

Abortion clinic opponents target United Way

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

ROCHESTER—Two local coalitions are calling on United Way donors to redirect their contributions this year to show opposition to the organization's support for Planned Parenthood of Rochester and the Genesee Valley, Inc.

Coalition members have urged individuals to give money directly to charities they wish to support rather than United Way of Greater Rochester as a means to protest Planned Parenthood's proposed abortion clinic in Rochester. In 1991, Planned Parenthood received \$459,000 in United Way funding.

"How long can we live with the hypocrisy of charity being given with one hand while the other hand is holding a suction machine," declared Lydia Jones, who helped organize Rochester Fights Back Against Abortion — an organization largely comprising leaders from inner-city churches and organizations.

The group is focusing its efforts on minority communities in the city. A second group — Citizens for a United Way Responsibility — is contacting Catholic parishes, distributing brochures and petition forms.

"Our object is not to decrease the amount of money United Way gets," observed Mary Burke of Citizens for a

United Way Responsibility. "It's to get Planned Parenthood off the list."

The two groups formed in response to the United Way's decision Jan. 31, 1992, to retain Planned Parenthood as a recipient of general fund monies. That decision reversed one made in the fall of 1991 to make Planned Parenthood a donor-option agency in light of the proposed abortion clinic.

Diane Ryan, vice president for communications at the United Way of Greater Rochester, Inc., explained that Planned Parenthood has agreed that no United Way monies would be used toward the proposed clinic.

She added that if people heed the two coalitions' calls to give directly to charities rather than United Way, then some of the less visible agencies may be hurt.

"There are agencies that are not going to get funded," Ryan said. "Those agencies are going to suffer."

But Burke noted that the onus lies on United Way to reverse its decision on Planned Parenthood funding.

"(United Way is) risking the funds that they collect from people to help legitimate organizations by continuing to fund Planned Parenthood as it has in the past," Burke said.

The first of the coalitions to form — Rochester Fights Back Against Abortion — developed after a March 5

meeting at Peace Baptist Church, 703 Joseph Ave. People at that meeting signed a petition opposing the clinic.

Among the individuals who signed were pastors of three Catholic parishes in the Rochester diocese: Fathers Robert Werth of St. Bridget's; James Callan of Corpus Christi; and Ronald Stacey of St. Andrew's.

Rev. Ron Hoston, pastor of Bethesda Church of God in Christ and also the group's coordinator, emphasized that the black community does not want such an abortion clinic.

"We don't believe the poor need to be aborted," the Rev. Hoston declared.

Rev. Hoston added that Planned Parenthood's founder, Margaret Sanger, had targeted the black community in her efforts to eliminate unwanted people. He contended that Planned Parenthood's policies are still based on Sanger's beliefs, as evidenced by the organization's tendency to place most of its abortion clinics in minority neighborhoods.

Rev. Hoston said his group would be trying to educate the black community about Sanger and Planned Parenthood. He said he had already begun to urge his congregation to redirect their contributions.

The predominantly Catholic group, meanwhile, has sent letters to representatives of the Parish Pro-life Net-

work, requesting that they bring the information to the attention of their pastors. The group will also be writing directly to pastors without network representatives.

Father George Norton, diocesan spokesman, said that Bishop Matthew H. Clark had been contacted by some individuals upset over the United Way decision to fund Planned Parenthood.

United Way provides funding for a number of necessary services, Father Norton said, including Catholic Family Center programs.

"Based on that," the priest said, "I think that Bishop Clark has written to people who have raised the question and said that he feels a Catholic can participate in the United Way campaign in good conscience."

Father Norton added, however, that "any abortion clinic would not be a welcome addition to the community." But he suggested that the appropriate time to protest the clinic will be when Planned Parenthood seeks state approval for the project — not during the United Way campaign.

Nevertheless, Father Norton acknowledged, Catholics could also choose in good conscience to participate in the coalitions' activities.

"Everybody has the right to make their own decision," he said.

Author alleges Planned Parenthood has racist roots

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

Author George Grant claims that the Planned Parenthood movement is essentially racist — founded by a woman who advocated purifying the human race through birth control, abortion and sterilization of undesirables and some members of such "dysgenic races" as Negroes and Hispanics.

Grant outlined these and other allegations in his 1988 book *Grand Illusions: The Legacy of Planned Parenthood*.

He touched on the book's themes during a March 21 talk at Buffalo's MacAlpine Presbyterian Church. The talk was part of a rally anticipating the "Spring of Life" abortion protests scheduled to begin in Buffalo April 20.

In a March 18 telephone interview with the *Catholic Courier* from his offices in Franklin, Tenn., Grant explained some of his allegations about Planned Parenthood and its founder, Margaret Sanger.

Grant said he read hundreds of Planned Parenthood documents — including some confidential memoranda and letters — independent studies, and books by and about Sanger and Planned Parenthood. The depth of his research is indicated by the book's more than 1,200 footnotes.

Grant claimed that Planned Parenthood was allied from its inception with the eugenics movement, which he said called for purifying the species by limiting the reproduction of people considered in some way inferior.

Sanger was a believer in eugenics,



George Grant is the author of *Grand Illusions: The Legacy of Planned Parenthood*.

Grant claimed. "It was even on the banner of her newsletter (*The Birth Control Review*): 'Birth Control: To Create a Race of Thoroughbreds,'" he told the *Courier*.

One of the groups Sanger targeted was blacks, Grant said. In 1939, she launched the "Negro Project" to help reduce the growth of the black population in the South, he said. "The

purpose of the Negro Project — according to her own words in documents — (is) the extermination of the lower levels of the black race."

Grant alleged that Planned Parenthood — as a movement — continues Sanger's policies, and noted that more than 90 percent of all its clinics are located in minority areas.

Although a number of black leaders did support Planned Parenthood in the past, Grant said that a movement is growing now in the black community to oppose some of Planned Parenthood's policies.

"There's a tremendous groundswell of action in the black and Hispanic community and in the pro-life movement," Grant said.

Contacted about Grant's allegations, Gregory Soehner, executive director of Planned Parenthood of Rochester and the Genesee Valley, told the *Catholic Courier* that he had not read Grant's book and had no desire to do so.

Soehner said he could not respond to Grant's specific allegations concerning Sanger, acknowledging that he is not aware of all of her views and statements.

But, he said, "I certainly know about Planned Parenthood of Rochester and the Genesee Valley, and we have no racist undertones here."

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