

America has evolved into a society that not only tolerates, but endorses interference into the family unit. Policies and laws have been enacted that give preference to artificial families over real families. The practice of removing children from their parents and placing them with licensed parents has increased the forced creation of artificial families. By 2002, the goal of the government has been to double the number of adoptions that occurred in 1997. This goal focused strictly on forced adoptions.

Ostensibly, this plan was to address the needs of children who had been in long term foster care. This focused on older, 'unadoptable' children. Throwaway children. In practice, what has occurred was predictable. More children have been removed from homes that are not abusive or dangerous to assist states with meeting these adoption quotas. Parental rights are routinely terminated in cases where the children have not been harmed by their parents. These legal orphans are then bartered on the open market to artificial families headed by licensed parents under a process that can only be described as forced adoptions.

Forced adoptions are those that occur when children are removed from their homes under the force of law and placed in licensed homes against their own and/or their parents' wills. Unlike voluntary adoptions, where the parents voluntarily consent to relinquish their parental rights to their children, forced adoptions are a government sponsored terrorist act of violence against innocent children and their parents.

These programs, which drive child protection practices, are fatally flawed and overwhelmingly harmful to the children involved.

On December 14, 1996, President Clinton said in an Executive Memorandum:

"I am committed to giving the children waiting in our Nation's foster care system what every child in America deserves loving parents and a healthy, stable home. The goal for every child in our Nation's public welfare system is permanence in a safe and stable home, whether it be returning home, adoption, legal guardianship, or another permanent placement."

From Guidelines for Public Policy and State Legislation Governing Permanence for Children:

On February 14, 1997, Secretary Shalala issued Adoption 2002: A Response to the Presidential Executive Memorandum on Adoption, as a blueprint for bipartisan Federal leadership in adoption and other permanent placements for children in the public child welfare system. Several important assumptions are articulated in the Adoption 2002 report.

1. ***Every child deserves a safe and permanent family.*** By way of explanation, the Guidelines state: "*Permanency*" is a term of art used throughout the Guidelines and is defined here. "*Permanency*" means that a child has a safe, stable, custodial environment in which to grow up, and a life-long relationship with a nurturing

caregiver. The concept of permanency has assumed a central place in American child welfare law and policy because permanency establishes the foundation for a child's healthy development. The basic needs of children include safety and protection; a sense of identity; validation of themselves as important and valued persons; stability and continuity of caregivers; an opportunity to learn and grow cognitively, physically and emotionally; and a protected custodial environment that is legally secure. Permanency, as epitomized by a safe, stable relationship with a nurturing caregiver, allows these basic needs to be met.

Permanency can be achieved in a number of ways. A child can be protected within his or her own home, or through reunification with his rehabilitated parents. Extended family can provide short or long term legally sanctioned care for the youngster through adoption or guardianship. Or, alternatively, a child can be adopted by non-relatives. Adoption is generally considered the optimal form of permanence when the biological parents are unable to provide a safe, stable, and nurturing home. However achieved, permanency is a cornerstone of American child welfare policy.

An analysis of this definition clearly shows that the natural parent-child bonds are disregarded in favor of a nebulous state known as 'permanency.' Every child born into a family already has permanency. The state does not recognize that, especially in cases where the child's home is less than perfect. What the state is really seeking is a state best described as 'perfect permanency,' or a condition where the state assigns artificial parents who have passed certain arbitrary and specious criterium as a prerequisite to licensing. The state believes that taking a child from his imperfect first permanent home and placing him into a more perfect, artificial family and calling that a 'forever family,' they can resolve all the problems associated with abuse and neglect. How arrogant. How naive.

While a child born into a family readily develops bonds to his parents and siblings, the state cannot insure that their selection of a family in which to place a legal orphan will result in a healthy parent-child bond. In fact, with over 40% of children placed in artificial families exhibiting attachment problems to the extreme degree that they require intensive therapy. The success rate of state selection of families is dismal when compared to the natural method of creating families through birth. Add to that the fact that over 25% of forced adoptions disrupt, and it leaves the logical minded person to wonder how can this phenomenon be characterized as 'permanency' much less as being in the best interests of the child?

However, under this push for permanency, children's lives with their real families are disrupted, on the arrogant belief that the social worker can place children in better and safer permanent homes than God can. No matter how nurturing a stranger can be, in the vast majority of cases, that stranger will never take the place of the child's parents, even if the parents were imperfect. This is the fatal flaw in the permanency argument.

2. *Children's health and safety is a paramount concern that must guide all child services.*

What is safety? Who defines it? Under current practices, safety is subjective. A lesbian social worker can make the determination that leaving a young girl in the home with her father is inherently unsafe. Based on structured risk assessment tools, she can make it appear to the court that the child is at risk of future abuse or neglect and use that to destroy this little family. She will

then be able to provide an eager adoptive home with another youngster. Don't think it can't happen, this is a real-life scenario.

What about health? If Ms. Social Worker can't find any injuries, she can always play the mental health card. Strict religious parents who train up their children in the way they should go are too restrictive and endanger the mental health of their children. Children need to be protected from parents who are so controlling.

The possibilities are endless. The health and safety arguments provide enough cause for every American home to be vulnerable to child protection terrorism.

3. ***Children deserve prompt and timely decision-making as to who their permanent caregivers will be.***

This principle puts the entire process on the fast track, and takes all decision making power out of the hands of the parents and places into the hands of complete strangers who know nothing about your children; who care nothing for the culture or the values of the family; and who have their own agendas and have no qualms about using your innocent children to accomplish those agendas.

With parents being allowed very limited time in which to insure the safety of their home, according to arbitrary state standards, it simplifies the fast-track forced adoption process.

4. ***Permanency planning begins when a child enters foster care; foster care is a temporary setting. Foster care is temporary. To ensure that the system respects a child's developmental needs and sense of time, the law reaffirms reunification as a viable option for children whose families can provide them with a safe, nurturing environment, strongly promotes the timely adoption of children who cannot return safely to their own homes, and radically changes the time frames for decision-making for children.***

This sounds so great, children will no longer languish in foster care. However, it doesn't mean that any great efforts will be made to reunite the family. Popular practice since 1997 has confirmed this. The guidelines pay lip service to reunification, but it is clear that the priority is the redistribution of our children.

5. ***Adoption is one of the pathways to a permanent family. Permanency planning efforts should begin as soon as a child enters care. The law heightens the importance of providing quality services as quickly as possible to enable families in crisis to address their problems quickly. The law:***

- ***Reauthorizes the Family Preservation and Support Program for three years and renames it the Safe and Stable Families Program; Here it is - the reallocation of money from reunification to the support of artificial families.***
- ***Expands the use of program dollars to include time-limited reunification services for the 15 months after children enter care; and Once again, severely limiting the ability of parents to reform and provide a safe home for their children.***
- ***Authorizes pre- and post-adoption services to support adoptive families and supports activities to expedite the adoption process. (See item # 6)***

This is a very telling principle because it addresses the real goal of the child protection process; the reallocation of children to licensed homes. This is accomplished by making all efforts to rehabilitate offending parents nothing more than posturing to satisfy the public. Conspicuous by its absence is any reference to substantive efforts to reunify children with their real parents. In

practice, every case is geared toward making legal orphans available for redistribution to state-approved parents under concurrent planning requirements.

6. ***Adoptive families require supports after the child's adoption is legalized.***

Notice, there is no mention made of providing support to real families before the children were declared orphans by the court. In fact, the dollars available to adoptive families exceed the dollars available for reunification by a factor of at least four.

Nearly all of the funding for child protection is geared toward removing the children from the home, and is disbursed to foster care, therapeutic services and classes for parents. A logical person would conclude that it would be much cheaper to leave the children in the home and provide relevant, and possibly intensive, in-home services than to pay strangers to care for the child while in foster care and to pay a monthly subsidy for strangers to raise this legal orphan and provide them with intensive therapeutic services to deal with the problems created by removing the child from his parents in the first place. Adoptive parents who receive the generous adoption subsidies which were never available to the real parents are nothing more than parents-for-pay.

7. ***The diversity and strengths of all communities must be tapped.***

8. ***Quality services must be provided as quickly as possible to enable families in crisis to address problems.***

These last two are a non-sequitur. In practice, only state-approved community-based services are allowed. If anyone provides a service that doesn't toe the child protection line of propaganda, those services will be excluded from the pool that parents may use as resources.

Under this model, only the state can resolve family problems. Parents who seek outside assistance are deemed to not be acting in the best interests of their children. Their judgement is denounced, and harmful, if not abusive services are imposed on the entire family.

The Guidelines also discuss the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997: *To ensure that children can move out of foster care and grow up in safe, permanent homes, ASFA:*

- *Reaffirms reasonable efforts to reunify families except under specified circumstances; E*

Limits are increased on reunification services, the priority of reunification is reduced.

- *Establishes a new reasonable efforts requirement for permanency, so that efforts will be made to find families for children who are legally free and waiting for permanent placement;*

Further limits on reunification services, further reduction of priority for reunification efforts.

- *Requires States to hold the child's first permanency hearing within 12 months (rather than 18 months);*

And again, more limits on the ability of the parents to succeed and reunification efforts.

- *Requires States to initiate or join termination of parental rights (TPR) proceedings for children who have been in care for 15 out of the last 22 months (unless the child is placed safely with relatives; there is a compelling reason why TPR is not in the child's best interest; or, when the family has not received the services that were part of the case plan); and*

A statutory mandate to terminate parental rights based on an arbitrary time frame. In practice, it is being used by child protection agencies to drag out the case to the 12 month

time frame by delaying services and court hearings. Then they don't need to prove anything other than the time allotted under law has elapsed and demand that parental rights be terminated.

- *Establishes adoption incentive payments for States to increase the number of children who are adopted, leading to a doubling of the annual number of children adopted by the year 2002;*

Financial incentives geared solely to the creation of artificial families at an accelerated pace.

- *Extends health coverage to children with medical needs who have an adoption assistance agreement; and*

More financial incentives available only to artificial families.

- *Allows adopted children to maintain title IV-E eligibility following the death of their adoptive parents or a disruption in the prior adoption.*

And even more financial incentives available only to artificial families.

In America, the deck is stacked against the family as God instituted it. There is no other country where children are indiscriminately ripped from their homes and redistributed to state approved parents. There is no other country where the requirements to terminate parental rights are so broad and subjective, and where there is no requirement to prove the parent ever harmed the child in any way. There is no other country the state is encouraged to substitute its own judgement for the judgement of the parents to the detriment of the children. Is this the legacy you want to leave for your children when they become parents? Or should I say, when they become the next generation of breeders for the state?