

Planned Parenthood: Understanding the Real Agenda of the Nation's Premier "Family Planning" Agency

The Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) portrays itself as a "family planning" agency, but a hard look at the numbers proves their real agenda leans in a very specific direction: abortion. In 2001, over 93% of the "services" performed by Planned Parenthood were directly related to abortion. Nearly 1 in every 5 abortions performed in the United States in 2001 was done at a Planned Parenthood affiliated clinic, making them the number one provider of abortion. Since 1995, while the total number of abortions performed in the US has continued to decline, abortions performed by PPFA increased over 14,000 from 2001 to 2002 and — the more telling indicator — the group's profits shot up 300 percent in that year alone.

In 2002, PPFA's activities were subsidized by over \$250 million in US taxpayer dollars and nearly \$200 million in "private contributions" from individual and corporate donors. While pro-life efforts continually focus on electing legislators who will trim the government's contribution to PPFA, we should not ignore the impact of applying pressure to the corporate donors. Some people dismiss boycotts as ineffective, but time and again it has been proven that economic pressure is the best way to affect change in the corporate environment.

What is a Boycott?

The Albert Einstein Institution defines an economic boycott as, "the withdrawal or withholding of economic cooperation in the form of buying, selling, or handling of goods or services, often accompanied by efforts to induce others to do likewise." Although historically linked with liberal politics, the fact that boycotting is a well-respected, effective, and *legal* means of *nonviolent* protest has convinced many conservative organizations that it is a legitimate method of impacting society. Participating in a boycott is also a reminder that society — not government — is the true engine of social change. When combined with other activities such as letter-writing (both to local newspapers and to the company itself) boycotts have been proven successful even when conducted by a small number of individuals.

Success Stories

According to Life Decisions International (www.fightpp.org) "to date, at least 98 corporations have ceased funding Planned Parenthood" as a result of economic boycott pressure. Among them is the corporate giant Berkshire Hathaway, Inc. This change came about directly because of economic pressure: when The Pampered Chef® became a subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway in late 2002, they didn't realize that the ongoing boycott of Berkshire Hathaway — because of its Planned Parenthood contributions — would impact their business as well. But the impact was quickly seen and because of it corporate policy was changed. As their July 3, 2003 news release put it: "[Although] the independent consultants that serve The Pampered Chef have no responsibility for what Berkshire Hathaway shareholders do, the careers of many of these consultants are now suffering because of the contributions program." As a result of this decision, "all Berkshire subsidiaries, under direction of their local managers, will continue to support local charities in a manner consistent with what they have been doing." So although some of the subsidiaries may continue to support PPFA, others such as The Pampered Chef, Fruit of the Loom, and Dairy Queen were able to ensure that none of their profits ended up in Planned Parenthood's pocket.

In another recent boycott, the construction of a Planned Parenthood abortion center in Austin, Texas has been put on hold

because of individuals who worked *before the fact* to persuade contractors and builders not to work on the construction project. Companies and — more importantly — church building committees made it clear that contractors who participate in the abortion center project will not be invited to bid on their future building projects. As a result, the project is stalled simply because there are no contractors willing to take the work and risk alienating the larger customer base.

Where to Start

Searching the internet for information on "Planned Parenthood Boycotts" turns up a wealth of information. The sheer number of companies that support Planned Parenthood with corporate donations is staggering. On the surface, boycotting is simple: if a company gives money to Planned Parenthood, don't buy their products. However, as The Pampered Chef story illustrates, knowing all of the corporate connections can be a challenge. If you are purchasing a pair of blue jeans, is it Lees or Levis that supports Planned Parenthood? (It's Levis.) The best approach is to start with one or two companies whose products are easily identified and work up from there.

Target: Subaru

If your first reaction upon reading these boycott lists is to consider the job too big and to give up, consider banding together with like-minded people and pick a single entity to focus on. At our last meeting, Endless Mountains Pennsylvanians for Human Life decided to focus on the auto maker Subaru. Why Subaru? In some industries multiple companies support PPFA and the choices are limited or even non-existent. However, in the auto industry, *only Subaru* lists Planned Parenthood as a beneficiary of its corporate giving. Therefore, buying *any brand other than Subaru* is an economic choice for life. Given the sheer number of auto manufacturers to choose from, boycotting Subaru is both simple and painless.

We encourage you: if you are shopping for a new car, be certain not just to avoid considering a Subaru, but follow that up by telling the salesman *why* you won't consider a Subaru. If you let the local Subaru dealers know that your rejection of Subaru is based on the company's corporate giving, the news will travel back to the corporate decision makers, who just might reconsider their policy.

Pastors Encouraged to Educate Congregations on January 18th

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is January 18th, and we urge all pastors to take time during your service to bring these issues to the attention of your congregation. You may want to consider centering your message for the day on the pro-life cause, educating your congregation about the activities and agenda of Planned Parenthood. Invite people to join the boycott and encourage them to keep the issue of life in mind as they make purchasing and other important decisions.

Pro-Life Rally Trip Seats Still Available

Three Tioga County Catholic congregations are sponsoring a bus trip for the Pro-Life March in Washington, D.C., on January 22, 2004 — the 31st anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade decision legalizing abortion.

The bus is scheduled to leave Mansfield about 5:00AM and return about 11:00PM. Father Al Leonard of Holy Child Church estimates the cost for the trip will be \$30 for adults and \$15 for students. All interested people are invited to join them in this important event.

Call Fr. Leonard or the parish secretary at 570-622-7773 or 570-662-3568 for more information or to reserve a seat.