made, under your leadership, in Cairo and Beijing.

Sincerely,

cc: The Vice President
Secretary of State
Undersecretary for Global Affairs
Administrator, Agency for International Development