



HUMAN LIFE INTERNATIONAL'S

PRO-LIFE TALKING POINTS

Abusive Population Control

1. Population control history has been full of abuse:

Since its beginnings in the 19th Century and especially since its exponential growth after World War II, the global population control movement has inflicted documented human rights abuses on millions of women worldwide. During the overpopulation hysteria of the 1960s and 1970s and into the 1980s, nations from Mexico to India implemented coercive population control policies that forcibly sterilized millions of women, forced millions more to have abortions, and also forcibly sterilized millions of men. Some of these abuses routinely continue to this day, particularly in China. Columbia University History Professor Matthew Connelly wrote in *Fatal Misconception: The Struggle to Control World Population*, “The great tragedy of population control, the fatal misconception, was to think that one could know other people’s interests better than they knew it themselves.”¹ In the case of the global population control movement, it was and is wealthy, elite, white Western people deciding how many children less fortunate people should have. Connelly details the racist agenda of the founders of the modern population control movement, which wanted to reduce the number of “racially inferior” human beings. Just a few examples of the resulting systematic human rights abuses are below.

2. Population control abuses had the full support of the establishment:

The U.S. government made foreign aid contingent on Third World countries’ adoption of population control programs and did not flinch when the reports of abuse rolled in. Private groups and individuals from the Ford Foundation to the Rockefellers poured money into reducing the population of developing countries. As the two most populous countries in the world, China and India were especially targeted. In China, the official one-child policy overseen by Xin-

zhong Qian required women to abort second children or be sterilized, and millions were forced to do so—by the open requirement of Chinese law. In India, desperate poor women by the millions were denied government aid unless they agreed to be sterilized, again openly and publicly so, by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi’s govern-

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ment. Even today, some Indian states deny government benefits to families with more than two children and offer payments to poor families to be sterilized. The most prominent population control organizations in the world then and now, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), supported such programs, and they were blessed by the highest level of the international establishment years after their abuses first became publicly known. “[I]t is not surprising that both the IPPF and UNFPA decided to help China implement the one-child policy,” wrote Connelly. “UNFPA even awarded Qian with the first United Nations Population Award, complete with diploma, gold medal, and a monetary prize of \$12,500. Indira Gandhi was the co-winner. When the honorees came to New York to receive their awards, [United Nations] Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar congratulated them: ‘Considering the fact that China and India contain over 40% of humanity, we must all record our deep appreciation

¹ Connelly, *Fatal Misconception: The Struggle to Control World Population* (Harvard University Press, 2008),

of the way in which their governments have marshaled the resources necessary to implement population policies on a massive scale.” Qian was forced to resign his post shortly after receiving his UN award due to pressure from Chinese women’s groups.

3. Mexico leads the way: In Latin America, Mexico became the first country to officially adopt a population control policy, in 1973. Abuses of poor Mexicans of Indian descent likely continue to this day. In 2002, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of Mexico reported, “Public health servants have imposed methods of family planning on the native population without their consent and without informing them of the risks.” The NHRC determined that government officials, supported by the UNFPA-funded National Population Council of Mexico (CONAPO), deny health care to poor men and women unless they agree to contracept. Doctors and others face losing their jobs if they do not meet population control quotas, leading some to sterilize women without their knowledge.

4. Peru admits guilt: The government of former Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori, fierce in fighting the country’s Communist guerrillas, was also fierce in fighting the Indian population. In 1999, Peru’s Ministry of Health admitted, “There are notorious deficiencies among RH/FP [Reproductive Health/Family Planning] providers regarding the respect of personal and reproductive rights.” Up to 300,000 women may have been forcibly or secretly sterilized, according to the Peruvian government’s own report on “Voluntary Contraception Activities.”²

5. Brazil’s experience: As Antonio Gaspari discusses in the “The War Against Babies,” *Catholic World Report*, April 1993, Brazil’s Health Minister Alcení Guerra alleged in 1991 that sterilizations of more than 7 million

2 http://www.c-fam.org/publications/id.219/pub_detail.asp

women were done without proper informed consent, or without any consent at all.³

6. Vietnam’s two-child policy: “Seven years after introducing a two child per family policy, Vietnam’s population control programme has become one of the most effective in the world...,” reported the BBC on Nov. 8, 2000.⁴ “A degree of coercion is used to enforce the two-child policy.” In this Communist country where the government controls services and taxes people accordingly, Vietnamese often had to pay the education and health costs for a third or later child. Land could be confiscated for having too many children, and expulsion from the Communist Party—which dominates this undemocratic nation—was routine for those who had more than two children. After relaxing the two-child policy in 2003, in 2008 the government announced its reimplementations. The UNFPA gave Vietnam’s population control agency an award in 1999.

7. African control: In sub-Saharan Africa, chaotic conditions and a strong pro-child mentality have rendered population control efforts less successful. Population control has come more through the diversion of resources away from life-giving medicine into providing contraception and abortion. In Tanzania, wrote Elizabeth Liagin in *Excessive Force: Power, Politics & Population Control* (1996), conditions are extremely primitive, but each month, even remote villages receive visits from workers bearing contraception. Sometimes methods have been more direct. For example, in apartheid-era South Africa, black women were given shots to “help their milk supply” that were really the contraceptive Depo-Provera and jobs were often contingent on using birth control, according to HLI’s Dr. Brian Clowes.⁵

3 Antonio Gaspari, “The War Against Babies,” *Catholic World Report*, April 1993, pp. 26-27.

4 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/1011799.stm>

5 Clowes, “Coercive Birth Control: Examining Anti-natalist Thought and Action,” *Yale Journal of Ethics* (Fall 1995).

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