



# Special Reports

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Life Decisions International

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## WHEN HOMEMAKERS ROAR A Homemaker Takes On A Multi-Billionaire—And Wins

### PART 3: Lacking Substance by Douglas R. Scott

In Part 1 of “When Homemakers Roar,” readers were made aware of the history of the work that went into convincing Berkshire Hathaway (BH) to stop funding Planned Parenthood. A widespread uprising of consultants for The Pampered Chef, led by Cindy Coughlon, was the key factor in the company’s decision to stop sending corporate money to the pro-abortion group.

Part 2 of “When Homemakers Roar” was a detailed examination of the decision by BH’s chief executive officer and chief shareholder, billionaire Warren Buffett, to stop sending corporate money to Planned Parenthood. This included the politician-like spin that some sought to place on the decision.

From the start of the BH melee, Life Decisions International (LDI) came under attack for Buffett’s decision to end the *entire* shareholder-based philanthropic program rather than simply stopping funding of Planned Parenthood. In Part 3 of “When Homemakers Roar,” we take a critical look at the arguments used by Planned Parenthood apologists and fans of Warren Buffett. We also analyze the far-reaching consequences of Buffett’s decision.

#### Wanted: One Scapegoat

Pro-abortion activists and some BH shareholders were quick to criticize LDI for the decision made *exclusively* by Warren Buffett to end its shareholder philanthropic program. Not one of them minced words. LDI leaders were accused of being “idiots” and one person even said the boycott against BH was contributing to the nationwide recession. Add this kind of rhetoric to the guy who said he hopes LDI leaders come down with an incurable disease and you have a taste of what pro-abortion people use as “logical argument.”

Publicity led many pro-abortion people to send LDI nasty e-mails. Some zealots apparently believed that the way to “punish” LDI leaders for Buffett’s decision was to give our e-mail address to those who operate corporate and pornographic websites. We continue to receive dozens of pornographic and corporate e-mails every day. Unfortunately, many of the e-mails come with an innocuous return address and subject line, which means we do not know they are offensive until they are opened.

When the facts are not on your side it is necessary to create a scapegoat. After all, someone has to be blamed and no one was willing to fault pro-abortion icon Buffett.

#### Missing Logic

Intermingled with name-calling, pro-abortion men and women offered many arguments in support of BH, Buffett, and abortion in general. The problem is that not one was based on logic or truth. Nevertheless, we offer responses to the points made by pro-abortion activists in our ongoing effort to educate pro-life *and* pro-abortion people about the important events that have transpired over the past year.

*Argument:* LDI caused Warren Buffett to end the entire shareholder-based philanthropic program.

*Response:* Actually, this was a decision made by Buffett and no one else. Rather than simply making Planned Parenthood ineligible for funding, Buffett chose to end the program, which demonstrates his lack of concern for the other groups being funded. Interestingly, most people who wrote to LDI said they supported Buffett’s decision to end the entire program rather than give in to us, but they berated LDI for “forcing” him to do so.

Of the 101 corporations known to have stopped funding Planned Parenthood, only one took the drastic step of ending an entire philanthropic program—BH. Who is responsible? He who ends the program or he

who asks that Planned Parenthood be made ineligible for funding?

It is important to know that Warren Buffett was contributing to the fund in question and sending it on to Planned Parenthood. Buffett ended the entire program because he would no longer be able to use it to funnel money to Planned Parenthood. It should also be noted that the program was open only to those who held a large number of shares.

*Argument:* Warren Buffett will continue to give his personal wealth to Planned Parenthood. Therefore, nothing was really accomplished.

*Response:* It is true that Buffett's fondness for Planned Parenthood and its agenda will eventually lead to billions of dollars in income for the horrific group. But it no longer has the corporate stamp of approval. Remember what Faye Wattleton said when she was president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America Inc. (PPFA):

Corporate support was only about 5 percent of our budget, but it meant a great deal to us. The credibility that such endorsements bestowed was at least as valuable as the actual dollars given. It was important that we receive support from every sector of our society—from the kid who sent us a portion of an allowance, to major conglomerates.

Consequently, convincing the *corporation* that is BH to cease support of Planned Parenthood was a huge victory. And this says nothing about the underlying message to the chief executive officers of other corporations: Choosing to fund Planned Parenthood is an unwise business decision.

*Argument:* Planned Parenthood does not participate in boycotts because they are morally wrong. So why do you?

*Response:* Planned Parenthood has indeed used the economic boycott strategy in the past, as have countless other groups. It seems the only boycotts Planned Parenthood leaders oppose are those directed at their group. The economic boycott has always been seen as a legitimate and peaceful way of changing corporate behavior. Furthermore, LDI limits its boycott to primary targets only. (For a detailed examination of the economic boycott as a strategy for impacting corporate behavior, please read, "The Economic Boycott," which is published by LDI.)

*Argument:* Jesus never boycotted anything He thought was wrong and it is not in the *Bible* so boycotting is unchristian.

*Response:* While the word "boycott" is not used in *Scripture*, the principle is clearly present. In the Old Testament, consider the plight of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who refused to cooperate with King Nebuchadnezzar's idolatry. And one could certainly argue that His reaction to the moneychangers in the Temple, which *Scripture* says looked more like a market than a place of worship, could be a considered one step *beyond* a boycott.

Clearly, Jesus saw a connection between financial undertakings and those things of a spiritual and moral nature. Just ask the rich man who wanted to know if he could get into heaven. Suppose for a moment that Jesus had chosen a less striking method to show his disdain for what the moneychangers we doing. Would He have at least asked people not to do business there? It is difficult to say for sure, but only because it would have been very obvious so it would be unnecessary for Him to do so.

Based on the very nature of God, it is clear that Jesus would have done much to stop money from going to unholy causes. After all, most ungodly monsters are fed by the dollar. So just why would a person want to do business with a company that is committing ungodly acts? Just what legitimate excuse could there be? We need positive action, not excuses. The question to ask yourself is: Did I do the right thing? And it requires a simple "yes" or "no" answer.

*Argument:* The boycott has led some people to send more money to Planned Parenthood and others to support the group for the first time when otherwise they would not have done so.

*Response:* These are two common points made by those who support legal abortion. The goal is to make us re-think the efficacy of the boycott strategy. They want us to think the strategy is backfiring so we will call it off.

Anyone who wants to support Planned Parenthood for the first time and those who decide to increase their donations are free to do so. There is little we can do about it. But overtly and loudly making such a point creates doubt about the statement in the first place. In any case, this point cannot be allowed to change a proven and morally sound strategy.

Remember, this is not only about money. In fact, given that PPFA enjoyed a budget of more than \$766.6 million in its last fiscal year, no boycott will bankrupt the group. The boycott has, however, cost

Planned Parenthood a *minimum* of \$25 million in corporate donations and much more in bad publicity.

*Argument:* The boycott is “cynical” “mean-spirited,” and “unethical.” Boycott leaders should be ashamed of themselves and they owe everyone a public apology.

*Response:* “Mean-spirited” is one of our favorite leftist terms. It seems to be applied to every action with which they disagree. Boycotting is neither “mean-spirited,” “cynical,” nor “unethical.” Just ask the countless number of leftist groups that have used the strategy. Economic boycotts are a peaceful and proactive response to an injustice.

Let us be frank. It is utterly amazing that persons who support the killing of children before birth can seriously accuse anyone of being “mean-spirited” and to suggest we should be ashamed. If killing unborn children is not “mean-spirited,” what is? And if it is not shameful, what could possibly be? An interesting world this is—Biblical, in fact—where good is seen as evil and evil is seen as good.

*Argument:* Boycotts should not be allowed in times of economic downturns as they further hurt the economy.

*Response:* Even the most expertly organized and executed boycott would likely have a negligible effect, if that much, on the economy, especially when one considers its size and overall strength. If a boycott did have such a strong effect, virtually every corporation would stop supporting Planned Parenthood almost immediately. This argument is clearly one of the weakest, yet it was still made by pro-abortion activists. (It is common for pro-abortion apologists to use the “scattered-fire” approach in the hope that we will be overwhelmed with the sheer volume and quantity of their arguments, even though they have little substance.)

*Argument:* Boycott leaders are ignorant and must be publicly chastised.

*Response:* It is the very fact that boycott leaders are knowledgeable and successful that we are being attacked in the first place. Pro-abortion men and women may chastise us any way they like, but it does not change the truth of the matter—the Corporate Funding Project (CFP) works, period.

*Argument:* The boycott is turning some pro-life people into pro-abortion people.

*Response:* This is impossible. When a person writes to say he is pro-life but because of the boycott he will be

sending a donation to Planned Parenthood, it is clearly a lie. Either that or it was one of the weakest pro-lifers ever. We are expected to believe that a “pro-life” person would “jump ship.” As strategies go, a boycott is rather tame (especially as opposed to violence and the much more controversial strategies). A person who would switch sides and actively support the killing of unborn children because of a strategy employed by a pro-life organization would also commit mutiny if given the slightest opportunity. “Pro-life” people like this we do not need, though we do not think they even exist. If such people do exist, our only statement is good riddance!

*Argument:* The Pampered Chef (TPC) was being boycotted but it did not fund Planned Parenthood.

*Response:* This is technically true, but TPC was acquired by the Planned Parenthood-funding BH. Profits from TPC supported its parent corporation, which in turn funded Planned Parenthood.

Soon after the CFP began it became clear that corporate leaders would fund Planned Parenthood through one subsidiary and claim all of their other companies were innocent. They generally chose their strongest subsidiary to do so. Since corporate decisions are made at the top, our policy is to boycott every part of the corporation, even if one of its smallest subsidiaries is making the contribution to Planned Parenthood.

Interestingly, the boycott became much more successful after LDI made the policy change to boycott the entire corporation rather than just a small part of it. All of a sudden, chief executive officers had to take notice because the boycott was having a negative impact on the entire company, not just one subsidiary.

*Argument:* The leader of TPC is a Christian so the boycott is wrong.

*Response:* Doris Christopher initially defended Buffett’s actions. She also praised him as a “friend” and mentor. Only when the heat got too much to bear did she go to Buffett with a “heavy heart.” We do not know Christopher’s position on abortion or her relationship with God and we are not here to judge her heart. But we do know her actions and inactions and we make an informed judgment about them and them only.

*Argument:* I am a Christian and pro-life but the boycott sickens me. Boycott leaders are not really Christians.

*Response:* Persons who argue this point are misinformed. One person who raised this point also said that while we were boycotting she was “in the midst of the sinners, working as the Light in the Darkness.” She continued by drawing a conclusion:

So, unless I am terribly mistaken, those of us who stayed were working in accordance with God’s word more than those of you who boycotted. Again, I see the bible as my leader and instruction manual, not some group of men or woman [sic], who’ve decided that they know what’s best for everyone...I see the bible as my leader and instruction manual, not some group of men or woman [at LDI], who’ve decided that they know what’s best for everyone.

There are indeed many parts to the Body of Christ and His Church. We are pleased that she has been “in the midst of sinners, working as the Light in Darkness.” Moreover, we are pleased that she views Scripture as her “instruction manual,” not anyone at LDI. But why does it seem that the writer believes it is necessary to accept the mortal sins of others in order to serve as a “Light?”

Assuming that the writer is pro-life, which we doubt, she is essentially arguing, “Saving the lives of the unborn is not my ministry.” If we were in Nazi Germany would our saying, “Saving the lives of Jews and others being persecuted is not my ministry” allow us to escape basic Christian responsibility? Could we really turn our backs? If the answer is “yes,” Jesus must be weeping.

*Argument:* I am a Christian and pro-life and boycott leaders are spreading false information.

*Response:* Many people accused us of being liars and misinformed. Those who did had a gross misunderstanding of corporate governance and philanthropy and no one was able to point to specific supposed “lies.” As usual, LDI stood by its statements 100 percent.

*Argument:* Why not keep the boycott of BH in place since its chief shareholder will continue to support Planned Parenthood.

*Response:* If LDI were to continue its boycott of BH because of what its chief executive officer does with his personal wealth, there would be no reason for the company to stop supporting Planned Parenthood. In addition, would we also continue the boycott if the vice president were funding PPFA? What about middle management. The janitor? Just how far down

to we go? At this point the boycott of BH is a matter of (dare we say it?) personal choice.

The same point could be made about The Walt Disney Company. We are not pleased with the movies it makes through its Miramax subsidiary, but the company has agreed to stop funding Planned Parenthood. And since *The Boycott List* tracks corporate support of Planned Parenthood, the company qualified to be dropped as a boycott target. However, The Walt Disney Company continues to be a boycott target for other reasons and we applaud those organizations that are promoting the economic sanction.

*Argument:* If we refuse to buy anything that is on *The Boycott List* we will all go naked and hungry. And BH has some pretty good products that make my life easier.

*Response:* Anyone who knows us can see that we are neither naked nor hungry. The boycott does not apply to medicines or other products or services that are *absolutely* necessary and alternatives are nonexistent. For everything else, however, this is a matter of commitment and inconvenience. If we are not willing to make a commitment and be inconvenienced for the causes of Christ and His children, we better hope it never becomes necessary to actually make a true sacrifice for Him. Can the Church really be so weak?

*Argument:* The boycott hurt Christian employees of BH.

*Response:* In any battle there are unfortunate casualties. But the incredible example shown by employees of TPC should be a lesson in Christianity for everyone. Many chose to forgo the money they made from the company to help the unborn child. Even to this day such commitment is encouraging. And we greatly admire those who participated.

*Argument:* There are millions of people who starve to death every year on this planet, the majority of those being women and children. Why don’t you turn your attention toward helping them instead of boycotting businesses and harassing people?

*Response:* In other words, stop doing that which I do not like and start doing something much more popular. We will *gladly* work on the other issues facing mankind when there is a ceasefire in the womb. Also, there are millions of unborn human beings who die in the womb every year on this planet, the majority of those being female and all of them being children. Why doesn’t everyone turn their attention

toward helping them instead of trying to stop hunger?  
We would never make such an absurd suggestion.

We want to emphasize that *all* of the arguments listed above were actually made by people who wrote to LDI following BH's decision to stop funding Planned Parenthood.

### The Bottom Line

It is important to remember that Warren Buffett's decision was made for one reason only—it was good business. The harm that his actions brought to the company was incalculable.

The most important part of the BH decision was clearly the impact it could have on other corporations. After all, if one of the world's wealthiest and most respected businessmen decided to stop giving corporate dollars to Planned Parenthood, anyone can.

But when a group of brave, strong and committed homemakers decided enough-was-enough, even a man like Buffett had to take notice.

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