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SPEAKING OUT

## James Dobson: Why Children Are a National Blessing

Under-population is the deeper global problem.

James Dobson / posted April 11, 2016



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*The Population Bomb* was one of only two gifts I gave my dad that he refused to accept. The year was 1968, and I was shopping for a Christmas gift. He was an avid reader, and I was searching for a book that sounded interesting. I settled on a runaway bestseller, *The Population Bomb*, by Paul Ehrlich. Everyone seemed to be talking about it.

The theme of this alarming publication was that there were far too many people in the world, and the problem was getting worse by the second. Ehrlich projected global disaster by 1975, involving worldwide disease and human beings overrunning the earth like rats in a subway. He warned his readers that a billion people could starve to death in the 1980s. The only thing that might save us, Ehrlich said, was immediate population control to prevent what he referred to as “a dying planet.”

I made the mistake of not reading the book before I gave it to my dad. I proudly wrapped it in festive paper and put it under the “tree” to be opened on Christmas morning. When my father tore the paper off the package, his countenance fell. He thumbed through the pages for a few seconds and then rudely handed the book back to me.

“I won’t accept this,” he said.

**When my father talked about the prospect of killing countless babies in the '60s and '70s, big tears filled his eyes and ran down his**

He didn’t explain his irritation, but clearly I had struck a nerve. Now I know that he was deeply concerned at that time about the approaching support for legalized abortion on demand. The *Roe v. Wade* decision by the Supreme Court

**cheeks.** was handed down five years later, and my father had seen it coming. When he talked about the prospect of killing countless babies in the '60s and '70s, big tears filled his eyes and ran down his cheeks.

“Population control” for my dad, and now for me, meant the murder of unborn babies—nearly 60 million to date—along with the horrors of infanticide and euthanasia. It also meant governmental policies to limit procreation, such as China’s “one child per family” decree. As a result, millions of baby girls in China were left to die in ditches or dumps or were drowned in stagnant waters. Others starved to death, beyond compassion or care. The policy also imposed forced abortion on vulnerable women.

There have been other tragic consequences of population control. One of them was the development of Planned Parenthood, an organization that has murdered babies for decades. More recently, its executives have begun selling body parts for profit, including “harvested” brains, hearts, and other organs of young victims. Some of them were still alive while being cut to pieces in a procedure called D & E, or dilation and evacuation.

When the American people learned of this outrage, they gasped. Then they yawned. Under the leadership of Speaker of the House of Representatives, Paul Ryan, and Majority Leader Mitch McConnell in the Senate, they led their colleagues to continue granting \$500 million per year to Planned Parenthood. President Obama signed their bill into law. The status quo continues.

**Americans are starting to realize, perhaps for the first time, that we are facing a demographic nightmare.**

Forty-seven years have come and gone since Paul Ehrlich made his case for population control. What has been the consequence? Americans are starting to realize, perhaps for the first time, that we are facing a demographic nightmare.

Our problem is not too many people but a plummeting birthrate. There are more single women today than those who are married, and the birthrate has been declining steadily. If it were not for immigration, this nation would be below zero population growth.

Abortion, contraception, and surgical alternatives have made it easy for couples to opt out of parenting if they choose. Children are perceived by many young couples as being expensive, burdensome, time-consuming, and often stressful to rear. Other young adults elect not to bear children because they cherish their freedom, independence, and personal fulfillment. They have a right not to bear children, of course, but serious consequences emerge when a majority of couples choose not to bear children. A nation can reach a tipping point from which it cannot recover. It is called the “point of no return,” and many nations are dangerously close to it. Some have already gone over the cliff and don’t know it.

Historically, children and young adults have greatly outnumbered the old and feeble. Those of a marriageable age have produced a vigorous birthrate for 300 years, which continually swelled the size of the population. Most of the elderly, on the other hand, had a short lifespan and were dying faster than

babies were born. Thus, the population has been depicted as a pyramid, with the young being represented across its broad base and fewer older individuals nestled at the pinnacle. Now, we're witnessing an inversion of the pyramid, where there are many more older people at the bottom and a smaller number of younger people and babies at the top.

A falling birthrate is occurring throughout Europe, parts of Asia, in Central and South America, and elsewhere. This inversion is a worldwide phenomenon.

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The Russian government, in a desperate attempt to repopulate their nation, is offering incentives now for women who produce babies. Japan's birthrate has fallen so dramatically that the Japanese population has the oldest average age on earth. Last year, more diapers were bought and used by aging Japanese citizens than were purchased for babies. China is not producing enough women for Chinese men to marry. France, Germany, and other European countries are also experiencing dramatically low birthrates.

If the human population continues to wither, it will have shocking implications. For example, A 2010 Brookings Institute paper outlined what it called a "crisis" facing China. A declining labor supply will dramatically alter the nation's "spending obligations"--meaning "an aging population will force national reallocations of resources and priorities, as more funds flow to health care and pensions." It adds, "Japan's economic stagnation, closely related to the aging of its population, serves as a ready reference."

It is not without reason that where negative population growth is occurring elsewhere in the world, some experts project that pensions may not be sustainable, and medical plans may fail..

**We are wise to remember that the world's fertility rate is fragile, and in many countries, on the decline.**

Bearing and raising children is a God-given privilege, and all things being equal, we are commanded by God to "be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1:28). To be sure, many women don't have the opportunity to bear children. And some individuals are called by God to a life of celibacy. Yes, there are exceptions. At the same time, we are wise to remember that the world's fertility rate is fragile, and in many countries, on the decline, and that this has serious consequences for the common good.

Aside from the biblical command, then, there are common-sense reasons that politicians and governments should ignore the concerns of Dr. Ehrlich and friends, and instead, cherish and nourish couples who bear children by making it easier for them to do that. The rest of us meanwhile should pause to thank the moms and dads who are replenishing the earth. For children are God's blessings to us and our link to the future.

*Dr. James Dobson earned his Ph.D. at the University of Southern California, and is the author of more than 30 books. He is*

*founder and president of Family Talk, a ministry that promotes and teaches biblical principles that support marriage, family and child-development. Family Talk's broadcasts and internet programs are aired on more than 1300 radio and online outlets worldwide. Dr. Dobson's most recent book is called [Your Legacy: The Greatest Gift](#).*

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<http://drjamesdobson.org/>*