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RETRACING THE INITIAL FORMULATIONS OF WORLD OVER POPULATION AND METHODS OF CONTROL: IDEOLOGICAL SPLIT AND DISPUTE ANALYSIS.

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Abstract

There has been an unending debate and dispute on the particular issue of whether the world is over populated with people or that there is nothing wrong with the current, and indeed further growth in the population. On the one side of the dived are those who see the world as heading for a global catastrophe giving the way that world population is growing. They see that very soon, assuming we are not there already; there will not be enough of anything to go-by as world population is far outstripping available resources: If unchecked, there will not be enough food, water, housing, health facilities and other basic need amenities for life to continue. This will eventually lead to exhaustion of resources, which by their nature are finite and that will usher in doomsdays. The reverse view disagrees and instead posits that human advancement, economic viability and overall welfare and growth of any society are conditioned and dependent on numerical strength. The more people there are the better the chances that they will produce more food, be able to put more hands to exploit resources and their heads to usher educational advancement and technological progression. Equally, the more there are the better the chances of political control and resistance to minority rule and dictatorship. They therefore see the call to control population as anti-thesis to the entire ideal that make life worthwhile and thus mount resistance. The issue of population as a problem or not is therefore hinged on which view or perspective one is looking at. What follows hereunder is an attempt to analyze the views of the groups who argue for and against the problem of world population growth and the need to control it as well as the views of those who feel that there is something sinister about the current drive at population control. This paper explores the positions that these views take by examining the basis on which they lay their arguments. It further directs its attention on the initial formulations that were made to establish a universal approach to population control and the ideas behind such a policy formulation. It narrows down the arguments by suggesting that irrespective of which position one favors, the world, as a global village has now agreed that there is indeed a case for the way human being are growing in number that call for the establishment of some consensus to deal with the problem. This is possible under the current international drive for the establishment of reproductive health and sexual rights which bears the direct consequences of the population issue. Thus the ties between child-bearing, safe motherhood, and maternal mortality/morbidity has now shifted the scales to one favoring policy formulations to deal with population and consequently narrowed down the fissure between the protagonists and antagonists.

1. General Introduction:

Is the world over or under or at par populated? This simple question is however mischievously difficult to answer, because there is not yet an

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agreement as to a yes or no answer to it. In the same line there are shades of opinions as to whether over population is a blessing or a curse to the world today, or whether the over population cry is an empty cry that is targeted at the elimination or reduction of the population and growth of some category of people, race or religion. On one side of the spectrum there are those who feel that the world economy is controlled and diametrically divided into two. Those few who control the means of production and those who struggle to earn means of sustenance by providing both skilled and unskilled labor. To this category of people, greater number in the family signifies a greater chance of earning the needed money to keep body and soul together. They therefore see the current drive at world population control as a means of truncating efforts of increasing their numeric strength in order to undermine their chances of earning livelihood. In these places, the numeric strength of a family speaks volumes of what they can earn to survive. This is because of the belief that too many of them mean many hands to use in the farm lands and other job providing avenues and consequently there will be a lot of money and the fewer their numbers means less money and greatly reduced chances of survival. In fact, there cannot be any meaningful development and economic emancipation where there are only a few hands to effectively work and earn money for survival. In this context, there is a consensus that there are basically three elements of economic development, that is to say, raw materials, technology and human labor.[1]

The other side of the divide sees the world, especially giving the growing trends in population in the third world or the less developed countries and the way natural resources are being depilated as heading for a major irreversible catastrophe until something is done to check the way that human beings reproduce off-springs. The second idea is that too many people will not only overstretch basic amenities and other social services but will unfairly mean that those that are not responsible for the increase will be made to bear the brunt or cost of those that produce children. Consequently, this will mean that people will be forced to pay for the health, education and other necessities of children they have no business with. Eventually this will bring a situation where all social structures will be consumed and the economic system will be destroyed. This is now assumed to be the position and realm of the arguments of demographers,

[1] The first thing to echo the ties between population and development was reported to be the official statement by the US delegation at the United Nations Conference on Population in Mexico, 'Population is itself a neutral phenomenon', this statement reopened the whole debate about the relationship between population growth and development. See 'Population and Development', Dr. Mohammed, A. in an article in the Inquiry Magazine, January (1988), 31.

economists, Malthusians, the United States[2] and other countries in the Western hemisphere who believe that something has to be done to check the increasing rise in world population growth. They also raise the alarm that the burden of taking care of the increase in world population will rest squarely on the shoulders of the developed countries.

Equally, demographers have concluded that giving the unabated continuing increase in world population, especially in the African, Asian and Latin American regions, if nothing is done to check the growth, especially with an all out aggressive birth control program, the consequence will be such that there will not be enough food to go round.[3] In essence, all basic amenities will be over-stretched; diseases, hunger, poverty, malnutrition, congestion and a lot of other terrible things will rule the world. According to this view there is the need to check population growth and reduce increase to the barest minimum as the only way to ensure survival and effective management of resources, infrastructures, basic health and other amenities.[4]

These two opposing views one saying that the world is over populated and the other saying that there is the need to produce more siblings have been described as two competing theories vying for dominance in the population debate. According to J. M Bracken, these two positions could be captured in their essential postulates to signify that, the first view and the one that achieved the most widespread support in policy circles and the media 'holds that population growth intensifies environmental degradation and exhausts natural resources. According to this view, the world population will exceed the earth's carrying capacity, and the world would undergo massive starvation to realign population with finite natural resources. The competing view, sometimes referred to as the 'revisionists' view or the 'supply-side demographic' view, finds that population growth has a neutral or even a positive influence on society. It holds that population growth encourages economic development through

[2] The United States has since the early 60s hold the belief and has preached that high population growth was detrimental for economic and social development in the third world. See the 'Inquiry Magazine' (supra)

[3] However, it has been reported that Africa's population density is about 1\10th that of Europe. And that Congo alone could grow enough food for the entire world population if there were enough people and resources to farm the land, harvest, transport and market the crops. A survey has also shown that on the average desired fertility is higher than actual fertility among Africans women. See Africa 2000/index/USAID 2001/USAID2001.html

[4] Ironically, Africa on line news carried on January 24, 2004 (9:40 EST) had it that Tomric Agency reported under the headline *Population Threat or Population Danger*, that Italy will be forced to import 9 million migrant workers in the next 25 years to balance a shortage caused by falling birthrate.

technological innovation and more efficient resource allocation. [5] However, in the current regime of the discourse in reproductive health and sexual rights especially as this relates to safe motherhood, maternal/infant mortality and morbidity, right to decide on the number and spacing of children and other related issues, there is agreement between all that governments must concern themselves with the issue of population.

2. Antagonists to World Overpopulation:

According to the views of antagonists, who see nothing wrong with the current increase in population growth, the world population would never exceed its carrying capacity. The scarcity of natural resources would encourage the development of new technologies and will stimulate the development of substitutes to replace the need for scarce resources.'[6] This, more than anything, captures not only the line of divide in the two approaches but also the basic assumptions these contending views use as the foundation upon which the evidence they bring forth to support their convictions.

With respect to the side of the divide that raises major objections to world population control, the evidence they advance to support their case begins with the assumption that there is no empirical proof that there is world overpopulation most essentially as this relates with respect to resources or human capacity to provide food. In this respect the antagonists advance argument and support their position with statistics, which generally suggests that there is a great danger to the current cry that the world is over populated and that available resources are almost exhausted. Accordingly, this view sees the current international harnessing of effort to fight for ways and means to curb population growth as a conspiracy to control population. They see this effort as a war against religion and culture. 'Population control would be impossible without interference in the religious sphere.'[7] This much has been stated elsewhere that population control 'raises issues that are of special concern from a religious point of view, ...population control is a matter of social and economic justice in the broadest sense. It is an issue that has important implications for the right of conscience, and profoundly affects

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[5] See Ringel, Andrew D. *The Population Policy Debate and the World Bank: Limits to Growth vs. Supply-Side Demographics*, 6 Georgia International Environmental Law Review (1993), 213.

[6] See Bracken, Jill M., *Respecting Human Rights in Population Policies: An International Customary Rights to Reproductive Choice*, 6 Indian International and Comparative Law Review, (1995), 197, at pp. 200-203.

[7] In fact statistics as far back as 1994 shows that there are over 2 billion people in the developing world who identify with major religious dominations that explicitly oppose family intervention primarily made up of the Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholic and Muslim faiths (infra note 6).

the relationship between church and the state.'[8] The worst scenario the unfounded claim to world over population can create is the fear that the only solution to the problem is genocide. According to Richard L. Rubenstein, it is 'unfortunately possible that to imagine plausible scenarios in which, in time of acute social stress, decision-makers in a desacralized society conclude that genocide is the most rational means of 'solving' the problem of surplus people. Put differently, as long as impersonal, value-free, cost-benefit calculations form the basis of large-scale decision-making by anonymous state functionaries, there may come a time when the functionaries may conclude that the benefit of a program of mass population elimination outweighs the cost.'[9]

The ties between population control and family planning are very strong and it is this connection that brings out the objection raised against all forms of demographic population control. In effect, the antagonists argue that in order to realize the 'devilish' intent of controlling world population by all means, there are believed to be a number of ways that this sinister objective can be achieved, for instance, that birthrates or population can be controlled by an all out child spacing, abortion, contraception and late marriage campaigns. In order to compel countries to adopt these methods, and or coerce them to implement there are a number of things that the protagonists can employ. This includes a situation where international support or allocation of donations for development is made conditional to some official form of birth control policy as a pre-condition for the grant of international financial or technical aid or donation.[10] This control may range also from the need to actually show a fall in the birthrates or may require the donor to make fund available only in the area of training and making contraceptives known and easily available.

Secondly, donors of assistance may insist that beneficiary countries must provide institutional framework which is based on the concept of family planning that is introduced into public sector activities like at ministerial level, incorporation into education curricular, public health policy program and directly engaging non-governmental organizations as well

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[8] See *Religious Warfare: Population Control and Religious Opposition*, A Research Paper Drafted in Preparation for the 1994 Meeting of African Catholic Bishops, (1994), 1

[9] In his book, *The Age of Triage*, Beacon Press, (1983).

[10] The role of the United States in this field can not under estimated because of its leading role in funding population control activity. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for instance accounts for 50% of all aid to developing world. Excluding other governmental expenditures and other donor assistance the USAID accounted for a whooping 80% of the total aggregate budget on population control. The cumulative total expenditure of the US in population control is now well in excess of $3 billion. (See ibid).

as the private sector to wage the war on behalf of the campaigners for the reduction of world population. Governmental policies insidiously aimed at controlling population may reach the extreme where the fear is raised that in the event the population keeps growing notwithstanding the measure suggested by those who are interested in seeing to it that population is kept low, the last option to curb the growth will be to kill or eliminated the surplus.

The antagonists further suggest that in furtherance to the objectives of the donor nations effort of reducing birthrates, certain other methods are adopted in places where the institutional approach to curb birthrates did not produce the desired results. These other methods may involve an effort at establishing population policies at the government level in the form of massive campaigns raising alarms that birthrates are 'too high' and then pushing the public to believe that there are far reaching consequences of giving a deaf ear to this danger. In this plan, the next thing that follows will be to provide catchy incentives to couples to have small and manageable family and those unmarried are hooked to the need to use condoms. To further this approach, governments may be coerced to legislate on the number of children per family or stipulate a minimum age of marriage.[11] In this way, population control has the effect of 'changing public perceptions and personal lifestyles in ways that will undermine preferences for large families. The latter is accomplished by using highly sophisticated social science research, including psychological studies into the subconscious motivation for having large families, investigation of cultural factors and symbols that can be manipulated to change values, and analysis of existing systems for the transmission of moral authority. Ways are then devised to pervert these institutions to serve the goal of planned population decrease.'[12]

3. Protagonist to World Overpopulation:

On the side of the antagonists of world population control there is the belief, strongly held by the protagonists that the world population is getting beyond the point of reasonable tolerance and control. The initial seed that implanted this idea or what the antagonists call the 'scare or fear' in the minds of the western world, first to the British and thereafter

[11] For instance the Child Marriage Restraint Act in India sets the minimum age of marriage at 18, but it has been recorded that about 50% of women enter their first union before their eighteen birthday and almost 30% have their first child by age 18. See J. C., Rebecca, M. D.; Bernard, 'Law and Bioethics: *The Injustice of Unsafe Motherhood*, Developing World Bioethics, Vol 2, No.1, Blackwell Publishers Ltd., (2002), 64, at p. 66.

[12] ibid.

the US and others can be traced to two unrelated events. The first was what is predominantly known now as the Malthusian theory of population growth. The later of the two events that happened was reported to have occurred in 1907. It was recorded that in 1907 an Egyptian author Yahya Siddyk wrote and issued a challenge to the British imperialists who have conquered and illegally establish colonial control over Egypt by the use of fire power 'noting that the present spirit of Islam is a pretentious fact, for its numerical strength is very great'. Siddyk then went further and predicted 'a revolution without parallel in the world's annals.'[13] It was this that was to spur the British subsequent approach to the issue of population growth.

In this respect, those claiming for or showing the worst fears in terms of population outbursts were motivated by the writings of Thomas Malthus,[14] a British Clergy and economist who wrote late in the 1700s and early 1800s. Malthus's maintained that unless restrained by 'preventive checks' human population would double every twenty years. The result will be geometric growth-1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, etc thereby outstripping the earth's capacity for food production, which could at best be expected to increase in an arithmetic progression, 1, 2, 3e, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, etc. In his considered view there is no difference between human, plants and animals, their number will depend solely on the limited capacity of the earth/plant.[15] At the very core of the Malthus's essay was said to be the justification of a continued concentration of wealth and power in the hands a small few elites. Malthus's faulted all measures at charity, either public or private as well as social welfare aimed at giving some form of relief to those who do not have the means of sustaining themselves or their family as responsible for population growth. He was of the belief that charity or welfare will greatly reduce the absolute dependence of worker to wages.

Accordingly, T. Malthus predicted that population would expand geometrically, doubling every twenty-five years. However, because of

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[13] ibid. This threat was also duly noted in a book titled: *The Rising Tide of color Against White World Supremacy*, by Lathrop Stoddard, (1922).

[14] See Malthus,T. R., *An Essay of the Principle of Population or A View of its Past and Present Effects on Human Happiness*, 6th ed. Ward, Lock and Company, (1890); and Malthus, T. R., *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, (1787) 2-6, Richard D. Irwin, Inc. (1963).

[15] See Cain, M. T. *The Economic Activities of Children in a Village in Bangladesh*, Population & Development Review, Vol. 3, no. 3 (September 1977). Yet it has been shown that Thomas Malthus was an advocate against contraceptives in principles. This is not surprising given the fact that he was an Anglican and at the time of his writings the Church was uniform in its stance on population control and the use of any form of family planning or control. See Hartman, B., *Reproductive Rights & Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control*, (Revised ed.), South End Press, Boston, Massachusetts, (1995), 14.

limited natural resources, food production would not keep pace with the increased demand. Ultimately, he concluded that the world population would reach the limits of sustainability and would be checked by famine, disease and war. Malthus argued further that the uneducated classes, by virtue of their 'general corruption of morals, with regard to...sex,' must be subject to conditions, which 'shortens the natural duration of human life'. These conditions include 'unwholesome occupations, severe labor and exposure to the seasons, extreme poverty, bad nursing of children...disease, wars, plague, and faming'. In Malthus's convictions, the political system should not intervene to correct these excesses but allow the 'natural' cycle of subsistence and distress for the lower classes to run its course.[16] In the final analysis T. Malthus feels that if workers had available to them alternative means of survival, they might eventually come into a position to bargain for better pay or working conditions. Malthus knew that this position will result into high death rate and therefore devices his theory as a 'scientific' explanation for the loss of life it would cause.

Malthus's position was followed and popularized in the conventional wisdom by Paul R. Ehrlich[17] who expanded the Malthusian theory to include the effects of rapid population growth on the availability of other natural resources, such as water and energy, and on the earth's ability to absorb increasing waste, such as pollution. Neo-Malthusians[18] see population growth as the major cause for poverty and believe that contraceptives and other devices will help and enable the poor have fewer children. Poverty and oppression are, according to his essays a normal phenomenon beyond the reach of the political process. Where the number of the poor and poverty stricken is reduced, they feel that this will close the gap of poverty, if not eliminate it completely. He therefore favored taking positive steps to cause the death of the poor when nature did not act quickly enough.[19]

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[16] See Abrams, P., *Preservations About Women, Populations Policy and Reproductive Rights*, 29 Cornel International Law Journal, (1996) 1 at p. 3

[17] In his book *The Population Bomb*, (1968), (rev. ed. 1971)

[18] Neo-Malthusians like Margaret Sanger and Dr. George Drysdale, also share the strong belief and conviction that overpopulation is a cause of poverty, but unlike Malthus who adopt celibacy and restraint as a solution, Sanger and Drysdale believe that the use of condoms, contraceptives and family planning rather than restraint is the solution to the overpopulation crisis. See Meadows, P., *Towards a Socialized Population Policy', in Population Theory and Policy*, (Joseph J. Spengler & Otis Dudley Duncan eds.,) (1956), 443, at p. 445.

[19] See *Critical Mass: The Continuation of History*, Information Project For Africa, Inc. 4938 Hampden Lane #192, Bethesda, Maryland, U. S. A. (1999), 10.

4. Eugenicists Theory on Population:

Apart from the Malthusian theory of eliminating the population of the poor by killing, the other optional method that was thought as the only way to reduce the astronomical increase in the rate of population of the non-wealthy cum European ethnic coloration was the so-called scientific method of eugenics. The word eugenic comes from the Greek word for 'good genes' from which there is the derivative word 'dysgenic' meaning that undesirable element grow at a greater rate than the rest. This science of eugenics was invented to study the qualities of various populations. Eugenics has as its major purpose the task of finding ways to maintain high birth rates among the privileged classes while at the same time, curbing 'excess breeding' among the disadvantaged. Eugenicists convinced that nations will benefit by taking steps to ensure that future generations were bred almost entirely from the upper class of the society. 'It goes without saying that in a male-dominated society, white able-bodied, heterosexual, fertile men are the self-proclaimed norm. The overwhelming majority of people who deviate from this 'norm' are consequently labeled as 'different,' and have to carry the burden of their differences, without being granted a right to be different.'[20]

Having the social repercussions this might entail, eugenicists suggest selective reproduction as a means to enhance the overall intelligence and moral character of the population. Eugenics[21] can be broken down into: -

a) Eugenics as Social Darwinism: according to the predisposition of this group which exposes its operative theory suggests that wealth is spontaneously distributed throughout the society according to the merits of the individuals within the society. In other words, the social Darwinists believe that the wealthy are rich not because of anything but for the inherent traits that make them successful. The poor on the other hand, are said to be destined to want precisely because they are of inferior stock. Thus, in the mind of the eugenicist, any effort to promote economic justice has a dysgenic effect because it only encourages breeding among inferior types. It is this that has been objected to by adherent to some religious faith, especially the Muslims, who hold the very strong position that health and wealth are God's own and He can decide to give or deny any of these without regard to any origin or coloration.

[20] See id.

[21] See Africa 2000 infra.

b) Racial Eugenicists: the exposition of this group is more on the side of racism as seen by the antagonists. Rightly or wrongly, this sub group defines people from different regions of the world as having unique 'evolutionary characteristics', which makes one group more suitable to certain pursuits than another'. The preponderance of the conviction here is that the white has inherent characteristic that places them as 'owners', producers and lords and the other non-white races are by nature consumers, workers and slave. Under this lies the notorious 'Bell Curve' ideology.

One cannot therefore, resist drawing conclusion tending to suggest a kind of conspiracy in the way that the protagonists have explained their positions. This is because, something that appears common to the solutions suggested by both Malthusians and Eugenicists in relation to the justification for the need to control world population is to ensure that the people who control wealth and power continue to predominate and those that work for them are not allowed to grow and eventually assert their numeric superiority over those that dominate them. This may become clearer if reflection is made to the general idea of the demographic critical mass.[22] It therefore become necessary to at least draw attention to the intrinsic connection that has been raised by both the antagonists and the protagonist in this population fight to a number of issues that have bearing to human race and its existence. The range of issues includes the connection between population theories and poverty, wealth, control, racial undertones, survival, economic control and political power. It is these that provided the basis on which demographers were able to come up with another issue that make the study and the unending debate in relation to world population not only complicated but one that draws inspiration to the antagonists.

5. Demographic Principles of Critical Mass:

The critical mass theory further explains the ties between population, economic control and power shift in political control and domination. According to the demographic principle of critical mass theory, it is practically possible for the minority to control the majority and perhaps dominate the majority politically. The past experiences witnessed under the apartheid regime in South Africa and the while minority regime in Zimbabwe show a glaring example, according to the protagonists, of the hidden fear of the Europeans with respect to the positive signs (from the perspectives of the Africans) of critical mass. Giving the fertility and

[22] See generally on this Moffet, G. D., *Critical Masses: The Global Population Challenge*, 12 (1994)

mortality rates probabilities,[23] the tendency is that in a matter of years the population of the 'whites' will fall dramatically while that of the 'blacks' will, against the predispositions of the protagonists, increase out of proportion. Furthermore, it is synopsized by this principle that the more the majority grew in size in comparison to the ruling minority the harder it becomes for the minority regime to maintain its dominance and economic cum political control. The minority needs more personal and material resources to control the majority. They also had to maintain surveillance over the greater number of oppressed, exploited and angry people. But due to the fact that the dominant class has complete control over the government and its resources, the stranglehold can be sustained up to a time. The desire of the minority to hold, tenaciously to economic and political power is thus threatened in a situation where the growth is left to continue as with the passage of time, the inevitable will happen.

This demographic principle of critical mass is said to be a universally applicable principle. It has worked positively (from the view point of the Europeans this time) and was held to be one of the major factors that brought about industrialization. An instance is cited to justify this assertion taking as an example the world entire population was estimated to have been about half a billion (500,000,000) people by the year 1650. Of this number about 100 million (20%) were Europeans and the remainder represent the population of non-Europeans. By 1900 the population of the world grew four-fold to about 2 billion people. The increase is however not proportionate. During this period under review European populations increased from 100 million to 700 million. Other grew from 400 million to 1.3 billion. This translates to the non-European population growing by triple while the Europeans multiplied to fully seven times their earlier population. This accordingly means that 'European demographic ascendancy was perhaps the most significant event in recorded history. The rapid growth in European population meant that Europe had a far larger share of the total world population than before. In fact, the European land mass held far more people than any other similarly connected group of nations at the time. But more than that, it meant that there were more Europeans to build industries, to establish trade connections, to settle foreign land, and to conquer far away territories.'[24] In other words, and much more significantly, the industrial revolution, which was made possible by a growing population and larger labor force, also helped to maintain these growth rates by increasing the means of sustenance for European's expanding population. In other

[23] Id., p. 4
[24] ibid p. 6

words, population growth fuelled industrial and economic advancement, and this advancement in turn, supported still higher rates of population growth.[25]

Effectively this therefore suggests that the minority can control the majority, but it becomes progressively more costly and more risky as the gap between the size of the minority and the majority gets bigger and bigger. Ultimately, though, a point is reached when the effort becomes too expensive, burdensome and the future becomes too uncertain for the majority to remain in economic control and political power. At this point where there is too much uncertainties and unnerving fear of loosing control by the minority against the majority, the stage is now set for what is called the critical mass. Critical Mass is said to be when a 'point in time is reached where the majority will be overwhelmingly outnumbered and left with two political options. The first option was to hang on to political power until they are violently overthrown. Or, the second option was to relinquish political power to the majority and continue their dominance in the economic and policy-making sector of the political entity.[26] It is generally this fear, according to the antagonists that prompted the Western worlds' all out war and policy drive and initiatives to control world population growth. The demonstration of how this fear of demographic critical mass will become the dominant rule was directly stated to the effect that the 'abrupt and massive changes in world population distribution resulting from demographic trends of the next few decades will lead to a reshaping of world political geography whose general outline can already be foreseen. Young powers will emerge, basing their strength in large part on their population size and the stimulus it creates, and old powers will fade as their population decline.'[27]

6. The Need for a Consensus on the Issue of Population:

It is therefore not surprising to note that even as we begin the journey into the new millennium, the world is still polarized or diametrically divided on the issue of whether population is a problem or may be a problem in the first instance. Secondly, there is no uniform approach in relation to the best way to deal with world population as well as how to effectively deal with resource management, allocation and control. In the third instance, there is debate as to whether efforts should be directed at controlling world population and the most acceptable means of realizing

[25] ibid p. 7

[26] ibid, p. 5

[27] See Chesnais, Jean-Claude, *The Africanization of Europe?* The American Enterprise, May/June (1990), 24-25.

this, as well as how to fashion out a world economic system that should see through to the equitable distribution of resources and hasten technological development across the globe. It is not easy therefore to come up with a conclusive submission that the world is or is not over populated. However, there is every indication that population growth has been a problem and is a problem. This can best be seen in relation to the way that existing infrastructures in the field of education, transportation, the provision of basic necessities like water, health care facilities, food and others are being over stretched. This is more glaring in the third world or developing countries where Famine, diseases, hunger, malnutrition and social, economic and welfare problems have exposed the dangers in having too many people vying for too few facilities.

Statistics keep showing the inadequacy of all existing social, economic and welfare facilities in dealing with the population of developing countries. The spill over effect of this is the witnessing of increasing social problems of crimes, migration, and congestion as well as the over stretching of almost all the available infrastructure. According to statistics, the United States of America by 1950 accounted for 6% of world population but by the 21stC. accounts for less than 4%. Africa on the other hand, is the fastest growing continent in the world. Between 1988 and 2010, Africa's populations will more than double to 1.2 billion, about 16.6% of the world's total. Between 1982 and 2030 the total increase will be 1.1 billion. However, Nigeria[28] with an estimated 103 million people in 1986 is expected to double the size by 2009, triple by 2024, and quadruple by 2035, adding 312 million people to the world population in 50 years. By 2035 Nigeria is expected to surpass both the US and the Soviet Union block of countries to become the third largest country in the world. Additionally, Kenya, Ethiopia, Zaire, Tanzania and South Africa are likely to be among the top 25 nations in population by the year 2025.[29] The alarm this statistic raise is the adverse effect the decline in US population growth will have in relation to its power, hegemony and strategic control of world politics. According to Gregory D. Foster, 'population decline in the US and the Russia will bring about reduced military strength while population increase elsewhere will give the

[28] Fertility rate in Nigeria is put at 6.5 children per woman. In other words an average complete family in Nigeria has 6-7 children. But according to a news flash on EuroNews Network aired on September 14, 2004 at 1614 GMT, the fertility rate in the EU was 1.48, in the US it is 2.7 and in India it is 2.9 births per woman.

[29] Africa 2000\INDEX\basics.htm. See also Mumford S. D., *Population Growth Control: The Next Move is America's*, (1977).

potentials for increase military strength. Old age increase will reduce work force.'[30]

It has thus been suggested that 'perhaps the cry out for the control of the growth of world population could have been more understood, especially in the western world and recently in Africa, if the case is made that there is currently an unprecedented growth of people attempting to illegally cross boarders. This push factor of movement is, apart from being illegal, illegally motivated as a means to internationalize prostitution, smuggling, child abuse and other vices. In other parts of the globe, like Middle East and Asia, such movement could be for child labor and initiation into acts of terrorism. There is no gain saying the fact that of recent there has been noticeable and worrying increase in the mass movement of people from the developing world, especially Central and East Africa into western countries in search of job, food, shelter or better way of earning a living. Trans-boundary illegal movement of people from developing to the developed countries occur also for the purposes of seeking refuge from war, hunger, famine and other problems resultant from the fact that there are too many people contending for too few facilities in the developing countries or for the apparent collapse of the economic and political systems in these countries. This much has been revealed in 1977 in a CIA report titled 'Political Perspectives on Key Global Issues'. The contents of this document was considered as too sensitive that it was classified as secret until January 1995 when it was declassifies and released in response to a Freedom of Information Act. In the report it was stated that '...world population growth is likely to contribute, directly or indirectly, to domestic upheavals and international conflicts that could adversely affect U. S. interests. Population growth also reinforces the politicization of international economic relationship and intensifies the drive of less developed countries for redistribution of wealth and of authority in international affairs.'[31]

Even though this may be explained away by saying that this unfortunate situation is due to the failure of these countries to fashion out a viable and result oriented political and economic policy, the fact still remains that there is just too many mouths to feed with too little on the ground to feed them. There is also the dangerous tendency that people in the third world block are producing more children then their resources can provide for. Even though, and undoubtedly, there are more than enough resources in

[30] *Global Demographic Trends to the Year 2010: Implications for U.S. Security*, The Washington Quarterly.
[31] id. See also Cline, R. S., (Former Deputy Director for Intelligence at the CIA), *The Power of Nations in the 1990s: A Strategic Assessment*, (1994).

the developing countries to cater for the current population of such countries, there is no adequate investment and the needed technology to exploit and turn these resources into the need money to deal with the social problem. But, then, the argument that the more people there are the greater the chances of putting hands together to attain economic power will collapse, since despite the numeric strength of the developing countries no meaningful in-road has been gained in the area of providing basic amenities and infrastructures.

In any case, it was the worry expressed by the United States in relation to the problem of the effect of world population to its security and national interest that set the current tone for population discourse. It was this call that set the stage for the establishment of agencies and the mounting of a multi-billion dollar campaign on world population.[32] Significant in-road has been made at showing the dangers that the world is facing or may face is measures are not taken to address the issue of world population growth.

7. Initial Policy Formulations of World Population Control:

It all started in the United Sates when on August 10, 1970 President Richard M. Nixon's National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger signed a decision directives titled 'The New US Foreign Assistance Program'. This memorandum[33] spells out the main guiding principles spelling out the way and manner the US foreign policy will be administered. Significant to all the proposals contained therein was a recommendation that the US propose a United Nations study of 'World Population Problems and measures required to deal with them, as a top priority item in the Second Development Decade'.

Thereafter, and getting the go-ahead from the President, Henry Kissinger on April 24, 1974 sent to the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Agriculture, Director CIA, the Deputy Secretary of State and the Administrator of the Agency for International Development with a copy to the Chairman Joint Chief of Staff, a memorandum titled 'Implications of World Population Growth for US Security and Overseas Interest'.[34] In that memorandum it was stated that 'the President has directed a study of the impact of world population growth on the US security and overseas interests. It was therefore demanded that the study should look forward at least until the year 2000, and use several alternative reasonable

[32] For instance the US and the World Bank have so far expended more than $167 million to control birth rate in Nigeria.

[33] The National Security Decision Memorandum 76.

[34] National Security Study Memorandum 200.

projections of population growth. The requested study was to specifically 'focus on international political, security, and economic implications of population growth rather than its ecological, sociological or other aspects. It was also to include memorandum for 'dealing with population matters abroad, particularly in developing countries.[35]

After the study was completed on December 10, 1974 it was submitted as a report. This study memorandum containing 250 pages in length was tagged 'National Study Security Memorandum 200. After review Kissinger on October 26, 1975 sent a confidential White House Memorandum to the then President, Gerald Ford in which he urged the President to, among other things, issue a decision memorandum confirming the need for 'US leadership in world population matter.' On November 26, 1975, a National Security Decision Memorandum 314 was issued which endorsed both the policy recommendations in the study and those additional points recommended by Kissinger and were signed by Brent Scowcroft.[36]

It is imperative to note the general and far-reaching decisions and policy formulations that this study has in relation to the way population control assumed a defining role in US international relations thereafter. The contents of the study began to define not only the target countries the US direct its attention to, but also became instrumental to the establishment of so many international agencies funded and sustained by the US to wage war against population growth. Similarly financial aids and donor assistance began to be tied down with the desire of countries to adopt ways and means to check population growth. In the whole, the NSSM 200 has been adjudged, most especially by the critics to US initiatives and antagonists to world over population to be a complete documentation of Malthusian principles and above that in all its contents and implications, emphasis about population control was oblivious of the growth of population in the US, but was deliberately target to show its worries were directed entirely on the ways and means to curtail population control in the less developing countries only.

Notwithstanding all these assumed short falls, it is important to note that the NSSM 200 has made so many policy statements that have had so

[35] See Africa 2000/INDX/Work1.htm

[36] All these reports took several years as official documents that was closely watched and were not for public consumption. It took several years before they were declassified. The National Security Decision Memorandum 76 was declassified on Dec. 18, 1989; the April 1974 Kissinger memorandum was declassified in July 1989. An additional National Study Security Memorandum 200 a recommendation written on a White House Stationary to President Ford's Staff Secretary James Connor by William Seidman, was declassified by the White House in July 1989 and release to the public by the National Archives June 26, 1990.

much bearing as far as the dimension of world population growth control has been taking shape and the leadership role of the US in this effort. Let us mention a few of the policy formulations under the NSSM 200 in order to show the way population control has become the cynosure of world power, politics or policy and as one of the major issues that has formed the foundation of the current international drive to establish both legal and policy framework in the field of reproductive health and sexual rights.

1. According to the NSSM 200 there are two major causes for high birthrates; first, some persons do not have knowledge or access to birth control. Second, there may be 'inadequate motivation to limit fertility.[37] Therefore the study recommends that the first problem can be remedied by supply approach, which is to say, by supplying contraceptives to those who request them. It is of interest to note that there is so much at stake here. Basically the study is suggesting that there is the need to expand the horizon as far as far as providing information, education and facilities to people about the dangers inherent in an uncontrolled regime of birth of children. This will bring forth the issue of popularizing sexual health education, providing adequate information on the right to choose and above all the decision on when and when not to have children as well as the times or number of the desired children to have. It will open up all the rubric of reproductive health and sexual rights issues that we now have as defining the economic, legal and political world order.

In this respect, there have been formulated legal regime that establishes certain attainable rights to women and men under reproductive health and sexual rights especially as they affect safe motherhood an the provision of adequate, affordable and sustainable welfare and delivery services.[38] Under so many international legal instruments these rights are accorded and so many countries have expressly signified their intent to be bound by these provisions while other countries are bound to respect them and abide by them tacitly under customary international law rules. In addition there are so many consensus documents arrived at during the world population and development programs and UN international conferences affecting women that have

[37] NSSM 200, pp 6-7.

[38] For further reading in this area of study and especially the articles under various UN Conventions, European and African as well as consensus documents see Cook, R. J. and Fathalla, M. E., *Advancing Reproductive Rights Beyond Cairo and Beijing*, 22 International Family Planning Perspectives, (1996), 115.

combined to establish both the soft and hard law binding on governments to as a matter of law provide effective rules to deal with all matter relevant to child bearing and rearing.

Indeed, the mere conclusion by the study to adopt contraceptives as a means of controlling population is one approach that received objections right from the time it was made. This objection has continued to hunt whatever benefits desired by the initial formulations. In it initial observation to the likely resistance the US will face with regard to the issue of providing information and means of controlling population in the less developed countries, the study noted that 'it is clear that the availability of contraceptives services and information is not a complete answer to the population problem. In view of the importance of socio-economic factors in determining desired family size, over-all assistance strategy should increasingly, concentrate on selective policies which will contribute to population decline as well as other objectives.[39]

The study also identified 113 key countries in which 'there is special US political and strategic interest. Among these countries are for instance, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nigeria, Mexico, Indonesia, Brazil, The Philippines, Thailand, Egypt, Turkey, Ethiopia and Columbia. It was also noted that these countries should be focused on and all arrangements made to court them into the scheme that will make future relationships with the US feasible where population or agreeing to wage war against unrestricted birth control is made a government deliberate policy. It also shows that grants and financial aids to these countries will largely be determine by how far these countries go in providing necessary information in the area of some segments of reproductive health and sexual rights.

The document indicated and analyzed the implications that populations will have on the overall security, strategic and economic interests of the US. Under this the full intended impact of the study was stated in relation to the need by the US to insure population control, political domination and resource control of the less developing countries to the effect that, 'whatever may be done to guard against interruptions of supply, the US economy will require large and increasing amounts of minerals from abroad, especially from less developed countries. That fact gives the US enhanced interest in the political, economic and social

d at p. 105.

stability of the supply countries. Wherever a lessening population pressure through reduced birthrates can increase prospects of such stability, population policy[40] becomes relevant to resource supplies and to the economic interest of the United States.[41] It is therefore important to constantly keep in mind the ties that population control has on economic development and the way the developed world and the less developed world see, in a kind of diametric divide. The developed world sees population and birth control as a precondition to the attainment of economic and technological development, while the less developed world see demographic and numeric growth in population as a *sine qua none* to the attainment of political, economic and technological development. It is this line divide that has continued to put questions to the current split on the issue of world population.

4. It was also the study and the subsequent policy document that resulted in the formation and funding of multilateral international agencies and their involvement in world population and efforts at curbing the growth of birth rates globally. The US Department of State and Agency for International Development (AID) played a significant role in establishing the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNEPA). The document categorically stated the position of the US and stated its readiness to work or collaborated with other interested donor agencies, countries and organizations like the WHO, UNFPA, World Bank, UNICEF 'in other activities which could include family planning.'[42]

In the end the document advises that the President and the Secretary of States treat the subject of population growth control as a matter of urgent or 'paramount importance.'[43] And accordingly, the Presidential endorsement of the recommendations contained in the study included 'a global target of replacement fertility by the year 2000.'[44]

8. Conclusions:

It was these initial formulations that were to set the ball rolling as far as the drive to bring to surface the idea that the world population is growing at an alarming rate. And that existing resources in the world at current rate can not sustain the astronomical growth in world populations. We

[40] Population policy has been defined as a plan to manipulate the sex of particular population groups for a political purpose. See Africa 2000\index\classroom.html

[41] NSSM 200 at pp. 37, 43 44, 45.

[42] See pp 113-114

[43] ibid p. 17

[44] See the National Study Document Memorandum (NSDM) 314.

strongly feel that there is nothing wrong with any country mapping out strategies to realize its goals and in this process mount any campaign that will not only help achieve that goal, but one that will allow it to define and protect its national interest. Looking at the way that poverty, want, disease and other social ills has become trademarks of heavily populated countries, we equally feel that there is the need to embark on an international concerted effort to curb the current world population growth. This must be done by the adoption of policies that will provide relevant information about the problem and methods of dealing with, or at least curtailing the problem. Equally, in order to deal with the problem of over population growth, we subscribe to the campaign that teaches the use of birth control contraceptives and other inter uterine birth control devices as the best way to deal with the current problem of population outbursts that is almost pandemic in third world or developing countries.

Obviously, objections were raised and some resistance mounted by the less developed countries to these US policy statements and the suggested manner of dealing with the problem. Quite apart from the objection raised that there is still the insistence by the antagonists that no epistemological evidence has been adduced that empirically establish that world population is far outstripping world resources. Major objections were also raised on the issue of contraceptives and that what the world needs is not a campaign for the adoption of contraceptives but a new world economic order. Contraceptives, according to these countries in whatever form they come are seen as a problem rather than a solution. They are seen as avenues of generating market and exposing people, especially children, to illicit sexual relations. This translates to the corruption of public morality and the spread of western immorality and does not address the problems of hunger, poverty as well as western economic domination. This resistances, has dominated all the forums that have so far gathered under the several World Population Conferences. Less developed countries are calling for a new world economic order, trade balancing, campaign to eradicate other dangerous disease, debt wavers, technological transfer and making patent rules on drugs or scientific invention less rigorous to enable these countries to address development programs.

Elsewhere it has been submitted that more forceful resistance and objection to the adoption of contraceptives and abortion as a means of controlling birthrates and populations in the less developed countries were raised at all the World Population Conferences organized by the United Nations as a mean of opposing the initial formulations of the

NSSM and the World Population Program of Action (WPPA). At Bucharest for instance, there was an overwhelming rejection of the proposal to control population through the WPPA in which the US has the major input rules by some countries. This made the US government to react and give reflections on how to deal with the issue of resistance. These objections to the WPPA 'were based on demands for a 'new economic order' as the foundation for social and economic development, and also on the belief that attempts by industrialized nations to influence domestic policies were a violation of that sovereignty'. Interestingly this situation was foreseen by the NSSM and as way out it was suggested that there was the need to work with foreign governments and their leaders in a subtle way. 'The beliefs, ideologies and misconceptions displayed by many nations...indicate more forcefully than ever the need for extensive education of the leaders of many governments especially Africans and some Latin American. Approaches [for] leaders of individual countries must be designed in the light of their current beliefs to meet their special concerns.'[45]

In the end, there is now a kind of world wide acceptance that, under the international human rights regime as this affects reproductive health and sexual rights, there is right to body integrity, the right to freely decide how, when and if not to have a child. There is also the right to decide on the timing, number and spacing of children and for the governments to provide to all couples and those in need relevant information and services to enable them make an informed choice and decision on each of these issues. Governments the world over have expressly or tacitly recognize the validity of these rights, and are obligated to not only provide for their realization but to work collectively to ensure that they are enforced and adequate resources are targeted towards their realization by all.

These and other such clusters of rights are binding under the rules of international treaties especially resulting from the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the two international covenants, the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, the African Child Rights Convention, the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women, constitutional provision and the numerous Consensus Documents generated from the United Nation Population and Development Conferences as well as the other international human rights and women conferences. Safely, it can be said that problem of unrestricted population

[45] See NSSM 200 p. 96

growth, the ravages this brings to the woman who bears the children, the economic hardship and porous healthcare/delivery system of many third world countries and the abject poverty of the poor people in the third world or developing countries and the low level of development in these countries are now accepted as issues that require collective approach to deal with.

And since it is universally true that the reproductive act of sexual intercourse between the man and the woman consequently brings about siblings, the matter of how to cope or deal with population growth is a universal phenomenon that cannot be tacked in isolation. And in order to be able to deal with the population phenomena and all the reproductive health and sexual rights attached to child-bearing vis-à-vis the need to attain industrial/sustainable development, overcome maternal/infant mortality/morbidity, cure diseases associated with child bearing and rearing, there is the need to make issue that polarizes view on overpopulation, or make people highly opinionated by holding to the conviction that there is something evil, sinister, or imperialistic about the campaign to curb population, to dissipate in order to realize what is collective good for all.

In our opinion, what is collectively good is to have a manageable population, one that available structures can sustain. A realistically manageable population, in our view is a population that is not too overbearing in the resources of the family, the community and the government. Similarly, a realistically viable population, in our opinion, is one that does not depend on street begging, alms, foreign aids, assistance or bank loans from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) to survive and realize its full potentials. Therefore, regardless of how small or large the population may be, if collectively, the population can escape all these, then the society will be a better place and people will be responsible to the extent that all available resources will be harness toward self sufficiency and societal development and progression.