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THE GROWING THREAT **An Analysis of Planned Parenthood's Annual Report (1998-1999)** by Patricia Pitkus Bainbridge, M.A.

After a delay of three months, Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) has released its *1998-1999 Annual Report*. While the 1997-1998 report was titled, “Responsible Choices,” the new report is titled, “Responsible Choices *in Action*.”

PPFA President Gloria Feldt remarked that she sees “Responsible Choices as a paradigm shift in how we advance the mission together. It’s as profound as Margaret Sanger’s first birth control clinic opening in 1916.” And just what is that mission? An even greater impact on the lives of people in the United States and throughout the world—particularly young people.

Both the 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 reports highlight PPFA’s Responsible Choices Action Agenda (RCAA) which, according to Feldt, “focuses Americans’ energy where the right to make responsible choices lies—in social advocacy, political engagement...RCAA makes it difficult for members of Congress to ignore their constituents on contraception, abortion, domestic and international family planning, and responsible sex education.”

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

The format for the 1998-1999 report is shorter in length, softer in approach, and more “donor friendly” in that it utilizes numerous color photographs depicting families and children. PPFA is very aware that “a picture is worth a thousand words.” (This explains why Planned Parenthood vehemently opposes legislation that would require a woman contemplating abortion to see even a line drawing of an embryo or fetus at the same age as the one she is carrying.) Using photos of children in its reports is apparently PPFA’s attempt to appear as an organization that loves children. Yet it does not include equal exposure for the pre-born children who are destroyed by PPFA’s abortionists. Maybe, then, Planned Parenthood’s annual report would more accurately reflect the reality of its mission.

On page one of the *1998-1999 Annual Report* a full page photograph of a pregnant woman and her family receiving information from a health care worker about PPFA’s prenatal care program. One must turn to page nine of the report, however, to see that there were only 16,065 prenatal clients seen throughout 1998 (down from 17,246 the previous year).

Confessed Abortions Increase

The number of abortions Planned Parenthood confesses to committing at its own facilities—rising from 165,174 in 1997 to 167,928 in 1998—was more than ten times the number of prenatal clients and more than 34 times the number (4,892) of “adoption referrals to other agencies.”

In addition to the self-reported number of surgical abortions, the number of “emergency contraception [EC] clients” rose 83.5% to 72,024. Seventy-eight of its 132 affiliates “offered EC kits to keep at home

‘just in case’ (EC-To-Go).” Forty-seven affiliates “prescribed EC (Dial-EC) over the phone.” Of course, there was no mention of the action of “emergency contraception,” which in most cases is to prevent implantation of a developing human being, thus causing a very early but none-the-less deadly abortion.

Overseas “Assistance”

Family Planning International Assistance (FPIA), PPFA’s international service division, is another of its pet projects. The 1998-1999 report describes FPIA as “a leader in the international reproductive health movement since 1971, providing quality, culturally sensitive health care services to people who have the least access. We provide services where others don’t, won’t, or can’t.”

PPFA proudly reports that in “responding to the crisis in Kosovo” it provided “emergency reproductive health care kits” and “abortion training for health care workers serving refugees.” In the past, PPFA has responded to natural disasters not by sending food or medical supplies, but by distributing condoms.

Judicial Activism

Whenever Planned Parenthood cannot get its minority point of view past the duly elected representatives of the people, it turns to its friends in the judiciary to force lawmakers to accept its will. PPFA has shown great persistence in over the past year in the area of judicial activism.

Absent from the new report was the phrase “partial-birth abortion.” Recognizing that even some “pro-choice” advocates find the dilation and extraction procedure horrendous, it appears that PPFA realized that the mere utterance of the phrase “partial-birth abortion” could turn off some supporters. As a result, in describing its efforts to “protect access to abortion services in the courts,” PPFA reported that it filed ten lawsuits against state bans on “certain abortion procedures” last year. The phrase “certain abortion procedures” apparently is a code phrase for dilation and extraction, which is more commonly called “partial-birth abortion.”

In keeping with its stated policy of helping “safeguard minors’ access to abortion” (also known as usurping parental rights), PPFA continues to file lawsuits in states that have passed laws requiring parental notification or consent. In 1998, PPFA “obtained a final injunction against a Montana law that would restrict minors’ access to abortion services by requiring parental notice and mandating a 24-hour waiting period.”

Legislative Activity

Reported legislative efforts on behalf of PPFA included the introduction of “contraceptive equity” legislation (expanding insurance coverage for prescription birth control) in 22 states. PPFA also bragged about persuading Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) “to reverse her votes on access to abortion services for servicewomen” overseas and on the Child Custody Protection Act, which would “make it illegal for any adult other than a parent to take a minor across state lines for an abortion.”

PPFA affiliates were also successful in convincing Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy (D-New York) “to reverse her vote” on the Child Custody Protection Act. Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn (R-Washington) was persuaded “to change her vote on access to abortion services for servicewomen stationed overseas.”

Ever Vigilant

Showing no respect for the right of a Catholic-affiliated hospital to decide against committing abortions or dispensing birth control, PPFA and other members of Family Planning Advocates of New York “established a national Merger Watch to prevent the loss of abortion and other reproductive health services that often result when religious—mostly Catholic—and secular hospitals merge.”

It was further reported that one New York affiliate “was instrumental in stopping a proposed partnership...which would have eliminated all family planning, infertility, and abortion services for the

women in that community.” So much for the right of health care providers to choose *not* to commit abortions. And Planned Parenthood wonders why it is more appropriately identified as *pro-abortion* than pro-choice.

Media and Hollywood Mistress

Always the darling of the media, Planned Parenthood proudly reports that:

PPFA is a primary—and highly respected—source of information for the media.

Through thousands of interviews with newspapers, magazines, radio, and television, PPFA advocates for reproductive freedom, defines the debate, places issues in their historical and social context, and corrects distortions circulated by anti-family planning, anti-choice extremists. Planned Parenthood was mentioned in more than 6,000 media stories in the last year—approximately 1,000 more than in 1997.

In addition to the positive exposure Planned Parenthood continually receives from the mainstream media, it is now pushing its views on television and movie audiences by embarrassing screenwriters and producers into “incorporate information about EC into scripts for popular television shows, which are a major influence on young people’s sexual behaviors and attitudes.”

The 1997-1998 annual report provided an account of one PPFA affiliate that “helped educate the nation about the need for confidential teen services...” It did so by “collaborating with television screenwriters to address the issue in an episode of the popular drama, *ER*.”

It is not surprising that Planned Parenthood and the entertainment industry (as well as the news media) are so closely tied and willingly to promote one another. The vast majority of those individuals in the entertainment industry and the news business are pro-abortion. Furthering the goals of PPFA by incorporating its views in their work is natural for them.

Planned Parenthood relishes the “200-plus high profile leaders in the entertainment industry whose public support for the PPFA mission is extremely valuable.” Headed by Kathleen Turner, these pro-abortion individuals are members of PPFA’s Board of Advocates and are paraded before the American public (especially young people), Congress, and fund-raising events to further promote the mission of PPFA.

Joining PPFA’s Board of Advocates last year were: Candice Bergen, Hector Elizondo, Beverly Peele, Martina Navratilova, and Jessye Norman. A sampling of other members as mentioned in previous annual reports include: Steve Allen, Anne Archer, Kathy Baker, Kim Basinger, Judy Blume, T. Berry Brazelton, M.D., Matthew Broderick, Julia Child, Jane Curtin, Matt Damon, Blythe Danner, Jane Fonda, Bonnie Franklin, Whoopi Goldberg, Corky Hale, Sally Kellerman, Joanna Kerns, Swoosie Kurtz., Norman Lear, Spike Lee, Madonna, Maureen McGovern, Sarah McLachlan, Dina Merrill, Rita Moreno, Gwyneth Paltrow, Amanda Plummer, Paula Poundstone, Anna Quindlen, Della Reese, Christopher Reeve, Cybill Shepherd, Ron Silver, Martha Stewart, Aaron Spelling, Cheryl Tiegs, Abigail Van Buren, and Malcolm-Jamal Warner.

Grammy-nominated Joan Osborne served as chairman of an honorary advisory committee of *Vox*, the “nationwide group of young, pro-choice activists who support reproductive rights by writing their elected officials, registering voters, organizing public events, and conducting outreach everywhere, including online and at concerts.” In 1998, PPFA outreaches took place at 260 summer concerts resulting in 25,000 petition signatures.

Targeting Teenagers

PPFA reports that within four months of launching its teen website, *teenwire.com*, it received “nearly 100,000 visits a month and 300 sex-related questions each week.” This, of course, the website that recently offered the following advice to teens concerning their parents and sex: “Your job now is to start paying attention—take the useful, smart stuff you’ve learned from your folks and kick the crap to the curb.”

Seeing this on PPFA's website certainly points up the insincerity of Planned Parenthood's highly touted programs facilitating "parent-child communication." Yet PPFA continues to claim that it is pro-parent.

Awards

The PPFA Margaret Sanger Award for 1998 went to Reverend Howard Moody, "a Baptist minister at the Judson Memorial church in New York City." One of the PPFA Maggie Awards went to CBS-TV for *Cosby*, "Now Is the Time, The Walrus Said."

The Senator Barry Goldwater Award was presented to Mary Dent Crisp for "demonstrating courage and leadership in promoting policies that ensure and defend reproductive rights." The accolade continued:

As anti-choice threats escalated in Congress, Mary Dent Crisp put principle ahead of politics and courageously warned her party that it risked losing its appeal to women. She ultimately brought national visibility to this issue by resigning as national co-chair of the Republican National Committee.

Big Operations

PPFA reported a record financial year ending June 30, 1999. Total revenue was \$660.7 million. Its expenses were \$534.9 million, resulting in a \$125.8 million profit for the year. The total net assets are now \$536.3 million—quite a profit for an organization that benefits greatly from tax dollars and continually demands even more.

The number of volunteers and staff members for PPFA has increased by 2,000 from last year's report of 21,000. While the number of affiliates decreased last year from 133 to 132, it is merely part of PPFA's plan to increase the efficiency of its operations and cannot be viewed as a negative. The number of its "health centers" remains at 850.

All in all—from PPFA's perspective—it was a great year for the largest single committer of abortions in the United States. While the total number of "services" for PPFA was down to 3,253,791 from 3,284,981 in the previous year, the number of total customers increased from 2,330,065 in 1997 to 2,364,854 in 1998. More than 700 PPFA affiliate "educators" reached 1.5 million Americans with its mantra of moral relativism.

PPFA's coffers are overflowing. It is difficult to fathom a charitable organization—one that claims to focus on providing services to poor women—having total net assets of \$536.3 million at the end of its fiscal year ending on June 30, 1999.

Conclusion

Let us be honest. The news is not good for those who hold to a sanctity of human life ethic. We must step up our efforts to clearly demonstrate that the "responsible choices" offered by PPFA are in reality *irresponsible*. With the dictionary defining "responsible" as "based on or characterized by good judgment or sound thinking," any intellectually honest individual who closely examines what Planned Parenthood is really all about will soon learn that the so-called "responsible" part of "responsible choices" is anything but.

PPFA's greatest ally continues to be ignorance of the organization itself. With a 1998 survey showing that 57 percent of those who call themselves "pro-life" have a positive opinion of Planned Parenthood, one cannot be surprised by the organization's continued success. The poll showed that Americans associate Planned Parenthood with education, assistance for teenagers, counseling and other services. Among a list of values associated with PPFA were "family responsibility" and "personal responsibility."

When Christians and pro-lifers (usually one in the same) believe Planned Parenthood is just fine, we have a real problem. Our task is to continue to expose the truth about Planned Parenthood through the intelligent and strategic use of all God-honoring methods available to us.

We truly have a choice. We can stop our work and leave the world's children to Planned Parenthood and its ilk, or we can fight on—redoubling our efforts. We believe you will agree that under *no* circumstances, regardless of how big the Goliath may become, will we give up.

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