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Last Updated: 07/16/2024

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 6, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES L. BUCKLEY

FROM: CARL A. ANDERSON 

SUBJECT: Draft Statement for World Population Conference

The Office of Policy Development has been instructed to prepare a draft statement regarding United States policy on population activities for the upcoming World Population Conference. As I am sure you will understand the enclosed is for internal discussion purposes only at this time. I hope to speak with you about this at your earliest convenience.

Draft Statement

For many years, the United States has supported, and helped to finance, programs of family planning, particularly in the less developed countries. This Administration has continued that support but has placed it in a very different policy context from that of the past. The experience of the last two decades not only makes possible but requires a sharper focus for our population policy. It requires a more refined approach to problems which appear today in quite a different light than they did twenty years ago.

First and most important, population growth is, of itself, a neutral phenomenon. It is not necessarily good or ill. It becomes an asset or a problem only in conjunction with other factors, such as economic policy, social constraints, need for manpower, and so forth.

The relationship between population growth and economic development is not a negative one. More people do not mean less growth; that is absurd on its face. Indeed, both in the American experience and in the economic history of most advanced nations, population growth has been an essential element in economic progress.

In some situations, however, a society's meager resources or economic dislocations -- whether imposed by destructive government policies or created by natural disasters -- may make it difficult to sustain a population increase. Such situations must be considered as temporary aberrations, requiring only temporary intervention by government. They can be prolonged, of course, and made permanent by the wrong kind of intervention, the kind that erodes family rights and

responsibilities, individual and group economic initiative, and the developmental energies of free people everywhere. That is one lesson of the past twenty years.

Before the advent of governmental population programs, several factors had combined to create an unprecedented surge in population over most of the world. Among the industrial nations, the baby boom that followed the Second World War resulted in a dramatic, but temporary, population "tilt" toward youth. The disproportionate number of infants, children, teenagers, and eventually young adults did strain the social infrastructure of schools, health facilities, law enforcement and so forth. It also sustained strong economic growth and was probably critical in boosting the American standard of living to new heights, despite occasionally counterproductive government policies.

Among the less developed nations, a coincidental population increase was caused by entirely different factors, directly related to the humanitarian efforts of the United States and other western countries. A tremendous expansion of health services -- from simple inoculations to sophisticated surgery -- saved millions of lives every year. Emergency relief, facilitated by modern transport, helped millions to survive flood, famine, and drought. The sharing of technology, the teaching of agriculture and engineering, the spread of western ideals in the treatment of women and children all helped to drastically reduce the mortality rates, especially infant mortality, and to lengthen the life span.

The result, to no one's surprise, was more people, everywhere. This was not a failure but a success. It demonstrated not poor planning or bad policy but human progress in a new era of international assistance, technological advance, and human compassion.

The population boom was a challenge; it need not have been a crisis. Seen in its broader context, it required a measured, modulated response. It provoked an overreaction by some, largely because it coincided with two negative factors which, together, hindered families and nations in adapting to their changing circumstances.

The first of these factors was governmental control of economies, a pathology which spread throughout the developing world with sufficient virulence to keep much of it from developing further. As economic decision-making was concentrated in the hands of planners and public officials, the ability of average men and women to work towards a better future was impaired, and sometimes crippled. Agriculture was devastated by government price fixing that wiped out rewards for labor. Job creation in infant industries was hampered by confiscatory taxes. Personal industry and thrift were penalized, while dependency upon the state was encouraged. Political considerations made it difficult for the economy to adjust to changes in supply and demand or to disruptions in world trade and finance. Under such circumstances, population growth changed from an asset to a peril. In a stifled economy, it threatened to blow off the lid of governmental control.

The worst consequence of economic statism was that it disrupted the natural mechanism for slowing population growth in problem areas. The world's more affluent nations have reached a population equilibrium without compulsion and, in most cases, even before it was government policy to achieve it. The controlling factor in these cases has been the adjustment, by individual families, of reproductive behavior to economic opportunity and aspiration. Economic freedom has led to economically rational behavior. As opportunities and the standard of living rise, the birth rate falls.

That historic pattern would already be well under way in many nations where population growth is today a problem, if short-sighted policies had not disrupted economic incentives, rewards, and advancement. In this regard, localized crises of population growth are evidence of too much government control and planning, rather than too little.

The second factor that turned the population boom into a crisis was confined to the western world. It was an outbreak of an anti-intellectualism, which attacked science, technology, and the very concept of material progress. Joined to a commendable concern for the environment, it was more a reflection of anxiety about the unsettled times and the uncertain future and disregard of human experience and scientific sophistication. It was not unlike other waves of cultural primitivism that have, over the centuries, swept through western civilization during times of social stress and scientific exploration.

The combination of these two factors -- counterproductive economic policies in poor and struggling nations and a pseudo-scientific pessimism among the more advanced -- provoked the demographic hysteria of the 1960's and 1970's. Doomsday scenarios took the place of realistic forecasts, and too many governments pursued population control rather than sound economic policies.

It was the easy way out, and it did not work. It focused on a symptom and neglected the underlying ailments. For the last three years, this Administration has sought to reverse that approach. We recognize that, in some cases, immediate population pressures may make advisable short-term efforts to meliorate them. But this cannot be a substitute for the economic reforms that put a society on the road toward growth and, as an aftereffect, toward slower population increase as well.

Nor can population control substitute for the rapid and responsible development of natural resources. In responding to certain Members of Congress concerning the previous Administration's Global 2000 report, this Administration in 1981 repudiated its call "for more governmental supervision and control. Historically, that has tended to restrict the availability of resources and to hamper the development of technology, rather than to assist it. Recognizing the seriousness of environmental and economic problems, and their relationship to social and political pressures, especially in the developing nations, the Administration places a priority upon

technological advance and economic expansion, which hold out the hope of prosperity and stability for a rapidly changing world. That hope can be realized, of course, only to the extent that government's response to problems, whether economic or ecological, respects and enhances individual freedom, which makes true progress possible and worthwhile."

Those principles underlie this country's approach to the United Nation's Conference on Population to be held in Mexico City in August. In accord with those principles, we reject compulsion or coercion in family planning programs, whether it is exercised against families within a society or against nations within the family of man. The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959) calls for legal protection for children before birth as well as after birth; and the United States accordingly does not consider abortion an acceptable element of family planning programs and will not contribute to those of which it is a part. Efforts to lower population growth in cases in which it is deemed advisable to do so must, moreover, respect the religious beliefs and culture of each society. Population control is not a panacea. It will not solve problems of unemployment. Jobs are not lost because there are too many people in a given area. Jobs are created by the conjunction of human wants and investment capital. Population growth fuels the former; sound economic policies and international assistance can provide the latter. Indeed, population density may make the latter more feasible by concentrating the need for both human services and technology. But as long as oppressive economic policies penalize those who work, save, and invest, joblessness will persist.

Population control cannot solve problems of unauthorized migration across national boundaries. People do not leave their homes, and often their families, to seek more space. They do so in search of opportunity and freedom. Reducing their numbers gives them neither.

Population control cannot avert natural disasters, including famines provoked by cyclical drought. Fortunately, world food supplies have been adequate to relieve those circumstances in recent years. Problems of transportation remain; but there are far deeper problems as well, in those governmental policies which restrict the rewards of agricultural pursuits, encourage the abandonment of farmland, and concentrate people in urban areas.

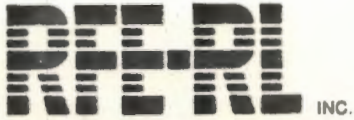
It is time to concentrate upon those root problems which frequently exacerbate population pressures. By focusing upon real remedies for underdeveloped economies, the United Nations Conference on Population can reduce demographic issues to their proper place. It is an important place, but not a controlling one. It requires our continuing attention within the broader context of economic growth and of the economic freedom that is its prerequisite. Most of all, questions of population growth require the approach outlined by President Reagan in 1981, in remarks before the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia:

"Trust the people, trust their intelligence and trust their faith, because putting people first is the secret of economic success everywhere in the world."

That is the agenda of the United States for the U.N. Population Conference this year, just as it remains the continuing goal of our family planning assistance to other nations.

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JAMES L. BUCKLEY
President

16 April 1984

Mr. Carl A. Anderson
Office of Policy Development
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Anderson:

Herewith a hasty editing of your statement to include points I feel need to be made and eliminating at least some of the verbal barbs (e.g. "cultural primitivism" and "demographic hysteria") which are satisfying to write but destructive of support at the margins. I am sure there is further weeding to be done.

I believe it important to include an explicit statement that the Administration will not fund family planning programs conducted by public and private groups that advocate abortion. Because money is fungible, a morally responsible donor cannot ignore collateral activities of the donee. If such a statement is included, however, the President can and must underscore his seriousness by directing AID to suspend any further contributions to all those private American family planning/population control organizations preaching the abortion gospel in third world countries which exist largely as a result of AID funding. Such action can clearly be defended as being required by existing law.

Might I also suggest, based on dismal past experience, that if the statement of policy in fact reflects the President's position (as I have every reason to believe it does), it will take a presidential directive to put it in place. There is no time between now and August to negotiate a consensus within the existing bureaucracy in support of such a position, let alone to devise a strategy to secure maximum international support for it.

Mr. Carl A. Anderson
16 April 1984
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Finally, I should mention that even with so fine a statement in hand (assuming it survives reasonably intact) I am still a long way from concluding that I would be the appropriate person to carry this particular ball because of my present location and responsibilities.

Sincerely,

James L. Buckley
(dictated but not read)

Enclosure

P.S. This letter was dictated on April 14th. Because the first part of next week will be preempted by Board meetings, etc., I am asking my secretary to send it off on Monday.

Draft Statement

It is self-evident that the current exponential growth in global population cannot continue indefinitely. There is no quarrel over the ultimate need to achieve a condition of population equilibrium. The differences that do exist concern the choice of strategies and methods for the achievement of that goal.

For many years, the United States has supported, and helped to finance, programs of family planning, particularly in the less developed countries. This Administration has continued that support but has placed it in a very different policy context from that of the past. The experience of the last two decades not only makes possible but requires a sharper focus for our population policy. It requires a more refined approach to problems which appear today in quite a different light than they did twenty years ago.

First and most important, in any particular society today, population growth is, of itself, a neutral phenomenon. It is not necessarily good or ill. It becomes an asset or a problem only in conjunction with other factors, such as economic policy, social constraints, need for manpower, and so forth.

The relationship between population growth and economic development is not a negative one. More people do not mean less growth; that is absurd on its face. Indeed, both in the American experience and in the economic history of most advanced nations, population growth has been an essential element in economic progress.

Before the advent of governmental population programs, several factors had combined to create an unprecedented surge in population over most of the world. Although population levels in many industrial nations had reached or were approaching equilibrium in the period before the Second World War, the baby boom that followed in its wake resulted in a dramatic, but temporary, population "tilt" toward youth. The disproportionate number of infants, children, teenagers, and eventually young adults did strain the social infrastructure of schools, health facilities, law enforcement and so forth. It also sustained strong economic growth and was probably critical in boosting the American standard of living to new heights, despite occasionally counterproductive government policies.

Among the less developed nations, a coincidental population increase was caused by entirely different factors, directly related to the humanitarian efforts of the United States and other western countries. A tremendous expansion of health services -- from simple inoculations to sophisticated surgery -- saved millions of lives every year. Emergency relief, facilitated by modern transport, helped millions to survive flood, famine, and drought. The sharing of technology, the teaching of agriculture and engineering, the spread of western ideals in the treatment of women and children all helped to drastically reduce the mortality rates, especially infant mortality, and to lengthen the life span.

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The first of these factors was governmental control of economies, a pathology which spread throughout the developing world with sufficient virulence to keep much of it from developing further. As economic decision-making was concentrated in the hands of planners and public officials, the ability of average men and women to work towards a better future was impaired, and sometimes crippled. Agriculture was devastated by government price fixing that wiped out rewards for labor. Job creation in infant industries was hampered by confiscatory taxes. Personal industry and thrift were penalized, while dependency upon the state was encouraged. Political considerations made it difficult for the economy to adjust to changes in supply and demand or to disruptions in world trade and finance. Under such circumstances, population growth changed from an asset in the development of economic potential to a peril.

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That historic pattern would already be well under way in many nations where population growth is today a problem, if short-sighted policies had not disrupted economic incentives, rewards, and advancement. In this regard, localized crises of population growth are evidence of too much government control and planning, rather than too little.

The second factor that turned the population boom into a crisis was confined to the western world. It was an outbreak of an anti-intellectualism, which attacked science, technology, and the very concept of material progress. Joined to a commendable and long overdue concern for the environment, it was more a reflection of anxiety about the unsettled times and the uncertain future and disregard of human experience and scientific

sophistication. It was not unlike other waves of cultural anxiety that have, over the centuries, swept through western civilization during times of social stress and scientific exploration.

The combination of these two factors -- counterproductive economic policies in poor and struggling nations and a pseudo-scientific pessimism among the more advanced -- provoked the demographic overreactions of the 1960's and 1970's. Doomsday scenarios took the place of realistic forecasts, and too many governments pursued population control measures that have had little impact on population growth, rather than sound economic policies that create the rise in living standards historically associated with declines in fertility rates.

It was the easy way out, and it did not work. It focused on a symptom and neglected the underlying ailments. For the last three years, this Administration has sought to reverse that approach. We recognize that, in some cases, immediate population pressures may make advisable short-term efforts to meliorate them. But this cannot be a substitute for the economic reforms that put a society on the road toward growth and, as an aftereffect, toward slower population increase as well.

Nor can population control substitute for the rapid and responsible development of natural resources. In responding to certain Members of Congress concerning the previous Administration's Global 2000 report, this Administration in 1981 repudiated its call "for more governmental supervision and control. Historically, that has tended to restrict the availability of resources and to hamper the development of technology, rather than to assist it. Recognizing the seriousness of environmental and economic problems, and their relationship to social and political pressures, especially in the developing nations, the Administration places a priority upon technological advance and economic expansion, which hold out the hope of prosperity and stability for a rapidly changing world. That hope can be realized, of course, only to the extent that government's response to problems, whether economic or ecological, respects and enhances individual freedom, which makes true progress possible and worthwhile."

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reject compulsion or coercion in family planning programs, whether it is exercised against families within a society or against nations within the family of man. The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959) calls for legal protection for children before birth as well as after birth; and the United States accordingly does not consider abortion an acceptable element of family planning programs and will not contribute to those of which it is a part. Nor will it any longer contribute directly or indirectly to family planning programs sponsored by governments or private organizations that advocate abortion as a licit instrument of population control. Efforts to lower population growth in cases in which it is deemed advisable to do so must, moreover, respect the religious beliefs and culture of each society.

Population control is not a panacea. It will not solve problems of massive unemployment. Jobs are not lost because there are too many people in a given area. Jobs are created by the conjunction of human wants and investment capital. Population growth fuels the former; sound economic policies and properly directed international assistance can provide the latter. Indeed, population density may make the latter more feasible by concentrating

the need for both human services and technology. But as long as oppressive economic policies penalize those who work, save, and invest, joblessness will persist.

Population control cannot solve problems of unauthorized migration across national boundaries. People do not leave their homes, and often their families, to seek more space. They do so in search of opportunity and freedom. Reducing their numbers gives them neither.

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It is time to concentrate upon those root problems which frequently exacerbate population pressures. By focusing upon real remedies for underdeveloped economies, the United Nations Conference on Population can reduce demographic issues to their proper place. It is an important place,

but not the controlling one. It requires our continuing attention within the broader context of economic growth and of the economic freedom that is its prerequisite. Most of all, questions of population growth require the approach outlined by President Reagan in 1981, in remarks before the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia: "Trust the people, trust their intelligence and trust their faith, because putting people first is the secret of economic success everywhere in the world."

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

JULY 11, 1984

DEAR JIM:

PURSUANT TO OUR CONVERSATION OF LAST FRIDAY YOU WILL FIND ENCLOSED A COPY OF THE FINAL VERSION OF THE POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION. I THINK YOU WILL FIND THAT WE'VE MANAGED TO CONSTRUCT A GOOD STATEMENT ALONG THE LINES WE DISCUSSED.

WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF COMPLETING SELECTION OF THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION AND OUR PERSONNEL OFFICE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH YOU REGARDING THAT MATTER IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

SINCERELY,

JAMES A. BAKER, III
CHIEF OF STAFF AND
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

DECLASSIFIED / RECLASSIFIED
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BY CAE NARA DATE 3/6/74

POLICY STATEMENT: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION

INTRODUCTION

FOR MANY YEARS, THE UNITED STATES HAS SUPPORTED, AND HELPED TO FINANCE, PROGRAMS OF FAMILY PLANNING, PARTICULARLY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THIS ADMINISTRATION HAS CONTINUED THAT SUPPORT BUT HAS PLACED IT WITHIN A POLICY CONTEXT DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE PAST. IT IS SUFFICIENTLY EVIDENT THAT THE CURRENT EXPONENTIAL GROWTH IN GLOBAL POPULATION CANNOT CONTINUE INDEFINITELY. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF THE ULTIMATE NEED TO ACHIEVE A CONDITION OF POPULATION EQUILIBRIUM. THE DIFFERENCES THAT DO EXIST CONCERN THE CHOICE OF STRATEGIES AND METHODS FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THAT GOAL. THE EXPERIENCE OF THE LAST TWO DECADES NOT ONLY MAKES POSSIBLE BUT REQUIRES A SHARPER FOCUS FOR OUR POPULATION POLICY. IT REQUIRES A MORE REFINED APPROACH TO PROBLEMS WHICH APPEAR TODAY IN QUITE A DIFFERENT LIGHT THAN THEY DID TWENTY YEARS AGO.

FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT, POPULATION GROWTH IS, OF ITSELF, A NEUTRAL PHENOMENON. IT IS NOT NECESSARILY GOOD OR ILL. IT BECOMES AN ASSET OR A PROBLEM ONLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER FACTORS, SUCH AS ECONOMIC POLICY, SOCIAL CONSTRAINTS, NEED FOR MANPOWER, AND SO FORTH. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POPULATION GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS NOT NECESSARILY A NEGATIVE ONE. MORE PEOPLE DO NOT NECESSARILY MEAN LESS GROWTH. INDEED, IN THE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF MANY NATIONS, POPULATION GROWTH HAS BEEN AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN ECONOMIC PROGRESS.

BEFORE THE ADVENT OF GOVERNMENTAL POPULATION PROGRAMS, SEVERAL FACTORS HAD COMBINED TO CREATE AN UNPRECEDENTED SURGE IN POPULATION OVER MOST OF THE WORLD. ALTHOUGH POPULATION LEVELS IN MANY INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS HAD REACHED OR WERE APPROACHING EQUILIBRIUM IN THE PERIOD BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THE BABY BOOM THAT FOLLOWED IN ITS WAKE RESULTED IN A DRAMATIC, BUT TEMPORARY, POPULATION "TILT" TOWARD YOUTH. THE DISPROPORTIONATE NUMBER OF INFANTS, CHILDREN, TEENAGERS, AND EVENTUALLY YOUNG ADULTS DID STRAIN THE SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE OF SCHOOLS, HEALTH FACILITIES, LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SO FORTH. HOWEVER, IT ALSO HELPED SUSTAIN STRONG ECONOMIC GROWTH, DESPITE OCCASIONALLY COUNTERPRODUCTIVE GOVERNMENT POLICIES.

AMONG THE DEVELOPING NATIONS, A COINCIDENTAL POPULATION INCREASE WAS CAUSED BY ENTIRELY DIFFERENT FACTORS. A TREMENDOUS EXPANSION OF HEALTH SERVICES -- FROM SIMPLE INOCULATIONS TO SOPHISTICATED SURGERY -- SAVED MILLIONS OF LIVES EVERY YEAR. EMERGENCY RELIEF, FACILITATED BY MODERN TRANSPORT, HELPED MILLIONS TO SURVIVE FLOOD, FAMINE, AND DROUGHT. THE SHARING OF TECHNOLOGY, THE TEACHING OF AGRICULTURE AND ENGINEERING, AND IMPROVEMENTS IN EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS GENERALLY, ALL HELPED TO REDUCE MORTALITY RATES, ESPECIALLY INFANT MORTALITY, AND TO LENGTHEN LIFE SPANS.

THIS DEMONSTRATED NOT POOR PLANNING OR BAD POLICY BUT HUMAN PROGRESS IN A NEW ERA OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE, TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCE, AND HUMAN COMPASSION. THE POPULATION BOOM WAS A CHALLENGE; IT NEED NOT HAVE BEEN A CRISIS. SEEN IN ITS BROADER CONTEXT, IT REQUIRED A MEASURED, MODULATED RESPONSE. IT PROVOKED AN OVERREACTION BY SOME, LARGELY BECAUSE IT COINCIDED WITH TWO NEGATIVE FACTORS WHICH, TOGETHER, HINDERED FAMILIES AND NATIONS IN ADAPTING TO THEIR CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES.

THE FIRST OF THESE FACTORS WAS GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL OF ECONOMIES, A DEVELOPMENT WHICH EFFECTIVELY CONSTRAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH. THE POST-WAR EXPERIENCE CONSISTENTLY DEMONSTRATED THAT, AS ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING WAS CONCENTRATED IN THE HANDS OF PLANNERS AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS, THE ABILITY OF AVERAGE MEN AND WOMEN TO WORK TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE WAS IMPAIRED, AND SOMETIMES CRIPPLED. IN MANY CASES, AGRICULTURE WAS DEVASTED BY GOVERNMENT PRICE FIXING THAT WIPED OUT REWARDS FOR LABOR. JOB CREATION IN INFANT INDUSTRIES WAS HAMPERED BY CONFISCATORY TAXES. PERSONAL

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INDUSTRY AND THRIFT WERE PENALIZED, WHILE DEPENDENCE UPON THE STATE WAS ENCOURAGED. POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR AN ECONOMY TO ADJUST TO CHANGES IN SUPPLY AND DEMAND OR TO DISRUPTIONS IN WORLD TRADE AND FINANCE. UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, POPULATION GROWTH CHANGED FROM AN ASSET IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC POTENTIAL TO A PERIL.

ONE OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF THIS "ECONOMIC STATISM" WAS THAT IT DISRUPTED THE NATURAL MECHANISM FOR SLOWING POPULATION GROWTH IN PROBLEM AREAS. THE WORLD'S MORE AFFLUENT NATIONS HAVE REACHED A POPULATION EQUILIBRIUM WITHOUT COMPULSION AND, IN MOST CASES, EVEN BEFORE IT WAS GOVERNMENT POLICY TO ACHIEVE IT. THE CONTROLLING FACTOR IN THESE CASES HAS BEEN THE ADJUSTMENT, BY INDIVIDUAL FAMILIES, OF REPRODUCTIVE BEHAVIOR TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND ASPIRATION. HISTORICALLY, AS OPPORTUNITIES AND THE STANDARD OF LIVING RISE, THE BIRTH RATE FALLS. IN MANY COUNTRIES, ECONOMIC FREEDOM HAS LED TO ECONOMICALLY RATIONAL BEHAVIOR.

THAT PATTERN MIGHT BE WELL UNDER WAY IN MANY NATIONS WHERE POPULATION GROWTH IS TODAY A PROBLEM, IF COUNTERPRODUCTIVE GOVERNMENT POLICIES HAD NOT DISRUPTED ECONOMIC INCENTIVES, REWARDS, AND ADVANCEMENT. IN THIS REGARD, LOCALIZED CRISES OF POPULATION GROWTH ARE, IN PART, EVIDENCE OF TOO MUCH GOVERNMENT CONTROL AND PLANNING, RATHER THAN TOO LITTLE.

THE SECOND FACTOR THAT TURNED THE POPULATION BOOM INTO A CRISIS WAS CONFINED TO THE WESTERN WORLD. IT WAS AN OUTBREAK OF AN ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM, WHICH ATTACKED SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE VERY CONCEPT OF MATERIAL PROGRESS. JOINED TO A COMMENDABLE AND LONG OVERDUE CONCERN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, IT WAS MORE A REFLECTION OF ANXIETY ABOUT UNSETTLED TIMES AND AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE. IN ITS DISREGARD OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE AND SCIENTIFIC SOPHISTICATION, IT WAS

NOT UNLIKE OTHER WAVES OF CULTURAL ANXIETY THAT HAVE SWEEPED THROUGH WESTERN CIVILIZATION DURING TIMES OF SOCIAL STRESS AND SCIENTIFIC EXPLORATION.

THE COMBINATION OF THESE TWO FACTORS -- COUNTERPRODUCTIVE ECONOMIC POLICIES IN POOR AND STRUGGLING NATIONS, AND A PESSIMISM AMONG THE MORE ADVANCED -- LED TO A DEMOGRAPHIC OVERREACTION IN THE 1960'S AND 1970'S. SCIENTIFIC FORECASTS WERE REQUIRED TO COMPETE WITH UNSOUND, EXTREMIST SCENARIOS, AND TOO MANY GOVERNMENTS PURSUED POPULATION CONTROL MEASURES WITHOUT SOUND ECONOMIC POLICIES THAT CREATE THE RISE IN LIVING STANDARDS HISTORICALLY ASSOCIATED WITH DECLINE IN FERTILITY RATES. THIS APPROACH HAS NOT WORKED, PRIMARILY BECAUSE IT HAS FOCUSED ON A SYMPTOM AND NEGLECTED THE UNDERLYING AILMENTS. FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS, THIS ADMINISTRATION HAS SOUGHT TO REVERSE THAT APPROACH. WE RECOGNIZE THAT, IN SOME CASES, IMMEDIATE POPULATION PRESSURES MAY REQUIRE SHORT-TERM EFFORTS TO AMELIORATE THEM. BUT POPULATION CONTROL PROGRAMS ALONE CANNOT SUBSTITUTE FOR THE ECONOMIC REFORMS THAT PUT A SOCIETY ON THE ROAD TOWARD GROWTH AND, AS AN AFTEREFFECT, TOWARD SLOWER POPULATION INCREASE AS WELL.

NOR CAN POPULATION CONTROL SUBSTITUTE FOR THE RAPID AND RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES. IN COMMENTING ON THE GLOBAL 2000 REPORT, THIS ADMINISTRATION IN 1981 DISAGREED WITH ITS CALL "FOR MORE GOVERNMENTAL SUPERVISION AND CONTROL," STATING THAT:

"HISTORICALLY, THAT HAS TENDED TO RESTRICT THE AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES AND TO HAMPER THE DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY, RATHER THAN TO ASSIST IT. RECOGNIZING THE SERIOUSNESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PRESSURES, ESPECIALLY IN THE DEVELOPING NATIONS, THE ADMINISTRATION PLACES A PRIORITY UPON TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCE AND A ECONOMIC EXPANSION, WHICH HOLD OUT THE HOPE OF PROSPERITY AND STABILITY OF A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD. THAT HOPE CAN BE REALIZED, OF COURSE, ONLY TO THE EXTENT THAT GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO PROBLEMS, WHETHER ECONOMIC OR ECOLOGICAL, RESPECTS AND ENHANCES INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM, WHICH MAKES TRUE PROGRESS POSSIBLE AND WORTHWHILE."

THOSE PRINCIPLES UNDERLIE THIS COUNTRY'S APPROACH TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION TO BE HELD IN MEXICO CITY IN AUGUST.

4

POLICY OBJECTIVES

THE WORLD'S RAPID POPULATION GROWTH IS A RECENT PHENOMENON. ONLY SEVERAL DECADES AGO, THE POPULATION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WAS RELATIVELY STABLE, THE RESULT OF A BALANCE BETWEEN HIGH FERTILITY AND HIGH MORTALITY. THERE ARE NOW 4.5 BILLION PEOPLE IN THE WORLD, AND SIX BILLION ARE PROJECTED BY THE YEAR 2000. SUCH RAPID GROWTH PLACES TREMENDOUS PRESSURES ON GOVERNMENTS WITHOUT CONCOMITANT ECONOMIC GROWTH.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION OFFERS THE U.S. AN OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN THE INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS ON THE INTERRELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND POPULATION WHICH HAS EMERGED SINCE THE LAST SUCH CONFERENCE IN BUCHAREST IN 1974. OUR PRIMARY OBJECTIVE WILL BE TO ENCOURAGE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO ADOPT SOUND ECONOMIC

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POLICIES AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, POPULATION POLICIES CONSISTENT WITH RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIGNITY AND FAMILY VALUES. AS PRESIDENT REAGAN STATED, IN HIS MESSAGE TO THE MEXICO CITY CONFERENCE:

"WE BELIEVE POPULATION PROGRAMS CAN AND MUST BE TRULY VOLUNTARY, COGNIZANT OF THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES, AND RESPECTFUL OF RELIGIONS AND CULTURAL VALUES. WHEN WE ARE, SUCH PROGRAMS CAN MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, TO THE HEALTH OF MOTHERS AND CHILDREN, AND TO THE STABILITY OF THE FAMILY AND OF SOCIETY."

U.S. SUPPORT FOR FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS IS BASED ON RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE, ENHANCEMENT OF HUMAN DIGNITY, AND STRENGTHENING OF THE FAMILY. ATTEMPTS TO USE ABORTION, INVOLUNTARY STERILIZATION, OR OTHER COERCIVE MEASURES IN FAMILY PLANNING MUST BE SHUNNED, WHETHER EXERCISED AGAINST FAMILIES WITHIN A SOCIETY OR AGAINST NATIONS WITHIN THE FAMILY OF MAN.

THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (1959) CALLS FOR LEGAL PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN BEFORE BIRTH AS WELL AS AFTER BIRTH. IN KEEPING WITH THIS OBLIGATION, THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT CONSIDER ABORTION AN ACCEPTABLE ELEMENT OF FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS AND WILL NO LONGER CONTRIBUTE TO THOSE OF WHICH IT IS A PART. ACCORDINGLY WHEN DEALING WITH NATIONS WHICH SUPPORT ABORTION WITH FUNDS NOT PROVIDED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, THE UNITED STATES WILL CONTRIBUTE TO SUCH NATIONS THROUGH SEGREGATED ACCOUNTS WHICH CANNOT BE USED FOR ABORTION. MOREOVER, THE UNITED STATES WILL NO LONGER CONTRIBUTE TO SEPARATE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS WHICH PERFORM OR ACTIVELY PROMOTE ABORTION AS A METHOD OF FAMILY PLANNING IN OTHER NATIONS. WITH REGARD TO THE UNITED POPULATION ACTIVITIES (UNFPA), THE U.S. WILL INSIST THAT NO PART OF ITS CONTRIBUTION BE USED FOR ABORTION. THE U.S. WILL ALSO CALL FOR CONCRETE ASSURANCES THAT THE UNFPA IS NOT ENGAGED IN ABORTION OR COERCIVE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS; IF SUCH ASSURANCES ARE NOT FORTHCOMING, THE U.S. WILL REDIRECT THE AMOUNT OF ITS CONTRIBUTION TO OTHER, NON-UNFPA FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS.

IN ADDITION, WHEN EFFORTS TO LOWER POPULATION GROWTH ARE DEEMED ADVISABLE, U.S. POLICY CONSIDERS IT IMPERATIVE THAT SUCH EFFORTS RESPECT THE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CULTURE OF EACH SOCIETY.

U.S. GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES WILL IMMEDIATELY BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE ABOVE POLICIES WITH THE APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS.

IT IS TIME TO PUT ADDITIONAL EMPHASIS UPON THOSE ROOT PROBLEMS WHICH FREQUENTLY EXACERBATE POPULATION PRESSURES, BUT WHICH HAVE TOO OFTEN BEEN GIVEN SCANT ATTENTION. BY FOCUSING UPON REAL REMEDIES FOR UNDERDEVELOPED ECONOMIES, THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION CAN REDUCE DEMOGRAPHIC ISSUES TO THEIR PROPER PLACE. IT IS AN IMPORTANT PLACE, BUT NOT THE CONTROLLING ONE. IT REQUIRES OUR CONTINUING ATTENTION WITHIN THE BROADER CONTEXT OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND OF THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM THAT IS ITS PREREQUISITE.

POPULATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND ECONOMIC POLICIES

CONSERVATIVE PROJECTIONS INDICATE THAT, IN THE SIXTY YEARS FROM 1950 TO 2010, MANY THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES WILL EXPERIENCE FOUR, FIVE OR EVEN SIXFOLD INCREASE IN THE SIZE OF THEIR POPULATIONS. EVEN UNDER THE ASSUMPTION OF GRADUAL DECLINES IN BIRTH RATES, THE UNUSUALLY HIGH PROPORTION OF YOUTH IN THE THIRD WORLD MEANS THAT THE ANNUAL POPULATION GROWTH IN MANY OF THESE COUNTRIES WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL DECADES.

SOUND ECONOMIC POLICIES AND A MARKET ECONOMY ARE OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE TO THE PROCESS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. RISING STANDARDS OF LIVING CONTRIBUTED IN A MAJOR WAY TO THE DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION FROM HIGH TO LOW RATES OF POPULATION GROWTH WHICH OCCURRED IN THE U.S. AND OTHER INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES OVER THE LAST CENTURY.

THE CURRENT SITUATION OF MANY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, HOWEVER, DIFFERS IN CERTAIN WAYS FROM CONDITIONS IN 19TH CENTURY EUROPE AND THE U.S. THE RATES AND DIMENSIONS OF POPULATION GROWTH ARE MUCH HIGHER NOW, THE PRESSURES ON LAND, WATER, AND RESOURCES ARE GREATER, THE SAFETY-VALVE OF MIGRATION IS MORE RESTRICTED, AND, PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT, TIME IS NOT ON THEIR SIDE BECAUSE OF THE MOMENTUM OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE.

RAPID POPULATIONS GROWTH COMPOUNDS ALREADY SERIOUS PROBLEMS FACED BY BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS IN ACCOMODATING CHANGING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEMANDS. IT DIVERTS RESOURCES FROM NEEDED INVESTMENT, AND INCREASES THE COSTS AND DIFFICULTIES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. SLOWING POPULATION GROWTH IS NOT A PANACEA FOR THE PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. IT IS NOT OFFERED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR SOUND AND COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES. WITHOUT OTHER DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS AND SOUND ECONOMIC POLICIES WHICH ENCOURAGE A VITAL PRIVATE SECTOR, IT CANNOT SOLVE PROBLEMS OF HUNGER, UNEMPLOYMENT, CROWDING OR SOCIAL DISORDER.

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POPULATION ASSISTANCE IS AN INGREDIENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM THAT FOCUSES ON THE ROOT CAUSES OF DEVELOPMENT FAILURES. THE U.S. PROGRAM AS A WHOLE, INCLUDING POPULATION ASSISTANCE, LAYS THE BASIS FOR WELL GROUNDED, STEP-THE-STEP INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF PEOPLE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND TO MAKE THEIR OWN EFFORTS, PARTICULARLY THROUGH EXPANDED PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVES, A KEY BUILDING BLOCK OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

FORTUNATELY, A BROAD INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS HAS EMERGED SINCE THE 1974 BUCHAREST WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE THAT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND POPULATION POLICIES ARE MUTUALLY REINFORCING.

BY HELPING DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SLOW THEIR POPULATION GROWTH THROUGH SUPPORT FOR EFFECTIVE VOLUNTARY FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH SOUND ECONOMIC POLICIES, U.S. POPULATION ASSISTANCE CONTRIBUTES TO STRONGER SAVING AND INVESTMENT RATES, SPEEDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE MARKETS AND RELATED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, REDUCES THE POTENTIAL RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS OF PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE, AND HASTENS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF EACH COUNTRY'S GRADUATION FROM THE NEED FOR EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE.

THE UNITED STATES WILL CONTINUE ITS LONGSTANDING COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE, OF WHICH POPULATION PROGRAMS ARE A PART. WE RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING OUR ASSISTANCE WITHIN THE CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE COUNTRIES WE ARE ASSISTING, AND IN KEEPING WITH OUR OWN VALUES.

HEALTH AND HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS

PERHAPS THE MOST POIGNANT CONSEQUENCE OF RAPID POPULATION GROWTH IS ITS EFFECT ON THE HEALTH OF MOTHERS AND CHILDREN. ESPECIALLY IN POOR COUNTRIES, THE HEALTH AND NUTRITION STATUS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IS LINKED TO FAMILY SIZE. MATERNAL AND INFANT MORTALITY RISES WITH THE NUMBER OF BIRTHS AND WITH BIRTHS TOO CLOSELY SPACED. IN COUNTRIES AS DIFFERENT AS TURKEY, PERU, AND NEPAL, A CHILD BORN LESS THAN TWO YEARS AFTER ITS SIBLING IS TWICE AS LIKELY TO DIE BEFORE IT REACHES THE AGE OF FIVE, THAN IF THERE WERE AN INTERVAL OF AT LEAST FOUR YEARS BETWEEN THE BIRTHS. COMPLICATIONS OF PREGNANCY ARE MORE FREQUENT AMONG WOMEN WHO ARE VERY YOUNG OR NEAR THE END OF THEIR REPRODUCTIVE YEARS. IN SOCIETIES WITH WIDESPREAD MALNUTRITION AND INADEQUATE HEALTH CONDITIONS, THESE PROBLEMS ARE REINFORCED; NUMEROUS AND CLOSELY SPACED BIRTHS LEAD TO EVEN GREATER MALNUTRITION OF MOTHERS AND INFANTS.

IT IS AN UNFORTUNATE REALITY THAT IN MANY COUNTRIES, ABORTION IS USED AS A MEANS OF TERMINATING UNWANTED PREGNANCIES. THIS IS UNNECESSARY AND REPUGNANT; VOLUNTARY FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS CAN PROVIDE A HUMANE ALTERNATIVE TO ABORTION FOR COUPLES WHO WISH TO REGULATE THE SIZE OF THEIR FAMILY, AND EVIDENCE FROM SOME DEVELOPING COUNTRIES INDICATES A DECLINE IN ABORTION AS SUCH SERVICES BECOME AVAILABLE.

THE BASIC OBJECTIVE OF ALL U.S. ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING POPULATION PROGRAMS, IS THE BETTERMENT OF THE HUMAN CONDITION -- IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF MOTHERS AND CHILDREN, OF FAMILIES, AND OF COMMUNITIES FOR GENERATIONS TO COME. FOR WE RECOGNIZE THAT PEOPLE ARE THE ULTIMATE RESOURCE -- BUT THIS MEANS HAPPY AND HEALTHY CHILDREN, GROWING UP WITH EDUCATION, FINDING PRODUCTIVE WORK AS YOUNG ADULTS, AND ABLE TO DEVELOP THEIR FULL MENTAL AND PHYSICAL POTENTIAL.

U.S. AID IS DESIGNED TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC PROGRESS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES THROUGH ENCOURAGING SOUND ECONOMIC POLICIES AND FREEING OF INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE. THUS, THE U.S. SUPPORTS A BROAD RANGE OF ACTIVITIES IN VARIOUS SECTORS, INCLUDING AGRICULTURE, PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, HEALTH, POPULATION, AND EDUCATION. POPULATION ASSISTANCE AMOUNTS TO ABOUT TEN PERCENT OF TOTAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.

TECHNOLOGY AS A KEY TO DEVELOPMENT

THE TRANSFER, ADAPTATION, AND IMPROVEMENT OF MODERN KNOW-HOW IS CENTRAL TO U.S. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE. PEOPLE WITH GREATER KNOW-HOW ARE PEOPLE BETTER ABLE TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVES. POPULATION ASSISTANCE ENSURES THAT A WIDE RANGE OF MODERN DEMOGRAPHIC TECHNOLOGY IS MADE AVAILABLE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND THAT TECHNOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENTS CRITICAL FOR SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT RECEIVE SUPPORT.

THE EFFICIENT COLLECTION, PROCESSING, AND ANALYSIS OF DATA DERIVED FROM CENSUS, SURVEY, AND VITAL STATISTICS PROGRAMS CONTRIBUTES TO BETTER PLANNING IN BOTH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS.

THE U.S. AT MEXICO CITY

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ABOVE STATEMENTS OF POLICY, THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES SHOULD BE DRAWN UPON TO GUIDE THE U.S. DELEGATION AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION:

1. RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE IS BASIC, AND ANY ATTEMPT TO USE ABORTION, INVOLUNTARY STERILIZATION, OR OTHER COERCIVE MEASURES IN FAMILY PLANNING MUST BE REJECTED.

2. POPULATION POLICIES AND PROGRAMS SHOULD BE FULLY INTEGRATED INTO, AND REINFORCE, APPROPRIATE,

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MARKET-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT POLICIES; THEIR
OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE CLEARLY SEEN AS AN IMPROVEMENT
IN THE HUMAN CONDITION, AND NOT MERELY AN EXERCISE
IN LIMITING BIRTHS.

3. ACCESS TO FAMILY EDUCATION AND SERVICES NEEDS
TO BE BROADENED, ESPECIALLY IN THE CONTEXT OF
MATERNAL/CHILD HEALTH PROGRAMS, IN ORDER TO ENABLE
COUPLES TO EXERCISE RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD.
CONSISTENT WITH VALUES AND CUSTOMS, THE U.S. FAVORS
OFFERING COUPLES A VARIETY OF MEDICALLY APPROVED
METHODS.

4. THOUGH POPULATION FACTORS MERIT SERIOUS
CONSIDERATION IN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, THEY ARE NOT
A SUBSTITUTE FOR SOUND ECONOMIC POLICIES WHICH
LIBERATE INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE THROUGH THE MARKET
MECHANISM.

5. THERE SHOULD BE HIGHER INTERNATIONAL PRIORITY
FOR BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH INTO SAFER AND BETTER
METHODS OF FERTILITY REGULATION, ESPECIALLY NATURAL
FAMILY PLANNING, AND FOR OPERATIONS RESEARCH INTO
MORE EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY AND PROGRAM
MANAGEMENT.

6. ISSUES OF MIGRATION SHOULD BE HANDLED IN WAYS
CONSISTENT WITH BOTH HUMAN RIGHTS AND NATIONAL
SOVEREIGNTY.

7. THE U.S., IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER CONCERNED
COUNTRIES, SHOULD RESIST INTRUSION OF POLEMICAL OR
NON-GERMANE ISSUES INTO CONFERENCE DELIBERATIONS.

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13 July 1984

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REPEATING LETTER TO THE HONORABLE JAMES BAKER, THE WHITE HOUSE --
PHONED THROUGH TO HIS SECRETARY ON 12 JULY 1984:

Dear Jim:

Thank you for the statement. As you asked me last Friday to advise you of any changes I felt necessary, I made bold to do so. Specifically, I request consideration of the following modifications in the section headed "Policy Objectives."

1. Amend the beginning of the last sentence of the fourth paragraph to read as follows (added language underscored): "The U.S. will also call for concrete assurances that the UNFPA is not engaged in, or does not provide funding for, abortion or coercive family planning programs...".

2. Amend the fifth paragraph to read as follows (new language underscored): "In addition, when efforts to lower population growth are deemed advisable, U.S. policy considers it imperative that such efforts respect the religious beliefs and culture of each society, and the right of couples to determine the sizes of their own families. Accordingly, the U.S. will not provide family planning funds to any nation which engages in coercion to achieve population growth objectives."

If these changes are acceptable, and assuming an appropriate delegation and staffing, I will be pleased to head the delegation to Mexico City. Again, I must emphasize that time is very short.

With best wishes,

Sincerely, James L. Buckley, President, RFE/RL, Inc., Munich, West Germany
(Signed) Jim Buckley

Govt of Mexico by hosting this Conf
and the Conference President & Secretariat for
skills in its management. Our thanks, too, to
Dr. Salas for contributions through the years

PLENARY STATEMENT

AT THE

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION

Appreciation

We thank the Government of Mexico, under its distinguished President, Miguel de la Madrid, for its hospitality in hosting this important gathering of the international community.

This Conference has been called to review the World Population Plan of Action adopted in Bucharest ten years ago. As we do so, it is important to keep in mind that the subject of population is part of a larger objective. In its own words, the Plan of Action is "an instrument of the international community for the promotion of economic development, quality of life, human rights and fundamental freedom."

In short, population goals and policies must be considered not as ends in themselves but in the context of social and economic strategies designed to enhance the human condition in a manner consistent with basic values.

Over the past twenty years, the United States has played a leading role in focusing attention on population issues, in urging international cooperation, and in the design and implementation of population strategies based on voluntary family planning. In the current year, we will be contributing \$240,000,000 for these purposes, or 44% of the total population assistance provided by developed nations; and the Reagan Administration has requested an increase for 1985. U.S. support for these programs has increased by more than 30% since 1980.

At the same time, the experience of the last two decades not only makes possible but requires a sharper focus for our population policy.

Given the dramatic success achieved by developing nations ~~over the past thirty years~~ in reducing mortality rates, there is no question that many of them find it difficult to cope with the resulting surge in their populations. Moreover, major increases are destined to continue well into the next century, even with significant reductions in birth rates.

Small wonder that so many have reacted to this dramatic phenomenon by concentrating more on how to control the surge in human numbers than on how expanding populations might be accommodated.

We believe, however, that in his superb address welcoming us to Mexico, ~~on Monday~~, President de la Madrid placed the problem in context when he said:

"Our planet, inhabited today by 4.8 billion human beings, has the natural resources, production capacity and different administrative and political skills it needs to fully meet the basic needs of its future population. To that end, let us make reason our guide in our efforts to prepare for the future."

~~We can do no better than to let us~~ follow the President's advice and place the population problem in ~~proper~~ perspective.

First, and foremost, population growth is, of itself, neither good nor bad. It becomes an asset or a problem in conjunction with other factors, such as economic policy, social constraints, and the ability to put additional men and women to useful work. People, after all, are producers as well as consumers.

┌ Hong Kong and South Korea are cases in point. They have few natural resources, ^{at} ~~at~~ over the past twenty years, they have experienced major increases in population. ^{Yet} ~~Yet~~ few nations have experienced such rapid economic growth. ┌ We believe it no coincidence that each of these societies placed its reliance on the creativity of private individuals working within a free economy.

┌ Some developing nations chose a different path, that of a ^{highly} ~~a~~ controlled, centrally-planned economy.

┌ In such cases, the concentration of economic decision-making in the hands of planners and public officials tended to inhibit individual initiative, and sometimes crippled the ability of ~~average~~ men and women to work towards a better future. ┌ In many cases, agriculture was devastated by government price controls that wiped out the rewards for labor. ┌ Job creation in infant industries was hampered by confiscatory taxes.

┌ Personal industry and thrift were penalized.

┌ Under such circumstances, population growth became a threat.

[61] One of the consequences of "economic statism",
~~and the lagging development such an approach~~
~~implies~~, was the disruption of the natural
mechanism for slowing population growth. [The
world's developed nations have reached a population
equilibrium without compulsion. [The controlling
factor has been the adjustment, by individual
families, of reproductive behavior to economic
opportunity and aspiration. [Historically, as
opportunities and the standard of living rise, the
birth rate falls. [Fortunately, a broad international
consensus has emerged since Bucharest that economic
development and population policies are mutually
reinforcing.

[This Conference offers a unique opportunity for
all of us to reflect on the interaction between
economic development and population in the light of
experience so that we may develop more effective
strategies for the years ahead. [Our thinking,
however, must not be limited to a consideration of
economic and population factors alone. [Any policy
adopted must be consistent with a respect for human
dignity and fundamental freedom.

As President Ronald Reagan stated in his message to this Conference:

"We believe population programs can and must be truly voluntary, cognizant of the rights and responsibilities of individuals and families, and respectful of religious and cultural values. When they are, such programs can make an important contribution to economic and social development, to the health of mothers and children, and to the stability of the family and of society."

In preparing for this Conference, the United States has issued a carefully developed statement of policy, a copy of which has been distributed to each delegation. It does not represent a radical shift ~~in its~~ past position. Rather, it reflects a sharpening of focus to make ~~its~~ ^{U.S.} foreign assistance programs more responsive to true needs and more reflective of fundamental values.

The United States will continue its long standing commitment to development and family planning assistance to other countries. By exercising greater care in determining how those contributions are used, the United States expects to increase the

effectiveness of its economic assistance while ensuring that its family planning funds are used in ways consistent with human dignity and family values.

The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959) recognizes the right of children to protection before birth as well as after. In keeping with this affirmation, the United States does not consider abortion an acceptable element of family planning programs.

Over the past decades, the United States has not allowed its population assistance contribution to be used to finance or promote abortion. The present policy tightens this existing restraint in three ways.

First, where U.S. funds are contributed to nations which support abortion with other funds, the United States ~~will contribute to such nations through~~ ^{contributions will be placed in} segregated accounts which cannot be used for abortion; second, the U.S. will no longer contribute to separate non-governmental organizations which perform or actively promote abortion as a method of family planning in other nations; and third, before the U.S. will contribute funds to the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, it will ~~insist that no part of its contribution be used for abortion and will also~~ first require concrete assurances that the UNFPA is not engaged in, and

Handwritten note: Being prepared, I should include
myself in self-governance program
in the report.

does not provide funding for, abortion or coercive family planning programs. Should such assurances not be possible, and in order to maintain the level of its overall contribution to the international effort, the United States will redirect the amount of its intended contribution to other, non-UNFPA family planning programs.

When efforts to lower population growth are deemed advisable, U.S. policy considers it imperative that such efforts respect the right of couples to determine the size of their own families.

Accordingly, the United States will not provide family planning funds to any nation which engages in forcible coercion to achieve population goals.

Our support of family planning programs serves two basic purposes, both of which require ready access to the knowledge and services that will enable couples to exercise their right to determine when they will conceive a child.

The first concerns health. The availability of effective family planning services will enable couples to better protect the health of mother and

child by enabling them to control the spacing of children and avoid pregnancies among women who are too young or too old to bear one with safety.

The second end of family planning is to facilitate parental control over the size of families. An effective voluntary family planning program will result in substantial decreases in family size only to the degree that couples desire fewer children, and that safe, acceptable, effective and affordable methods are available.

Here again we can benefit from recent as well as historical experience. So long as the great majority of couples see an economic advantage in having a large number of children, they will tend to have them. This desire is prevalent in the least developed countries where children begin to contribute to family income at an early age, and are the main source of support for parents too old to work. Once a society achieves a certain level of real economic development, however, the incentives to child bearing will change -- especially where women have achieved higher education and broader economic opportunities, and are able to attain their rightful place in society.

South Korea and the ASEAN countries are cases in point. Between 1970 and 1982, they experienced an average annual rate of economic growth of over 7%, well above that of any other part of the world.

At the same time, through a combination of significant family planning efforts and the decline in the desire for children historically associated with economic growth, they reduced their average crude birth rate by more than 30%. While some of these nations are richly endowed with natural resources, others have none. What they do share in common are marketplace economies and policies which encourage private investment and initiatives.

Unfortunately, the current situation in many developing countries is such that relief from population pressures cannot be achieved overnight even under optimal economic policies. In the meantime, rapid population growth compounds already serious problems, and increases the costs and difficulties of economic development. Slowing population growth, however, is not a panacea. Without sound and comprehensive development policies, it cannot in itself solve problems of hunger, unemployment, crowding, or potential social disorder.

By helping developing countries through support for effective voluntary family planning programs in conjunction with sound economic policies, U.S. population assistance contributes to stronger saving and investment rates, speeds the development of effective markets and related employment opportunities, reduces the potential resource requirements of programs to improve the health and education of the people, and hastens the achievement of each country's graduation from the need for external assistance.

These are our goals and expectations as we take advantage of the experience of the last two decades to provide our population assistance policy with a sharper focus.

We urge this Conference to do the same as it reviews the World Population Plan of Action. We hope, in examining alternative models, it will seek out those that have proven the most successful.

Much remains to be done, but we can take heart from the extraordinary progress already achieved.

Over the past thirty years, for example, fertility rates and birth rates in the developing world have

fallen more than halfway toward a goal of population stability; human life expectancy has increased dramatically, caloric intake per capita has improved, literacy rates have increased significantly, disease is on the decline, and per capita income in most countries has risen substantially.

This record of accomplishment should be encouragement enough as we proceed with the work of this Conference. At the same time, we should be neither surprised nor disturbed by the inevitable differences we will encounter.

We here today represent a rich diversity of cultures and historical experience. Our ethical and moral perspectives have been shaped by a variety of religious and secular traditions. We govern ourselves in different ways in accordance with fundamentally different assumptions about the nature of man and purpose of nations.

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August 8, 1984

U.S. Commitment to International Population Planning

August 8, 1984



United States Department of State
Bureau of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C.

Following is the plenary statement by Ambassador James Buckley, head of the U.S. delegation, to the International Conference on Population, Mexico City, August 8, 1984.

We thank the Government of Mexico, under its distinguished President, Miguel de la Madrid, for its hospitality in hosting this important gathering of the international community.

This conference has been called to review the World Population Plan of Action adopted in Bucharest 10 years ago. As we do so, it is important to keep in mind that the subject of population is part of a larger objective. In its own words, the Plan of Action is "an instrument of the international community for the promotion of economic development, quality of life, human rights and fundamental freedom."

In short, population goals and policies must be considered not as ends in themselves but in the context of social and economic strategies designed to enhance the human condition in a manner consistent with basic values.

Over the past 20 years, the United States has played a leading role in focusing attention on population issues, in urging international cooperation, and in the design and implementation of population strategies based on voluntary family planning. In the current year, we will be contributing \$240,000,000 for these purposes, or 44% of the total population assistance provided by developed nations; and the Reagan Administration has requested an increase

for 1985. U.S. support for these programs has increased by more than 30% since 1980.

The Need for a Sharper Focus

At the same time, the experience of the last two decades not only makes possible but requires a sharper focus for our population policy.

Given the dramatic success achieved by developing nations over the past 30 years in reducing mortality rates, there is no question that many of them find it difficult to cope with the resulting surge in their populations. Moreover, major increases are destined to continue well into the next century even with significant reductions in birth rates.

Small wonder that so many have reacted to this dramatic phenomenon by concentrating more on how to control the surge in human numbers than on how expanding populations might be accommodated.

We believe, however, that in the superb address welcoming us to Mexico on Monday, President de la Madrid placed the problem in context when he said:

Our planet, inhabited today by 4.8 billion human beings, has the natural resources, production capacity and different administrative and political skills it needs to fully meet the basic needs of its future population. To that end, let us make reason our guide in our efforts to prepare for the future.

Let us follow the advice of President de la Madrid and place the population problem in proper perspective.

First, and foremost, population growth is, of itself, neither good nor bad. It becomes an asset or a problem in conjunction with other factors, such as economic policy, social constraints, and the ability to put additional men and women to useful work. People, after all, are producers as well as consumers.

Hong Kong and South Korea are cases in point. They have few natural resources. Over the past 20 years, they have experienced major increases in population, yet few nations have experienced such rapid economic growth. We believe it no coincidence that each of these societies placed its reliance on the creativity of private individuals working within a free economy.

Some developing nations chose a different path, that of a controlled, centrally planned economy. In such cases, the concentration of economic decisionmaking in the hands of planners and public officials tended to inhibit individual initiative and sometimes crippled the ability of average men and women to work toward a better future. In many cases, agriculture was devastated by government price controls that wiped out the rewards for labor. Job creation in infant industries was hampered by confiscatory taxes. Personal industry and thrift were penalized. Under such circumstances, population growth became a threat.

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One of the consequences of "economic statism," and the lagging development such an approach implies, was the disruption of the natural mechanism for slowing population growth. The world's developed nations have reached a population equilibrium without compulsion. The controlling factor has been the adjustment, by individual families, of reproductive behavior to economic opportunity and aspiration. Historically, as opportunity and the standard of living rise, the birth rate falls. Fortunately, a broad international consensus has emerged since Bucharest that economic development and population policies are mutually reinforcing.

This conference offers a unique opportunity for all of us to reflect on the interaction between economic development and population in the light of experience so that we may develop more

effective strategies for the years ahead. Our thinking, however, must not be limited to a consideration of economic and population factors alone. Any policy adopted must be consistent with a respect for human dignity and fundamental freedom.

U.S. Policy

As President Ronald Reagan stated in his message to this conference:

We believe population programs can and must be truly voluntary, cognizant of the rights and responsibilities of individuals and families, and respectful of religious and cultural values. When they are, such programs can make an important contribution to economic and social development, to the health of mothers and children, and to the stability of the family and of society.

In preparing for this conference, the United States has issued a carefully developed statement of policy, a copy of which has been distributed to each delegation. It does not represent a radical shift in its past position. Rather, it reflects a sharpening of focus to make its foreign assistance programs more responsive to true needs and more reflective of fundamental values.

The United States will continue its longstanding commitment to development and family planning assistance to

other countries. By exercising greater care in determining how those contributions are used, the United States expects to increase the effectiveness of its economic assistance while ensuring that its family planning funds are used in ways consistent with human dignity and family values.

The UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959) recognizes the right of children to protection before birth as well as after. In keeping with this affirmation, the United States does not consider abortion an acceptable element of family planning programs.

Over the past decade, the United States has not allowed its population assistance contribution to be used to finance or promote abortion. The present policy tightens this existing restraint in three ways.

First, where U.S. funds are contributed to nations which support abortion with other funds, the United States will contribute to such nations through segregated accounts which cannot be used for abortion.

Second, the United States will no longer contribute to separate nongovernmental organizations which perform or actively promote abortion as a method of family planning in other nations.

Third, before the United States will contribute funds to the UN Fund for Population Activities, (UNFPA), it will insist that no part of its contribution be used for abortion and will also first require concrete assurances that the UNFPA is not engaged in, and does not provide funding for, abortion or coercive family planning programs. Should such assurances not be possible, and in order to maintain the level of its overall contribution to the international effort, the United States will redirect the amount of its intended contribution to other, non-UNFPA family planning programs.

When efforts to lower population growth are deemed advisable, U.S. policy considers it imperative that such efforts respect the right of couples to determine the size of their own families. Accordingly, the United States will not provide family planning funds to any nation which engages in forcible coercion to achieve population goals.

Our support of family planning programs serves two basic purposes, both of which require ready access to the knowledge and services that will enable couples to exercise their right to determine when they will conceive a child.

The first concerns health. The availability of effective family planning services will enable couples to better protect the health of mother and child by enabling them to control the spacing of children and avoid pregnancies among women who are too young or too old to bear one with safety.

The second end of family planning is to facilitate parental control over the size of families. An effective voluntary family planning program will result in substantial decreases in family size only to the degree that couples desire fewer children and that safe, acceptable, effective, and affordable methods are available.

Here again we can benefit from recent as well as historical experience. So long as the great majority of couples sees an economic advantage in having a large number of children, they will tend to have them. This desire is prevalent in the least developed countries where children begin to contribute to family income at an early age and are the main

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PRESIDENT REAGAN'S MESSAGE, MAY 30, 1984

I am grateful to Mexico, under the leadership of President Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado, for its gracious hospitality in hosting the International Conference on Population.

World leaders have come to recognize that the historically unprecedented growth of population now occurring in many countries affects economic and social development and presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities. It is for these reasons that the United States provides bilateral and multilateral assistance in population programs.

Recognizing the seriousness of environmental and economic problems and their relationship to social realities, the United States places a priority upon technological advancement and economic expansion which hold out the hope of prosperity and stability for a rapidly changing world. That hope can be realized to the extent nations respond to problems, whether economic or ecological, in ways that respect and enhance the freedom and dignity of the individual.

source of support for parents too old to work. Once a society achieves a certain level of real economic development, however, the incentives to childbearing will change—especially where women have achieved higher education and broader economic opportunities and are able to attain their rightful place in society.

South Korea and the ASEAN [Association of South East Asian Nations] countries are cases in point. Between 1970 and 1982, they experienced an average annual rate of economic growth of over 7%, well above that of any other part of the world. At the same time, through a combination of significant family planning efforts and the decline in the desire for children historically associated with economic growth, they reduced their average crude birth rate by more than 30%. While some of these nations are richly endowed with natural resources, others have none. What they do share in common are marketplace economies and policies which encourage private investment and initiatives.

Unfortunately, the current situation in many developing countries is such that relief from population pressures cannot be achieved overnight even under optimal economic policies. In the mean-

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Our concern over the dimensions of demographic change is inseparable from a concern for the welfare of children—who are the ultimate resource of any society. Together we must strive for a world in which children are happy and healthy. They must have the opportunity to develop to their full mental and physical potential and, as young adults, be able to find productive work and to enjoy a decent and dignified existence.

I wish the participants in this Conference good counsel and inspiration in addressing these issues. I am confident they will fulfill their responsibility to produce recommendations for action by the international community which will improve the well-being of generations to come.

RONALD REAGAN

time, rapid population growth compounds already serious problems and increases the costs and difficulties of economic development. Slowing population growth, however, is not a panacea. Without sound and comprehensive development policies, it cannot in itself solve problems of hunger, unemployment, crowding, or potential social disorder.

By helping developing countries through support for effective voluntary family planning programs in conjunction with sound economic policies, U.S. population assistance contributes to stronger saving and investment rates, speeds the development of effective markets and related employment opportunities, reduces the potential resource requirements of programs to improve the health and education of the people, and hastens the achievement of each country's graduation from the need for external assistance.

These are our goals and expectations as we take advantage of the experience of the last two decades to provide our population assistance policy with a sharper focus.

We urge this conference to do the same as it reviews the World Population Plan of Action. We hope in examining alternative models, it will seek out those that have proven the most successful.

Much remains to be done, but we can take heart from the extraordinary progress already achieved. Over the past 30 years, for example, fertility rates and birth rates in the developing world have fallen more than halfway toward a goal of population stability; human life expectancy has increased dramatically, caloric intake per capita has improved, literacy rates have increased significantly, disease is on the decline, and per capita income in most countries has risen substantially.

This record of accomplishment should be encouragement enough as we proceed with the work of this conference. At the same time, we should be neither surprised nor disturbed by the inevitable differences we will encounter.

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