

'Anguish of Many Souls'

Birth Control Issue Needs Urgent Solution

Pope Paul has taken the wraps off a secret commission of experts shaping a new policy on birth control for Catholics.

Long-known and much-talked-about, the 55 member commission met last week on the outskirts of Rome for its fourth and still deadlocked session.

Its members are reported stalemate on whether to continue to forbid Catholics to use any contraceptive drug or device, or to permit them to use the "pill" (an anti-ovulant drug recently developed) to assure success of the rhythm method of limiting family size or whether to shift emphasis from biological aspects of the question to other factors.

In a talk to commission members after their meeting, Pope Paul told them to come to their conclusions promptly because the urgency of the situation calls for absolutely clear indica-

tions on the part of the Church and her supreme teaching authority.

He told the priests, doctors, scientists and married couples of the commission that the Church must consider "old and new things" in making its decision.

Speaking in French, the Pope was "deeply preoccupied public opinion in the world and also, very justly, husbands and wives and their pastors."

In its present phase, he said, the problem might be summed up in the following manner:

"In what manner, and according to what norms are husbands and wives to accomplish the exercise of their mutual love, this service of life they are called to by their vocation?

"The Christian answer will always take inspiration from the many souls."

awareness of duties of the dignity of the marriage state in which the love of husbands and wives is ennobled by the grace of the sacraments and from the greatness of the gift to the child that is called to life.

The Pope went on to say that "it is possible that the vivid awareness of the need to let certain problems mature imposes a reasonable delay on you to examine with all serenity and freedom of spirit" — he nevertheless believed solutions would be found.

"We trust," he said, "that you will go on to the end with courage. We said to you a little time ago that this question is all too important. The uncertainties of some are too grievous for you not to feel urged by a duty which is that of charity toward all those to whom we owe an answer. Your work, we trust, will provide the elements for this."

"Moreover, apart from such urgent questions for spouses, there are also some economic and social problems which the Church cannot ignore. Let maturity what must mature. But you must understand the anguish of many souls."

Concluding his talk with a final admonition to "work diligently without attention to criticism and difficulty," the Pope added: "We wish that the basis of your research should be made wider, that the various schools of ideological thought should be better represented, that the countries which know the grave difficulties of the sociological plane should make their voice heard through you and that laymen, particularly married couples, should have qualified representatives in such a great undertaking."

According to the Vatican press office, the commission is expected to draw up a final report at the close of its session. Some sources claimed that this report would form the basis of an address on birth control which the Pope would deliver before Easter.

Commission members have observed a strict rule of secrecy since it was set up a year ago. Heading the commission is U.S. Archbishop Leo Blin of St. Paul, Minnesota. Secretary is Swiss-born Dominican Father Henri de Riedmatt.

The rigid secrecy began to crack in recent weeks when a group of British Catholics complained only one Englishman, a conservative, was on the papal commission. Two U.S. Catholic newspapers, both edited by virtually the same staff members, reported last week that the commission was opposed to any relaxation of present restrictions against birth control.

The National Catholic Reporter, in its issue dated March 24, claimed that two-thirds of the pontifical commission has opposed approval of the so-called birth control pill.

At the same time, it said, half of the commission members held it was inopportune for the Pope to make a statement on birth control.

According to The Catholic Reporter, Kansas City diocesan newspaper, the following Americans are working with the commission:

Mr. George A. Kelly, head of the New York archdiocesan Family Life Bureau, described as a "late appointee." His position in his own words, "I feel very, very strongly that the teaching of the Church is Catholic doctrine and is binding. As doctrine it is going to stand and stay standing."

Dr. John E. Cavanagh, Washington, D.C. psychiatrist, described as one who upholds current Church doctrine on the immorality of the "pill" or any other form of contraception.

Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Crowley of Chicago, founders of the Christian Family Movement, described as "open-minded" by associates.

Father John C. Ford, S.J., theologian at the Catholic University of America, Washington, who has "written that past papal condemnations will not change and cannot change because they probably are infallible."

Donald N. Barrett of the University of Notre Dame, an expert on population growth patterns who says his work with the U.S. hierarchy has been confined to technical information in his field.

Dr. Frank J. Ayd, Baltimore psychiatrist who, according to



Vatican City — (RNS) — Members of the special papal commission studying birth control in relation to Catholic teachings were received by Pope Paul VI at the Vatican. Mrs. Patrick Crowley of Chicago, with her husband, founder and director of the Christian Family Movement, is shown meeting the Pope.

Anglican Cleric Meets Pontiff Birth Control Discussion Reported 'More Mature'

Vatican City — (RNS) — Dr. John Findlow, recently appointed as the Church of England's permanent representative at the Vatican, was received in private audience by Pope Paul VI.

Dr. Findlow, who succeeded Canon Bernard C. Pawley in the post which serves as liaison between the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity and the Anglican Council on Inter-Church Relations, was accompanied at the audience by Msgr. Gianfrancesco Arighi.

The Corsican-born monsignor is the undersecretary of the Vatican Secretariat's section concerned with Anglican and Protestant Churches.

He was named to his new post last September by Dr. Arthur Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of Canterbury. His predecessor, Canon Pawley attended the first two sessions of the Second Vatican Council as a "guest" of the Christian Unity secretariat headed by Augustin Cardinal Bea.

Full Time Smut War

Washington — (NC) — A Catholic priest has suggested establishing full-time offices in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles to arouse public opinion against peddlers of pornographic material.

Father Morton A. Hill, S.J., secretary of Operation Yorkville, an anti-pornography association in New York City, told a "national conference on obscenity that such offices are 'absolutely essential' if a national war against obscene publications is going to be made effective."

Father Hill said he envisioned offices where publicists and attorneys could cooperate in assisting local agencies to battle smut peddlers in the courts and why they could arouse the public to the dangers of pornographic material.

Atheists Attend Catholic Meeting

Paris — (NC) — Coadjutor Archbishop Pierre Vouillot of Paris has defended the presence of atheists and Marxists at the annual study week of Catholic intellectuals here.

They were invited to the study session to speak to the more than 2,000 participants on the ideas and motivations of those who do not believe in God.

members of the special papal commission studying the question when he granted them a special audience last Saturday (March 27).

"The Holy Father told the commission that it should finish its work as quickly as possible. He said that the teaching authority of the Church requires answers which are free from ambiguity.

"The question remains of how the Church's teaching can be adapted to the needs of contemporary man. Here again Pope Paul has given a hint as to the direction in which the search for the solution is moving.

"In his allocution to the commission studying the birth control question, the Holy Father encouraged the members to study the question in a spirit of full freedom and serenity. He added that the Church, like a mother, has sought through the ages to adapt her teaching in a way always helpful to her children.

"The Church's tradition is not of immobilism which is insensitive to the great question of the day, but rather one of combining the old with the new, of upholding traditional truths while new doctrines are being evolved."

It also said that "much of today's propaganda for birth control seems to make a morally neutral, if not an amoral, stand."

Portions of the broadcast follow:

"Today Catholic newspapers, even the radio are discussing the birth control problem with the openness and seriousness that it rightly requires. Schemas No. 12-13 of the Second Vatican Council discussed the issue last November. The Council Fathers will take it up again in the next session.

"Recently in the U.S.A., a book entitled Contraception and Holiness was brought out by Catholic writers, and in England the matter of contraception was treated in the now famous book Objections to Catholicism, written by a group of Catholic intellectuals.

"If an air of debate somehow attends the problem of birth control it only shows the sense of urgency with which the approach is made and the need for change in traditional Catholic teaching. It was precisely (due) to a sense of urgency that Pope Paul exhorted the mem-

the diocesan newsweekly, "has stated repeatedly that there are no new medical findings which might lead the Church to change its condemnation of the pill."

Thomas J. Burch of Georgetown University, "is expected demographer." According to the diocesan paper, "his writings have shown great sympathy to hardships accompanying overpopulation, discussion of some Catholic rigidity in its praise of large families, and not much tendency to discuss changes in Catholic moral teaching."

Dr. Andre Hellegers of Baltimore, gynecologist, described as "a researcher in gynecology and pre-natal bio-chemistry, the field crucial to the discussion of the morality of the pill."

According to The Catholic Reporter, another U.S. member of the commission — but unconfirmed — is an American teaching in Rome.

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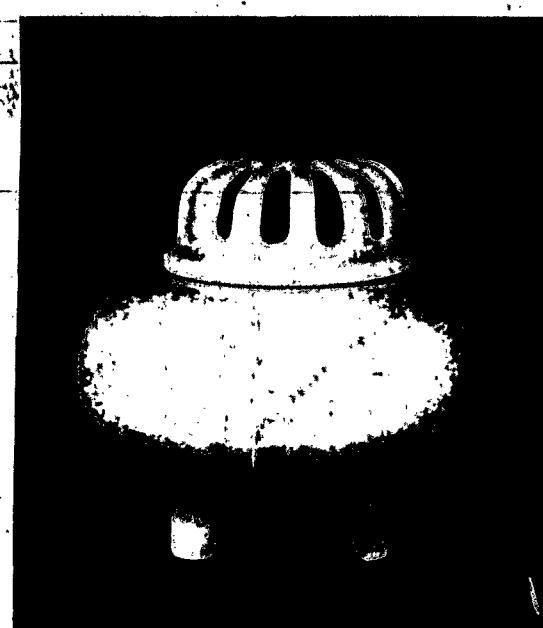
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