

Coeds Here Tell of 'Slush Funds' To Help Girls Pay for Abortions

By KATHLEEN TELTSCH

Four college girls said yesterday they knew of students who pooled their money to help pay for abortions for co-eds in need:

The four took part in a news conference arranged by William R. Baird, director of the Parents Aid Society, to dramatize his campaign to promote birth control and to legalize abortions.

"The tendency is not to admit that such things like abortions happen, but they do," one of the students, 20-year-old Elsa Bernenberg of City College, said.

Joan Normandy, an 18-year-old freshman at Nassau Community College, added her quick agreement. Miss Normandy, the youngest of the four, urged that birth control methods be taught to students. She also pleaded for a change of legislation so that students would not have to "go to doctors for illegal operations which cost them \$500 or \$1,000."

A Queens College student, 19-year-old Deborah Levy, said friends usually go to the assistance of a pregnant girl needing help, but that it's a problem to get the money together. Another Queens student, Ellen Hoffman, 20, said word of the girl's predicament usually got around by word-of-mouth, because school authorities were likely to oppose any fund-raising activity.

Authorities Surprised

Although Mr. Baird insisted that money for abortions, or "slush funds" flourished on campuses, and that a "multi-million-dollar network" existed, the four students indicated that collections were not made on an organized basis. Some said contributions came from members of clubs, sororities or student groups such as chapters of Students for a Democratic Society.

Authorities at the three colleges expressed surprise at the suggestion that campus groups had collected such "slush funds."

"It's news to me," said Joseph P. McMurray, president of Queens College.

A spokesman for City Col-

lege remarked that "we have never heard of such a thing—usually such things get back to us."

Dr. Martin S. Reff at Nassau Community College also said that close relations were maintained between faculty and students and this was "the first word I have heard" of funds for abortions.

Dr. Alan F. Guttmacher, president of Planned Parenthood, said he had been on many campuses, without hearing of such fund collections.

"I'm not shocked, because I suppose girls would help each other and the need is pretty great," he said. "Students call me often, looking for assistance. I'm tuned in, you might say, so I'm not shocked."

Nurse Joins Plea

Also attending the news conference at the Americana hotel was a young student nurse from Beth Israel hospital who declined to give her name but who also pleaded for the legalization of abortions.

Another participant at the conference was Russell Hoffman, professor of English at Adelphi University, who said: "I have no firsthand knowledge of the existence of any 'slush fund,' but I have heard rumors of such collections."

He said that girls had come to him for help or "for a shoulder to weep on" and that he had suggested how they could get advice.

Mr. Baird, who is 35, lives in Valley Stream, L. I., and directs a free birth-control clinic in Hempstead. He said he supported himself by lecturing. He also said he had studied medicine but lacked the funds to complete his education.

He was arrested in New Jersey in 1966 for distributing birth-control information, and in Massachusetts a year later for passing out contraceptive devices to Boston University coeds.

He was named as a consultant to the New York State Senate and Assembly Joint Legislative Committee on Health in May 1966—exactly one year after he had been jailed in New York for one night for distributing birth-control data.