

**Birth Control Issue**

**U.S. Leans Two Ways**

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London—(NC)—The Catholic Overseas Appointments Bureau here reports that so far this year over 100 graduates have applied for jobs in developing countries. They include teachers, doctors and nurses, 60 of whom have already gone abroad, mainly to Africa.

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The issue of birth control and public policy is a burning question throughout the nation in an effort to determine the dimensions of the problem. NCWC News Service sought information from sources in the 50 state capitals and Washington, D.C. Facts thus obtained are presented here in the second of three articles.)

By **RUSSELL SHAW**  
(N.C.W.C. News Service)

From the outside looking in the federal government in its approach to the birth control issue appears rather like a man trying to go in two directions at a time while standing still.

The description, though paradoxical, is appropriate to a situation in which voices in and out of government are raising conflicting and mutually exclusive policies.

At one extreme are those who advocate an active government effort involving large-scale expenditures for research on birth control and implementation through foreign aid. On the other wing are those who want the government to stay out of this field — period. Some where in the middle are those who would sanction a strictly limited government role through support of basic research.

Advocates of the activist approach scored a significant success this year in the foreign aid bill. For the first time, a section written into the bill by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee provided for spending U.S. funds "to conduct research into problems of controlling population growth and to provide technical and other assistance to cooperating countries in carrying out programs of population control."

Sponsored by Sen. J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, the foreign relations chairman, this provision was inserted in the bill during a closed committee session without benefit of public hearings. In 15 days of Senate debate on the bill, the birth control section went unmentioned.

Opposition was expressed, however, by Monsignor Paul F. Tanner, general secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

In a letter to Fulbright, Monsignor Tanner declared that "for the federal government to adopt a policy approving the promotion of artificial contraception is to infringe upon the freedom of conscience of many of its citizens . . . It is not the business of government to enter into this question."

The House version of the foreign aid bill did not contain this provision. The section was eliminated from the bill by Senate House conferees, who instead adopted a provision limited to research on population problems and making no reference to birth control.

The federal government's role with regard to birth control be-

came a major public issue in 1963. On July 23 that year a citizens' committee appointed by President Eisenhower to study the foreign aid program and headed by William Draper, Jr., issued a report calling for cooperation by the U.S. government with underdeveloped nations "in the formulation of . . . plans designed to deal with the problem of population growth."

On Nov. 26 the U.S. Catholic Bishops in a joint statement declared their opposition to the use of public funds to promote artificial birth control. They stated:

"United States Catholics will . . . not 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 issue quickly became part of the debate that preceded the 1960 presidential election campaign. Episcopal Bishop James A. Pike of California raised the question of whether the Bishops' statement would be binding on a Catholic President.

A specific statement of government policy on the issue was given in December, 1962, by Richard N. Gardner, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, at a meeting of the United Nations General Assembly. He repeated the same position last May at a conference on population problems sponsored in Harriman, N.Y., by the American Assembly.

Said Gardner: "While the United States will not advocate any specific family planning policy in any other country, we request, to find potential sources of information and assistance on ways and means of dealing with population problems."

"The provision of materials for this purpose can best be done by those governments whose citizens are not divided on this question, by private foundations, and by business firms."

Having heard this policy outlined, the conference of citizens prominent in various fields in effect rejected it by adopting a report that stated:

"The U.S. should provide direct aid to countries wishing assistance in family planning programs. Such aid would include services and materials (implants) for family limitation, as well as information to that end."

APART FROM the foreign aid program, the birth control issue has been raised also in connection with government-sponsored biomedical research.

A report on research on reproduction issued last September by the National Institutes of Health, research arm of the Public Health Service, showed the federal government to be far and away the largest backer of such studies. According to this source, federal agencies were providing \$3.2 million for this purpose, some 64% of the total of \$5,184,208 being spent to aid research projects.

Among federal agencies, NIH itself was shown to be the leader in supporting such studies, with an expenditure of \$1,426,134 to aid 108 projects. Other government agencies involved in this field, according to the report, are the Atomic Energy Commission, the Department of Agriculture, the National Science Foundation, the Defense Department, the Bureau of State Services, and the Interior Department.

The NIH report emphasized (as had a preliminary study published in December, 1962) that it "neither advocates nor condemns birth control" and that the development of improved birth control techniques "is not an objective toward which the NIH has a planned effort."

Last April the late President Kennedy was queried at a press conference about the expenditure of government funds in this area. In reply he exhibited the caution that has marked the government's approach to the issue.

His questioner asked the President if he agreed that "the federal government should participate actively in an attack on uncontrolled population growth."

Mr. Kennedy pointedly rephrased the query, saying: "If your question is, can we do more, should we know more about the whole reproduction cycle, and should this information be made more available to the world so that everyone can make their own judgment, I would think that it would be a matter which we could certainly support."

A similar theme was sounded by a national Catholic spokesman at the time the NIH's preliminary report on research was made public last December. Monsignor John C. Knott, director of the Family Life Bureau, National Catholic Welfare Conference, commended government support of basic reproduction research.

The information gained in this manner, he said, "in time would benefit thousands of presently sterile couples and possibly prevent the malformation, crippling and retardation of hundreds of thousands of innocent babies."

"The fact that such information could be used for what we Catholics would consider immoral purposes should not prevent us from supporting those who are seeking the truth . . . Ignorance is more to be feared than truth or even its misuse," Monsignor Knott said.

But advocates of an activist government policy on birth control are not satisfied with an approach limited to support of basic research. They seek a major government effort to cope with the problem of rapid population growth, seen as a major obstacle to social and economic progress in underdeveloped countries and, ultimately, as a serious threat to world peace.

The National Academy of Sciences, in a report last April calling for stepped-up efforts to promote international family planning programs, said that if world population continues to grow at its present rate there will be more than 25 billion people on the earth by the year 2070, compared with some 3 billion at present.

The implications of these figures are as apparent to Catholics as to other Americans, but as countless spokesmen have made clear, Catholics cannot sanction the use of public funds to pay for immoral means to even a worthy end.

While an accommodation that would satisfy all parties to the dispute over the government's role is probably possible, its probability remains in doubt.

Good will and hard work would both be necessary to find a solution. One approach, suggested by Father John A. O'Brien of Notre Dame University, is for a White House conference bringing together representatives of various viewpoints for talks aimed at ending what he calls "the war over birth control."

Pending some such development, however, the only realistic prospect is for more statements, more political maneuvering and — more confusion.

**Prayer for Persecuted**

London—(NC)—Archbishop Thomas Roberts, S.J., retired Archbishop of Bombay, recited a prayer for the persecuted at a Human Rights Day interfaith service at London's Anglican "newspaper church."

The ceremony at St. Bride's, the old church in Fleet Street, the capital's newspaper center, was attended by representatives of the major churches in Britain—Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, Hebrew and Muslim. It was organized by Amnesty International, worldwide movement founded by an English Catholic, Peter Benenson, to seek freedom for prisoners of conscience everywhere.

The ceremony included hymn-singing and lighting of the "amnesty candle"—a big candle encircled by barbed wire—by the wife of Heinz Brandt, a West German socialist now imprisoned in East Germany without trial.

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**Mozart's Requiem To Honor Kennedy**

Boston—(RNS)—President Johnson is expected to attend a memorial concert honoring the late John F. Kennedy in the Roman Catholic Holy Cross Cathedral here on Jan. 19th.

Tentative plans call for Eric Leinsdorf to conduct the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the performance of Mozart's Requiem.

Choral groups from Harvard, Radcliffe, Boston College (a Jesuit university) and the New England Conservatory of Music will take part.

Cardinal Cushing of Boston will preside at the concert. Some 20 other bishops of the New England area will attend.

Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, the late President's brothers, and Gov. Endicott Peabody and Mayor John F. Collins of Boston are also expected at the program.

**Intermarriage, Threat To American Judaism**

New York—(RNS)—Inter-Jews have non-Jewish partners. He reported that a study published by the American Jewish Committee of Iowa statistics and the marital status of Jews in Washington, D.C., indicates that approximately 70 per cent of the children of mixed marriages "don't care to be identified with the Jewish faith."

Alarm at the rate of Jewish intermarriage was voiced by officials of the Rabbinical Court of America, known in Hebrew as Beth Din. The court was organized three years ago by the Rabbinical Council of America, largest Orthodox rabbinic group in the U.S., as a counseling service and religious court to deal with marital problems in the Jewish community. Serving with the rabbis in the court are a panel of lawyers, judges, psychiatrists and social workers.

Rabbi Emanuel Rackman, a professor of political science at Yeshiva University here and past president of the court, said that "one of the greatest threats to the disintegration of the marital unit in Jewish life stems primarily from intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews."

He said an increase in the rate of intermarriage "is sure to break down the vitality of Judaism in its desire for survival and continuity."

In addition, he commented, intermarriage presents the possibility of "disintegration of other faiths."

Though noting that accurate nationwide statistics on intermarriage cannot be obtained, Rabbi Rackman said a study of marriages in Iowa — the only state requiring a listing of religious affiliation on marriage certificates — shows that 54 per cent of third-generation married

people have non-Jewish partners. He reported that a study published by the American Jewish Committee of Iowa statistics and the marital status of Jews in Washington, D.C., indicates that approximately 70 per cent of the children of mixed marriages "don't care to be identified with the Jewish faith."

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