PS1 for 8/13/87#DRAFT WOMEN? YOU MUST BE KIDDING!

I recently received a surprising, unsolicited letter from the Acting Director of U.S. Selective Service asking me to consider ""the ultimate benefits'' of proposed legislation to allow Selective Service to develop a computer program to prepare for registering and drafting ""health care professionals.'' This proposal was included in the $289 billion Defense Authorization Bill passed by the House on May 20.

The choice of the term ""health care professionals'' is most significant. Since that is a sex-neutral term, in plain English, it means some bureaucrats are toying with the idea of conscripting male and female doctors, nurses, and others engaged in health care.

In the entire history of the United States, no woman has ever been conscripted. Even in the midst of World War II, when we were suffering a million casualties in a two-front war, and we had only a small fraction of the miracle drugs, blood supplies, and other emergency aids that we have today, it was not necessary to draft a single woman.

In World War II and in all the other wars of this century, women volunteers have served nobly and valiantly. They all served voluntarily, while the majority of women remained at home to take care of their children.

In a national emergency, thousands of women volunteers would rise to the challenge. But no conscription system that disrupts or tends to disrupt the primary duty of most women to care for their children can be tolerated in America.

Here is the text of my reply to Wilfred L. Ebel, the Acting Director of Selective Service.

""Dear Mr. Ebel: In reply to your letter of July 7, the notion of conscripting women for ANY purpose is absolutely unacceptable to the American people -- and your endorsement of this concept is likewise

unacceptable. You must be living in some kind of cloistered feminist dream world to have acquired the nutty notion that the American people will stand for this ever happening.

""This notion is an anti-women, anti-family, anti-American idea. So is the surreptitious way that it was slipped into a defense authorization bill without any public comment or debate.

""In World War II, when our nation was fighting a bloody war on two fronts, we did not conscript a single woman. There is no conceivable set of circumstances today that would pose the challenge of more wounded troops than we suffered simultaneously in World War II.

""If it is really true, as your letter said, that, if a major war were to break out in Europe today, six out of seven U.S. wounded could die for lack of adequate medical treatment, you and the U.S. Armed Services should be exposed for criminal negligence in not preparing for this contingency.

""If your statement is true, then our Armed Services are not combat ready in any sense of the word, and those responsible should be called to account.

""We are not fooled by your statement that this legislation would not call for the registration or conscription of women, but only finance a standby system. That is an insult to anybody's intelligence. What is the standby system for? Clearly, it is for registration and conscription. This legislation is the foot in the door, engineered by a bunch of bureaucrats who think they have the power to remake our society regardless of what the people want.

""Mr. Ebel, it is your job to figure out a way to care for our wounded troops without destroying the families of America. The Armed Forces can train or hire their own medical personnel. They can call for women volunteers.

""But they canNOT conscript ANY women. If you and the U.S. Armed Services can't figure out a way to care for our wounded without conscripting women, we should get some officials who can.

""Let me explain the facts of life to you, Mr. Ebel. Regardless of what you may have heard from some noisy feminists, in the real world, the primary responsibility of young women is to care for their children. If you think you are going to upset the family structure of America in order to solve YOUR problems, you are very much mistaken.

""The very idea behind your letter is an insult to American values. We are not interested in your presuming to develop the criteria for exemptions. The only exemption that is acceptable is ALL women.

""Please send me a list of all the federal employees who have been involved in lobbying for this provision, and a statement of what each one is doing to try to get the law passed with this provision in it.''

I haven't received a response from Selective Service yet. Stay tuned.