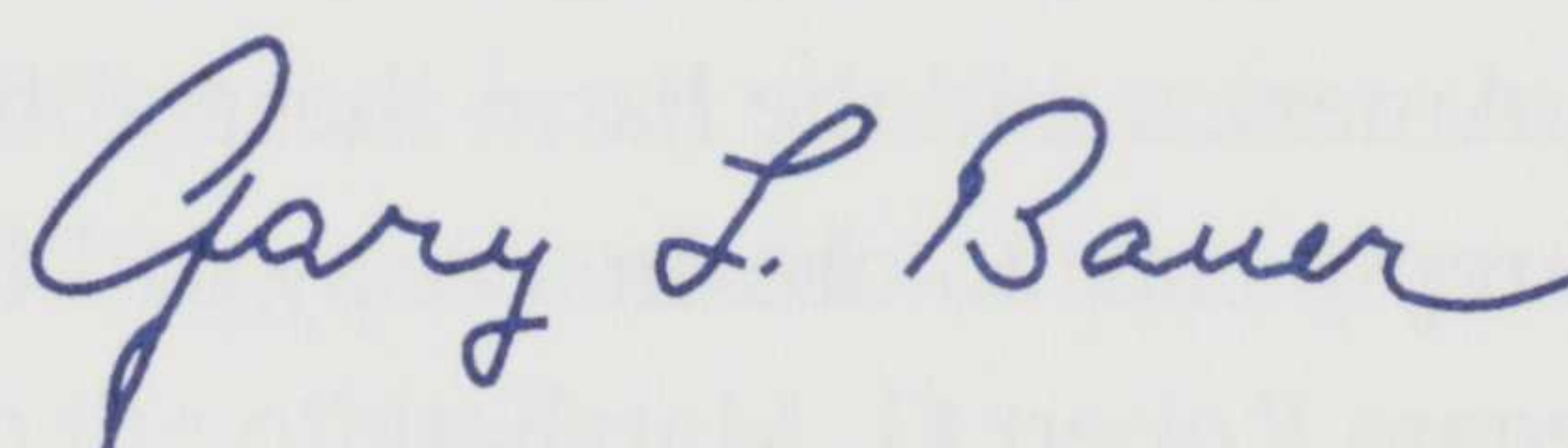

after the incident. Asked by a counselor what was going through his mind, the little boy said he had hoped to catch his brother before he hit the ground. *Irrational love.*

Or, finally, the young police officer in Tennessee, struck by a bullet in the line of duty, who lay in a "persistent vegetative state." (That's an awful term for a physical condition that none of us can fully comprehend.) One day, after several years of this coma-like condition, the officer awoke for a brief time, recognized his children, and spoke to them. His brother rushed to the hospital to be with him. When the press asked the brother what his reaction was to so many years of waiting and worrying, he said that it was worth it all just to be able to tell his brother that he loved him, and to be understood.

My friends, these are acts of irrational love -- performed out of profound, reflexive respect for the sanctity of human life. All around us in 1997, there are signs that affirm this kind of love, but unfortunately there are also many other signs that tell us we have lost our way -- a way of service and sacrifice on behalf of those who desperately need us.

In the days to come, let us all pray that our Supreme Court, our Congress and our President will recover their sense of direction and help this nation, once again, become a beacon to the oppressed, a Shining City on a Hill.

Sincerely,



Gary L. Bauer

P.S. As always, your partnership with us is essential to our success. We thank God for all you do to make our work possible. Your generosity and your prayers, your friendship and notes of encouragement -- these things mean more to me than you will ever know. I pray that you and your family will enjoy all of God's blessings in 1997.

¹ "Teen-Age Sweethearts Charged with Murdering Their Baby," *The New York Times*, November 18, 1996, B1.

² *Ibid.*

³ George F. Will, "An Abortion Choice," *The Washington Post*, November 24, 1996, C7.

⁴ *Vaco v. Quill* (No. 95-1858), *Washington v. Glucksberg* (No. 96-110), *Schenck v. Pro-Choice Network of Western New York* (No. 95-1065).