

~~File - Edwards~~

cc: Mr. Cohen -
look at DoEd question

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 3, 1997

Mary and Paul Root
Ouachita Baptist University
Post Office Box 3789
Arkadelphia, Arkansas 71998

Dear Mary and Paul:

Thanks for your letter of January 16. As usual, it was thoughtful, insightful, and encouraging. I know that our secondary schools could greatly benefit from your attention once again.

We missed you at the Inauguration but hope to be able to see you later this year. Abby is beautiful -- Jeff and Deborah should be so proud of her!

Sincerely,

BR

*I'll explore the
Senior Day idea -
Mauley*

*cc: w/ Paul Root incoming letter
Bruce Reed*

Office of Public Liaison
Ann Stock
The First Lady

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 4, 1997

The Root Family
239 Cherry Street
Arkadelphia, Arkansas 71923

Dear Deborah, Jeff, and Abby:

Thank you for remembering me at Christmas and for sending the wonderful picture of Abby. She's beautiful -- I know you must be so proud of her.

You all have my very best wishes for a healthy and happy year.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton



OUACHITA
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

Mauker

January 16, 1997

Bill Clinton, President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500-2005

Dear Mr. President:

I have not written since before the election. Tuesday, November 5, was a great day in the history of this country. It was great to see you and Hillary at the party for former staff members.

We saw you Monday night on CSPAN awarding the Medal of Honor to a group of African-American families, an honor that was long overdue.

We have been receiving information and invitations to events at the Inaugural. We will be unable to attend because we are starting a new semester and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education is returning to our campus for a site visit on February 22. We must be diligent concerning our preparation. We will save the invitations, place them in a scrapbook and treasure them forever.

Since I am fast approaching retirement age, I am evaluating my previous activities and wondering how I might spend my time in a useful way. Arkansas is on a plateau in terms of race relations. Race relations are not bad, they just have ceased to improve it seems to me. Relations between groups in this country have improved sporadically, not gradually. I think we have reached another period of time when improved relations needs a catalyst.

Mary and I spent almost ten years trying to improve desegregation in Arkansas public schools before I came to work for you. We believe something similar to a desegregation center is needed again but with an emphasis on academics. We are thinking about school improvement--Goals 2000 in desegregated schools. These are the schools in Arkansas where unemployment is highest and family income and test scores are lowest.

We think we might have a chance at some funding through the Arkansas Rockefeller Foundation. If there is any discretionary money in the U.S. Department of Education for such a venture, I would like to know about it.

*ac
Bruce
Paul*

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Jeff and Deborah wanted to be sure you received their greeting and I guess it's my fault that it did not reach you before Christmas. Of course, the picture is the important message. She is Mary Abigail Root, better known as "Abby" and she's a much loved daughter and granddaughter. It's been great to add her to our family circle to join Larry and Terrie's children, Wes, Lorraine and Olivia. The girls were thrilled to receive their letters from you last fall. Thanks for your kindness and thoughtfulness for all the children of our country.

Sincerely,

Paul + Mary Root



*May Christmas shine
brightly in your heart
and bring warmth
to those you love.*

*Our thoughts and
prayers are always
with you. May God
continue to bless you
and your family.*

Jeff, Deborah & Abby