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knowledge and technological expertise.

Population control is definitely a necessity, both in the long run and in the short run. But the population should not merely be limited to the level

that can be fed and housed in reasonable circumstances. Life should be active, pleasurable, exciting, and prosperous to be lived the most enjoyably. For everyone to enjoy a high standard of living we need a great decrease in the world's population: a decrease which should be equal, in proportion to present population, in both developed and underdeveloped lands.

If we give up our affluence, reduce our standard of living and our consumption, and modify all our actions towards using less of everything, there will be less spending on science.

Fusion power, which promises a future where man will have all the energy he wants, whether to end poverty, explore the solar system, or beam messages to the heart of the galaxy, of manufacture IBM 360/67's at a price everyone can afford, will be neglected: if we limit consumption, we can make do with solar and geothermal power, they will say. Space exploration? A Congress elected by an American whose affluence is gone, cast upon the waters of the world, is not likely to vote for massive expenditures on such things so far removed from "human realities".

In order to end poverty we shall only have perpetuated it. In order to stop starvation and hunger a little sooner, we shall have sold out the entire future of Mankind. If the attitudes that desire a stable world; population control only as much as is needed to banish starvation, all technological innovations given long scrutiny before any use is made of them, and research itself watched and guided, and certainly no extremes of affluence; win out, then, progress will also be halted: and, once halted, it would take little time to begin going in reverse, until we entered into a new, longer version of the Dark Ages.

conviction of the full humanity of the unborn.

However, there is something more that I must say.

As killing a child in the womb because he is deformed doesn't do him any good (which would you rather be - crippled, or dead? If you think dead is the answer, talk to someone who is handicapped) what then should be done? If amniocentesis is possible, the genes of the parents can also be looked at.

To ask that a stranger should undergo a 25% risk of being retarded or crippled so that you can have a child of your own is unconscionable. And if the unborn child is a human, this means that those who have genetic defects reflected in their mates should go on birth control and stay on it.

Trying to have a normal child of your own, and thereby risking sentencing more children to death or misery is wrong. How else can it be seen? Of course, when one child is born defective because of injury or temporary illness of the mother, this does not apply. I am only talking about cases where a real and abnormal risk is known to exist.

The aim of genetic counselling today is to create normal children: even if there are failures along the way. It is of course the natural attitudes of the parents that cause this. Let's take my reasoning to its logical conclusion. I read somewhere that at conception, the ratio of males to females is 150 to 100: but at birth it is only 105 to 100. This is only the tip of the iceberg: even if no females died, that is an 18% death rate. Everyone must die sometime, with the current state of medical science, but to conceive children when there is an unacceptable risk of an early death is wrong. So may be everyone should use birth control (before conception only)? At least until the shocking pre-natal mortality figures are brought down (if there is anyone left to do it)?

Denying treatment, rather than euthanasia, to the young and seriously deformed, or the old and ill, is also becoming more acceptable. The great expense of treatment in such cases is probably one factor. If we removed this factor, by a decent medicare program (everyone who loses an arm becomes a two million dollar man, etc.) I suspect that people would be willing to let doctors do what they can to prolong a persons life for whatever small benefit it would be worth to him or her.

Of course, when there are so many lives that can be saved a lot more cheaply ... but that's where we came in. John Savard Science 3

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