



# Special Reports

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## THE MAKING OF A CONTROVERSY The History Of The Conspiracy Against Pregnancy Care Centers

by Douglas R. Scott, Jr.

In 1987, Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) was joined by several other pro-abortion groups in alleging that pregnancy care centers (also known as “crisis pregnancy centers,” “pregnancy help centers,” “problem pregnancy centers,” and so forth) masquerade as abortion-committing entities in order to lure women into their anti-abortion facilities. Once inside, women are supposedly subjected to abuse (verbal and emotional) and threats. It has even been alleged that some women have been physically restrained by center personnel to prevent them from exercising their “freedom of choice.”

The campaign to “expose” pregnancy care centers did not begin by accident. It was not the result of “investigative journalism.” It was not due to law enforcement efforts. It was the direct result of a conspiracy between pro-abortion groups, abortionists, the news media, and sympathetic lawmakers. It was a clear example of the news media abusing power without regard for truth or fairness.

### Manufacturing Controversy

On January 22, 1987, PPFA contrived a new front in the abortion battle when it issued a statement by Faye Wattleton, president of the pro-abortion empire, at a national press conference:

On this day, fourteen years ago, the right of every American woman to receive a safe and legal abortion was resoundingly confirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court’s 7-2 vote.

Although, throughout the past 14 years, we have seen extremists who have tried to construct barriers to that right or eradicate it completely, they have failed dismally because the right to privacy is one which Americans hold as inalienable.

In their frustration, however, these extremists have sunk to new depths in an effort to harass and punish women who seek abortion services. They have resorted to intimidation and even violence to inflict their own views on an unwilling America. The latest effort in their campaign of deception is the creation of anti-abortion counseling centers, many of which appear to offer abortion services, but actually lure unsuspecting pregnant women into their clutches under false pretenses...

These centers, for the most part, exist only to inflict upon very vulnerable women their own views of morality and religion and to harass women who seek abortion as their legal alternative.<sup>1</sup>

In conjunction with the National Abortion Federation (NAF), the membership of which consists primarily of abortionists, PPFA published a document titled, “A Consumer’s Alert to Deception, Harassment and Medical Malpractice”:

In their zeal to stop women from having abortions, anti-abortion activists have set up “counseling centers” in hundreds of communities around the country. Far from true counseling, these centers are designed to misinform and intimidate women—some will go to any lengths necessary to dissuade women from ending their pregnancies.

Increasingly, women complain about their unwitting encounters with anti-abortion centers. Women describe being harassed, intimidated, and given blatantly false information. They complain that confidential information they provided was used against them. In some cases, they describe instances of medical malpractice which threatened their lives.<sup>2</sup>



Wattleton

One section of the document, “How to Recognize Anti-Abortion Counseling Centers,” lists alleged “characteristics” of such centers: 1) falsely suggesting or promising a full range of reproductive health services; 2) offering free pregnancy tests but giving ambiguous answers about the results; 3) showing shocking and deceptive films or slide shows; 4) attempting to induce guilt by engaging women in discussions about their religious views and beliefs; 5) refusing or failing to provide information about birth control; and 6) making exaggerated promises.<sup>3</sup>

“A Consumer’s Alert to Deception, Harassment and Medical Malpractice” included a warning:

Caution: if you find that the facility from which you have sought help is actually an anti-abortion facility, protect yourself from further harassment. Leave the premises immediately and do not return. When you do locate a professional clinic or counseling center that offers all available alternatives, you may find it helpful to share those experiences with your new counselor

so that whatever distortions and misinformation you may have received can be corrected.<sup>4</sup>

Women were urged to locate “professional” pregnancy care centers. According to PPFA, such centers would: 1) have a clearly established reputation; 2) provide a full range of birth control alternatives; and 3) have (or are supervised by) physicians, nurse practitioners, or other licensed health professionals.<sup>5</sup> Not surprisingly the standards described PPFA facilities. (It should be noted that abortion-committing groups typically do not advertise as “abortion clinics.” Their purpose is diffused by names such as “Women’s Health Center” or “Planned Parenthood.”)

Pregnancy care centers educate women about abortion and fetal development, provide support, free clothing, baby products, medical care and other services. They are staffed primarily by volunteers.

A list of pregnancy care centers from around the country was published and distributed at the press conference. In an attempt to avoid a lawsuit a disclaimer was included:

The facilities on this list have been reported to us as providing anti-abortion counseling and failing to provide counseling or information as to where and how abortions may be obtained. Inclusion on this list is not a representation that a facility has engaged in any particular deceptive practice. This is not a complete list and the fact that any facility is not mentioned should not be regarded as an indication of approval.<sup>6</sup>

### Media/Abortion Industry Conspiracy

One of the most important aspects of PPFA’s project was to focus on local pregnancy care centers. Its affiliates and other pro-abortion groups were urged to get media attention by attacking their local centers.



**Olasky**

Media complicity in the campaign against these centers was evident nationwide. A study by Marvin N. Olasky, Ph.D., journalism professor at the University of Texas at Austin, proved that the campaign was no coincidence. He documented the conspiracy between PPFA, the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights (RCAR—now called the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice), and the Reproductive Freedom Project of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).<sup>7</sup>

The ACLU published a booklet titled, “Women’s Legal Guide to Reproductive Rights.” It was noted that the booklet would appear as a chapter in the ACLU’s upcoming handbook called *The Rights of Women*. The printing of the booklet was donated by the Playboy Foundation.<sup>8</sup>

Olasky noted that Amy Sutnick, public information associate for Planned Parenthood of New York City,

spent about 1,000 hours with a single purpose—creating a negative image of pregnancy care centers. To do this, Sutnick convinced a *New York Daily News* reporter who supported legal abortion to run a story based on material she provided. Once the story ran, Sutnick sent the article and a media packet to other reporters in an effort to prompt the writing of more articles.<sup>9</sup>



**Sutnick**

Evidence mounted that the attacks on pregnancy care centers were based on the actions of those operated by the Pearson Foundation.<sup>10</sup> Centers associated with Pearson did not oppose the use of deception since it may have resulted in saving a life. The Foundation’s establishments represented fewer than five percent of all pregnancy care centers. Nevertheless, all centers were lumped together by PPFA and the media, even though most had issued statements saying women should always be told the truth.

In preparing a story for *USA Today*, writer Marlene Perrin contacted leaders of pregnancy care centers who oppose deception. However, when she heard from unhappy women who claimed to have been clients at one pregnancy care center, Perrin decided she did not believe center leaders were telling the truth. Consequently, Perrin refused to include comments from center leaders in the story. Worst of all, the women who claimed to have been misled had been supplied by Planned Parenthood,<sup>11</sup> but this important point was never made. (Gannett Company Inc., which owns *USA Today*, is a financial supporter of Planned Parenthood.)

It did not take long for the unwarranted attacks on pregnancy care centers to begin paying off. Many centers reported a drop in clientele and financial resources. Even some strong pro-life people who had backed pregnancy care centers ended their support because they believed—and were embarrassed by—media reports.<sup>12</sup>

There is no doubt that the media attacks on pregnancy care centers were a well-planned, well-coordinated effort. Several pro-abortion groups simply conspired with abortion supporters in the media to do a slash job on pregnancy care centers.<sup>13</sup> Why? Pregnancy care centers take business (profits) away from these groups and the abortion industry knew that many in the media would back their claims without question.

Olasky pointed out the unethical practices in what took place. He noted that pregnancy care centers, which operate on small budgets, were assailed by groups that could afford to put millions of dollars into a campaign to discredit them.<sup>14</sup> Fighting back was difficult against such odds, especially since the media—the self-described “investigative reporters”—chose to narrow the investigation and report only what they wanted the public to know.



**Nathanson**

The media has a history of blatantly siding with pro-abortion activists, regardless of the facts. This was true from the earliest stages of the cause to legalize the deadly act—long before *Roe v. Wade*. Bernard N. Nathanson, M.D., the cofounder of the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws (NARAL—now called the National Abortion & Reproductive Rights Action League), wrote about his reliance on the media to spread lies for the cause:

[W]e generally emphasized the drama of the individual case, not the mass statistics, but when we spoke of the latter it was always “5,000 to 10,000 deaths a year.” I confess that I knew the figures were totally false, and I suppose the others did to [sic] if they stopped to think about it. But in the “morality” of our revolution, it was a *useful* figure, widely accepted, so why go out of our way to correct it with honest statistics? The overriding concern was to get the laws eliminated, and anything within reason that had to be done was permissible.<sup>15</sup>

Olasky documented the cooperation between those who wished to eliminate protective laws and the media in his book, *The Press and Abortion, 1838-1988*. He wrote that since the mid-1900s, the media has “set a pro-abortion agenda” and has been “used by those setting agendas.”<sup>16</sup>

### Advertising Campaign

PPFA stepped up its attacks on abortion opponents as well as centers assisting women faced with untimely pregnancies. As part of its “Don’t Wait Until Women Are Dying Again” advertising series, Planned Parenthood lumped together all pregnancy care centers. The full-page advertisement was headlined, “Would You Lie to a Pregnant Teenager?” It attacked pregnancy care centers by claiming women are shown frightening and untruthful films.<sup>17</sup>

Many pregnancy care centers are independent entities with standards of operation varying from center to center. Others are affiliated with national organizations such as Alternatives to Abortion International, Birthright International, CareNet, National Institute of Family and Life Advocates, or Save-A-Life. Standards applied to local pregnancy care centers by national organizations also vary.

At the time of the initial attacks by PPFA and its legions, Birthright International had more than 650 centers worldwide. Birthright International officials reported they had never put a girl into a room to watch anything more than a film on fetal development, which was produced by scientists, not abortion foes.

Denise Cociolone, president of the National Life Center, said Planned Parenthood took the actions of one individual, as noted in the PPFA advertisement, and

argued that all pregnancy care centers were the same. “All we do is tell them the truth. No audio visual presentations or pictures are used except for Window to the Womb,” she said.<sup>18</sup>

Cociolone, who served as national director of Birthright at the time the advertisement was placed by PPFA, said pregnancy care centers fill a huge void. She said centers work to meet the needs of women and girls who may choose abortion because they feel they have “no choice.” “We’re here to show the woman that somebody cares. We’re giving them a real choice. If she chooses abortion, we give her literature on abortion and fetal development and we ask her to read the literature before making a final decision.”<sup>19</sup> She is among the most respected leaders doing pregnancy counseling work.



**Cociolone**

The association between pregnancy care centers is often in name only. In some cases, what may appear to be a parent organization is in reality nothing more than a clearinghouse for information with no policymaking authority. One example is Alternatives to Abortion International (AAI), which has hundreds of loosely affiliated centers, none of which use “graphic” films.

The pregnancy care centers affiliated with AAI operate independently. Planned Parenthood, on the other hand, is a closely-knit confederacy with strong ties that are based on specific national and international standards. Yet PPFA often attempts to disassociate itself from some of its affiliates and local leaders. The reverse is also true. PPFA affiliates will occasionally try to pretend that the connection between the national group and the locals is strictly in name only.

One argument used against pregnancy care centers affiliated with religious institutions was that counselors were encouraged to share their faith with clients. It is true that evangelism is practiced by some centers, but only when the client gives her consent. People who work in these kinds of centers say that while their primary and immediate role is to assist the woman facing an untimely pregnancy, it would be improper not to also share their faith as doing so could lead to a change in lifestyle for the client—and even eternal life itself.



Planned Parenthood officials endorse the activities of “religious” people who help further the group’s insidious agenda, but they oppose Christians who put godly principles into practice. Of all the supposedly horrible things happening inside the “fake clinics,” it seems that to some Planned Parenthood employees evangelism is the worst of all.

Lee Minto, executive director of Planned Parenthood of Seattle-King County, said she took “great exception to

the fact that the primary purpose of this is [pregnancy help centers]—although it’s not in front of the public at all—is that it’s a Christian ministry...” She asserted that women were not allowed to leave a pregnancy care center without hearing the Gospel.<sup>20</sup> Needless-to-say, the latter accusation, if true, would constitute kidnapping and should be prosecuted as such, but the claim is ridiculous on its face.

The Planned Parenthood hierarchy seems to think sharing the Gospel will have some sort of devastating effect on the supposedly helpless and vulnerable people who visit a pregnancy care center. They are essentially asking Christians to leave their faith at home as though there were some sort of mandatory constitutional separation between church and helping those in need. In reality, of course, they often go hand-in-hand.

Consider this matter from the Christian perspective. A person who wholeheartedly believes *The Holy Bible* is the Word of God is *required* to share the Gospel (the “Good News”). If Christians believe sharing the Gospel will save the very soul of a person, asking that the information be withheld is like asking a lifeguard to keep essential water safety facts to himself. It is telling Christians they must be hypocrites, selfish, and disobedient to God. No decent Christian would act as though what he believes is in reality untrue. Yet Planned Parenthood and its allies insist that Christians either do so or stop helping people in need. This is beyond unconscionable.

### “Investigative” Charade



After PPFA fired its initial shot at pregnancy care centers, the project was picked up by others in the Pro-Abortion Movement. People for the American Way (PAW) launched a campaign against pregnancy care centers in mid-1991. The effort was intensified in the fall of that year when Rep. Ron Wyden, D-Oreg., who at the time was chairman of the Subcommittee on Regulation, Business Opportunities and Energy, held a public hearing on allegations made against pregnancy care centers. He asked the staff of the Subcommittee to “investigate” the allegations. (Wyden has a 100 percent pro-abortion voting record and is a strident supporter of euthanasia.)

Wyden’s staff issued a report and memorandum titled, “Investigation and Hearing on Bogus Abortion Clinics: The Role of False, Deceptive and Misleading Telephone Directory Advertisements and Listings; State Enforcement Efforts and the Extent of Federal Consumer Protection Jurisdiction.” In the report, several charges were made against pregnancy care centers. Early in the report, the staff noted how the investigation began:

At your [Wyden’s] direction, subcommittee staff beginning earlier this year initiated an extensive inquiry of unfair competition issues, and consumer protection complaints, stemming from the emergence of “bogus” abortion or abortion referral clinics.<sup>21</sup>



A June 20, 1991, memorandum from Ron Fitzsimmons, executive director of the National Coalition of Abortion Providers (NCAP), to “NCAP Members and Interested Parties,” pointed to the group’s involvement in Wyden’s hearing:

I recently met with Congressman Ron Wyden to discuss the format of his hearing on phony clinics. We now expect the hearing to occur sometime in September. We want to have a panel of women who have had bad experiences in phony clinics, a panel of state Attorneys General who can testify to the need for a national solution to the problem, the Federal Trade Commissiona [sic] and a panel of telephone company executives who can discuss why they are not as cooperative as we would like. I could use your help with two things: we need women are [sic] willing to testify about their experience (we could guarantee anonymity) and a tape recorded conversation with a phony clinic. Please call me if you think you can help.<sup>22</sup>

A September 4, 1991, memo from Fitzsimmons to “All Abortion Providers” stated:

While this issue may not be a high priority item for some providers, I still thought the issue deserved attention so I approached the Chairman of the Subcommittee, Rep. Ron Wyden (D-OR), approximately seven months ago and suggested he hold a hearing to help publicize the issue. My thinking was that the resulting publicity would at least make some women more aware of the problem.<sup>23</sup>

It is incredible that Wyden, using taxpayer money, would hold a hearing at the request of Fitzsimmons—a lobbyist for the multimillion dollar abortion industry. It was an attempt to attack and regulate all pregnancy care centers even though only a handful used questionable practices.

In short, this entire controversy was *manufactured* by people intimately involved in the abortion industry. When Wyden’s staff wrote, “At your [Wyden’s] direction...,” it really should have read, “At your direction, which was at the direction of the abortion industry...”

### Something Bogus This Way Comes

One part of the staff report provided a definition of a “bogus abortion clinic”:

For the purposes of this investigation, and a hearing on these issues scheduled for September 20, 1991, a “bogus clinic” is a facility which typically is not staffed by professional health care providers. Abortion and abortion referral services are neither given nor contemplated by the operator. Instead, these facilities are by design venues for hard-sell, and often abusive anti-abortion arguments and tactics aimed at unsuspecting and vulnerable consumers.<sup>24</sup>

While it is interesting that those who seek an abortion are viewed as “consumers,” the point is that a “bogus clinic” was being defined in a “bogus” way. A pregnancy care center does not need to be staffed by “professional health care providers,” which PPFA defines as those who are supporters of abortion, to be free of deception. The reverse is also true. Having “professional health care providers” on Planned Parenthood’s staff does not mean it is impossible for deception to occur.

There is no reason why volunteers, who care about women and wish to assist them, must be “professional health care providers” unless they are practicing medicine. It is also interesting to note that Planned Parenthood facilities are not exactly brimming with “professional health care providers.” In fact, only a fraction of its workers could be so described.



With the exception of the last sentence of the broad definition provided in Wyden’s staff report, virtually every pregnancy care center in North America would fall into the category of “bogus clinic.” Not offering abortion “services” or referrals makes a center “bogus” only to the abortion industry. Not being staffed by “professional health care providers” makes a center “bogus” only to the abortion industry.

The use of “hard-sell” and “abusive” (both undefined) arguments and tactics (unspecified) have been condemned by virtually all pregnancy care centers and pro-life leaders. Anything that may encourage a woman to give birth is considered “hard-sell” and “abusive” to abortion apologists, including a discussion of fetal development. (What exactly is an “abusive argument?”)

### “Unprofessional Volunteers”

Wyden’s staff sought to provide specific examples of inappropriate conduct on the part of pregnancy care center operators:

These “clinics” tend to mislead the most socially vulnerable women seeking an abortion. Those most likely to be duped are women who because of economic status, age or cultural background have no personal physician, and who rely on telephone directory advertising as their principal means of selecting a pregnancy termination service.

In many cases, these women are deceived by a misleading ad designed by a “clinic” operator with no intention of providing a legal, medical service.<sup>25</sup>

Pregnancy care centers are most often listed in Yellow Pages under “Abortion Alternatives.” Women who call or go to a center for an abortion need only ask if abortions are committed. The answer given is straightforward and honest—“no.” Once again, it is implied that by refusing to provide a “legal, medical service” which destroys hu-

man life, the centers are inherently deceptive. Women are capable of reading the telephone directory and making a call to learn more about any business listed in the Yellow Pages. In addition, it is extremely rare that a woman’s “personal physician” is the one who commits or even refers for the abortion.

Subcommittee staff has assumed that the term “clinic” implies medical service. But “clinic,” “center,” and “medical clinic” have been used synonymously and loosely by pregnancy care centers critics throughout this ordeal. *The Random House College Dictionary* offers several definitions of “clinic,” including: “any class or group convening for instruction, advice, remedial work, etc., in a special field: a marriage clinic; a speech clinic.”<sup>26</sup>

### A Wide Brush

Wyden’s staff sought to paint almost all pregnancy care centers exactly the same—a strategy that pro-abortion activists knew was critical to the success of pregnancy care centers:

An extensive survey by subcommittee staff of yellow page directory listings in all fifty states tends to support earlier claims that there may be as many as 2,000 of these deceptively promoted facilities, nationwide.<sup>27</sup>

This 2,000 figure represented nearly every pregnancy care center in the United States and, not surprisingly, was the number quoted by the media. The use of words was clever



as one could also read it to mean as many as two. The truth is that if some pregnancy care centers purposefully used deceptive tactics, they were the exception, not the rule. The point of the hearing, however, was to infer that all pregnancy care centers “abuse” women in an effort to discourage them from seeking abortions. Another point was to establish a congressional record for efforts to pass federal, state, and local legislation at a later time.

Had pregnancy care center representatives been allowed to testify, an opportunity denied by Wyden, the Subcommittee and its staff would have learned that a *small* minority have used deceptive tactics. Employing the absurd definition of “deception” invented by the staff, however, makes it seem as though almost every group was guilty of wrongdoing.

### Deception and Abuse

Wyden’s staff continued their diatribe against pregnancy care centers:

Staff heard personal stories, and collected affidavits, from a number of individuals who had been deceived and abused in such clinics. The abuse ranged from personal recriminations

from clinic staff toward persons seeking abortions to attempted physical restraint of those persons. Some of these incidents were repeated in instances where subcommittee staff visited bogus clinics to verify implied offerings of abortion or abortion referral services.<sup>28</sup>

Once again, few complaints came from *actual* clients. Most complaints came from “plants” representing news agencies, congressional offices, and/or those sent by pro-abortion groups. In other words, people who went looking for a controversy were able to create one, but those truly in need were pleased with the services.

Planned Parenthood and similar groups have actively solicited people to file complaints against pregnancy care centers, which have served hundreds of thousands of people that were pleased with the services. Consequently, personal stories and affidavits attacking centers are primarily from “plants,” not individuals who were really in need. Moreover, the abortion dynasty is one of the least regulated industries in the Free World. Only insiders know the degree to which deception takes place inside an abortion facility. Those who have left the industry have reported that abuse, lies and misinformation are common practices.

Planned Parenthood has nothing negative to say about a person who goes into a pregnancy care center under false pretenses. Yet in 1985, a parent went into a Planned Parenthood facility with the specific purpose of obtaining some of the group’s indecent literature. What was the response of Planned Parenthood officials? “I frankly don’t know what to think about people who come to an agency under false pretenses and hunt around to try to find evidence for their charges,” a spokesman said.<sup>29</sup> The parent easily found what she had been seeking.

While there are countless stories of women who were displeased with their visit to Planned Parenthood, the group seeks to discredit or ignore those who complain. While Planned Parenthood refuses to deal with allegations made against its employees, it is quick to point to “plants” to make a case against pregnancy care centers. Pro-life leaders, on the other hand, point to *real* Planned Parenthood customers. Consequently, Planned Parenthood’s attempt to draw attention away from its failures and place it on innocent volunteers—some of the most caring and selfless people on earth—is both wrong and pathetic.

### **Grandstanding Par Excellence**

Seeking someone they could bully, blame and publicly chastise, Wyden and his staff took aim at Yellow Pages publishers:

In its survey of yellow page directories, subcommittee staff found a wide degree of variance in use of disclaimers, restric-

tion of advertising placement, and policing of claims or implications in the substance of display ads...Some yellow page publishers, for example, require disclaimers that precede abortion alternative listings specifying that those advertisers will not provide abortion or abortion referral services, but most directories do not. In many cases, directory publishers allow bogus operators to list themselves under the “clinics” heading, even though no professional services are provided.<sup>30</sup>



Wyden’s staff wanted to place Yellow Pages publishers in the position of determining what is and is not a “bogus abortion clinic.” Once again, using the definition provided by the staff, this would include virtually every organization that does not commit or refer for abortions. Moreover, there is nothing inherently wrong with advertising under “clinics,” so long as false or misleading statements are not made about services offered. The abortion industry sought to write the definitions and set the “standards” in order to support itself.

Wyden’s staff believed Yellow Pages advertising to be a problem primarily because listings and advertisements for abortion alternative organizations were placed close to those that commit abortions:

These operators often advertise under “clinic” listings in yellow page directories. In those directories which also offer both “abortion services” and “abortion alternative” listings, these operators generally are correctly listed under “alternatives.” However, often these deceptive facilities share display advertising space, usually on the same page, with legitimate abortion providers. This proximity problem has been the cause of confusion and consumer abuse, according to persons interviewed by the subcommittee staff.<sup>31</sup>

Pregnancy care centers were generally and appropriately listed under “Abortion Alternatives” in telephone directories where a distinction was made. This is clearly not deceptive and shows a desire to be upfront. The fact remains that in many areas it is the Yellow Pages publisher who determines the most appropriate category for a pregnancy care center.

It seems the agenda of abortion fans is to remove the “Abortion Alternatives” category altogether. “Abortion Alternatives” appears before “Abortion Services,” as does “Abortion Information.” Some women may contact one of the alternative groups because they did not originally know alternatives were available or because, in their haste, they selected the first name in the phone book that had “Abortion” in its title. This impacts the income of abortionists. In addition, women who seek assistance at a pregnancy care center are given accurate information that is not typically made available by abortionists, such as fetal development, possible abortion-related complications and a description of abortion procedures.

Wyden's hearing intimidated Yellow Pages publishers into doing what the abortion industry wanted them to do. Yellow Pages publishers are now printing "clarifications" under "Abortion Alternatives" which read for example: "Advertisers under this heading provide assistance, and/or information on abortion alternatives. They do not provide abortion services, nor do they provide counseling or information on abortions."<sup>32</sup> There was little resistance to adding this "clarification."



Do the publishers consider this some sort of compromise, especially since it is at least partially inaccurate? Advertisers under the heading do provide counseling and information about abortion; just not that approved by the abortion industry and the easily intimidated Yellow Pages publishers. Unfortunately, some of the nation's largest national and international pregnancy care center organizations appear unconcerned about this action.

Interestingly, Planned Parenthood was listed in the 1994 telephone book in Nashville, Tennessee under "Abortion Alternatives" even though the text above the listing stated that entities listed under the heading assert "that they do not provide abortion services or counseling or information on the attainment of abortion." Knowing that all Planned Parenthood affiliates must either commit or refer for abortions, one has to wonder why this deceptive practice has not been investigated or reported by the media.

To counter the alphabetical listing problem, abortion-committing entities are now being placed under a new category titled, "Abortion Access," which appears before "Abortion Alternatives" in the Yellow Pages. It seems abortionists do not want women to find out that alternatives are available.

### Rewriting History

Wyden's staff gave their version of the history of pregnancy care centers:

The bogus abortion clinic phenomenon emerged in the early 1970s, spurred initially by the work of the St. Louis, Missouri-based Pearson Foundation, an aggressive anti-abortion organization. The Foundation provides training manuals, urine tests, videos such as the anti-abortion staple "Silent Scream," and detailed training for operators of bogus clinics.<sup>33</sup>

Once again, these comments were aimed at the Pearson Foundation by name, but were intended to be extrapolated to all pregnancy care centers. The report continued:

Pearson's formula for clinic operation is recounted in a 93-page manual, "How to Start and Operate Your Own Pro-Life Outreach Crisis Pregnancy Center." The Foundation's methods were later adopted, replicated and/or refined by other groups...<sup>34</sup>

Near the end of the report, Subcommittee staff noted that not all pregnancy care centers are guilty of deception. "These bogus operators do not necessarily represent the majority of the anti-abortion counseling movement," the report read. "Recognized groups such as Birthright have gone on record as opposing the deceptive practices of the bogus clinics."<sup>35</sup>

This brief statement is rather pathetic given the fact that virtually every other statement throughout the report and during oral testimony at the Wyden hearing (note the 2,000 figure) implied that all but a few pregnancy care centers were guilty of deception. As usual, the media reported such statements as "gospel truth" without even a passing reference to the above statement.

One of PPFA's chief accomplices in attacking pregnancy care centers, PAW was described in glowing terms by Wyden's staff:

People for the American Way, a non-profit, constitutional rights organization, recently demanded that the Maryland state attorney general conduct an investigation of a chain of "Crisis Pregnancy Centers" in that state. The group said the centers "through ads and conversations with callers...deliberately mislead women to believe they provide abortion services and give false information about abortion and birth control."

"The centers disseminate false information regarding the risks and effects of abortion," reads the complaint. "The centers provide anti-abortion information and engage in scare tactics with the intent that women will rely on the false information and decide not to seek the services of a legitimate abortion clinic."<sup>36</sup>

PAW was identified as a "non-profit, constitutional rights organization." Founded by Norman Lear, the group is staunchly supportive of the abortion industry. It has even filed legal briefs in abortion-related cases. PAW is *not* a neutral entity. In fact, "PAW" is essentially another way of spelling "ACLU."



It was alleged that pregnancy care centers disseminate "false information regarding the risks and effects of abortion" and they "engage in scare tactics." Apparently, only those statistics released by pro-abortion groups such as PPFA's affiliate The Alan Guttmacher Institute are acceptable.

The "scare tactics" included showing fetal development slides or abortion procedure information. While these may be surprising and even disconcerting to some women, such information is nevertheless scientifically sound. Women who know the whole truth are likely to decide against abortion. Abortionists are even concerned about showing women an ultrasound image of the baby. "Abortion is a hard enough thing for any woman to decide without the torture of seeing the baby on an ultrasound screen," said Lianne Lacroix of a Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada British Columbia affiliate.<sup>37</sup>

## Litigation

Wyden's staff report claimed there had been few lawsuits against pregnancy care centers, but three such cases were referenced:

An attorney general's action in Maryland would be unusual, but not unique. Attorneys general or district attorneys in at least three states—California, New York and Texas—have sued bogus abortion clinics for deceptive or misleading promotional tactics. In each case, the foundation for action was the state's consumer protection law:

- In the New York case, clinics settled out-of-court with the state, agreeing to amend counseling and advertising methods.
- The Texas suit resulted in an injunction against the offending clinic, followed by a jury verdict which resulted in a large cash award to plaintiffs. The decision has been sustained in lower court appeals, and the U.S. Supreme Court has declined to review.
- In California, courts enjoined a clinic requiring that it only advertise that it provides abortion alternatives.<sup>38</sup>



**Allred** Assuming politics played absolutely no role in enforcement and tossing aside the definitions created by Wyden's staff (huge assumptions, to be sure), some of these actions may have been appropriate. This was clearly not the case with all three, however. For example, Gloria Allred, a radical feminist and activist for abortion, was the lead attorney in the California action. The report continued:

Some state attorneys general have declined to act against bogus clinics based on interpretations of state consumer protection laws. In Washington state, for example, the state AG [Attorney General] argued that since no money changed hands at a bogus clinic which was the subject of a complaint, no "commerce" took place which places the activity under the consumer protection statute's authority...<sup>39</sup>

This was a good decision on the part of Washington's Attorney General. Consumer fraud is not taking place because pregnancy care centers do not exist to sell commodities or services to the consuming public. They are nonprofit, charitable organizations providing welcomed services free of charge. Center volunteers are people helping people. Women are being offered a real choice and abortion providers do not like it.

## Bad Hearing

After Wyden's staff prepared their report, the lawmaker continued his crusade of outright and intentional deception when he held a public congressional hearing on pregnancy care centers. Three panels had been established for testimony at the hearing.

Panel one included Shannon Lock and Jennifer Kraeger, identified as victims of "bogus clinic practices"; Lynn

Taliento, Subcommittee staff investigator; and NCAP's Fitzsimmons.

Panel two was comprised of Robert Abrams, attorney general for the State of New York; Arlo Smith, district attorney in San Francisco; Stephen Salo, assistant attorney general for the State of Texas; Mark Salo, executive director of Planned Parenthood of San Diego and Riverside Counties; Marcia Greenberger, co-president of the National Women's Law Center; and Deanna R. Duby, deputy legal director of PAW. *All* of these people adamantly support abortion.

The third panel consisted of representatives from various telephone companies. Wyden chose to use these gentlemen for his grandstanding by grilling them on their practices. This is common behavior for Wyden who is long on showmanship but short on facts and integrity.

Despite repeated requests for an opportunity to testify, pregnancy care center leaders were not allowed to do so. Wyden appeared on NBC's "Today" the morning of the hearing during which he said representatives of the "bogus abortion clinics" had refused to testify and that he would have loved the chance to hear from them. This was an outright lie to the American people and Wyden knew it. Not only did the Subcommittee have subpoena power, the leader of at least one organization defamed in Wyden's staff report virtually begged to be allowed to testify, but he was not allowed to do so.

Media coverage of the Subcommittee hearing was extensive and largely unfair. Statements by those testifying and accusations made in the staff report were often presented as fact, not opinion. No one was allowed to question those making allegations.

## "PrimeTime" Exposé

Fitzsimmons, who in 1997 admitted to lying about the number of partial-birth abortions committed in the United States, demonstrated the collusion between the media and the abortion industry in his memorandum dated September 4, 1991:

To publicize this issue as much as possible, I went to the ABC program "Prime Time" several weeks ago and they immediately agreed to do an "expose" on the issue. I have directed them to bogus clinics around the country and to several "victims". Their producers tell me that they have some terrific footage using undercover cameras. At this time, they hope to air the program sometime in mid-September [actual airing date was October 31, 1991]. This show airs at 10:00 EST on Thursdays. I will alert all providers with fax machines once I hear when the show is going to air.<sup>40</sup>

In the same memo, Fitzsimmons urged members of his group and others to stage a media event outside local pregnancy care centers. This led to many local stories on

the issue. “PrimeTime” producers, two camera crew, and correspondent Chris Wallace interviewed Harriet R. T. Lewis, national director of the Christian Action Council’s (CAC) pregnancy care centers. “PrimeTime” had sent an employee posing as a pregnant woman into at least two centers affiliated with CAC. The employee carried a hidden camera.

During the interview, Wallace alleged that advertising under “Clinic” in the Yellow Pages is deceptive. There were two primary reasons for this statement: 1) pregnancy care center advertising is sometimes placed on the same page as—even next to—that for abortion facilities. Wallace implied the advertising was intentionally and diabolically placed in that location to mislead women; and 2) pregnancy care centers do not write in their advertising, “Don’t want to get an abortion? Come see us.”



Wallace

In other words, Wallace was asserting that a specific statement should be included in advertising that expresses the center’s philosophy. Opposing abortion is what the centers “do” and offering services is just a means to do so, he suggested. Wallace also said pregnancy care center operators really do not care if a woman erroneously goes to a center believing she can get an abortion.

One of the specific display advertisements referred to by Wallace included “offering...Free Pregnancy Tests, results while you wait, Lay Counseling, Post Abortion Counseling, Abortion Information and Alternatives, Temporary Housing, 24 Hr. Hotline. All services confidential, all services free.”<sup>41</sup> The advertisement was listed under the “Clinic” heading. While clarification is advisable, the sentence, “Abortion Information and Alternatives” does show that alternatives are offered. The advertisement does not state, nor does it imply, that abortions are committed.

Wallace was utterly ignorant about why pregnancy care centers were established in the first place, although it may be reasonable to argue that his position was based more on his politics than reality. The centers were established to provide alternative services and care to women and to present them with information about abortion that was not being given by abortionists.

Pregnancy care centers are unashamedly anti-abortion, but the purpose is to offer alternatives to abortion. The natural byproduct of providing positive solutions to the needs facing women during an untimely pregnancy is that many will decide against abortion. Pregnancy care centers essentially place the “choices” available to women and girls on a more equal footing.

Wallace wanted pregnancy care centers to blatantly state a philosophical position. Unfortunately, he does not be-

lieve abortionists should place a statement like, “Abortion alternatives and prenatal care are not offered here,” in their advertisements. A woman could just as easily make the mistake of believing an abortionist will provide nondirective counseling, which is not the case, and alternatives.

What is the harm done if a woman goes to a pregnancy care center when she wants to have an abortion? She not only may learn that alternatives are available, but she may also discover that she has not been told everything there is to know about abortion. No harm could come to her. Nevertheless, such a mistake would be based on a misunderstanding, not deception (overt or covert), and it is easily cleared up. Some organizations just cannot tolerate it when a woman chooses life over abortion.

Wallace questioned the description of an abortion procedure given by a pregnancy care center director. He said the phony client was in her first trimester, but the director described a fetus and abortion procedures applicable to the second trimester. The director said she had explained abortion procedures at *all* stages of development, not just those used in the second trimester. When Lewis expressed doubt about the accuracy of Wallace’s version of what took place, he said the entire videotape would be aired on “PrimeTime” and Lewis should just accept his word. Wallace was telling Lewis she should comment on a video she had not seen with her own eyes. (The part of video Wallace had referenced was *not* aired, but the allegations against the director were included of the program.)

Wallace questioned references to possible abortion-related complications that had been made by the Center’s director. He said the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported only six deaths had been attributed to abortion in 1990. What Wallace did not say was that abortion-related deaths are underreported. Abortionists have nothing to gain by reporting a death as having been related to abortion. A more specific cause of death, such as “heart failure,” is recorded. Deaths that occur after the procedure are also routinely listed as having been due to unrelated reasons even when there was a direct correlation.

The CDC admits that abortionists are *not* required to report abortion-related data. It has conceded that states have differing reporting standards (some have none for complications but deaths must be reported—in some way). Simply put, reporting is a state matter. When the CDC was asked about underreporting and attributing abortion-related deaths to other causes, the response was, “That happens, I’m sure.”<sup>42</sup>



According to Wallace, the American Cancer Society, which donates funds to Planned Parenthood, claimed there is no increase in the possibility of breast cancer due to an early first trimester abortion. Wallace also said there is no increase in the possibility of spontaneous abortion following an induced abortion. But the CDC said there are conflicting studies on both issues. With this in mind, telling women that some studies have shown a potential risk is advisable as this is the truth. Planned Parenthood and its allies apparently believe women do not women have a right to know.

The CDC statements Wallace chose to report were presented as indisputable facts. They were not. Wallace either intentionally set out to mislead the public or was negligent in his “research.”

At the urging of NCAP, several similar reports on pregnancy care centers were been done by the media. The “PrimeTime” report generated extensive local coverage. KVEN-AM, based in Ventura, Calif., featured a report by Phil Hendrie, one of those radio show hosts believe controversy is necessary to get listeners. In a program aired on September 20, 1991, Hendrie said he “found out about the Ventura County Crisis Pregnancy Center” and that he was “a little bit troubled.” He went on to allege the Center was deceptive.<sup>43</sup>



**Hendrie**

One issue raised during a conversation Hendrie had with a woman on his staff. The woman, who claimed to have conducted an “investigation” of the Ventura Center, said, “They do offer, ah, medical treatment should you decide to, to keep your pregnancy, but pretty much if you decide to terminate [the pregnancy] they won’t have anything to do with you.”<sup>44</sup>

Hendrie asked the staffer, who had never been involved in an abortion-counseling program at the Center, to describe her experience. Strong anti-religious bigotry was evident in his choice of words:

*Hendrie:* And what does that mean? They’ll save your soul from eternal damnation?

*Staffer:* Yeah, probably.

*Hendrie:* They’ll save you from burning in Hell?

*Staffer:* Probably. They’ll probably make you see the light.

*Hendrie:* Either that or they’ll make you feel even more guilty than you, than you might already feel walking in the door there.

*Staffer:* Yeah, I think so, because I remember they have a lot of paraphernalia and films and propaganda that they show you before hand...I think what it is, basically, is, ah, they used, ah, the scare tactic type thing.

Most of them do, when you think about it. You know, they don’t counsel you as far as decisions, they show you only a one-sided thing...<sup>45</sup>

Not surprisingly, Hendrie was quick to back off from his strident position after KVEN’s station manager received a six-page letter from an attorney representing the pregnancy care center’s parent organization. The letter detailed the unfair treatment and suggested legal action was under consideration. Cowardly radio program hosts often retreat under such circumstances. They are good at opening their mouths, but poor at supporting their reckless remarks with facts. Nevertheless, radio program hosts like Hendrie seem to think, in their own minds, that they are Sherlock Holmes.

### Still More Litigation



**Glessner**

The National Institute of Family and Life Advocates (NIFLA) was created to provide legal services to pregnancy care centers and to assist those under siege by providing counsel and training. Thomas A. Glessner, J.D., president and general counsel of NIFLA, commented on the need for a legal arm to defend pregnancy care centers:

Pro-life pregnancy centers around the country are victims of a national conspiracy planned and implemented by Planned Parenthood—the nation’s number one abortion provider. Planned Parenthood’s motives are obvious. The more than 2,000 pro-life pregnancy centers annually take millions of dollars out of the pockets of abortion providers by giving women resources, which enable them to choose life. Such an effective response to the abortion industry from the pro-life pregnancy centers obviously has enraged abortionists who want to close these centers down.<sup>46</sup>

Extensive publicity helped lead to court decisions against pregnancy care centers. In April 1994, a California Superior Court issued its decision in *Jane Roe v. San Diego Pregnancy Clinic*. The plaintiff had charged that she found the Center for Unplanned Pregnancy in the Yellow Pages under “clinic,” wherein the pregnancy care center offered a “free pregnancy test and pregnancy options counseling.”<sup>47</sup> The plaintiff in the case, Planned Parenthood of San Diego and Riverside Counties (Calif.), and a woman who claimed to have been misled charged the Center with fraudulent and deceptive advertising. Practicing medicine and operating a clinic without a license were also alleged.

Mark Salo, executive director of the PPFA affiliate involved in the case, referred to the advertisements placed by the pregnancy care center as “artful deception.” He charged that consumers are unable to tell what is being offered by reading the advertisements.<sup>48</sup>

In the decision, the Superior Court judge wrote:

As a result of the contents of such advertising, it was reasonable for the Plaintiff to believe that CUP [Center for Unplanned Pregnancy] was a licensed clinic authorized to conduct pregnancy testing; and that she would receive unbiased medical information about abortion and about her options, if she was pregnant, including the option to choose abortion.

While the Plaintiff was waiting for the results of her pregnancy test, she was presented a videotape for viewing. The contents of the videotape clearly establishes the fact that CUP is anti-abortion and a religious-based organization whose purpose is to persuade pregnant women not to have an abortion.<sup>49</sup>

The judge granted an injunction requested by Planned Parenthood of San Diego and Riverside Counties limiting the operations of the pregnancy care center. The injunction prohibited the center from:

- indicating or implying that the Center for Unplanned Pregnancy is a medical or health care facility, or a clinic, including an injunction against advertising “pregnancy testing” or “pregnancy test,” as opposed to “pregnancy test kits,” which indicate a medical or health care service, that the Center for Unplanned Pregnancy cannot lawfully perform;
- advertising that the Center for Unplanned Pregnancy’s pregnancy test kits are free, when they are conditional upon anything—including, but not limited to, signing a waiver, receiving “counseling” or listening to any presentation; unless such conditions are disclosed in every location where a free “pregnancy test kit” is advertised, or the Center for Unplanned Pregnancy informs every consumer who comes to the Center for Unplanned Pregnancy that the test kit is available free (unconditionally) without signing any waiver, providing information or receiving counseling;
- advertising in such a way as to deceive the public into believing the Center for Unplanned Pregnancy offers abortion counseling which meets the standard of care for such counseling; including a prohibition against advertising “abortion education,” without disclosing that the center provides only alternatives to abortion counseling from a Biblical perspective by volunteers;
- advertising under misleading directory headings, such as: “clinics,” “abortion service providers,” “abortion service referral providers,” “birth control providers,” “birth control information,” headings for family planning information, the Health Care Guide headings of the “SDSU—Plus Pages,” and headings for pregnancy options counseling;
- performing “pregnancy testing” until licensed to do so, including: 1) collecting urine samples; 2) transporting urine samples for the purpose of conducting pregnancy tests; 3) assisting in the administration of pregnancy tests; 4) diagnosis or assisting in self-di-

agnosis of pregnancy; and 5) interpreting pregnancy test results or confirming the interpretation of pregnancy test results by others.<sup>50</sup>

The injunction required disclosure over the telephone to each caller that the Center for Unplanned Pregnancy does not perform abortions or give abortion referrals, birth control or birth control referrals, or written pregnancy verifications, and that the Center for Unplanned Pregnancy’s counseling is run by volunteers from a Biblical, “anti-abortion” perspective.<sup>51</sup>



Planned Parenthood could not have written a better decision itself. It is amazingly ludicrous. All of this is especially interesting considering a comment made by Abby B. Silverman, attorney for the plaintiff, during opening arguments in the case: “The only option to an unplanned pregnancy is abortion.”<sup>52</sup>

### Continuing Fallout

While the intensity of this battle wanes from time-to-time, it is periodically reignited by pro-abortion groups, the media, politicians, and in the writings of abortion apologists. *A Woman’s Book of Choices*, by Rebecca Chalker and Carol Downer, included this crafty statement:

By its own estimate, the anti-abortion movement operates some 3,500 fake “clinics,” “crisis counseling services,” “problem pregnancy advice centers,” and phony abortion information services in the States. Most of these groups are associated with the Pierson [sic] Foundation, a Catholic anti-abortion funding organization, or with the Christian Action Council, a fundamentalist umbrella group that sponsors many anti-abortion activities.<sup>53</sup>

The authors quote the director of an abortion facility who said, “One of the most skillful ploys of these places is the insidious mix of truth and falsehood.”<sup>54</sup>

*On the Issues* ran an article by Neil deMause titled, “Counterfeit Clinics, Genuine Pain.” Not surprisingly, it is riddled with misinformation as well as a narrative about “Nicole’s” experience at one of the “phony clinics.” In a continuation of the Yellow Pages controversy from 1991, Leslie Sebastian of Planned Parenthood was quoted as saying, “If Tupperware put an ad in saying they were Faberware, nobody would have any qualms about making them change.”<sup>55</sup> The problem is that no one offered proof that any pregnancy care center had called itself an “abortion clinic.” For that matter, has anyone seen a Yellow Pages advertisement for an abortion facility that refers to itself as an “abortion clinic”?

Unable to document anything fake about NIFLA, deMause referred to its president as “fake-clinic advo-

cate Tom Glessner.” deMause continued his hatchet job by stating that “most investigators agree that—with the possible exception of the Birthright chain—virtually all fake clinics engage in deceptive practices.” The only documented charge offered against a pregnancy care center was that of Krista Stoner who filed a successful lawsuit (*Stoner v. Williams*) against a San Diego center for fraud.<sup>56</sup> If the testimony offered was truthful it was a most unfortunate incident. In no way, however, could it be legitimately used as an indictment of “virtually all” pregnancy care centers.

A February 1995 article in *Time* referenced how the “goals of the antiabortion movement collide headon [sic] with the [Newt] Gingrich agenda...by promoting childbirth among the very women the Contract with America hopes to discourage from motherhood...” The work of a pregnancy care center in New York, Cobb Pregnancy Services, was described. The author was quick to point out that the Center “has no staff members with medical training” and that any woman who enters the facility will be subjected to “a good dose of antiabortion counseling using plastic fetuses, pamphlets, and videos.”<sup>57</sup>

The author continued by taking another swipe at the New York center, noting that it provides “used baby and maternity clothes (emphasis added).” Not finding evidence of deception, the reporter sought out Planned Parenthood’s Leslie Sebastian “who has monitored these unlicensed centers” and “warns that they have a history of deception.” What supporting information did Sebastian offer? A personal narrative from an *unidentified* woman who had supposedly been looking for an abortion but wound up contacting Cobb Pregnancy Services instead. She apparently was surprised that “a Christian woman would be on the other end of the phone.” Interestingly, it was reported that the woman did pay a visit to Cobb Pregnancy Services and she decided to keep her baby.<sup>58</sup>

In April 1995, the *Washington Times* ran a story about the Capitol Hill Crisis Pregnancy Center in Washington, D.C. Titled, “A Helping Hand to Halt Abortion,” the article included an interview with an *identified* woman, Darlene Ray, who was determined to either have her pre-born child killed or release the baby for adoption. After getting assistance at the Center, she decided to keep her baby. Ray spoke positively about the assistance she received, including help finding a job to support her family.<sup>59</sup>



In pointing out the existence of intense opposition to pregnancy care centers, the *Washington Times* sought the opinion of Planned Parenthood. Its spokeswoman, Susan Montagne, said, “They will, in effect, lie. It’s deceptive. It’s not factual.” Again, sweeping, unsubstantiated, un-

related accusations are made by a spokesman for the abortion industry. Robin McDonald, the director of the Capitol Hill Crisis Pregnancy Center, countered that the staff is “very upfront” with the women it counsels.<sup>60</sup>

*Mademoiselle*, which has accepted awards from PPF, published a four page article titled, “Abortion Clinics That Aren’t,” in its June 1995 issue. In describing pregnancy care centers “around the country,” the author commented that, “Instead of fighting the abortion battle in the courts or in the streets, they strike at women’s minds. Using a combination of misleading advertising, inflammatory medical information and psychological manipulation, they work to make those who are considering abortion feel frightened or guilty...”<sup>61</sup>

### “Bogus,” to “Fake,” to “Stealth”

Another assault on pregnancy care centers can be traced to a *Washington Times* article on January 8, 1999, in which Frederica Mathewes-Green reported on the success of a San Francisco Bay (Calif.) area center. First Resort “operates under a special arrangement with one of the largest HMOs [health maintenance organizations] in the country.” Shari Plunkett, the founder of First Resort, said the HMO had conducted a study in which it found that the rate of abortion for women having repeat abortions declined “if women received counseling.” After making a presentation to the staff of the HMO a referral system was established.<sup>62</sup>



Mathewes-Green

Plunkett commented that the people in the organization had “been very honest” that their goal was to “build the Bay Area into an abortion-free community.” She added that 60 percent of the women they work with who were seriously contemplating abortion decide to carry their babies to term. “Over the 14 years I’ve been doing this,” Plunkett said, “we’ve seen 15,000 to 20,000 women, and I’ve never seen one come back and say, ‘I’m so angry that you helped me carry this baby to term.’”<sup>63</sup>

One week later the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that the previously unnamed HMO, Kaiser Permanente, has “hastily withdrawn referrals to the counseling center...pending a review of its previous evaluation that First Resort provided ‘unbiased’ advice to its patients. To pro-abortion activists, it is the latest manifestation of what they call ‘stealth clinics,’ anti-abortion front groups that masquerade as as [sic] counseling services in a bid to talk women out of having an abortion.” Apparently, 40 percent of women visiting First Resort and choosing abortion is just not enough for the pro-abortion crowd. Plunkett said “every one of the 140 women referred by Kaiser has filled out an evaluation” and only one woman said she felt “pressured to not have an abortion.”<sup>64</sup>

“Based on our meetings with them [First Resort personnel], and reviewing their literature, we felt they did provide the full range of choices to somebody trying to make a decision whether to maintain a pregnancy,” said a local spokesman for Kaiser Permanente. It was noted that Kaiser was aware of First Resort’s goals and philosophy before they agreed to work together.<sup>65</sup>

No complaints about the counseling at First Resort had been received by Kaiser. But Kaiser Permanente headquarters was unaware of the arrangement between First Resort and its Oakland office. As a corporate supporter of Planned Parenthood, it is easy to see what happened when corporate leaders learned about the referrals.

PPFA and other pro-abortion groups are quick to point out that, unlike the people at bogus, fake, or stealth clinics, they believe women should be made aware of *all* options available to them. But Planned Parenthood officials have refused to acknowledge that they fall short in this regard. Ignoring personal narratives and looking only at facts, a strong case can be made that women counseled at Planned Parenthood are not presented with all choices.

An audit of federally-funded “family planning clinics” by the U.S. General Accounting Office found that PPFA had the highest average abortion referral rate. The study revealed that Planned Parenthood’s rate was 35.2 percent compared to 5.7 percent for all family planning clinics. Amazingly and surely not accidentally, PPFA’s Seattle-King County (Wash.) affiliate referred 86.4 percent of females with a positive pregnancy test to an abortionist.<sup>66</sup>



**Feldt**

In 1999, a bill called that Adoption Awareness Act was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. It would have required family planning clinics receiving federal funds to get their employees trained in adoption counseling. Commenting on the bill, Gloria Feldt, president of PPFA, saw dollar signs. She said PPFA “would be delighted to have additional monies...to support what in many instances—in almost all instances—what we’re already doing.”<sup>67</sup> Needless-to-say, however, with statistics like those reported by the U.S. General Account Office, PPFA is apparently doing something very, very wrong.

## Internet Overload

The assault on pregnancy care centers has been fueled by the Internet. While still attempting to paint all centers as the same, central in most attacks on pregnancy care centers is the complaint that many use “neutral” or “feminist” sounding names.

PPFA is the undisputed leader in the assault against pregnancy care centers. It published a brochure, which has been made available online, titled, “Anti-Abortion

Counseling Centers: A Consumer’s Alert to Deception, Harassment and Medical Malpractice.”<sup>68</sup>

In 1999, NARAL posted a “fact sheet” on its fear-based website titled, “Deceptive Anti-Abortion Crisis Pregnancy Centers [CPCs].” Designed for media use, it is riddled with semantic garble including, “fake clinics,” “deceptive centers,” “lure women,” “enticing,” “duplicitous means,” “coercive and overbearing tactics,” “intimidation,” and “use any means necessary.”<sup>69</sup>

One ludicrous complaint offered by NARAL was that, “unlike clinics which provide abortions, CPCs are staffed by anti-choice volunteers who refuse to refer for abortion or birth control, preaching abstinence as the only method of preventing unwanted pregnancies.”<sup>70</sup>

NARAL was more cautious about lumping all pregnancy care centers together when it declared that “while there are centers which do not deceive women or attempt to coerce them to keep their child, many other centers continue to use deceptive practices in order to prevent women from accessing the full range of reproductive health options.”<sup>71</sup>

Always on the search for stories from supposed “victims,” an appeal was included:

The NARAL Foundation would like to collect stories from women about their experiences or their friends’ experiences with these fake clinics. If you would like to share a story about an experience at a crisis pregnancy center, please send it to [naral@naral.org](mailto:naral@naral.org) or fax to (202) 973-3030.<sup>72</sup>

The Feminist Majority’s website included the following text about pregnancy care centers:

In an effort to stop women from choosing abortion, anti-choice zealots have established fake “clinics” all over the country. Through deceptive advertising offering “free pregnancy tests,” or reading, “Pregnant? Need Help?” these centers prey on young and low-income women. These anti-choice fake clinics seek out women who are afraid to talk to their parents, or cannot afford pregnancy tests. Although they claim otherwise, these centers are not pro-choice reproductive health clinics, and do not offer a full range of gynecological services for women. Instead, workers at the “clinics” intimidate and scare women who are considering abortion.

...

Your Leadership Alliance can help protect yourselves and others in your community by uncovering this anti-choice deception. The “Exposing Fake Clinics” action involves researching all of the clinics in your area, and determining which ones are fake. After identifying these fake clinics, your Leadership Alliance will help protect women in the area by conducting visibility campaigns against the anti-choice fake clinics.

...

Report your findings to your Field Representatives, Planned Parenthood and the National Abortion Federation (NAF), who track and record the locations of these centers.”<sup>73</sup>

The Center for Reproductive Law & Policy included this statement about pregnancy care centers on its website:

There exists a well organized anti-choice campaign to dissuade women from exercising their right to choose by luring them into “crisis pregnancy centers” and then subjecting them to anti-abortion intimidation and propaganda.<sup>74</sup>

In an article titled, “Don’t Be Fooled by Imitations,” The Pro Choice Connection seeks to “warn” women:

These anti-choice organizations make finding legitimate agencies as difficult as navigating your way through a minefield. Finding a pro-choice agency can be particularly discouraging and confusing to women unaware of anti-choice politics.

Once these fake clinics get women inside their doors, they prey upon the vulnerability of their situations, using guilt, fear, intimidation, and exaggerated promises of post-natal support to dissuade women from having abortions.<sup>75</sup>

The Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL) advised online visitors to check Heartbeat International’s website “for a list of fake clinics...” As CARAL explained, “If it’s on this list, it doesn’t provide the full range of services. (Please note that this may not be a complete list.)”<sup>76</sup> This is a clear indictment of all Heartbeat International centers that is not based on alleged fraud, but on the fact that it refuses to commit abortions.

### Logical Conclusions

It seems one can logically reach several conclusions with regard to the attacks against pregnancy care centers. But one must look at the controversy in an honest manner, without a political or social agenda:

- The charges against pregnancy care centers, even if true, applied to only a handful of operations, but they are used as a broad way to attack all centers.
- Most pregnancy care centers have strict standards relating to integrity. This fact is routinely ignored.
- At the urging of the abortion industry, Wyden used taxpayer dollars to wage a personal war against pregnancy care centers. (Wyden was the only Member of Congress to attend the hearing.) They conspired to generate negative publicity against all such centers and to create a congressional record for future legislation at all levels.
- Pregnancy care center representatives were not allowed to testify before the Subcommittee because a one-sided attack was part of the scheme.
- Attacks against pregnancy care centers were part of a sinister and calculated effort orchestrated by PPFA, the world’s primary abortion advocacy behemoth.
- The definition of terms provided by Wyden’s staff were flawed and served the purposes of the abortion industry.

- Allegations of abuse were fabricated or exaggerated and came from abortion industry “plants.”
- At the urging of the abortion industry, the media presented a tainted view of pregnancy care centers.
- The attacks continue and those who spread these lies are not expected to quit any time soon.

Pregnancy care centers were initially created because women needed help. Pro-abortion activists made a point of saying that pro-lifers were fighting abortion but not offering real assistance to women and girls. Now that such help is being offered, PPFA has seen the error of its ways. Complaining that pro-life activists were not providing help to those in need ended up costing PPFA a lot of money in lost business. Pro-abortion activists did not believe pro-life people would step in to meet the need, but they could not have been more wrong.

*Life Insight* reported on an October 1997 poll conducted by the Wirthlin Group which found that 86 percent of those individuals who call themselves “pro-choice,” 87 percent of those who called themselves “pro-life,” and 88 percent of those who took a “middle ground” position on abortion had a favorable attitude toward pregnancy care centers. It reported that “of those who have actually used the services of a crisis pregnancy center, 98 percent felt it had a positive effect on them—including 71 percent who felt it had a very positive effect.”<sup>77</sup>

While some of the most caring and decent people in the world work at pregnancy care centers, it sometimes seems that “no good deed goes unpunished.” This is especially true when the organized “crime” that is the abortion industry sees someone or something that is invading its “territory.” It is an indictment against the pro-lifers who accepted the attacks by the secular (pro-abortion) media—abandoning pregnancy care centers, the people who serve there, and the women who are in need of assistance and the truth.

While the attacks against pregnancy care centers are ongoing, they are occasionally more orchestrated. It remains to be seen if the Pro-Life Movement will be ready. It remains to be seen if pro-life people will support pregnancy care centers in the face of such ungodly and self-serving activity. Only with God’s help will caring pro-lifers stand strong and sustain this good work despite being subjected to unjustifiable attacks.

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**UPDATES** and information related to the attacks on pregnancy care centers may be found in Autumn 2008 edition of *Special Reports* as well as the following editions of *The Caleb Report*, all of which may be accessed online ([www.fightpp.org](http://www.fightpp.org)): May-June 2005, May-June 2006, September-October 2006, November-December 2006, and May-June 2007.

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