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cc: R. Kane ✓

June 21, 1991

To Whom It May Concern:

I am trying to make my voice heard to those responsible for C-SPAN today, Sunday, June 21, 1991---"A Look at the Week-end Public Affairs Show". I couldn't find my glasses in time but this is a partial list: Mariana Spicer-Brooks, Veronique Rodman, Connie Doeboe, Elisa Free. And somewhere along the line--Ruth Cane, Dennis Perrin, Terry Eastland, Susan Swain, Steve Scully, and Thomas Rosensteil.

THANKS, THANKS, AND THANKS AGAIN!

I tuned in while sitting on my bed paying bills, which seem to grow and grow and grow! Pretty soon, however, you got my full attention.

Finally someone is addressing the issues that really face the country today. (leaving out the few that only affect D.C., and are strictly political) The words "democratic debate" seems to stick in my mind. It is what I thought our leaders did in the state legislatures, and in Congress. I am among the majority of people who do not want to dwell on what sort of personal trouble our congressmen get into, although I care about those I have the power to throw out of office in my own state. I expect our elected officials to do this job. (I am absolutely sick about the savings and loan scandal, although I can't do anything about that now, either, except pay for it.)

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What I can do sometimes seems a wasted effort, but once in a while, my message is acknowledged, and makes an impact. And of course I am an informed voter, or as informed as possible.

I am very sensitive about the role of women in America, and our so-called "equality".

This interest has recently been kindled as a result of the Louisiana State Legislature, in their stance on a women's childbearing rights. I am shocked and embarrassed over the ignorance/ego of the men who run this state to try to control this right. While our governor, Buddy Roemer, vetoed this law, they overrode his veto, and passed the strictest abortion law in the U.S. It will not directly affect me, as I am a mother of six, and grandmother of 5, --- past the productive years. They are all healthy, well educated, and on their own now. And, it would not have affected me in my productive years, because if I had had to face this decision, I had the education and financial means to do it, if it meant traveling out of state or out of country. Fortunately, I would not have had to resort to a dangerous backstreet abortion.

Women are basically half of our population, and I feel our input in society is being ignored, and is critical.

In reality, mothers never loose concern for their children, and yet we have little power in government. At the moment, we are watching them struggle to overcome the pitfalls of becoming independent, productive citizens in an environment that doesn't seem to care. The breakdown of the family has created an insecurity for them, as well as their mothers, who are not playing on a level ball field. Like ducks out of water, we are forced into a job market that refuses to take us seriously. We were not prepared, but are trying to become prepared for the dual roll of provider and homemaker. It is an unnatural and stressful burden.

Everytime I pick up the paper, I see where our "equal" rights are being threatened. I now understand that federal monies for research in behalf of women is non-existent---at a period in history which statistics say we are the most vulnerable. We are the most likely AIDs victims in the next decade. We are not allowed to serve in combat, although it is the women and children who suffer homelessness and starvation in the pictures I see in the "third world" countries. They are used a political tools, while their men play heroes. We continue to ignore the condition of our own women and children in America, but it is slowly approaching that of the "third world".

Abortion is a horrible thing, but so is war, the death penalty, our justice system, and etc., in general.

At stake now, is the quality of life in America. The land of freedom and the land of plenty. My state seems to think that the rights of the embryo are paramount to that life after birth, or the rights of the mother. They don't seem to care what happens to these babies after they are born, or address the problems of survival. They loose interest, unless the mother qualifies for State Aid, in which case they are momentarily rewarded for each child they have that they cannot support. It is a bare minimum, and is usually abused in application. Our stores and streets are full of unhappy, poverty stricken, illiterate mothers and children, who have no hope for the future. We encourage spaying our dogs and cats, but seem to ignore humans. It is creating a crime problem that is so far out of hand that we have learned to take it for granted. So we dedicate more money for prisons, hospitals, and programs for the disadvantaged. What sort of reasoning is this?

For the last year, I have had a foreign exchange student from Holland living with me. The first thing she wanted to do when she arrived was join the Red Cross, and the Scouts. She ended up doing neither. At her age, 18, in Holland, both are available and interesting activities. However, when she

investigated the Girl Scouts here, she found out that they offered cake decorating, needle point, and baby sitting. They didn't even offer first aid, which she said is an important subject back in her country. There is no "boy", or "girl" scouting there, it is "co-ed". They offer lifetime and interesting activities, such as hiking, camping out, adolescent acting out therapy, sports, creative thinking, the history of their country, and whatever else the group is interested in. She qualified for the "magnet" school here, although she was not in the top of her class back home, and found it "a piece of cake", as well as boring. This does not speak well for our educational system. She was here for a full school year, and just left for home yesterday. It was a sad day for me because she had become part of my family. I have had a number of foreign students in my home over the last few years, and found them to be delightful and interesting. (One from Brazil, one from Spain, and one from Columbia.) It is an expensive venture, but it replaced the "empty nest" syndrome that was painful when my own children flew out of it. I only recommend it to people who can afford to spend the time and effort to seek out the good things our country has to offer, as they are not readily available to ordinary citizens.

One of my children was fortunate enough to go on the "Semester-at Sea" program this past year on the SS Universe. He was totally amazed at the status of women and children around the world. In a way, I guess I should feel fortunate, but I do not when I think of the progress we have made in other ways. I do feel fortunate to be an American, and to be able to express my views. Maybe someday it will make a difference. He paid his way through Russia by the sale of condoms, which apparently are in short supply. He said the government issues so many a year, which is not adequate, so they reuse them. Their primary means of birth control is abortion, and accepted by the population there. I seriously considered going into condom sales in Russia at the time, but am sure that by now someone has beat me to it.

Meanwhile, the pope is traveling the world advising his followers that condoms are sinful. So, these countries continue to multiply like rabbits, and their population is full of disease and poverty. What a mess! It is for this reason that we need more education and discussion on the human condition in this world. And, thank goodness for separation of church and state.

Thank you for listening to me, and for your brave attempt to present things as they are with input from the general population. You must have really offended the man that called in with the obscene message. (I thought I was hearing things!) Keep on keeping on!

Sincerely,

