

ONAN: THANK GOODNESS FOR PLANNED PARENTHOOD!

The Christian Coalition's behavior is unconscionable, libelous and morally bankrupt

Chuck Gosnell, president of The Christian Coalition of Colorado, wrote a scathing commentary about Planned Parenthood in the Nov. 9 issue of *The Statesman* that shamelessly displayed contempt for

both the truth and the voters of Colorado. Asserting that Planned Parenthood "has

blatantly misused tax dollars," Gosnell said, "Recent independent auditors report that Planned Parenthood revealed they are directly tied to abortion clinics all over Colorado." I spoke with Gosnell and asked him what his statement meant. He refused to clarify. Gosnell's statement doesn't say or prove that Planned Parenthood misused tax dollars. It simply states the obvious; Planned Parenthood operates abortion clinics throughout the state. I asked Gosnell what the audit found. "Some discrepancies," he said and refused to explain further. I obtained a copy of the report. *The auditors found no discrepancies that suggest, let alone prove, a violation of law.*

In 1999 Gov. Bill Owens stripped Planned Parenthood of its state family planning funds without a shred of evidence they'd violated the law, and demanded they split their abortion services and contraceptive services into two separate

corporations (Planned Parenthood Services Corporation and Planned Parenthood Of the Rocky Mountains, Inc., (PPRM) respectively) before he'd restore their funding. Planned Parenthood complied rather than risk the loss of health care services to thousands of poor rural Colorado women, something Gov. Owens, determined to make good on his political payback to the Christian Coalition, was ready and willing to do.

This audit, commissioned by the State Health Department, triggered in part by letters from Rep. Dave Schultheis, R-Colorado Springs, Right to Life, and the Christian Coalition said, "We contacted PPRM and Service Corp.'s financial auditors, KPMG, LLP, inquired as to the type of financial transactions between PPRM and Services Corp. and whether there are indications that PPRM could be subsidizing Services Corp...no exceptions were noted in their testing regarding these matters." They also said, "We reviewed 15 transactions judgmentally selected between the entities under the property and services agreement and traced them to supporting documentation. No exceptions were noted." They also said the audited financial statements showed PPRM is not guaranteeing any loans or other liabilities of Services Corp. Once again Planned Parenthood is found in total



compliance with the letter and spirit of the law! Gosnell's statements and insinuations to the contrary are bald-faced lies.

These anti-abortion extremists are now 0 for 2. Previous audits by late state auditor, Steve Barba, a man well respected by both sides of the aisle, also found Planned Parenthood in total compliance. No one, including Gosnell, seems prepared to publicly level charges that Barba displayed incompetence in conducting those audits nor are they willing to challenge his honesty.

Gosnell said Planned Parenthood is "cooking the books by under reporting the number of abortions they actually perform," claiming he obtained such evidence from the Alan Guttmacher Institute. I asked for the exact cite, he refused.

Gosnell claims Planned Parenthood "doesn't want taxpayers to know the truth," but it's Planned Parenthood that has spent thousands of hours of staff time and thousands of dollars fully cooperating in audit after audit of their operations. Those who scream the loudest here are the guiltiest. Back in May it was the Christian Coalition who ran an ad in this newspaper bemoaning the defeat of an amendment to the long bill carried by Rep. Schultheis, designed to change the original intent of the constitutional amendment voters passed. The voters didn't vote to prevent Planned Parenthood from

informing women abortion is a legal viable option nor prevent them from referring those who ask to one of their abortion clinics. The Christian Coalition isn't ignorant of that fact and attempted, through Schultheis, to change the voters' mandate without their permission.

The lies the Christian Coalition keeps telling about Planned Parenthood and their repeated attempts to violate the will of the voters is all about hiding and distorting the truth. Their behavior is unconscionable, libelous and indicative of an organization that's become morally bankrupt, whose end justifies the means strategy and tactics has left their integrity in question.

By helping women prevent unintended pregnancies, Planned Parenthood works to reduce the number of abortions in this state. By providing prenatal care and other resources to hundreds of poor pregnant women every year, they make it possible for these women to remain healthy during their pregnancy and deliver healthy babies which demonstrates great concern for the well being of women and babies. By providing women who decide to terminate their pregnancies with safe abortion services, Planned Parenthood protects the health and life of women. Thank goodness for Planned Parenthood!

Peggy E. Loonan is the executive director of Life and Liberty for Women.