

What About Children?

A challenge to the population control myths & propaganda



Against the Grain

Large families are on the decline in modern society. Those that do have families with more than the accepted norm of two children are oftentimes treated negatively or as an oddity. Sometimes even with hostility. Many people who would like large families are stopped because of financial considerations in our ever-taxed society where material things are valued over people. But how did our culture come to this? What factors and people have been changing the face of society to reflect this attitude? And what is going to happen in the world in the next century as a result of the current Birth Dearth? This is a brief introduction to this subject and its goal is to encourage further research.

The Population Planners

There are many individuals, government agencies, and various globalist organizations responsible for the current trend in western society towards smaller families. Large amounts of taxpayer dollars and grant money have been and continue to be spent to shape the thoughts of the nations in this matter. But the ideas they present are not new. There have always been people alarmed at the growing population and predicting the end of the world because of it. Plato and Aristotle worried about it 500 years BC and Tertullian wrote two centuries after Christ, "***What most frequently meets our view (and occasions complaint), is our teeming population. Our numbers are burdensome to the world, which can hardly support us...In very deed, pestilence, and famine, and wars, and earthquakes have to be regarded as a remedy for nations, as the means of pruning the luxuriance of the human race.***"¹ Saint Jerome in the fourth century wrote that, "***the world is already full, and the population is too large for the soil.***"²

More recent people whose ideas are espoused today include; Thomas Malthus, writer of the ***Essay on the Principle of Population*** in 1798; Margaret Sanger, founder of Planned Parenthood and the Birth Control Federation of America, among other organizations she started, who said, "***Ignorance, poverty, and vice are populating the world;***"³ and Paul Ehrlich, author of the 1968 book, ***The Population Bomb***, whose 1970 prediction that there would be ***65 million American deaths due to starvation in the decade 1980-89 and ten million deaths every year of the 1970's*** thankfully never came to pass.⁴

Many of the assumptions made by these antinatalist alarmists have no basis in absolute facts or scientific research. In fact, the demographics demonstrate the opposite of what they are preaching. Population control, therefore, is an ideology founded on pessimistic, irrational fears, misleading and false statistics, and efforts to manipulate people, rather than on Truth.

An example of purposely and deceptively misleading the public can be found in *The Limits to Growth*, which sold nine million copies in 29 languages. This treatise put out by the Club of Rome rocked the world with its dire forecasts. Four years later the Club said that the conclusions of the first report were not correct and that they purposely misled the public in order to "awaken" public concern.⁵

Here are just a few of today's organizations involved in promoting the overpopulation theory and aggressively enforcing its agenda: **U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), the Rockefeller Foundation, the Population Council, the Population Crisis Committee, the International Planned Parenthood Federation, the UN Fund for Population Activities, the Ford Foundation, Zero Population Growth, Negative Population Growth, National Organization for Non-Parents,**

The Image Reinforced

The image of the ideal family as a couple with one or two children is continually reinforced throughout all medias. Advertising from health insurance to footwear uses the same picture to sell their product. Billboards, newspapers, TV shows and commercials all promote this picture perfect family. This is a subtle form of indoctrination; this is the norm and if you do not conform to this model you won't be doing as well as the Jones's. One is hard pressed to find positive portrayals of large families in the media. If they are presented at all, it is usually in a negative, bleak ad for some help agency as they are obviously in poverty and despair due to their ignorance. Even the popular late 70's show, ***Eight is Enough***, about life in a large family, had a negative implication in its very title; ENOUGH!

The school textbooks continue the pattern. They are chocked full of instruction on the perilous state of the environment and the hopeless condition of our "over-populated" Earth. We are doomed, they teach, and the only hope is a drastic reduction in population that only we can control. We impose this on the rest of the world through our health care, family planning programs, and by aid programs to underdeveloped nations. One textbook has an accompanying picture of a rat on a dinner plate as an example of "future food sources" along with its gloomy text.⁷

Children themselves have been increasingly presented as a burden that should be delayed as long as possible so as not to disturb your best years, and then stuck into a day care/school program at the earliest opportunity so as to minimize their inconveniencing effects on the parent's life.

Other factors have also affected fertility rates. Environmental toxicity, found in everything from chlorinated, fluoridated tap water, pesticides on food, and chemicals in everyday things around the house.⁸ Although these household and industrial pollutants have also contributed to a lower birth rate, it is the mindset of those who influence people that we want to address here.

Food Production

There is not a shortage of food. But there is a distribution problem. Drought and starvation are not due to an overpopulated Earth that cannot support its inhabitants. Governmental mismanagement of finances and resources, overall poverty and local conditions that change each growing season cause hunger and shortages. In the Ethiopian crisis, the Marxist regime did not properly distribute food aid shipped to their country. This, and other factors involving the government, contributed to the mass starvation.⁹

Politics have a lot to do with the problem. Government interference with markets reduces the incentive for farmers to increase their crops, so production is constrained. The 1971 war and subsequent starvation crisis in Bangladesh was followed by two record annual harvests due to new government policies and favorable weather conditions.¹⁰ Why are only 1.2 million of that country's 22 million cultivated acres irrigated? Gas to run water pumps is expensive and unless farmers are allowed to take advantage of market opportunities, production will not continue to increase sufficiently enough to reliably support the population.¹¹

Western assistance also destroys foreign markets and induces dumping of surpluses in poor countries by our subsidized farmers, lowering local incentive more in those countries.¹² China's remarkable agricultural turnabout is further evidence of these principles. Agriculture was changed from collective farming to mainly private farming between 1978-81 and the productivity has increased annually.¹³

Other conditions lead to starvation as well. In India, the Hindu religion prohibits cows from being killed due to belief in reincarnation. This also prevents them from killing rats and other rodents that devour food storage sources. The annual monsoon season that usually helps farmers can also wipe out crops in some years. Despite all that, however, India had a grain reserve of 22 million tons in 1977, probably encouraged by the lifting of price controls on food in the mid-1970's.¹⁴ India actually has a low population density (persons per square acre) and India's land can support much more production as well as people. Land shortage will not be a problem, either, now or in the future.¹⁵ This does not even consider the worldwide aquaculture market that

has continued to increase in production, so much so that the falling price of fish is its main obstacle to market competition.¹⁶

There has been overall progress that has led to sharp reductions in underweight children in Asia and Latin America.¹⁷ The amount of overweight people in the world has increased to 1.1 billion, the same number as underweight people and 55% of the United States is overweight.¹⁸ 300,000 people in this country die annually as a result of obesity related illnesses.¹⁹

Advanced reclamation techniques are continually increasing world farmland. Bioengineering has changed the face of agriculture. Crops are being developed that are disease resistant and grow in less than ideal climatic conditions. Modern crop technology has given us many new options in produce selection. The food and land is available; the distribution and government policies are what need work.

Limited Resources?

Discoveries of new deposits and new ways of extracting existing resources are continually being developed. Substitutes and better alternatives for certain resources are also being introduced into the market. Technological advances are limitless, except where we limit the existence of the very minds that can create them. The electric car has a long way to go, but it represents possibilities in alternative transportation energy sources. Another is liquefied natural gas, which is now being implemented in the trucking world in California. Cities have the capability to mine methane gas out of landfills and generate energy from it.²⁰

Lowering prices of other resources are also reflecting a greater supply than demand. When the market goes through a time of shortage and price increases, the producers respond with new innovations. Evidence of resource availability lies in the fact that the costs of raw materials have fallen sharply over the period of recorded human history.²¹

There are many material technical forecasts based on both physical principles and economic ones and their conclusions tend to vary as greatly as those of the different camps of evolutionists. These forecasts have reflected both positive and negative predictions for the future, but the pessimistic ones seem to attract the media attention.²² Why is this? Could it be possible that the media has its own agenda and is not merely at our service for reporting the straight facts? I think we all know the answer to this question.

Julian Simon, an economist who changed from devoting his life to stopping population growth to publishing the true facts on the issue, says, *"...the possibilities in the world are sufficiently great so that with the present state of knowledge...we and our descendants can manipulate the elements in such fashion that we can have all the raw materials that we desire at prices ever smaller relative to other goods and to our total incomes."*²³

People are the Ultimate Resource. Human ingenuity and labor is a resource we cannot afford to lose. The types and quantities of economic resources are continually changing, as is the ability of given areas to support life. Innovative people are the ones who will discover and manage resources and the resource that we cannot afford to lose.²⁴

Global Ecosystems and Pollution

Pollution is a direct result of human choice, not size of population. Creative minds are tackling this problem daily. Education on how our choices affect our environment can be delivered in a non-alarmist, intelligent way. Corporate waste is being addressed and companies are modifying their production in an effort to comply with new guidelines and legislation. We no longer face some of the worst disease causing pollution problems that our ancestors faced due to our increasing technology and sanitation practices. London air quality, for example, is dramatically improving as well as is the water in the Great Lakes.²⁵

Parents who are disturbed about pollution can start making changes right at home. Using cloth instead of disposable diapers reduces the harvesting of trees and production of harmful chemicals such as dioxin bleaching used to make disposables. Breastfeeding rather than bottle-feeding taps into a great free, inexhaustible resource and lowers worldwide milk production for formula. This in turn decreases the number of cows that produce methane gas and consume grain that could feed the starving masses. It will also reduce all the other materials produced for that market such as bottles and tin cans. These and other economically and ecological practices also make having a large family more affordable.

Research teams keep coming out with new data, some very conflicting to earlier held views. A case in point would be the recent research by a Stanford team that came to the conclusion that the ozone hole above Antarctica is having scarcely any effect on phytoplankton growth in the ocean.²⁶

And for every problem there is a potential offset. For example; carbon dioxide emissions are threatening to raise the world's temperatures, part of the "**greenhouse effect.**" Higher temperatures, however, will increase evaporation and the resulting cloudiness will block incoming heat. There are other air pollution particulate that could also reduce global temperatures, thus countering the effect.²⁷ Commuters, frustrated by traffic in these areas, are learning to use alternative transportation and the air quality has actually improved slightly over the past two years. Trees cut down to produce paper are continually being replanted and will grow and continue to help our air. The rain forests will not be destroyed due to global pressure on the few people causing damage in very small areas.

Are We Running out of Room?

All six billion people in the world can fit into the states of Nebraska and South Dakota with 2000 square feet of living room per person. They could all fit in Texas with a nice size ranch house per family of five as well. This might seem a bit crowded, but it demonstrates the carrying capacity of the Earth. People have chosen to cluster together in cities throughout history and densely populated cities and nations for the most part have a positive correlation between people per square mile and per capita income.²⁸ Some of the most densely populated countries, such as Japan and Taiwan are the most economically industrious and prosperous.²⁹ There are vast amounts of open space on this planet that are virtually undisturbed. But few think on this as they are stuck in rush hour traffic cursing the existence of all the humanity around them.

So are the problems of today really due to the amount of people, or are they due to the increasingly stressful lifestyles that people in urban industrial societies are choosing?

From an economic standpoint, declining birth rates and negative growth will not be good for the world economy. As stagnation sets in to industrial societies it will affect the developing countries' economies as well. They need our growth in order to sustain them financially. When we are prosperous there is a trickle down affect throughout the world as we buy manufactured products abroad.³⁰ Hopefully a responsive business community will adjust as best they can to the changing demographics.³¹

What Damage Have Our Programs Caused?

The U.S. and U.N. funded population reduction programs in developing countries are directly responsible for incalculable damage.³² Untold thousands of men and women have been forcibly sterilized, many permanently injured and killed as a direct result. The U.S. government has made their "family planning" reproductive programs a mandatory part of receiving U.S. aid, whether or not the service was desired by the countries requesting aid.³³ Aggressive imposition is a better term for the reality of what is happening outside of our white picket fenced yards.

The Population Research Institute writes, "***Quinacrine, a known mutagen capable of causing cancerous changes in body cells, often causes irreparable damage to a woman's reproductive system... Accusing their governments of turning a blind eye to the situation, health activists and women's groups in the two Asian countries (India and Bangladesh) called for a halt to the quinacrine sterilization trials, which they allege are being pushed by population control groups based in the United States.***"³⁴ A study on the potential carcinogenic effects of this chemical substance ends by saying, "***However, until long term studies can prove the safety and efficacy of this method, quinacrine sterilization should be allowed to continue only as an experimental procedure in countries that are likely to benefit from it.***"³⁵ What are the authors implying here? Its OK to experiment on people "lesser" than ourselves who would obviously benefit from a little DNA altering, cancer causing drug, because their lives are pretty crummy anyway? Unfortunately, this makes it easier to unwittingly sterilize women. They come in to the clinic for a health check up and are prescribed something for what ails them. Little do they know they are about to burn their insides by taking that little white pill

So is this a philanthropic effort to improve the living conditions of women in the world, or is there more to it? How about this from the journal *Progress in Human Reproduction Research*,

"Communication helps shape public opinion. Public interest in research may wane--and financial support may decline--if research remains an academic exercise that has little apparent relevance to the "real" world. Public relations is therefore also important to research because it helps to keep the relevance of research findings in the public eye."³⁶ (bolding mine)

Let's reason this out; research money will only be available if the public is interested in it. The public will only be interested in it if there's a problem to solve. Therefore, population growth must be continually communicated in the media to the public as a problem or we won't get our money. Hmm...Now it's probably not as simple as that. Surely those that have dedicated their lives and careers to this field must be sincere in their belief that they are doing something good to benefit women and the world, right? Let's hope so. But then why do so many of them attack the researchers who come out publicly with different results about the state of the world?³⁷

AID's Office of Population director Reimert T. Ravenholt demanded in a 1977 newspaper interview, "***the sterilization of one-quarter of the fertile women of the world to meet U.S. goals of population control...***"³⁸ A secret 1970's document that was de-classified in 1980 now available to the public is very clear on the United States' global intentions. In this document the AID planners stated their goals to bring about "**a two-child family on the average**" throughout the world by the year 2000.³⁹ It appears they've been pretty successful. And this is only the tip of the iceberg. We need to be concerned when Paul Ehrlich is suggesting that chemicals be dumped in our own water supply that will cause infertility. And Al Gore writes in Ehrlich's book jacket, "***The time for action is due, and past due. Ehrlich has written the prescription***"⁴⁰ Scary thought. I think I'll avoid that pharmacy.

There are many people and organizations fighting these atrocities and the prevailing attitudes, but most people have never heard of them. Why? There is an obvious media blackout of anyone who disagrees on this issue no matter what the scientific and economic evidence clearly says. Face it; bad news sells. And a few people have shaped the thoughts of an entire culture. A reflection of that worldview is shown in a recent tragedy involving a high school girl who gave birth and then stabbed her baby daughter to death. A writer responded to the paper's letters section demanding forced sterilization of this girl rather than rehabilitation.⁴¹

The Effects of Stymied Population Growth

We are already experiencing the negative effects of declining growth in the United States. Currently we are at 1.8 children per woman TFR (total fertility rate), way below the 2.4 needed to be at replacement level. Since 1973, 40 million people have been killed through legalized abortion. Millions more have been prevented from being conceived due to increased contraception. This "Birth Dearth" is affecting us economically at all levels and will only get worse. These non-people should now be entering the work force; paying taxes, contributing to Social Security, developing new technologies, developing cures for cancer, and increasing market supplies as well as purchasing them. But they aren't there.

The California Highway Patrol has taken to billboard advertising to try to attract potential officers. Recruitment for police officers in California is the number one concern for agencies and cities.⁴² The U.S. Marine's slogan used to be that they were "**looking for a few good men.**" Now they are just looking for *any* men, or women. All branches of the military are seriously below recruitment levels. Employers everywhere at all levels are having problems filling positions.⁴³

And who will pay your social security when that time rolls around? The number of older people to younger people is increasing and by 2035 the ratio will be two producers (workers) to one retiree.⁴⁴ Someone has to work to pay for their retirement. But there won't be enough "someones".

Europe is realizing too late the effects of curbing population growth. Spain has the "honor" of boasting the world's lowest birthrate at 1.07.⁴⁵ The problem is that they are finding it is nothing to boast of as they enter the new millennium anticipating a decline in population in the next twenty years with the rest of Europe not far behind.

The Dynamics of Individual Family Size

The size of one's family has a direct effect on a person. Some people's individual gifts and talents are better developed as an only child and others need to come from a large family in order to shine. Many of the world's greatest contributors to society come from large families and were later born children. A 1995 Newsweek article has recently resurfaced citing a study that allegedly demonstrates that children from smaller families do better academically. But upon reading the entire article one discovers that the difference was a B+ for only children to a B for those from a family of five.⁴⁶ It also relates the story of a family of ten children that were all college graduates and professionals and boasted one millionaire among their clan. Some of the following list of examples comes from **A Full Quiver** by Rick and Jan Hess:

Presidents- 12 were fifth children or later starting with George Washington, fifth of ten. Eighteen more were first, second or third born children from families of four and up.

Musicians- Schumann, Wagner, Beethoven, Bach, Mozart, Steinway, Copland are just a few of the musicians that not only came from large families, but were later born children. Although Bach himself came from a small family, he had twenty-one children and all who reached adulthood were accomplished musicians.

Other historical figures- scientist Robert Boyle, Corrie ten Boom, The Montgolfier bros., who invented of balloon travel, came from a family of 16 children. Dwight Moody, David Livingstone, Jonathon Edwards, Dietrich Bonhoffer, and Charles Finney were all later born children in large families.

What would our lives be like today if these people had not been born? We don't know. Would others have risen to take their place? Or would there be a void in their contribution to humanity and scientific discoveries and inventions that we would be missing and never know it, but suffer the effects of it. Could that be currently happening now?

Where Do We Go from Here?

So is rampant overpopulation truly threatening to destroy the Earth? The evidence shows otherwise. There are definite problems in the world that need to be addressed by society and individuals. However, the world *can* support a growing population, that is not the ultimate problem. Industrial nations have caused ecological conditions that need fixing. But technological advances provided by an increased knowledge base dependant on more people to provide that knowledge will continue to redefine our society's needs. These problems can be corrected through awareness and education and self-regulation along with intelligent policy making. For example, the forestry industry responded to public concern by implementing tree plantations as a source of timber, thus using only the equivalent of 5% of the world's total forest area.⁴⁷

Most of the current problems are not caused by the amount of people, but the practices and lifestyles of certain people and industries. There needs to be accountability for disposable consumerism in western, industrial nations. Consumerism in itself is very good for the economy, but it can be taken too far if there is no responsibility attached to it and its environmental byproducts. Our reproductive choices affect this trend. The population of the western nations has decreased from 22% of the world's population in 1950 to 15% in 1990 and continues to drop. At this rate it will be 5% by 2100.⁴⁸ Less of "us" may cause worse problems if allowed to continue as we adopt more decadent lifestyles reflective of greater disposable income due to smaller or no family size.

Localized problems seem worse because we are in the midst of them and it is easy to blame them all on growth. Example: Congestion in southern California will continue to exist as long as people choose to live an hour away from where they work and move to the area no matter what the total population of the world is. Elected officials in these regions have a responsibility to plan for growth and act accordingly.⁴⁹

Julian Simon sums it up well, ***"There will always be temporary shortages and resource problems where there are strife, political blundering, and natural calamities, where there are people. But the natural world allows, and the developed world promotes through the marketplace, responses to human needs and shortages in such manner that one backward step leads to 1.0001 steps forward, or thereabouts. That's enough to keep us headed in a life-sustaining direction. The main fuel to speed our progress is our stock of knowledge, and the brake is our lack of imagination. The Ultimate Resource is people; skilled, spirited, and hopeful people who will exert their wills and imaginations for their own benefit, and so, inevitably, for the benefit of us all."***⁵⁰

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