

U.S. POPULATION: RIGHT TO LIFE — LIFESPAN POLICY STATEMENT

The terms “population bomb” and “population explosion” were used increasingly in the 1950s, thereby linking normal human reproduction to the threat of violence. Aided by the zeal of such groups as Zero Population Growth, the schools began to teach our students that it was unpatriotic to bring babies into an over-crowded world. These voices copied the thesis promoted by the Rev. Malthus in 1798 that there are too many people on earth and nature does not provide enough food for all.

Defects of Malthusians—new and old—were that they underestimated scientific progress and natural resources. Frequently the problem of large scale starvation can be laid to political ineptitude (e.g. India), which allowed food to rot on the ground in one area while people starved in another. Or political malice which was seen recently in Ethiopia where tons of goodwill food supplies were diverted from the suffering to where the government wanted them to go. The Malthusians were given to preoccupation with the sex life of others and visioned a solution in the limitation of births. The “superfluous people” were seen to be the poor, the non-white, and the foreign.

The overpopulation theory lends itself to justification for letting people die. A tough thread of elitism runs through such populationists as Margaret Sanger and Planned Parenthood, Joseph Goebbels and the Third Reich, and more recently, Zero Population Growth.

Now, on the economic front, where many of the Malthusians based their claims, the birthrate of the U.S. is below replacement levels, and such demographic experts as Senior Fellow Ben


Wattenberg of the American Enterprise Institute, call attention to the sad plight of our Social Security system because we do not have enough young workers coming along to support it. [1] Similarly, Dr. Karl Brandt, Director of Food Research Institute at Stanford, says the U.S. is underpopulated and will have a higher standard of living when the population increases greatly. [2]

The success of the populationists was achieved through the subtle power of language, and once the concept of “superfluous people” took hold in the human mind, the means for getting rid of these “superfluous” became more acceptable.

In the 1980s, and thus far into the 2000s, there have been massive efforts to cut population in the Third World, which is identified, in general, as Africa, Asia (especially South Asia), India and, in this hemisphere, Central and Latin America. The conditions in this area have fueled some real concerns which should be shared by everyone: In Africa, more than half the mothers are not attended by trained personnel at childbirth but rather by “traditional” personnel, and it is not made clear what this phrase means. Since women earn more than half the family support, when one is disabled or dies, chaos results. There is massive mortality of women from “pregnancy-related causes,” and the overwhelming majority of these are from “unsafe abortions.” [3]

The Guatemala Safe Motherhood Declaration reports that “one in every five Central American women has experienced a violent relationship with a partner,” and that “there is no adequate legislation to protect women in this area.” It is safe to assume that the above statistic testifies to the low social status women suffer in the Third World. [4]

Moved by the conditions described



above, and stirred by the current literature viewing population as a potentially explosive enemy, a group of world-wide organizations emanating from the United Nations has assumed a candidly high profile in its zeal to cut population in this Third World. Chief among them are those listed below, which for brevity's sake, will be referred to as The Network: World Bank, World Health Organization (WHO), UNESCO, Family Care International (FCI), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), International Planned Parenthood Fund (IPPF*), United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF), U.N. Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The Network subscribes to what is called the "Safe Motherhood Initiative." Among its "First Tier activities are "family planning and abortion." [5] (Implicit here is activity to legalize abortion where it is not already legal, in order to make it "safe.")

The Second Tier addresses adolescent years by reviewing the laws on marriage and by altering "school curriculum to emphasize sexual and reproductive health education." [6]

The Third Tier emphasizes education to encourage contraceptives and women's "reproductive health role." [7]

No thinking person enjoying the economy, health services, and protective laws in our own country can turn his/her head away with comfort from the conditions stated above. How does the Network propose to remedy these conditions? a) Sex education in the schools; b) contraceptive services; c) "safe" abortions. Some of the euphemisms used are "menstrual regulation" which means abortion in the first eight weeks; "population dynamics," which is formulation of "population policies," and "family life education which means the spacing of children which sounds innocent enough if it were not for the rest; "surgical contraception"—this is not explained. Does it mean tubal ligation, vasectomy, Norplant? Such euphemisms should be viewed with the question, "At what point do they become government fiat, given the strong image that population is looked upon as the enemy?"

The positive aspects of the program are those dealing with educating midwives and health

personnel, with raising respect for women and concentration on child immunization and the importance of nutrition to the health of the people. The New York Times reports that "the Clinton administration is seeking a substantial increase in spending ...on population control programs with the goal of providing birth control to every woman in the developing world who wants it by the end of the decade." [8] Timothy Wirth, main population spokesman for the Clinton administration, talks of raising the annual spending figure to \$1.2 billion to provide family planning services to the 600 million women of childbearing age in developing countries. [9]

However, much Right to Life - LIFESPAN would rejoice in higher standards of living for our Third World neighbors, we must remind our fellow citizens that they will pay for these inefficient, ineffective, anti-life programs. The means proposed to carry them out have been forced through our own country—our own schools, our own adolescents, with the result that America now has the highest teen abortion rate in the world, the highest teen illegitimacy rate in the world and reckless homicide has become the popular national sport. Sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS have become rampant, especially among the young. Population control programs in this country have not solved the problems with which the Third World is plagued and will not in the world. It is difficult to see how, given this dismal picture, our country should presume to take on the role of number one world leader in population activities.

[1] Ben Wattenberg, see "The Birth Dearth" (Pharos Books, New York, 1987).
[2] Fredric Wertham, M.D., "A Sign for Cain" (McMillan and Co., NY, 1966, p. 110).

[3] Dr. Mahbulul Hag, "Why Does the Miracle of Life Become a Nightmare of Death?" The World Bank, Meeting of Partners for Safe Motherhood, Washington, D.C., March 1992.

[4] Bulletin; Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development, "Guatemala Safe Motherhood Declaration," Vol. 9, No. 3, March 1992.

* It should be noted here that, although the Reagan "Mexico City Policy" forbade the use of U.S. dollars to fund the IPPF for abortion overseas, in 1993, President Clinton, by Executive order, scrapped the Mexico City Policy for the eight years of his term. In January, 2001, President George W. Bush, by his own Executive order, reinstated the policy. Therefore, at this writing, the IPPF is forbidden to use U.S. dollars to fund abortions overseas.

[5] Dr. Fred T. Sai, "Safe Motherhood Initiative: Getting Our Priorities Straight," The Lancet, Vol. 339, February 22, 1992.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Steven Greenhouse, "U.S. to Spend More on Birth Control." New York Times (International), January 23, 1994, p. 5.

[9] Ibid.