

Big bucks for international abortion

By Christopher H. Smith

Suppose Congress voted, at the urgent request of the president, to spend a half-billion dollars for a worldwide educational campaign to help people stop smoking, or drinking, or gambling. And then suppose the president used most of the money for multimillion-dollar grants to tobacco companies, or liquor manufacturers or casinos. He might point out that these were the people who really knew the business. The companies would surely promise not to use the grant money to make or promote their products. Nevertheless, would anyone blame Congress for holding up the money until the president agreed to find grantees who were in a different line of work?

If not, then perhaps someone can

Rep. Christopher H. Smith is a New Jersey Republican.

explain the current proposal — backed by the Clinton administration and by a narrow majority in the Senate — to give hundreds of millions of dollars to abortion providers for the ostensible purpose of preventing abortions.

Here's how the proposal came about: This January, Congress and the president reached a compromise on the difficult question of funding for international population control, with particular reference to international abortion funding.

The House had voted several times to condition U.S. funding for population control activities on restoring the "Mexico City Policy" — a prohibition against funding foreign organizations that perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning. The House had also voted to condition its support for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on an end to UNFPA support for the forced abortion pol-

icy of the People's Republic of China.

The House provisions recognized that money is fungible. The fiction advanced by the other side — that international population control agencies can use bookkeeping devices to spend "their" money on abortions, and "our" money on everything else — ignores this reality. U.S. taxpayers do not want their money going to organizations which support the brutal PRC program, which themselves perform abortions; or which seek to export abortion to countries that currently protect their unborn children. If population-control organizations insist that they want population money only for family planning activities unrelated to abortion, they could do so under the House provisions by getting out of the abortion business.

There is strong evidence that when the Mexico City Policy was in effect from 1984 to 1992, it was

effective in preventing cultural imperialism by the abortion lobby. In 1989, a New York Times article complained that the policy had led to "a near halt in the liberalization of abortion laws in the third world countries" because international pro-abortion organizations that had formerly devoted substantial resources to pressuring third world governments to change their laws

