



# Special Reports

Summer 2007

Life Decisions International

vol. x • no. 3

## ROTARY'S DANCE WITH DEATH

### Population Control Agenda And Ties To Pro-Abortion Groups Eclipse Good Works

by Douglas R. Scott, Jr.

**S**everal charitable organizations are included in the "Dishonorable Mention" section of *The Boycott List* because they support Planned Parenthood and/or at least part of its agenda. This support can come in many different ways.

The most common reason for placing a charity in the "Dishonorable Mention" section is support for human embryonic stem cell experimentation. Planned Parenthood supports such "research" because it furthers the idea that before birth, human beings have no moral value. After all, experimentation on human embryos would not be allowed if were immoral or otherwise considered wrong. And if there is nothing wrong with experimenting on such "products of conception," there surely could not be anything wrong with destroying them at will.

Some nationwide or worldwide charitable groups have received a "Dishonorable Mention" because they allow their chapters to fund Planned Parenthood. Rotary International falls into this category. But this is just one aspect of Rotary's involvement in advancing the Culture of Death.

#### A Good Start

Rotary International (RI) was founded in 1905 and is made up of business and professional leaders. There are at least 32,000 local Rotary clubs in more than 200 countries, territories and geographical regions. RI describes itself as "A Global Network of Community Volunteers."



Membership in Rotary is by invitation only. Women were not allowed to join until 1989. RI claims nearly 1.2 million members. Each club strives to include representatives from major businesses, professions and institutions in its community.

RI commands an annual budget of nearly \$90 million. Its work is supported by the Rotary Foundation, which is funded by Rotarians and other supporters. Established in 1917, the Foundation was intended to be an endowment fund for RI so it can "do good in the world." There is currently approximately \$640 million in the fund.

Rotary's primary motto is "Service above self." It also has a secondary motto—"They profit most who serve best."

For more than a century, RI and its network of clubs have engaged in service projects designed to make the planet a better place on which to live. Rotary has tackled such problems as poverty, hunger, illiteracy, and disease.



Rotary's most well-known project began in 1979. So far, PolioPlus, which seeks to totally eradicate the devastating disease, has inoculated more than two billion children. At least 209 countries, territories and geographic areas around the world are now polio-free. It is estimated that by 2010, Rotary will have spent more than \$650 million on this project. Needless-to-say, PolioPlus is a praiseworthy effort—assuming, of course, that the source of the vaccine(s) is not human embryos. If this were the case, the project would be highly unethical and both the good intentions and deeds would be gravely overshadowed.

Along with its service projects, Rotary promotes high ethical standards in the workplace. Its objectives are to foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to promote:

- The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;
- High ethical standards in business and professions, the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations, and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;
- The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life;
- The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

These objectives are supplemented by "The Four-Way Test." Written by Rotarian and entrepreneur Herbert J. Taylor during the Great Depression, The Test was to be used as guiding principles for men in all aspects of professional life—in everything they "think, say or do". Taylor believed the application of such a standard would help restore consumer faith and confidence. Adopted by RI in 1943, The Four-Way Test consists of questions that business people should ask themselves:

Is it the truth?  
Is it fair to all concerned?  
Will it build good will and better friendships?  
Will it be beneficial to all concerned?



**Taylor** Taylor, who served as RI president in 1954, came up with The Test after taking over the nearly bankrupt Club Aluminum Company. Taylor theorized that if his employees could be convinced to do the right thing in every situation, the Company might be able to take customers away from competitors. He credited The Test for the eventual profitability of the Company.

### United Nations Children's Fund

Rotary International's working relationship with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) began in the 1980s. Despite its name, however, UNICEF is anything but pro-child and its agenda includes far more controversial than "disease prevention."

John Sagsveen, an admirable gentleman who left Rotary upon learning of its inclusion in the "Dishonorable Mention" section of LDI's *Boycott List*, wrote to RI headquarters in search of an explanation. He received a response from David Plater, program coordinator for the Service Support and Awards Department, Programs Division.

After reading Plater's response, a troubled Sagsveen sent an e-mail to LDI:

It's 3 AM, and I can't sleep because I am trying to make sense of...[Plater's response]. I resigned from Rotary, an organization I have belonged to for many years, based on the information...provided [by] Life Decisions International...After asking for clarification from my Rotary District regarding assertions that Rotary indirectly supported abortions, I resigned from Rotary because I didn't get a definitive response. As you can see from the last letter, another Rotarian took a different route and went directly to Rotary International and got a very good response, and one that directly contradicts yours.

You have made a strong accusation against a very good organization, and one I took a [sic] face value, because I had respect for Life Decisions International. This accusation has caused concern within Rotary, a wonderful organization that has done good works throughout the world. Both Rotary International and UNICEF have strong policy statements regarding their opposition to abortion. If you do have irrefutable proof of your assertions, that Rotary International supports UNICEF and they in turn support abortion, I would like to see it presented. If you don't, then you and your organization have caused untold distress and I will go back to my local Rotary Club like the prodigal son and ask forgiveness.

Noting that Sagsveen's distress was heartfelt and, given letter from Plater, quite understandable, LDI quickly responded to his concerns:

Mr. Sagsveen, as you might imagine, we have become rather expert at analyzing corporate rhetoric. After all, there can be no room for miscommunication or misunderstanding in our work. This protects both LDI and the corporation. With all due respect, the correspondence received from Rotary International is not a "good response." In fact, it is hardly a "response" at all. Moreover, the correspondence from Rotary International "directly contradicts" nothing. It does not even remotely or vaguely contradict our statements. Let's examine Mr. Plater's letter...

LDI addressed *every* point made by the Rotary official:

**RI:** Thank you for your recent message regarding Rotary's relationship with UNICEF and regret the controversy this relationship has caused within your club.

As you know, Rotary has helped to spearhead the global eradication of polio. To support these efforts, Rotary has partnered with several organizations including the World Health Organization, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and UNICEF. Polio has nearly been eradicated from the world with the help of these three organizations and the countless contributions of Rotarians around the world. To learn more about the role each of these partners play in global polio eradication efforts, we encourage you to visit either Rotary's PolioPlus Web site...or the Global Polio Eradication Initiative Web site...

**LDI:** RI admits it has a working relationship with UNICEF. This paragraph redirects the reader's focus from the relationship Rotary International has with UNICEF and toward the effort to eradicate polio. We do not dispute the statements made with regard to such efforts. In fact, we applaud such work. We do not believe, however, that this work should be done in alliance with a group that has as much baggage as UNICEF.

**RI:** Established in 1946 to provide food, clothing, and healthcare to children orphaned during World War II, UNICEF has become one of the world's leading child advocacy organizations. While UNICEF assists Rotary to procure, distribute, and train volunteers in the use of the polio vaccine, UNICEF also supports programs to improve the health, education, and safety of children in 191 countries worldwide.

**LDI:** Once again, this paragraph does not address the central issue. Very few organizations do bad work and only bad work. In virtually every case, ungodly works are cloaked by good works. Planned Parenthood, for example, commits hundreds of thousands of abortions in its own facilities every year. Yet it does not talk about this "work" when wanting to get support from the general public. In fact, it is downplayed. "Sure, we terminate pregnancies, but it represents just a small part of our work," its leaders often say.

So, fine, UNICEF was founded for ostensibly altruistic reasons. Who could be against providing food, clothing, education, safety, and health care to children? The problem is not with the *founding* of UNICEF; the problem is what it has been turned into by certain pro-abortion and population control zealots.

**RI:** You may be interested to learn that neither UNICEF nor Rotary International provides support for abortion

or abortion related activities. Moreover, Article 35 of the *Rotary Code of Policy*...specifically prohibits relationships that provide support for abortion or promote a particular political or religious entity.

**LDI:** The only directly applicable text of the *Rotary Code of Policy* is found on page 248 (Section 35.010.2, Sub-section 3b): “Neither RI nor TRF [The Rotary Foundation] shall enter into a cooperative relationship which involves ...abortion.”

[U]nder this rule, RI could enter into an agreement with Planned Parenthood itself so long as the relationship does not “involve abortion.” If Rotary wanted to enter into a working relationship with Planned Parenthood on *anything* (sexually transmitted disease screening/treatment, breast exams, sex education, etc.), it could do so without violating the policy.

The association between Rotary and UNICEF does not “involve abortion,” it involves the eradication of polio, we are told. All other activities of UNICEF, Planned Parenthood or any other entity are outside the scope of Rotary’s rule. The rule does not say, “Neither RI nor TRF shall enter into a cooperative relationship with any group that commits abortions or is involved in abortion advocacy.”

**RI:** Rotary is a quilt of many colors. The fabric of our many faiths, cultures, and political ideologies is held together by a common desire for greater international understanding, good will and peace. Our diversity is one of the reasons why Rotary is so successful and one of the reasons why RI takes great care to remain neutral on matters of religion, politics and race. Rotary’s partnerships are negotiated with this diversity in mind and are carefully crafted to advance the greater Object of Rotary rather than the particular religious or political viewpoint of a single individual or group.

We appreciate your interest in Rotary’s relationship with UNICEF. If you would like further information about UNICEF, we suggest that you visit their web site...

**LDI:** A politician could not have written it better. While the paragraph sounds incredibly inclusive and warm, the fact is that such rhetoric fails to address the very serious issues at hand. Does this “quilt of many colors” mean one must accept the association with UNICEF in order to be all-embracing?

While your letter primarily addresses UNICEF, we should note that RI has refused to adopt a policy prohibiting local affiliates from donating funds to pro-abortion groups. Our research into this area is in its infancy, but we have already identified two Rotary groups that have donated money to Planned Parenthood.

Evidence of UNICEF’s involvement in—and even active promotion of—the Culture of Death is both overwhelming and indisputable. LDI provided Sagsveen with examples of such activity by UNICEF, including:

- In 1997, the Vatican cut funding to UNICEF after the group cosponsored a manual that endorsed emergency birth control. (Emergency birth control most often causes an early abortion.) UNICEF also refused to pro-

vide a detailed accounting of its population control and pro-abortion programs.

- On October 26, 2002, the *Calgary Herald* reported that UNICEF has been straying from its mission for many years. The article, titled “UNICEF’s Other Agendas,” included an interview with Mary Kassian, author of *The Feminist Gospel*. “Hundreds of thousands of children are still dying of TB or malaria, or because they don’t have clean water. And the UN is giving them IUDs...I chose long ago not to support UNICEF and to support those good causes through other agencies that aren’t tainted.”
- In 1987, UNICEF officially endorsed “good quality abortion services” at the International Conference on Better Health for Women and Children in Nairobi, Kenya.
- In 1993, UNICEF boosted its quiet contribution to UNFPA’s open support for Communist China’s “one-child family” policy—Beijing’s program to shrink its population with coerced sterilizations, late-term abortions and sometimes infanticide—from \$2 million to \$5 million.



Information supporting the allegations against UNICEF is so readily available that LDI listed *only* 16 examples in the letter to Sagsveen. Consequently, LDI provided him with several website addresses that could be used to obtain additional information and source details.

LDI’s letter ended with these words:

[W]e hope the information provided herein, which is a fraction of all that is available, will convince you that neither Rotary International nor UNICEF “have strong policy statements regarding their opposition to abortion.” In fact, neither organization has issued a policy statement that could even remotely be considered anti-abortion.

The correspondence between Sagsveen, Plater and LDI made reference exclusively to Rotary’s association with UNICEF, but RI’s involvement runs much deeper.

### Population Control

“Rotarians care about the quality of life for all, from the youngest to the oldest, and have sponsored immunization and health programs that have helped to increase longevity,” reads the Population Issues page of RI’s website. “But falling global child mortality rates and climbing life-spans have prompted a new concern: that population growth may outpace Earth’s ability to sustain development.” Additional information is provided:

In the 30 years between 1969 and 1999, the world’s population grew from 3.7 billion to 6 billion people. While the annual rates of growth slowed from 2.4 percent to 1.3 percent over that same time span, the global population continues to rise by about 78 million a year. United Nations reports provide telling glimpses into population issues:

- The highest population growth rates are generally occurring in the poorest and most environmentally fragile parts of the world.

- The most rapid fertility declines have occurred in developing countries which have achieved major improvements in child survival rates and educational levels and have implemented family planning programs.
- Even if fertility rates everywhere were to fall instantly to replacement level (2.06 children per woman), the high number of youths who are entering reproductive age ensures that world population growth will continue for another two generations.
- While there are more young people than ever, there are also more older people; the proportion of people over age 65 worldwide will exceed 17 percent by 2020.

In August 1999, the Rotary International Board of Directors adopted a statement on population:

Population growth, when accompanied by increased agricultural production and adequate education for all, can be an important element of a prosperous society, providing a strong labor force to help drive the economy. Where population growth exceeds the capacity of the economy to absorb and integrate the population, the result is not prosperity for the majority of the people, but rather a downward spiral of increasing poverty, insufficient resources, urban violence and environmental degradation. The poorest of the poor are the most adversely affected.

Sustainable development, preservation of the environment and the quality of life for all people, especially the new generations, are [sic] impacted by population growth. Present world birth rates and longer life expectancy contribute to accelerated population growth, which puts an ever-increasing strain on the non-renewable resources necessary for sustainable development. Through projects such as Hunger, Concern for the Aging, AIDS, Literacy and Preserve Planet Earth, Rotary clubs have already begun to address the issue of population growth, both directly and indirectly.

Rotary International encourages Rotary clubs and districts, working as appropriate with government agencies, non governmental [sic] organizations and local leadership to increase awareness and undertake even more projects that directly impact population growth and sustainable development. Projects would include those that promote education on the issue of population, access to family health care, adequate nutrition, and enable individuals to make informed and responsible decisions about issues such as child spacing, in a way that is in keeping with their personal values and cultural and religious considerations.



Rotarians are urged to show a “commitment to population issues” by setting up a project in their respective communities. Specific project ideas are suggested, some of which read as though they came right out of a Planned Parenthood handbook. For example, it is suggested that Rotarians, “Conduct or sponsor women’s health seminars in the community, focusing on *reproductive health*, prenatal care, and the benefits of delaying child-bearing past adolescence and of spacing children, if appropriate (emphasis added).”

Another suggestion regards the development of a “community-awareness campaign aimed at warning young people about the consequences of teenage *pregnancy* and sexually transmitted diseases while promoting self-esteem (emphasis added).” Nothing is said about teen sexual activity.



In October 2003, RI created the Rotarian Fellowship for Population and Development (RFPD). Specifically formed to support RI projects that “address population and development issues,” RFPD provides grants to Rotary clubs for work on “population” issues.

In November 2006, RFPD held a conference to discuss the “four major obstacles to international community development.” One of the speakers, Werner Fornos, was formerly president of the Population Institute (PI). In June 2007, PI President Lawrence Smith, Jr., praised the U.S. House of Representatives for abolishing the Mexico City Policy.

First implemented by President Ronald W. Reagan in 1984, the Mexico City Policy prohibits U.S. “family planning” dollars from going to international organizations that commit abortions or promote the deadly act. The policy, which was named for the city where it was first announced (at the International Conference on Population), was continued under President George H. W. Bush. It was rescinded by President William Jefferson Clinton and reinstated by President George W. Bush. “Anyone who claims to oppose abortion—including those serving in the White House and in Congress—should be at the forefront of family planning advocacy,” Smith said.

Astonishingly, RFPD claims to be independent of Rotary International. “RFPD operates in accordance with Rotary International policy,” a RI statement reads, “but it is not an agency of, or controlled by Rotary International.” This is a pathetic attempt to protect RI’s reputation. RI has truly moved over to the dark side.

### United Nations Population Fund

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is “the world’s largest multilateral source of assistance in the areas of reproductive health and population data collection and analysis.” At least that is how RI describes the group. But UNFPA does much more than collect and analyze data. Since 1969, UNFPA has spent in excess of \$5.6 *billion* to meddle in more than 140 developing countries.

RI entered into an official “cooperative relationship” with UNFPA in June 2001 to “provide clubs and districts interested in planning community service projects focused on population issues with additional resources.” Rotary clubs wanting to work on population issues are encouraged to contact the UNFPA agent in their country to “work togeth-

er on projects of mutual interest.” A link to UNFPA’s website is provided.

The RI press release that announced the relationship with UNFPA said the two entities would “work together on population and reproductive health issues and promote awareness worldwide of the social, economic and environmental implications of population growth.” RI specifically encouraged its members to “further the goals of the UNFPA.”

In August 2002, the Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute (C-FAM) warned RI that an association with UNFPA would harm its reputation:

This association...has raised concerns among pro-life contributors to Rotary International, who wonder how the organization can associate with the controversial UN agency, especially in light of the fact that the US government has recently determined that UNFPA supports forced abortion in China. What is more, a Peruvian government report holds UNFPA at least partially responsible for the forced sterilization of close to 200,000 Peruvian women, stating that “the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), known for its support of population control in developing countries, took charge. For that end, the United Nations Population Fund act[ed] as Technical Secretary.”



Smith

C-FAM reported that pro-life Congressman Christopher H. Smith, R-N.J., contacted Rotary International to express his concern about the new “cooperative relationship.” He was told that the Rotary was not involved in “population control.” Rather, the organization supports “having families have the number of children that they can feed, clothe, house and educate.” But C-FAM, which does the best research in the world on such issues, disagreed:

A number of projects on Rotary President Frank Devlyn’s web site explicitly describe Rotary funding for sterilization programs in order to further population control goals. For instance, Rotary International established a “Happy Family Center” in Tamilnadu, South India. According to the web site, “The center will be equipped to carry out population control measures such as vasectomies, button hole tubectomies [sic], distribution of contraceptives, and advice [sic] mothers on the benefits of child spacing.” Devlyn has also stated that “One of the most pressing problems that we face today is the rapid growth of our world’s population.” In addition to such programs, members of Rotary International’s Population and Development Vocational Fellowship work as consultants at UNFPA, itself.

In August 2007, C-FAM reported that UNFPA and the International Planned Parenthood Federation had come together to work with the African Union to “make abortion widely legal in Africa.” The pro-abortion groups seek to impose “a continent-wide strategy that delivers ‘sexual and reproductive health services,’ including ‘safe abortion.’”

Planned Parenthood often emphasizes that the killing of preborn human beings is a small part of its business. RI has

taken the same approach with regard to its population control activity. Susan Ross, a spokesman for Rotary, told C-FAM that the association with UNFPA accounts for only a “miniscule” portion of Rotary programs, despite the fact that group’s expenditures on such efforts has exceeded half a *billion* dollars.

In an August 2007, article titled, “UNFPA Proposes New Global Campaign to Push Reproductive Health/Abortion,” C-FAM’s Samantha Singson reported that UNFPA has “assessed the various regions of the world and despite differences in local circumstances, proposes that the solution is the spread of ‘reproductive health services,’ a phrase that is used by UN agencies and committees as synonymous with abortion.”

UNFPA has proposed a comprehensive, four-year, \$224 million advocacy campaign aimed at supporting and raising “awareness of reproductive rights.” Claiming “the right to reproductive health applies to all people at all times,” UNFPA seeks to “increase demand for sexual and reproductive health services and reproductive rights” worldwide by working with all sectors of society from governments and community leaders to nongovernmental organizations and the media.

Does UNFPA intend to completely ignore cultural and religious traditions and law? Singson addressed the issue:

UNFPA asserts their new program takes into account the culture and socioeconomic climate of particular regions; for instance, they know promoting abortion in Arab states is problematic. Outlining its proposed actions in Africa, UNFPA targets the region’s relatively high fertility rates, arguing that population growth is “outpacing the capacity of economies to generate jobs” and aims “to address the unmet need for contraception” in the region. UNFPA does not seem to take into account the fact that fertility rates are falling in most African countries and that longevity in some African countries has dropped into the 40s. The UNFPA program also proposes increased condom usage among adolescents.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNFPA urges judges “to monitor and enforce policies and laws protecting reproductive rights.” This means convincing courts to legalize abortion in those countries where the duly elected representatives of the people will not to do so. The same tactic had been used in the United States, resulting in the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* decisions.



In November 2006, the World Health Organization hosted a panel discussion focusing on a series of reports about reproductive and sexual health published in the British medical journal, *The Lancet*. In attendance was Mary Beth Ginder of the Population Institute. In her article titled,

“Sexual and Reproductive Health Movement ‘Robbed of Allies,’” Ginder cited statistics on the number of maternal fatalities in South Africa. Between 1994 and 1997, such deaths decreased by 91 percent. What was *credited* for the dramatic drop? South Africa had legalized abortion.



**Pinel** “The people who die are not just numbers,” said panelist Arletty Pinel, head of UNFPA’s Reproductive Health division. “We have a responsibility to them because we’re part of this world.” Ginder reported that, “Panelists agreed that easy access to safe and legal abortions can improve the lives of women.”

Evidence of UNFPA’s active support for abortion and repressive population control programs is not hard find. In fact, such proof is both readily available and overwhelming. In an apparent effort to placate critics, RFPD placed on its website a policy statement on abortion that it attributes to UNFPA:

UNFPA does not support or promote abortion. In June 1985, UNFPA adopted decision 85/19 which affirmed, “It is the policy of the Fund...not to provide assistance for abortion, abortion services or abortion-related equipment and supplies as a method of family planning.” This policy remains in effect today.

The 1994 Cairo Programme of Action also banishes abortion by stating, “In no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning”...

UNFPA’s policy statement on abortion is worthless when its actions run completely contrary to the words used in the document. But such a statement will placate some people who wish to ignore the facts and the difference between UNFPA’s words and its deeds.

### **For Some, A Hard Pill To Swallow**

One would think that the evidence against UNICEF and UNFPA would convince any reasonable person to stay clear of the two deadly groups. Yet this is apparently not the case, as evidenced by a message written by Rotarian William T. Butcher. LDI’s response to David Plater’s letter has been forwarded to many other interested individuals, including Butcher:

I don’t think any Rotarian refuted Plater’s explanation. The Life Decisions [International] guy did, however, and that response is attached. Again, I don’t think the Life Decisions [International] will ever be satisfied with Rotary and I think each Rotarian must make his or her own decision. Plater’s comments certainly satisfy me.

I have kept...[other Rotarians] appraised all along the way on this situation. No one in their club is interested or concerned about this issue. Guess they are short on zealots. Anyway, I think it’s a Farwest Rotary issue and we should just keep it that way. No reason to stir the pot of every Rotary Club in the world.

I’d be glad to fill John [Sagsveen]’s seat on the board...

A member of LDI’s Board of Directors contacted Butcher regarding his statements:

How can Mr. Plater’s response “satisfy” you when LDI’s letter refuted it point-by-point? Not only did LDI refute each point, each point was destroyed! The evidence is not unclear; it is overwhelming!

No reason to “stir the pot” or involve other Rotary clubs? On the contrary, if the information LDI has presented is true—and it *is* true, don’t you think *every* pot should be stirred? It’s not a matter of being a zealot. It’s a matter of standing up for something that is truly a matter of life and death. Anyone who chooses to “cooperate with evil,” as Scripture commands us to avoid, should certainly not commit the grave sin of bringing others along with him.

You write that you don’t think LDI will “ever be satisfied with Rotary.” If the organization were to end its associations with UNICEF and UNFPA, prohibit funding of Planned Parenthood, and stop advocating for the same population policies as these three groups, LDI would be *thrilled* with Rotary.

We would appreciate hearing how you could possibly be “satisfied” with Mr. Plater’s response. Thank you.



**Butcher** did not respond to LDI’s message. Of course, this should not be a surprise. After all, what could he say? While excuses and rationalizations may sound good to the uninformed, those who have researched RI’s involvement in the advancement of the population control mentality, policies and programs definitely know better.

It is impossible for any person with an intact conscience to turn a blind eye to Rotary’s ungodly associations and population control works. One may offer up any excuse or justification he or she desires, but there is no way that anyone who truly cares about human life, born and preborn, could be associated with Rotary International. No way whatsoever.

Rotary International had an admirable start. But one need only apply The Four-Way Test to see the group has lost its way.

– Douglas R. Scott, Jr., is president of Life Decisions International and author of several books, including *Bad Choices: A Look Inside Planned Parenthood*.

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