

--Birth Control, Politics, and Population--

On various occasions, I have spoken to the related subjects of birth control, planned parenthood, and world population and it is neither my desire nor my intent this morning to do a retake of that material. However, the recent projection of the issue of birth control into the political arena and the subsequent attempt to more or less sweep the whole matter of birth control in its relevance to an exploding population under the rug, in and of itself invites to consideration and leads to a renewed examination of certain fundamental points.

A year or so ago President Eisenhower named a committee to evaluate our various foreign assistance programs. That committee, headed by William H. Draper, a New York banker and a former roving United States ambassador in Europe, made its report last July and in its report stated that "No realistic discussion of economic development can fail to note that development efforts in many areas of the world are being offset by increasingly rapid population growth," and went on to recommend that the United States should give birth control help to countries requesting it and that it should support in the United Nations and elsewhere such research as will produce scientific information needed for effective programs of population control. According to Arthur Krock, as reported in the New Republic, Mr. Draper was in favor of side-stepping the issue. It was, he suspected, an all too hot political potato. But President Eisenhower insisted on its inclusion for evaluation and recommendation. This report was followed a few days later by an-

other report, this one issuing from a special study made by The Stanford Research Institute, and conducted for the senate foreign relations committee and ordered by a committee within this larger committee which included Senators Kennedy and Humphrey. This report, from a quite independent source, only confirmed that of the Draper Committee. It stated that "food shortages and population pressures are already contributing to conditions that can lead to war", that population control is imperative, and it recommended a doubling, even a tripling of money and effort in the area of population control research.

At Abilene, Kansas, on October 13th., President Eisenhower gave emphasis to the seriousness of the world population problem, saying in part, "This is not a problem for the distant future... You must now help determine how such a vast humanity may.... increase the sum of human happiness on this earth."

On November 26th. the Roman Catholic hierarchy of the United States, made up of sixteen bishops headed by Cardinal Spellman, denounced the seeming development toward an official birth-control stand by asserting and even threatening that the 37 million Catholics in this country would not support any contraceptive birth control programs, at home or abroad. His statement was filled with such phrases as "terror technique" and "sheerest kind of nonsense" and charge was made that the whole matter had been loaded with "hysterical terrorism and bland misrepresentation of data."

On December 2nd, at a press conference, President Eisenhower, without benefit of a script prepared for him by speech writers, but with apparent political sensitiv-

growth stands in the way of economic advance. Senator Kennedy, caught in a political-religious cross-fire, has indicated in another context that he ~~denies~~ ^{denies} the right of the American Roman Catholic Hierarchy to determine Presidential policy, but pressed for a statement on the birth control-population issue, his answer was more in the way of a circumvention. "The question" he said "is whether the available resources of the world are increasing as fast as the population". And he gave as his belief that they are. And he further went on to say: "The United States government does not advocate any policy concerning birth control here in the United States. Nor have we ever advocated such a policy in western Europe. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Accordingly, I think it would be the greatest psychological mistake for us to appear to advocate the limitations of the black or yellow peoples.... They must reach decisions on these matters based on their own experience and judgement."

The most biting denunciation of this position and thereby of Senator Kennedy that I have encountered comes from a Catholic source. Writing some time back in the Catholic Weekly publication "Our Sunday Visitor", Dale Francis, a Catholic columnist said: "I know that Senator Kennedy wants to be the Democratic candidate for president but I remember, too, that he is the author of "Profiles of Courage" and it seems to me that while statements like this may make him a presidential candidate, they won't make him a candidate for any list of courageous statesmen.he could have and should have answered that Catholics are absolutely opposed to artificial birth control and no Catholic worthy of the name Catholic could hold any other position. This is a plain statement of fact and a courageous man

should state it openly and proudly.⁵"

The political fortunes of Senator Kennedy are not my professional concern. Some other aspects of the birth control-population issue, however, likewise need to be openly stated, rather than being smothered, as they all too commonly are, under generalized statements.

First, there is a somewhat growing argument, without any ~~specific~~ particular religious association, ~~that~~ that we are unnecessarily concerned about the world population problem. With the coming of space travel, other planets, it is held, will be opened to settlement and the world's population will be thinned out, just as historically occurred with the opening and settling of the various continents of the earth. The number of planets are far greater than the number of continents and therefore there is no end to the room for population growth. Reviewing a new volume entitled "The Population Explosion and Christian Responsibility" in the very evangelistic publication "Christianity Today", the reviewer, for instance, says: "The truth is that God has ways of confounding the statisticians.... the solution may lie on (other) planets. One has a feeling that by the year A.D. 2000 such books as this will be seen to have been looking for the right answers in the wrong places."

Maybe so. But the whole matter is still too largely speculative to warrant belief that it will become a reality within the near or even the rather distant future. Whether and what other planets can maintain life yet remains to be seen.

Whether any sizable number of human beings would be willing to endure the conditions for life that might exist on some one or another planet, is as yet a completely unknown factor. And such items as cost and the limited length of life must necessarily be factors of no small significance in any projected thinning out of the population through large-scale transportation to planets at a time-distance even within that of the human life-span.

Meanwhile population pressure is an unmistakable reality in various parts of the world, and for the welfare of individuals themselves as well as from a broader social point of view, something a good deal more immediately effective is required than a vaguely expected solution through space travel and interplanetary migration.

Second, the argument is commonly advanced, and not solely by Catholics, although it is a stock answer given by some Catholics, that population pressure is good insofar as it makes for an expanding market and stimulates economic growth, and that with developing scientific techniques and the tapping of new resources there can be production of more than enough food to meet the needs of future population growth. In support of this proposition, reference is oftentimes made to the large surpluses of food that we in this country are year after year producing.

There remains the basic fact, however, that the world, with its earth and seas, is limited in area, perhaps even more than in potential resources, and it is only common sense to know that there must be a limit to the number of human beings

and other forms of animal life that it can contain and support. A country such as Japan, which in recent years has made a decided cut in its rate of population growth, has long been without much in the way of animal producing food because the land limited area would not allow for a joint production of ~~land~~ food animals and human beings. The Japanese, by and large, have had to live from rice and millet and from the products of the sea. So even allowing for the forced elimination of all food animals, pigs, chickens, beef cattle and sheep, and every variety of ~~wild animals~~ undomesticated beast, there comes a point when ~~just~~ human beings alone would be uncomfortably crowded. Dr. Harrison Brown, a geochemist at the California Institute of Technology, is only one of many who without necessary recourse to Einsteinian mathematics, has indicated that at the present rate of population increase, the land areas of the earth would be so tightly packed within 750 years, ~~that~~ ^{that}, allowing for a free distribution of individuals, each individual would have one square foot of land on which to stand. It is quite unlikely that science can ever provide us with a way to produce enough food from off the top of our heads to sustain such a population, or that even sufficient food would ~~make~~ for much happiness.

Moreover, our particular circumstance in which we have an economic surplus of food-stuffs, is not necessarily related to the ^{the surplus which could be for the good of} economic and dietary needs of ^{the world} some-part of our own population. We have it by virtue of a particular economic ^{system, a by-product of the present} system, and through factors of technical achievement, and land availability, and

^{our} ~~and~~ exclusion policy in immigration ^{is} that ^{does} not invite or allow ~~and~~ every-
one to settle here and to fill up our space. We are bedevilled with a surplus.
Economically we don't know what to do with it. We can't find a way of disposing
of it in the economic lives of our own people, or even into the starving bellies
of many people elsewhere. ^{Our} ~~Our~~ situation, ^{by} by virtue of circums^{ta}nce, greed, avarice,
or whatever it may be called, cannot be used as evidence of either potential or
promised food supply for all. Our wealth is only a temporary matter, subject to
vast dislocati^on if population were to press heavily upon every available inch
of our land.

There is no ^(t) argument whatsoever with the need and likewise with the realistic
possibilities of further food production, but this cannot skirt the fact, accord-
ing to Dr. Eugene Staley of Stanford University, that because of population
increase, and despite technol^ogical and economic progress, there are more poverty
stricken people in the world today than there were fifty years ~~ago~~ ago. It is
testified by economist after economist that in such heavily populated countries
as India and much of Asia and in Mexico and Puerto Rico there might be a ~~some-~~
what proportionate increase in productivity of economic and other resources if
there were a like decrease in population. Their argument is to the effect that
where
people ~~are~~ are reproducing themselves up to the point of where everyone barely
has ~~enough~~ enough to live on^e, there is little opportunity for the accum^ulation of
capital for technological advance and basic long-run undertakings. They would
also argue that it is not just food that people are interested in, ^{they} they want

and need to eat, but even more they increasingly desire and demand education, health and recreation, and all this goes beyond just the matter of finding ways of increasing the food supply.

To assume that the reducing of the rate of population growth will anywhere and everywhere automatically produce more economic development and greater individual happiness is to assume far too much. The whole matter is too greatly intertwined with varying factors of differential resources, and technological advance, and instances of geographical land availability, to allow for any such single factor of explanation or solution. But however inadequate it may be to propose birth control as a ~~contributory~~ ^{sole} solution, it is even more absurd to advance the assumption that improved economic measures will keep up with any amount of population increase. Somewhere along the line of near population growth, there must be a point at which there will be an increase of misery and starvation. It is already evident in some areas, and long before another 730 years when the situation, according to present trends, would be intensified on a world scale, we would in all likelihood be torn asunder in a fratricidal struggle for space and some little measure of prolonged survival. If there is not deliberate and widespread birth control which serves to hold the world population within limits of required food and ~~desired~~ ^{desired} education and wanted opportunities for fulfillment and enjoyment then there will be other consequences of an increasingly disastrous nature that will destroy much of human life and disintegrate most of what we have regarded as social advance and cultural development.

Third, the statement by Senator Kennedy that "The United States government does not advocate any policy concerning birth control here in the United States", as likewise that of President Eisenhower that birth control is not the business of our government, stands in need of ~~xxxxxxx~~ some ~~xxxxxxx~~ elaboration. It is true that our government, state and federal, does not require of the citizenry by and large that it practice birth control or that it not practice birth control. The assumption is generally made, and most people would consider it rightfully made, that in any society, but most certainly in a democratic society, the decision as to whether a married couple should have children and how many children is one that rests with the married partners themselves and is not something to be dictated or directly determined by government. If some married couples care to practice birth control and have no children at all, that is their own business; and if other married couples, for one reason or another, give birth to four, eight, ten, or a dozen children, that likewise is their own business, even though in some instances it may become a matter of public concern.

Still government is not so completely apart from the matter of birth control as President Eisenhower's and Senator Kennedy's statements might imply. For one thing, the federal government has long made available to the vast number of personnel in the armed services not only information about contraceptives but the contraceptive devices themselves. President Eisenhower, as a former Army career man, cannot be unaware of this fact. The practice, it is true, has not

been with the particular intent of furthering birth control, but rather with the intent of preventing disease and keeping the fighting forces in trim. Nevertheless, the government has served in an appreciable capacity, and by no means just by indirection, as a purveyor of birth control information and devices.

Elsewhere the federal government, in conjunction with numerous state governments, and without the indirection associated with the armed forces, has supported birth control programs and furthered birth control research. This has been done mainly through the United States Public Health Service. North Carolina, through its own state health service, pioneered by incorporating birth control into its public health program back in 1937. South Carolina followed in 1939, the same year that police raided and closed for good Connecticut's only clinic at Waterbury. Then came Alabama, followed by Virginia, Georgia, Mississippi, and Florida. In 1942 the use of federal funds for the support of state and local planned parenthood programs was authorized, and such monies have been and still are being used in various parts of the country. As reported by Carl Rowan, in a recent series of articles on the subject, North Carolina officials, for example, say that "the contraceptive service is now just as much a part of the maternity care of patients attending the public health clinics as are the physical examinations, laboratory tests and contraceptive advice for the well-to-do in the office of private physicians." They likewise hold that "the contraceptive service has definitely been a factor in the improvement of maternal and child health in the state."

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Such service is not being forced upon anyone by government, but it is being made

available to a good many who desire it, through government and federal funds ^{with}.

Likewise the Public Health Service is supporting a number of research projects having to do with human reproduction and which among other things might be productive of an effective, inexpensive, and more easily utilized kind of contraceptive. It is therefore by no means true that the government has no business with birth control. To imply otherwise, is to indulge in political euphemism.

Fourth, a considerable amount of emphasis has been placed on the point that it would be wrong for the United States to force birth control on other nations.

This was the sense of part of Senator Kennedy's statement, and the theme of no compulsion was readily seized upon by a number of other political figures.

One can not ^{not only} readily agree that it would be ^{not only} wrong, but quite likely impossible, for our government to force birth control ~~upon~~ on other peoples. Just as within our own society, final decision must rest with the individual couples as to whether or not to have children, so the matter of population control must remain essentially a matter of internal decision in any particular country.

It is not something to be imposed upon a country or a people from without.

But no one, in any position of responsibility, as far as I know, has advocated any such thing. All that has been urged has been that we not withhold aid and support for a birth control program when and as it is requested, and that we not tie any other aid we give to a provision that it must not be used for birth control

purposes. When Senator Kennedy was pressed on this point by James Reston of the New York Times, he acknowledged that to refuse a request for aid by a country eager to develop a birth control program would itself be "a kind of intervention". This acknowledgement, however, was swallowed up in the "no compulsion" theme.

It is a matter of no ~~small~~^{small} irony, is it not, that during these past years when so much of our aid to other countries has been in the form of military agents of death and destruction, that the American Catholic hierarchy raised no voice of protest, but as soon as it becomes a peaceful means of reducing and averting human misery, starvation and want, the hierarchy blasts forth with denunciation.

Numerous studies made in such crowded agrarian countries as India and Puerto Rico indicate a growth on the part of the peoples themselves of a desire for planned families and an interest in learning how to best implement the desire. This growth has had to take place over against various social and religious attitudes, but it has unmistakably been developing. And in various countries, such as India and Puerto Rico, the governments themselves, have been seeking to provide family planning services to the best of their ability and to the extent of their means. For us not to give aid and support for such programs, if requested, would be just as much a wrong as to try to force birth control upon a country. As a matter of fact, without specific request for such aid, there is acknowledgement, although not widely publicized, that some part of our grants of economic aid have gone and are still going into birth control programs in other countries.

One spokesman for the Indian Embassy has been quoted as saying: "We would never embarrass Mr. Kennedy or any other American president by asking for direct help in our birth control program. All we care about is our total resources. If you loan us ten million dollars for irrigation, that permits us to divert the equivalent to birth control or some other project in which you may not want to participate directly." This roundabout way of supporting birth-control programs is certainly known to Washington officials, and it cannot be wholly outside the knowledge of President Eisenhower and Senator Kennedy. Thus, whatever they may say for public consumption about birth control being no business of the government, and not to be forced upon peoples, it is nevertheless being supported through indirect grants. And insofar as general aid continues to be given, and there is every likelihood that it will continue to be given in some measure, it can only be understood that some part of it will serve to support birth control programs. One might wish that the matter could be handled openly through direct request but at least the ^{implied} request is not being wholly denied as the American Catholic hierarchy would like to demand.

Fifth, and last, the statement by the hierarchy that the 37 million Catholics in this country would not support any contraceptive birth control programs, at home and abroad, cannot be taken at its face value, and must be discounted in some considerable measure as a political threat.

For surveys have repeatedly demonstrated that Catholics do favor birth-control

in substantial proportions. Most recent is a study from the University of Michigan and the Scripps Foundation. In this study of a national sample of wives aged eighteen to thirty-nine, it was found that 85 per cent of the Protestant wives and 45 per cent of the Catholic ones approved of deliberate family limitation. Four fifths of the Catholic wives capable of conceiving had used some means of birth control, and over half of them a method banned by the clergy. Statistical breakdowns of the clientele of various birth-control clinics have also shown that a good proportion of the women are Catholics. Moreover, in predominantly Catholic countries such as Italy, France, and Belgium the low birth rate suggests that efficient contraception is being practiced. In Jamaica, among a representative sample of 1368 women from low-income groups, the Catholics not only desired and had actually borne fewer children than the non-Catholics, but also expressed a more favorable attitude toward birth control. Such findings, write Kingsley Davis and Judith Blake, "indicate that even devout Catholic laymen do not automatically think or do what their religious leaders tell them (and they are not delivered up in an election as a solid bloc). Like their fellow citizens of other faiths, American Catholics, being American as well as Catholic, accept the validity of individual conscience, and the right to make up one's own mind on public issues. They are no less ambitious for their children than other Americans; and they feel they can rear them better if they are not burdened by too great a number. At the same time, however, they are far from indifferent

to the official doctrines of their church, and the result is a compromise which must be personally painful to many. According to the Michigan-Scripps study, among Catholic wives using some method of birth control, 40 percent of those who attend church regularly and 83 percent of those who seldom or never go to church employ a method other than the officially approved one of "rhythm."

This is not to be wondered at, insofar as the rhythm method is technically difficult to determine and is considerably less reliable than chemical or mechanical means. It might be assumed that a good ^{Catholic} many would turn from rhythm to some other method, and this is borne out in the Michigan-Scripps study which found that Catholic couples who have tried rhythm tend to switch to mechanical means of contraception once accidental pregnancies have occurred. Again, once the concession of the rhythm method was made by Pope Pius XI in 1930, (a method incidentally which St. Augustine had explicitly denounced) the ~~logical~~ argument against the use of mechanical and chemical methods was weakened. For prior to that concession it was held that abstinence by mutual consent was allowable, but sex without the aim of ~~pro~~creation was a sin. Once ^{the} that concession was made, it carried with it a basic admission that family limitation was rightful and that it might be accomplished otherwise than by abstinence. Considerable ecclesiastical rationalizing has been given to defense of the rhythm method and to denunciation of other methods, but even to many Catholics the defense of the rhythm method as natural and the branding of other methods as artificial, strikes them as being ecclesias-

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tical hair-splitting. If family limitation is rightful, and if sexual intercourse without the aim of procreation is rightful, then why not make use of more efficient means than the rhythm method?

It is not to be expected that the Catholic hierarchy will quickly or greatly alter its position on this matter. Sex ~~xxxxxxxx~~ in various of its ^{connections} ~~manifestations~~ runs too deeply throughout Catholic structure and is a near obsession in official Catholic thought. Still the tone of some Catholic statements indicates an awareness of fighting a losing battle. A few years ago, the Roman Catholic hierarchy of England and Wales issued a statement criticizing the report of the Royal Commission on Population, in which it said: "We must proclaim again that artificial contraception is intrinsically evil, contrary to the law of God, and a mutilation of the purpose and process of the sexual act. That the practice is already widespread, that it is accepted by a large part of public opinion, in no way invalidates the truth of the above statement or diminishes our duty to publish it." And just recently a Catholic columnist, writing in Our Sunday Visitor, said: "The Catholic Church now stands absolutely alone among our religious bodies in defense of God's order with respect to the use of sex. So standing, she is beginning to lose battle after battle in her fight to hold our American laws to the laws of God."

World population is a complex problem, and no one can be so naive as to think that birth control provides the sole or a simple solution. The problem however is not one that can be swept under the rug, and family planning is

at least an integral part of the solution. The matter is not exclusively religious, as President Eisenhower has rather wistfully said. It is also a cultural, and social, and economic, and likewise a political issue and consideration.

It needs to be frankly and honestly discussed by candidates and by citizens, and without fear of any ecclesiastical displeasure. For the population explosion may yet prove to be more disastrous than hydrogen bombs, even the trigger for the use of hydrogen bombs.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Sunday April 3, 1960 at 11 AM

Preludes: Allegro Hayden
Minuet

Opening Words:Hymn No. 11:

"Spring Carol"

Reading: from Morals and Medicine by Joseph Fletcher

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Interlude:Aspiration:

Solo: Three Pieces for Flute and Piano
Koechlin
Jane Burris, piano
Phyllis Campbell, flute

Hymn No. 12:

"He Liveth Long"

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Offertory: Sonata in F Major Telemann
Vivace
Largo
Allegro

SERMON: BIRTH CONTROL, POLITICS AND POPULATION
MR. STORM

Hymn No. 18: "Seeking Wisdom"Closing Words:

Postlude: March Kabalevsky
* Late Comers May Be Seated
Ruth Rye - Organist
Thomas Nee - Music Director

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WEEK'S CALENDAR

TODAY	8:00	S W Fellowship meeting at Lyman Lodge in Excelsior Dr. Arthur Foote, speaker
	7:30	Orchestra rehearsal
MONDAY	7:30	R.E. Committee Meeting
TUESDAY	7:30	Special Board Meeting
WEDNESDAY	10:30	Women's Alliance business meeting
	12:00	Pot Luck luncheon
	1:00	Speaker-Mr. Wilfred Leland, Exec. Dir. Minnesota FEPC Subject: "Organizing to Assure Civil Rights in 1960"
	7:30	Chorus rehearsal
FRIDAY	8:00	Unitarian Study Group
SATURDAY	1:00	Mental Health Group at Anoka

NEXT WEEK

SERMON SUBJECT: FREEDOM OR COMMITMENT Mr. SYKES
ADULT FORUM: "Federal Aid for Education-Why?"
Speaker: Mr. Frank Adams, member, Minneapolis Board of Education.

MUSIC: Ella Emery will play violin.

THE WOMEN'S ALLIANCE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR OLD sheets for the making of cancer bandages on Wednesday mornings.