

Explosion or Backfire, Bishops Ask

'Terror Techniques' Fail To Solve Population Boom

Following is the full text of the American Bishops' statement on the Catholic Church's stand on current efforts to finance with federal funds extensive birth control programs here and abroad.

For the past several years a campaign of propaganda has been gaining momentum to influence international, national, and personal opinion in favor of birth prevention programs. The vehicle for this propaganda is the recently coined terror technique phrase, "population explosion."

The phrase, indeed, alerts all to the attention that must be given to population pressures, but it also provides a smoke screen behind which a moral evil may be foisted on the public and for obscuring the many factors that must be considered in this vital question.

More alarming is the present attempt of some representatives of Christian bodies who endeavor to elaborate the plan into a theological doctrine which envisages artificial birth prevention within the married state as the "will of God."

Strangely, too, simply because of these efforts and with caliginous disregard of the thinking of hundreds of millions of Christians and others who reject the position, some international and national figures have made the statement that artificial birth prevention within the married state is gradually becoming acceptable even in the Catholic Church. This is simply not true.

The perennial teaching of the Catholic Church has distinguished artificial birth prevention, which is a frustration of the marital act, from other forms of control of birth which are morally permissible.

Method alone, however, is not the only question involved. Equally important is the sincere and objective examination of the motives and intentions of the couples involved. In view of the nature of the marriage contract itself, as long as due recognition is not given to these fundamental questions, there can be no genuine understanding of the problem.

At the present time, too, there is abundant evidence of a systematic, concerted effort to convince United States public opinion, legislators and policy makers that United States national agencies, as well as international bodies, should provide with public funds and support, assistance in promoting artificial birth prevention for economically underdeveloped countries.

The alleged purpose, as already remarked, is to prevent a hypothetical "population explosion." Experts, however, have not yet reached agreement on the exact meaning of this phrase. It is still a hypothesis that must stand the test of science.

Yet, pessimistic population predators seizing on the popular acceptance of the phrase, take little account of economic, social and cultural factors and changes.

Moreover, it would seem that if the predictors of population explosion wish to avail themselves of the right to forecast "population increases," they must concede the right to predict "production increases" of food as well as of employment and educational opportunities.

The position of United States Catholics to the growing and needy population of the world is a realistic one which is grounded in the natural law (which, it should be made clear, is not the law of the jungle, as sometimes erroneously supposed) and in respect for the human person, his origin, freedom, responsibility and destiny.

They believe that the goods of the earth were created by God for the use of all men and that men should not be arbitrarily tailored to fit a nagging and static image of what they are entitled to, as conceived by those who are more fortunate, greedy or lazy.

The thus far hidden reservoirs of science and of the earth unquestionably will be uncovered in this era of marvels and offered to humanity by dedicated persons with faith in mankind, and by those seeking cuts to comfort at the expense of the heritage of their own or other peoples.

United States Catholics believe that the promotion of artificial birth prevention is a morally, humanly, psychologically and politically disastrous approach to the population problem. Not only is such an approach ineffective in its own aims, but it spurns the basis of the real solution, sustained effort in a sense of human solidarity.

Catholics are prepared to dedicate themselves to this effort, already so promisingly initiated in national and international circles. They will not, however, support any public assistance, either at home or abroad, to promote artificial birth prevention, abortion or sterilization, whether through direct aid or by means of international organizations.

The fundamental reason for this position is the well considered objection to promoting a moral evil — an objection not founded solely on any typically or exclusively Catholic doctrine, but on the natural law and on basic ethical considerations. However, quite apart from the moral issue, there are other cogent reasons why Catholics would not wish to see any official support or even favor given such specious methods of "assistance."

Social man himself is the most valuable productive agent. Therefore, economic development and progress are best promoted by creating conditions favorable to his highest development. Such progress implies discipline, self-control and the disposition to postpone present satisfaction for future gains. The widespread use of contraceptives would hinder rather than promote the acquisition of these qualities needed for the social and economic changes in underdeveloped countries.

IMMIGRATION. Immigration and emigration — even within the same country — have their role to play in solving the population problem. It has been said that migration — other countries is no ultimate solution because of difficulties of absorbing populations into other economies. But it is a matter of record that migration has helped as a solution.

Thirty million people migrated successfully from Europe to the Americas in the last 150 years. When the nomadic Indians roamed the uncultivated plains of North America before the coming of these immigrants, the entire country with its estimated Indian population of only 500,000 and its shortage of food, would have been regarded as "overpopulated" according to the norms of the exponents of Planned Parenthood.

Yet, the same plains today are being retired into a "land bank" because they are overproductive in a land of 175 million. It is, therefore, apparent that to speak of a population explosion in the United States in these circumstances is the sheerest kind of nonsense.

POLITICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL. The Soviets in their wooing, of economically underdeveloped countries do not press artificial birth prevention propaganda on them as a remedy for their ills. Rather they allure them into the communist orbit by offering education, loans, technical assistance and trade, and they boast that their economic system is able to use human beings in constructive work and to meet all their needs.

The Russian delegate to the relatively recent meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission on Asia and the Far East proclaimed, "The key to progress does not lie in a limitation of population through artificial reduction of the birth rate, but in the speedy defeat of the economic backwardness of these countries." The communist record of contempt for the value of human life gives the lie to this hypocritical propaganda, but to peoples aspiring to economic development and political status, the deceit is not immediately evident.

Confronted on the one hand by the prospect of achieving their goals without sacrificing natural fertility and, on the other by the insistence that reducing natural fertility is essential to the achievement of such goals, how could these peoples be reasonably expected to reject communism?

Yet, the prophets of "population explosion" in alleging that contraception will thwart communism naively emphasize its specious attractiveness in these areas.

FOOD, AGRICULTURE. United States Catholics do not wish to ignore or minimize the problem of population pressure, but they do deplore the studious omission of adequate reference to the role of modern agriculture in food production.

The "population explosion" alarmists do not place in proper focus the idea of increasing the acreage or the acreage yield to meet the food demands of an increasing population. By hysterical terrorism and bland misrepresentation of data they dismiss these ideas as requiring too much time for the development of extensive education and new distribution methods and for the elimination of apathy, greed and superstition.

Such arguments merely beg the question, for the implementation of their own program demands the fulfillment of the same conditions. It seems never to dawn on them that in a chronic condition where we have more

people than food, the logical answer would be, not to decrease the number of people but to increase the food supply which is almost unlimited in potential.

We make these observations to direct attention to the very real problem of population pressures. Such remarks are not intended to exhaust this complex subject, nor to discourage demographers, economists, agricultural experts and political scientists in their endeavors to solve the problem.

Rather our intention is to reaffirm the position of the Catholic Church that the only true solutions are those that are morally acceptable under the natural law of God.

Never should we allow the unilateral "guesstimates" of special pleaders to stampede or terrorize the United States into a national or international policy inimical to human dignity. For, the adoption of the morally objectionable means advocated to forestall the so-called population explosion may backfire on the human race.

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Annual Appeal For Catholic University

My dear People:
On next Sunday, the first Sunday of Advent, we have the annual appeal for the support of the Catholic University in Washington. This University is unique in that it is a Papal University, directly under the care of His Holiness, Pope John XXIII.

Every diocese in the United States is indebted to this national center of education. Bishops, priests, religious, and laymen all over the country have studied in the halls of the University. Its contribution to Catholic culture in this country has exceeded even the fondest hopes of its founders.

Through the generous support of the Catholics of America the Catholic University has been able to maintain a national rating of the highest class among the universities in the country. As a member of the board of trustees of this university, may I, therefore, ask your generous contribution to make the Catholic University Collection worthy of the Diocese of Rochester.

With a grateful blessing, I am
Your devoted Shepherd in Christ,

+ James E. Kearney
Bishop of Rochester

Bishop Kearney's Appointments

- DECEMBER
- 1 Tuesday — St. Andrew's Seminary — Patronal Feast Mass — 10:30 a.m.
 - Knights of Columbus, Canandaigua Council No. 1445 Jubilee Banquet — 7:30 p.m.
 - 3 Thursday — McQuaid Jesuit High School — Low Mass in honor of St. Francis Xavier — 11:15 a.m.
 - 4 Friday — St. Joseph's Church — St. Monica's Sodality Mass — 8:00 a.m.
 - Sheraton Hotel — First Friday Luncheon — 12:15 p.m.
 - 5 Saturday — Nazareth College — I.F.C.A. Mass — 4:30 a.m.
 - 6 Sunday — Nazareth College — Sermon at College Mass — 11:00 a.m.
 - 8 Tuesday — St. Bernard's Seminary — Solemn Pontifical Mass — 9:30 a.m.
 - 9 Wednesday — St. Vincent DePaul Church, Churchville — Blessing of new Hall — 6:30 p.m.
 - 10 Sunday — Immaculate Conception Church — Low Mass and Sermon, 110th Anniversary of Parish — 8:00 p.m.
 - 16 Friday — St. Mary's Hospital — Capping of Nurses and Low Mass — 4:30 p.m.
 - 23 Wednesday — Sheraton Hotel — Diocesan Workers Christmas Party — 11:30 p.m.
 - 24 Thursday — St. Mary's Hospital — Low Mass and Hospital Visitation — 8:00 a.m.
 - 25 Friday — New Canaan — Low Mass — 12:00 Midnight.

SERMONETTE

By Rev. James D. Moriarty

Do We Answer God's Prayers?

There was once a poor boy who had no shoes. He was also a very pious lad. He prayed much. One day he was taunted by an irreligious neighbor. "You say so many prayers. It seems to me that if God heard your prayers He would tell someone to buy you a pair of shoes."

"Please, mister," the boy answered, "I think He does, but they don't listen."

Do you listen to the prayers God sends your way? Or do you mistakenly believe that only God is in the business of answering prayers?

The poorest man muddles along somehow. He needs very little to exist. He will survive in the face of great need. Even Christ assured us that the poor we would always have with us. It was the rich man whom Christ warned. And viewing the situation from a purely practical point of view it follows that the rich need the poor more than the poor need the rich.

The panhandler who meets you on the street and asks for a handout may be repulsive. Your first impulse is to ignore him. He is lazy. He is dirty. His breath may disgust you. If he were not shiftless he could get a job like other men and earn his living. And all these things are true. That's why you want to walk on by... ignore him completely.

Did it ever strike you that you may need him more than he needs you?

If you refuse, there will be another along in a few minutes who will fill this man's immediate needs... maybe better and more generously than you might have done. And even if there is no one to hear his plea, he has gone to bed (if he had a bed) hungry, before he ever crossed your path.

But if you refuse you have missed an opportunity to perform an act of charity. God told us that we must love Him above all things and that we must love our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God. He didn't say because he was attractive or because he might be able to do us a favor sometime in the future but simply to show our love of God.

It may be much more satisfying to help orphans or widows or the truly deserving but we may need these others more. That is why we ask, "Do we answer God's prayers?"

THE CATHOLIC
Courier Journal
OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ROCHESTER DIOCESE

Friday, November 27, 1959 Vol. 71 No. 9

MOST REV. JAMES E. KEARNEY, D.D., President

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Entered as second class matter in the Post Office at Rochester, N. Y.
As required under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

Single copy 10c; 1 year subscription in U. S., \$4.50
Canada \$5.00; Foreign Countries \$12.50

What Are Catholic Schools For?



Over 600 parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Brighton, attended an open house and panel discussion Thursday, Nov. 19. A tour of the school brought parents to meet the principal, Sister Louise Marie. Mrs. and Mrs. Earl O'Connor (above) confer with the nun, Assistant Librarian Mrs. John Brady (below) shows Mr. and Mrs. Sheldon Koch latest additions in list of children's books. Librarian Mrs. James Koller explains school's book program to Mrs. Karl Meng.



What are Catholic schools for? The answer seems easy — "To train children to be good citizens and good Catholics." That training today is complicated by demands of the times to provide specialized training in the face of strong competing and distracting forces. The once simple "Three R's plus Religion" course must now add science, social studies and even foreign languages — all at grade school level. Pupils formerly came home to study "when the street lights go on" but now they face the glittering TV screen, have their personal radios and glibly talk about space travel and nuclear research. Catholic schools have kept pace with progress as parents learned during recent "open house" programs in many diocesan schools. These pictures show Our Lady of Lourdes school "open house" highlights as the Brighton parish dramatically demonstrated current Catholic school methods Thursday, Nov. 19.

These are books children love to read"

Joseph Breig

Editors' Paper

I was just thinking, it's a confounded nuisance that we don't have a publication in which Catholic thinkers could dispute nose to nose, instead of each talking chiefly to himself, the way it is now.

I mean to say, there are some pungent words I would like to have with Donald McDonald, Father Ginder, John Cogley, William F. Buckley, Father Murchland, Father Thurston Davis, Ed Skillin, and who-not.

Likewise, I am positive sure that some of these would welcome a chance to say a few choice things to some or all of the others, and even to me — although how anybody can question my wisdom is a mystery to me.

FATHER GINDER and Don McDonald (to take an instance) disagree about everything, but the former's readers don't read the latter, and vice versa, because their views appear in different periodicals. So there they are, like I said, talking to themselves.

This is frustrating. I would like to tell Father Ginder off myself, and stick a needle or two in McDonald, and also ask Father Murchland why he won't write so that somebody aside from God can get his drift — but I can't reach them.

If I could, I would point out, to Father Ginder, Bill Buckley & Co. that they are spoiling their own case if they have a table — by their obsession about calling themselves conservatives in every second or third paragraph.

CONVERSELY, I would dress down John Cogley, Ed Skillin and their comrades for everlastingly talking about how liberal they are, until it begins to look like you have a choice of either being one of them, or a bad guy.

I suppose I'm a simpleton, but I still think that either the Ginders, Buckleys, Cogleys and Skillins are right, or they're wrong. Calling yourself a liberal or a conservative won't make you right if you aren't.

The meanings of such words settle all over the place like quicksilver. Now me, I think a Catholic has got to be ready to be conservative when conservatism is true, and to be radical when what people denounce as radicalism happens to be right.

BUT WHAT'S THE USE of trying to straighten out these thinkers' thinking when you know that if you can't talk to them in their own publications — an usually you can't — you can't talk to them at all? They're not listening.

Another thing, Father Thurston Davis and his staff on "America" hold periodic brain-sessions in their magazine, lamenting the lack of humor in the Catholic press. One humorous article would do more good than all the complaining; but how can I put that thought across?

Or take Don McDonald again. Just the other day, Commonweal reprinted his piece of a couple of years ago, in which he alleged that there's something wrong with the Catholic press when only a few papers publish his syndicated column.

HIS ARGUMENT was that he tells people straight out what the popes say, and this makes him a nasty word with certain reactionary editors of diocesan weeklies.

RUG CLEANING

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