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Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights

100 Maryland Avenue, N. E.
Washington, D. C. 20002
(202) 543-7032

Helen R. Parolla
Chairperson

Patricia A. Gavett
National Director

MEMBERS:

National Ministries
American Baptist Churches
American Ethical Union
National Women's Conference
American Ethical Union
American Humanist Association
American Jewish Congress
Women's Division
American Jewish Congress
B'nai B'rith Women
Catholics for a Free Choice
Division of Homeland Ministries
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Episcopal Women's Caucus
National Council of Jewish Women
National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods
General Assembly Mission Board
Presbyterian Church in the US
Committee on Women's Concerns
Presbyterian Church in the US
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
Unitarian Universalist Association
Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation
Board of Homeland Ministries
United Church of Christ
Office for Church in Society
United Church of Christ
Board of Church and Society
United Methodist Church
Women's Division
Board of Global Ministries
United Methodist Church
The Program Agency
United Presbyterian Church, USA
Council on Women and the Church
United Presbyterian Church, USA
United Synagogue of America
Women's League for Conservative Judaism
Young Women's Christian Association

June 1, 1981

Mr. Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant to
the President
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

Thank you for your note of May 26, 1981. I know of no organization called the "National Coalition on Abortion Rights." However, I suppose it is possible that such a group exists and that they may have requested a meeting with President Reagan.

As executive director of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, I have been delegated to facilitate a meeting between the President and the head officials of 22 national religious organizations, representing most of the mainline Protestant and Jewish denominations. The names of those prominent leaders were signed on a letter to the White House dated January 28, 1981.

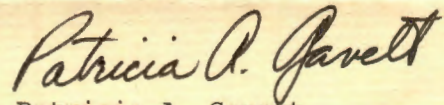
In view of the fact that these people are the religious leaders of organizations representing some 35 million Americans, including the denominations in which the President himself holds membership, I am sure he would welcome the opportunity for direct dialog with them on an issue that has become so divisive among Americans. In fact, in February I was assured by Gregory Newell that such a meeting would take place.

Mr. Morton C. Blackwell
June 1, 1981
Page 2

Because of the unfortunate attempt on the President's life, we refrained from pursuing this matter for a few months. Now that he has resumed a full schedule, we would like to request that a date be set for the meeting as soon as possible.

I will look forward to hearing from you or Mr. Newell in the near future.

Sincerely,



Patricia A. Gavett
Executive Director

PAG/crw

c.c.: Gregory Newell
White House Appointment Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 22, 1981

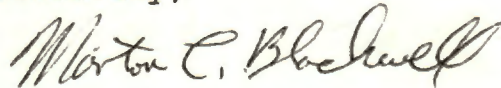
Ms. Patricia A. Gavett
Executive Director
Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights
100 Maryland Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Ms. Gavett:

Thank you for your letter of June 1.

As I explained in my letter of May 26th, the President's schedule does not permit at this time a meeting such as you request. A copy of your correspondence has been sent to Secretary Schweiker, who has been given responsibility by the President in this area of concern.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Morton C. Blackwell".

Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant to the President

1/25/52
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Thank you for your letter
of June 1.

As I ~~was~~ explained
in my letter of May 26,⁵²
~~It is not possible~~
to the President's
schedule does not
permit at this time
a meeting such as
you request. A copy of
your correspondence has
been sent to Sec. Schweiker,

who has responsibility
for the President
in this area of
concern.

Sincerely



cc. Gregory Newell
Hon. Richard Schweiker

MCB-1

RE: Urging P meet with Representatives of the
National Coalition for Abortion Rights

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 26, 1981

Dear /s/

On behalf of the President, I would like to thank you for your message suggesting and requesting he meet with representatives of the National Coalition on Abortion Rights.

Regrettably, due to heavy demands on the President's time, he will be unable to schedule such a meeting. However, a copy of your request is being forwarded to Secretary Schweiker, whose Department has general responsibility in this area of concern.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant
to the President

(5/19/81)

/s/
///
///

Cut 5/22/81 - ckb
Proofed nm

cc: The Honorable Richard Schweiker
w/copy of incoming

MCB:/s/
MCB-1



THE UNITARIAN *file*
UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY

2425 SIERRA BOULEVARD • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95825 • (916) 483-9283

June 3, 1981

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

Thank you for your letter of May 26 in which you explain that Mr. Reagan is too busy to see representatives of the National Coalition on Abortion Rights.

The earlier letter emphasized the fact that Mr. Reagan seemed to have time to visit with priests and others who disapprove of abortion; that he was unwilling, or as you say "could not find the time" to see the President of my Association, Dr. Eugene Pickett and other eminent religious leaders.

Your explanation might happily be extended with some indication as to why he had time for one group of religious leaders and not another. I am sure the President of the United States can anytime and always say he is too busy to see anybody. The politics of a visitation, or the refusal to see visitors, is what is important in this instance.

May I hear from you again. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sally Peterson

theodore a webb - minister


sally peterson - program director

MEMORANDUM

Copy - file

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 6, 1981

To: David Swoap
From: Morton Blackwell 
Re: National Coalition on Abortion Rights

Per our conversation this afternoon, I have drafted a suggested response to the correspondence requesting the President meet with representatives of the National Coalition on Abortion Rights.

The decision has been reached that the President will not be able to schedule such a meeting at this time. However, it has been decided that the focus on this issue would be better placed on H.H.S. than on the Executive Office of the President. Therefore my draft response will refer correspondents to Sec. Schweiker, albeit without committing the Secretary to meet with anyone.

I regret thus adding to your burden and hope that the time will come when you or I can come up with a way in which I can facilitate matters for you by way of compensation.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

DRAFT OF RESPONSE TO LETTERS TO THE PRESIDENT URGING HE MEET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR ABORTION RIGHTS.

Draft by Morton Blackwell, May 4, 1981

Dear _____

On behalf of the President, I would like to thank you for your letter suggesting he meet with representatives of the National Coalition on Abortion Rights.

Regretably, due to heavy demands on the President's schedule, he will be unable to schedule such a meeting at this time. However, a copy of your request is being forwarded to Secretary Schweiker, whose Department has general responsibility in this area of concern.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant
to the President

Mr. _____

cc. The Honorable Richard Schweiker