

POPULATION PRESSURES IN THE PHILIPPINES AND SOME ETHICAL ASPECTS OF GOVERNMENT PLANNING

by

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This paper is divided into three parts. The first discusses the recent population growth of the Philippines in general together with that of Cagayan de Oro City and Misamis Oriental in particular. The second part considers several aspects of population pressures in connection with the Philippines. And the third part then discusses some aspects of government planning with their associated ethical implications.

I

RECENT POPULATION GROWTH

The annual growth rate of the population of Misamis Oriental Province between 1948 and 1960 was only four-tenths of one per cent (.004), if the comparison is based upon the official figures of the 1948 Census and the preliminary figures of the 1960 Census. Simultaneously, according to the same sources, the population of the entire Philippines was growing at an annual rate of three and eighteen hundredths per cent (.0318) a rate almost eight times that reported for Misamis Oriental.¹

Using each set of data separately as the exclusive basis for deductions concerning the Philippine growth rate one would come to extraordinarily different conclusions. Can something have gone very wrong someplace? Is it possible that the national rate of increase be so very different from that of Misamis Oriental Province? This province, incidentally;

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led all other provinces of the Philippines in growth during the period 1939-1948 with a reported increase of 73 per cent.²

Others have asked this question, too. The result is a re-census of Misamis Oriental which is presently being taken. As readers are no doubt aware, many political disadvantages will befall Misamis Oriental unless this re-enumeration shows her February, 1960, population was actually much larger than that reported.

The writer, at least, was convinced that something was radically wrong with the reported growth rate of Misamis Oriental. Misamis women have very large families (and think nothing of bearing from eight to fifteen children). Their fertility seems to compare favorably with that of any group of women in the Philippines. To be sure migration from the province to Bukidnon, Cotabato, and Lanao del Sur had taken place, but this loss of population seemed too insignificant in numbers to explain more than a fraction of the decline in the Misamis Oriental rate of increase. In addition, the out-migration seemed to have been more than compensated for by the in-migration. Nor could epidemics explain the population deceleration. Far from getting larger, the death rate gave every appearance of having declined substantially since 1948.³

If the above mentioned premises of the present writer are granted, the Misamis anomaly must have been caused by over-enumeration in 1948, by underenumeration in 1960, or by both. The writer strongly suspects, for reasons he has discussed elsewhere,⁴ that Misamis Oriental Province was seriously over-enumerated in 1948, and that this at least partially explains the abnormal growth record of the province between the last two censuses.

Nevertheless, the writer was somewhat skeptical concerning the both the magnitudes of the growth rate reported for the Philippines as a whole for the period 1948-1960, and the crude birth rate estimated by United Nations and other demographers.⁵ Growth rates of almost 3.2 per cent per year and birth rates in the neighborhood of 50 births per thousand popu-

lation are remarkable phenomena, and the writer was not prepared to accept them without an independent check of his own. Their computation on the basis of rather abstract and complex statistical derivations rather than upon direct calculation from population bases and vital statistics data (which in the Philippines are subject to gross underreporting), raised questions about the validity of the findings. The writer thus determined to investigate the birth rates and reproduction rates of Misamis Oriental, both as a check upon the reported provincial growth rate for the period 1948-1960, and as a regional check upon the estimated national crude birth rate and the reported national growth rate for the same period.

Data from two Cagayan de Oro field studies were at hand for analysis. One of these was a rural survey of 398 families living in three different barrios. The other was a survey of 103 families living in the City poblacion. The urban data were gathered in 1958 by Mr. Antonio J. A. Pido, now with the National Science Development Board, in connection with his master's thesis at Xavier University, which was concerned with differential fertility. The rural data were collected by Xavier's Social Science Research Institute (now the Research Institute for Mindanao Culture) in 1959, undertaken in connection with research for the Community Development Research Council.⁶ Cagayan, which contains about eighteen per cent of the Misamis Oriental population and perhaps as much as thirteen per cent of its land area, seemed to constitute a good sample of Misamis Oriental Province. Most Cagayan residents were born in the Province (either within or outside the City limit) and in marital behavior seem quite similar to husbands and wives living in other parts of the Province. Therefore, the Cagayan birth and reproduction rates were considered to be representative of those for Misamis Oriental Province as a whole.

The crude birth rates estimated for Cagayan de Oro City and therefore for Misamis Oriental Province are as follows:

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Region	Crude Birth Rate per Thousand Population
Rural Cagayan	47.7
Urban Cagayan	43.7
Combined City Rate	46.2

These are high birth rates which are surpassed by few national averages. However, they cover the entire period from 1895-1959. Can Cagayan fertility have declined in recent years? When sorted, the data give no indication of such a decline. If anything, there is a slight upward trend in more recent times. The average marital birth rates for the most fertile years of life, ages 15-29, for decade-cohorts of women born from 1880 to 1930 (which correspond to cohorts of women marrying from 1895 to 1959) are as follows:

1880-1889	400.0	1910-1919	414.0
1890-1899	398.0	1920-1929	452.3
1900-1909	448.4	1930-1939	471.9

On the basis of these results, if the average crude death rate between 1948 and 1960 had been 20 deaths per thousand population (which may be too high an estimate), then Cagayan's rate of growth would be estimated at about 2.6 per cent per year.

Computation of the net reproduction rates from the Cagayan age-specific birth rates and from a model life-table (which may again have been too conservative in estimating expectation of life) will show the growth potentials inherent in the Cagayan birth and death rates.⁷

On the assumption of constant birth and death rates, a net reproduction rate shows how well one generation of women is reproduced in terms of daughters born. A rate of 1.000 indicates exact reproduction, that is, that three are neither more nor less girl babies born than in the previous generation. With this in mind, the net reproduction rates estimated for Cagayan are as follows:

Rural Cagayan	2.20
Urban Cagayan	2.04
Cagayan City	2.14

This Cagayan de Oro City rate of 2.14 means that at present each generation of Cagayan women is succeeded by a following generation of daughters somewhat more than twice as big. The large growth potentials should be evident. Visualization of these potentials may however be assisted by some international comparisons, setting forth the latest reproduction rates for several countries. While the estimated Cagayan rate was 2.14, that for Canada was 1.83, that for the United States 1.73, that for France was 1.28, and that for Japan only 0.96. Only six out of 48 countries for whom the writer was able to secure recent estimates had net reproduction rates equalling or surpassing the Cagayan rate. It may be of interest, however, to note that the highest of these considerably exceeded the rate of Cagayan. This was Costa Rica whose net reproduction rate in 1959 was estimated to be 2.69.⁸

The writer trusts that the spectre of population decline in Misamis Oriental Province has been laid to rest by these results. Cagayan de Oro City is undoubtedly quite representative of Misamis Oriental in regard to birth and death rates, although death rates may be somewhat higher in the Province outside City limits.

As for the reported pan-Philippine growth rate and the estimated national crude birth rate, the writer believes that these are supported by the results of the Cagayan studies. The small differences noted may easily be due to regional variation, sampling error, and somewhat different assumptions in the statistical models used. Further regional investigation is urged as this may reveal significant regional fluctuations, especially in the death rate and therefore in the rates of natural increase for different parts of the country.

II

SOME ASPECTS OF POPULATION PRESSURES

Having satisfied himself (and perhaps some of his readers) that the Philippines is in the fact experiencing a very high rate of population growth at the present time, the writer would now

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like to turn to a related subject, that of population pressures.

Six important encyclicals upon societal subjects have embodied the best in Catholic thought upon social questions since the inauguration of Leo XIII. Each in its own way has powerfully reminded Catholics and other men of good will that every fellow human being is one's brother in Jesus Christ and is equally the son of the same Father in heaven. These encyclicals have reiterated again and again the theme that charity and social justice call for improvement of the lot of the world's underprivileged masses, especially the lot of the depressed rural peoples.

In the Philippines, to be sure, the rural lower class does not undergo a poverty so universally grinding as that of India or continental China. Yet no one who has lived in the rural Philippines would deny that it is necessary to raise the living levels of the Filipino rural poor. In terms of the minimum and frugal "good life" which the Popes have demonstrated to be the social right of every human being, the typical rural Filipino is undernourished, undersheltered, underemployed, undereducated, and medically underprivileged.

The Philippine Government and several economically well developed friendly countries as well as private citizens and institutions are of course engaged upon large-scale development programs to ameliorate this situation. Who has not heard of the PACD, the ICA-AID, the United Nations Technical Assistance Program, The Colombo Plan, the Ford Foundation's rice studies, the P.R.R.M., as well as the extension work of such schools as Xavier University and the Los Baños Agricultural School of the University of the Philippines? However, one factor which confronts such efforts is the remarkably large population growth which presently characterizes the Philippines. Is so rapid a population growth as that of the Philippines bound to obstruct or render even useless these efforts?

Unfortunately, many factors in the situation of a developing country are not well known or well understood by scientists at the present time. For example, writers have suggested that a rapidly expanding population and the pressures it creates constitute a challenge that may be psychologically necessary for

the earlier stages of a nation's conversion from a primarily agricultural economy to a primarily industrial economy. Otherwise, runs the argument, men may not be sufficiently stimulated to work harder than necessary for the present, to take the initiative, and to undergo the sacrifices and risks required to set up basic industries.

Whether research would support this hypothesis is difficult to say. One feels an uneasy doubt that population pressures may indeed be, if not a necessary, at least a highly important socio-psychological condition for industrial "take-off," at least in some types of cultures. On the other hand, can investment capital, sufficient to maintain a constant increase in living standards up to the point of social justice, be accumulated if population growth is extremely rapid? And yet if an expanding population furnishes a psychologically necessary environment for a burgeoning industrial economy, would not a moderate growth rate of perhaps 1.5 per cent a year provide the necessary challenge without the deleterious side-effects that a much more rapid growth like that of 3.2 per cent seems likely to engender?

It seems to the writer that it would and this leads the specific question: Is the Philippines at present overpopulated?

Surely, in the Philippines there are many areas of rich land waiting for a cultivator, many rich resources waiting to be tapped, many profitable industries waiting to be developed. Surely, few would quarrel with the statement that if the Philippines could presently use all its resources as efficiently as the Netherlands has used those of her small homeland, it could support a population considerably larger than its present approximately twenty-nine million.

Yet in answering the question of overpopulation in the Philippines it does not seem to the writer that a simple negative suffices. A distinction must be made. Some countries may already have too many people for their national resources to support even if these resources should be developed to the utmost degree by the best presently available technologies. Whe-

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ther any of the world's nations are already in this class seems questionable, although India may be heading in this direction. The availability of more efficient new technologies based upon atomic power and the discovery of new kinds of resources would of course change the picture. The Philippines is evidently not overpopulated in this sense.

May not a country be overpopulated in a more relative way, however? Suppose a nation in which the masses are nearly destitute and living in sub-human environmental conditions, because of economic underdevelopment and the insufficiency of traditional agricultural methods. Suppose too that despite sincere and energetic efforts by government and other agencies to raise standards of living, economic gains are small, insufficient to get much ahead of the necessities of an expanding population, and in addition are constantly threatened by population growth. Expert opinion, with more or less qualification, seems to believe that this situation corresponds closely to that of present-day India. Cannot such a country be said to be relatively overpopulated in terms of its present development? The writer believes that it can.

Is the Philippines overpopulated in such a relative sense? Several writers would reply affirmatively without much qualification. They point to the continuing high birth rate and the downward secular trend of the death rate, and ask how the already low standards of living in the Philippines can be maintained, let alone bettered, in the face of this rising tide of population. They point to the growing number of dependents, young and old, who must be supported by the working population, to the increasing difficulties of educating the multiplying youth of the land, to present dietary insufficiencies, to increasing unemployment and underemployment, to the small per capita increase in income between 1956 and 1959, time and finally to what they consider rather impossibly high ratios of net investment to net productivity necessary in order to maintain a modest three per cent per year increase in per capita income or even to maintain the status quo.⁹

On the basis of his studies, the present writer would be

inclined to agree in a very qualified manner with these observers. However, he believes that the picture they paint is generally far too gloomy and that there is much more reason for optimism about the future than their somber commentaries would indicate.

For example, although educational programs for the country have met with serious financial difficulties from year to year, still a greater percentage of people were going to school in 1956 than were going to school in 1939 or 1948,¹⁰ and not only has the national percentage of illiteracy decreased from 51.1 per cent in 1939 to 24.7 per cent in 1957, but the relative rate of progress between 1948 and 1957 (34.7 per cent) was greater than that between 1939 and 1948 (26.0 per cent.)¹¹

As regards nutrition, the small-scale survey (189 families in two regions of the Philippines) noted by several writers allude to above, did indeed note various vitamin and mineral deficiencies in its sample, but found the total caloric intake about ninety-seven per cent adequate and the level of protein satisfactory. Too little fats were found in the diet.¹² However, readers of this report will find suggestions that most of the nutritional deficiencies could be remedied by more efficient methods of preparing the food, and better consumption of vegetables and legumes that can be raised in the home garden. Thus the dietary situation does not seem very alarming.

The present writer would also express a qualified optimism in regard to productivity, per capita income, and net domestic investment. Gross national product at constant (1955) prices increased from roughly 6,200 million pesos in 1950 to 10,797 million pesos in 1960.¹³ Despite the expanding population, per capita national income at constant (1955) prices is estimated to have increased 3.7 per cent a year from 1947 to 1959, going from P224 to P345. Although it is true that the rate of per capita income increase was smaller from 1955 to 1959, still it was one of 2.0 per cent per year.¹⁴ Thus despite heavy population increases, per capita income has in fact simultaneously increased.

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As for the difficulties in maintaining a high enough rate of net domestic investment to maintain a modest annual per capita increase in income for some time to come at least, the present writer is more sanguine than the persons mentioned previously. It is widely felt that the published national data understate the formation of capital in the Philippines. The estimated understatement for the manufacturing sector varies from ten to fifty per cent, and the official figures for investment in agriculture are also evidently too low.¹⁵ The most important source of saving in the Philippines over the last decade has been business enterprise, and profits have been good. The writer doubts that population increases will cut significantly into the profits of these wealthy segments of the economy over the next twenty years. In addition, industrial production has increased from 8 to 12 per cent a year, while agricultural production increased faster than did the population at 4 or 5 per cent a year.¹⁶ Further, both the figures for gross national product and for national income are undoubtedly underestimated. Finally, the connection between capital and output seems to have been overplayed even for developed countries. Recent analysis have found that inputs of labor and capital accounted for only a part, often only a small part, of the post-war growth of western European countries while more intangible factors like "technique," "organization," and the "human factor" played a very important role.¹⁷ Thus as time goes on, advancing skill and "know-how" will also make for increases in the national product.

The writer therefore does not believe that the possibilities of success in raising the living standards of the masses are at present gravely threatened by the population increases. Nevertheless, he believes that the chances of success would be better for raising living standards more quickly and to a higher level and for maintaining these, if the population rate of increase could be cut to two-thirds or even one-half its present size. In this very relative sense, he would say that the Philippines is overpopulated.

III

GOVERNMENT PLANNING AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

In general, what might a responsible and well-intentioned national government do to raise the living standards of its people in the face of population pressures such as have been described?

There are two main schools of thought on this subject. Most authorities take positions somewhat in between the more extreme adherents of either school.

The first school of thought grew out of the experiments and studies of agriculturalists and agricultural economists, and is characterized by a highly optimistic outlook. In the light of technologies already tested and developed as well as those expected to be soon forthcoming, proponents of this general view see almost no limits to the production of food supplies, fibres, energy sources, construction materials, and other elements to support human life that the world's resources can provide. They feel that the amazing creativity of modern science with its marvellous capabilities to synthesize products is more than able to support a world population very much larger than the present population, and at higher levels of living.

Adherents of this view therefore urge better redistribution of population in terms of world resources through large-scale international and internal migrations. They call for a more equitable sharing of the world's resources. They particularly stress the need to make the best technological knowledge available in order to develop fully the previously dormant or inefficiently operated resources of countries experiencing serious population pressures.

They are characteristically inclined to play down the dangers which others presently see in large rates of growth of world population. At times they adduce "natural laws" of population growth which purport to show that the presently high growth rates of world population cannot long continue

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and that a deceleration in population increase must soon take place. Thus they argue that no calamitous overexpansion of world population will occur so that better policies of emigration and immigration and expanded national productions will make possible the eventual solution of population pressures in particular countries.

They look with more concern upon the present population pressures of individual countries. They readily admit that individual countries may undergo severe hardships in terms of present underproduction, present inaccessibility of needed world resources, and contemporary bars to international migration. They therefore insist strongly on the necessity of bringing about a more equitable international social order.

The opposite school of thought grew out of the studies of demographers and economic planners. It is characterized by a more somber outlook on the capacity of world resources to cope with the vast numbers of people with whom the world may soon be populated unless population growth begins to decline.

This second view also emphasizes the great importance of increasing national and world productivity as rapidly as possible, of a better internal redistribution of national populations in terms of the national resources, of breaking down trade barriers and encouraging the commercial relations of the developing countries (where population pressures are often most strongly felt), of working earnestly for a more equitable sharing of the world's resources among the world's peoples, and of laboring for more generous and less discriminative immigration policies in countries which can still absorb large numbers of immigrants.

But adherents of this viewpoint differ sharply from the first school of thought in regard to the dangers of overpopulation and population pressures. They can discover no evidence of a natural law of population which providentially provides for falling birth rates as the world's populations rise towards the high water mark. While admitting the tremendous versatility of modern science to increase world production,

they point to present miseries and the almost insuperable difficulties of getting traditionally-minded people in the agricultural economy of an underdeveloped country to accept even simple technological changes, much less the latest scientific techniques. To be told, therefore, that in twenty-five or fifty years science may discover means to synthesize cheaply food enough to provide for the full nutrition needs of fifty billion people does not strike a very responsive chord in their hearts. They wish present needs to be met by more than vague hopes for the future. They are less optimistic than proponents of the first view about the possibilities of a better world redistribution of resources through the United Nations or a world federation, and more concerned with meeting the present needs of depressed populations as soon as possible.

More extreme proponents of the second school tend to make birth restriction the universal nostrum for all population pressures. Once high birth rates are brought down near those of advanced industrial countries, they believe, most of the economic difficulties of underdeveloped countries will be well on the way to solution.

More moderate adherents of the second viewpoint are, however, far from seeing in birth restriction a panacea. They point to the dangers for a nation that may ensue from a widespread conversion of its people to the practice of restrictive measures. Man has strongly selfish tendencies in his makeup and the large family is among the greatest natural means God has given man to counteract such tendencies and to build up an unselfish personality. Selflessness is not an inborn disposition, but requires repeated unselfish acts, such as those motivated by love for spouse and children, to be developed. Families with few or no children may increase the selfishness of a nation's people because such families give less occasion and motivation for sacrifice. Selfish people are less likely to sacrifice for the nation's good.

Children from large families may also be psychologically sturdier and better able to bear up under the give and take of life. Is not the danger of "spoiled" children increased in small families? It is an interesting phenomenon that neuroses and

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nervous disorders seem to have increased at the same time that restriction of birth became more widespread in the countries which presently commonly practice such restriction, while in countries where the big family is still typical, such disorders seem to be more unusual and the people more tranquil. In addition, after the custom of restricting birth, even by licit means, has become more common, will not temptations to avoid undesired births by illicit means become more vivid? Finally, after a people have become accustomed to restrict births, after a time a population decline may develop which will be exceedingly difficult to reverse, and this may seriously endanger the economic life and even the national security of the nation.

Thus moderate proponents of the second school of thought by no means consider a falling birth rate an unmixed blessing. Nevertheless, when a country's population growth is outstripping the development of its economy, they consider birth restriction a necessary, although not the principal, element in a realistic plan to raise the living standards of that people.

At this point many men of good will part company from the Catholic. Most contemporary non-Catholics, having once determined the advisability of retarding population growth in a particular country, proceed immediately to the position that artificial birth control is the best and almost necessary means to that end. By artificial birth control I mean here contraception, that is, any deliberate act which aims directly at the frustration or hindrance of the fecundity of the conjugal act, that is, which aims to deprive the conjugal act of its normal procreative quality. Such for instance would be the use of a condom or a pill to prevent fertility.

Considering the present world climate of opinion, Catholics can hardly expect to convert many of their non-Catholic friends to the Catholic point of view on artificial birth control. A more unpopular doctrine at the present time can hardly be imagined. They can, however, hope to explain the Catholic position clearly to these friends, so that it will be understood and respected even if not accepted, by non-Catholics.

First, many non-Catholics completely misunderstand the point of the Church's ban on artificial birth prevention. They think that her ban results merely from a stubborn adherence to some positive ecclesiastical law made during the Middle Ages which present conditions have rendered archaic. They think the Church could change this prohibition as easily as she has changed her laws of fasting in recent times.

The facts are otherwise. The Church has made no positive law on artificial birth control. But she realizes that such a law exists. For contraception goes directly against nature, and nature reveals the will of God when taken in totality with all its relations, and when considered in conjunction with other sources of knowing the Divine will.

Briefly, the evil which Catholics find in contraception is this. It is a contradiction to will an act whose primary natural purpose is the procreation of children, and simultaneously to will a second act to prevent this purpose from being fulfilled. Eating is good, but if someone should arrange that everything he ate went into a rubber bag, thence to be cast out, all would agree that this is against the primary natural purpose intended by God for eating and is evil. This kind of evil is intrinsic to the act itself; it is not merely due to disobedience to some positive Church law, such as the failure to fast on Good Friday. Further, the preservation of the human race is bound up with the proper performance of the conjugal act; therefore artificial birth control or contraception is not only an evil, but a gravely evil act.

Therefore, contraception will always be wrong under any circumstances. So Catholics most decisively repudiate the idea that practices of artificial birth control or pills to avoid fertility are proper means to avert the dangers of overpopulation. The principle that the end justifies the means is ignominious and harmful. No evil in the world, however great, permits usage of a sinful means to avert that evil. If that were not true, the martyrs would not have had to lay down their lives.

The Filipino soul today seems gripped by a profound new

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self-realization. It is caught up in a great search for identity, even in the midst of the impact of other cultures, with its own age-old traditions and rich cultural heritage. A problem like population growth, which touches directly upon the key institution in Filipino culture, the family, can scarcely be solved by some ready-made, pat solution imported from foreign shores, like artificial birth control. The solution, it would seem, must go much deeper and must take into account the many-sided facets of Filipino traditions and culture.

Catholics belonging to second school of thought regarding population pressures propose no such pat remedies. Knowing full well the cultural diversities of different peoples, they merely point to certain licit courses of possible action, and leave the solution for those peoples to work out according to their particular ways of life. The licit courses of action for slowing down the growth rate of a population are capable of as numerous developments as the cultures of the world, but they can be summarized under five general headings: immigration, a more widespread practice of voluntary celibacy, the delaying of marriage, and finally a more widespread practice in marriage of voluntary absolute or periodic abstinence in order to space and limit the number of children. Each will be discussed in turn.

Men of good will certainly should continue and even redouble their efforts to bring about more equitable immigration policies on the part of countries which can still absorb large numbers of immigrants. They should also labor to effectuate a more humane sharing of the world's natural resources. The present writer, however, believes that there is little realistic hope for such a sharing of resources in the near future, while emigration seems but a temporary expedient which is fraught with many grave difficulties. Natural increase is not checked by emigration, and may even be stimulated by it. Unless large-scale emigration is continued indefinitely, and this is impracticable under present world conditions, the country will soon find itself back in its previous situation of heavy population pressures.

Secondly, at present a realistic assesment of the annual capacity to absorb migrants on the part of the Western Hemisphere together with Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa places the number at about 1.7 million persons. However, Europe alone would presently like to send two million emigrants a year from her shores.¹⁸

Thirdly, migration and especially international migration has too frequently resulted in human tragedies. Population transfers look easy on paper, but they often have long-range serious effects on both the people that were moved and upon the recipient populations. Mass human suffering is the lot, too often, of the new minorities. For these reasons the writer does not look upon emigration as a satisfactory solution to population pressures, and advocates use of it only with great care and as a last resort.

A more widespread practice of voluntary celibacy. In a largely Catholic country like the Philippines, this is a real possibility. In particular, during population crises like the present, hundreds of thousands of young Filipinos cannot go to school for lack of teachers and facilities, and multitudes cannot be cared for medically for lack of personnel. At such times the ideal of consecrating one's life out of love of God to the service of one's fellow man in school or in hospitals in a religious life might well have greater appeal than in more ordinary periods. For the need of the neighbor is greater. Such an approach might be more than usually effective in the Philippines where a smaller portion of young Catholic men and women have been entering the clergy or the religious life during the past few decades than in several other Catholic countries like Ireland and France. In one of these countries, almost sixteen times as many young people per hundred thousand persons as in the Philippines were leading the religious or clerical life during the period 1959-1962.¹⁹ Both for the social and educational services freely rendered to the country, as well as for the relief from population pressures that would ensue the government might well consider what it could do to encourage the clergy and the religious orders in their work of attracting vocations. Theoretically, if the number of young Catholic Filipinos entering the clergy or religious life should increase to the level

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of the country just mentioned, the annual crude birth rate of Catholics could fall from 49 to as low as 43 births per thousand persons with no change whatsoever in the present marital behavior of married persons. And Catholics account for about 81.5 per cent of the national population.

Delayed marriage. This was the solution which another Catholic country, Ireland, utilized to solve its acute population problem of the 1840's. After the terrible potato famine when starvation, disease, and emigration had halved the Irish population of eight million persons, the Irish kept their numbers down to about four million up to the present. No one would deny that considered purely as a measure to relieve population pressures, delayed marriage has been highly successful in Ireland.

However, serious social problems have attended Ireland's custom of delayed marriage, and nobody would desire to see delay in marriage tried today in other countries with the same rigor as practised in Ireland.

However, a moderate delaying of marriage till the woman's twenty-third to twenty-fifth year probably would produce none of the harsh effects delayed marriage has caused in Ireland, and would lower the nation's crude birth rate considerably if such voluntary delaying became at all widespread. Theoretically, if Filipino women voluntarily delayed their marriage until they reached their 25th birthday, this could lower the crude birth rate from 49 to as low as 34 births per thousand persons, even if after marriage the fertility of these women continued at the same high age-specific birth rates as hitherto.²⁶

One way in which the government could encourage and persuade young men and women who are able to delay their marriages till they are twenty-five would be to set up a national development corps of volunteer workers for single young men and women — a kind of National Conservation and Development Corps for the underdeveloped rural areas of the Philippines. Public-spirited youth would be encouraged to sign up as unpaid but supported volunteers for from three to five

years of service to the country in conjunction with Community Development teams working upon agricultural, health sanitation, and other projects, in conjunction with road-building and road-surfacing programs throughout the country, in conjunction with reforestation, flood control, the development of cottage industries, and so forth. Such a development corps would effectively delay the marriage dates of the young workers (since only single persons could remain in the corps), and at the same time provide them with two causes commensurate with their sacrifice: first, the social welfare of their depressed rural fellow countrymen, and secondly, the good of the country as a whole in slowing down the rate of population growth.

Such a program is worth trying. I believe we underestimate the idealism and the willingness of young people to sacrifice for a cause they believe in. In addition, the government could appeal to other youth who do not participate in the development corps, at least to imitate, if they are able, their more public-spirited fellows in remaining single till their twenty-fifth birthday for the common good of the nation. Perhaps the program could be financed, in part at least, out of the P100,000,000 Emergency Unemployment Bill just signed by President Macapagal.

A caution is necessary. The delaying of marriage would carry for some persons a serious hazard to chastity. Therefore social pressures should not be invoked against persons who might be willing to take up and carry this burden of sacrifice.

Abstinence in marriage. Not many persons would desire, except for gravely serious reasons like danger to the wife's life if she should conceive, to practice complete abstinence for the entire time of marriage or even for periods as long as one or two years. However, very many more might be willing, for the good of the nation, in addition to valid family reasons, to make the sacrifices necessary to practice periodic abstinence or the method called "Rhythm" in order to space their children and to limit these children to four or five in number. Can Rhythm be an effective means for the slowing down of too-rapid rates

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of population growth and thus for lessening population pressures?

It seems that the answer is a clearcut "yes". First, about eighty per cent of all women have a monthly cycle regular enough to predict or ascertain the time of ovulation fairly well and therefore to make a reasonable effective use of periodic continence.²¹ Admittedly, at present the method does not at times prevent conceptions, but there is little doubt that it can be used by most couples to lessen the number of children they will have, even though an unexpected conception may occur now and then. In addition, research is being pressed on numerous fronts to increase the effectiveness of the method.

Examples of such research are studies of pills to regularize a woman's cycle, urine tests, analysis of metabolic changes, development of statistical formulae, and various color-changing tapes. Some of these latter tapes, resulting from these researches, are already being marketed and these have substantially improved the effectiveness of rhythm by showing clearly when conjugal relations may be resumed after ovulation. Speaking of Rhythm, Pope Pius XII expressed the hope that science would succeed in providing the method with a sufficiently secure basis. In view of the research now being undertaken this time may not be far off.

But is it licit to use Rhythm on a wide scale in order to solve national population pressures? There has been some question of this on the part of Catholics, and the words of Pius XII have been adduced to prove that such a usage of Rhythm would be illicit.²² However, interpretation of Pius XII's words to proscribe Rhythm as a means of easing population questions has been seriously challenged by competent theologians. The present writer believes that it may now be taken as certain in practice that the Rhythm method may be used in cases of population pressures in order to limit the number of one's children to four or five, and to space these children more in accordance with one's means.²³

If the writer's view on the liceity of Rhythm be granted.

what can the government do to slow down the national growth by means of Rhythm, and what must it avoid doing? It is convenient to consider the second part of the question first, and also to incorporate several points relating to topics previously treated.

First, the government would have absolutely no right to prevent, by social pressures or other means, the marriage of persons at any age they might choose (supposing of course freedom to marry as well as sufficient mental and physical maturity). Nor could the government attempt to prevent, by legislation or otherwise, married couples from having any number of children they might choose. The reason for this is that the family is by nature prior to the state and the state exists for the benefit of the family, not vice versa. This most intimate I-thou communion between spousal lovers is not, as regard its nature, entrance, or consummation, within the competence of the state, but belongs to the private realm of the individual. Individuals differ in their physical constitution and ideals, and the state has no right to impose demands upon them in this sacred area which in view of personal or other reasons they do not wish to undertake.

If the use of Rhythm to relieve population pressures is licit, what then would be the proper role of government as the present writer conceives it? In times of population pressure, the government would have every right to inform its people through various agencies and through the mass media of the dangers confronting the nation because of these pressures. Then through its agencies with "grass roots" representatives such as the PACD, rural health units, and the rural doctors, it could make available to its people information and advice on the effective practice of Rhythm. Perhaps special rural units might be set up to propagate this information and to advise more effectively.

In conclusion, then, a country undergoing population pressures like the Philippines, could attempt to raise the standards of living of its people and to ease the over-rapid expansion of its population by the following means: (1) by increasing the national production as rapidly as possible in consonance with

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sound planning, (2) by seeking a better internal distribution of its people throughout the country in terms of voluntary migration, (3) by striving to strengthen its commercial relations with other nations (4) by working seriously to make the world's resources more available to have-not nations by international cooperation and by laboring for more equitable immigration policies on the part of less-populated countries, (5) by praising and otherwise holding up for admiration the vocation to voluntary celibacy, (6) by advocating more responsible parenthood in line with the national situation in terms of (a) delaying marriage until the prospective bride has reached her twenty-fifth year, and (b) after marriage, by limiting the number of one's children to four or five in proportion to one's ability to support them properly. In regard to this sixth point a national development corps for single men and single women, and the dissemination of information on the Rhythm method to married couples as well as advice regarding particular problems, would undoubtedly render the policy more effective.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize that these are my personal views and therefore do not represent any official Church teaching. In a nutshell, they are a Catholic's view, not the Catholic view.

¹ Bureau of the Census and Statistics, **Census of the Philippines: 1948, III, Summary of Population**, p. 4; **Population of the Philippines by Province and Municipality, February 15, 1960** (Manila : Bureau of the Census and Statistics, November 26, 1960), pp. 1-2, 29-30.

² **Census of the Philippines: 1948.**

³ In regard to migration, the Xavier University rural survey found that 13.3 per cent of the interviewees were migrants to Cagayan barrios from another province. Of these in-migrants, 18 per cent had arrived during the decade 1940-1949, but 62 per cent during the years 1950-1959. Rather than declining, then, in-migration had substantially increased since 1948.

In regard to the secular decline of the death rates, the evidence is based upon the common opinion of local doctors and health personnel as well as upon records of the provincial hospital and the annual numbers of registered deaths in the office of the City Bureau of Health. Although deaths are undoubtedly considerably underregistered, one can reasonably presume that the proportion of registered deaths remains more or less constant from year to year, if it does not improve. For an analysis of the secular decline of death rates for the Philippines as a whole, see Basilio B. Aromin, "The Trend of Mortality in the Philippines: 1903 to 1960," *Statistical Reporter*, V, 3 (July, 1961), 1-7.

⁴ "Some Population Characteristics of Cagayan de Oro City;" (A paper delivered at the Third Annual Sociological Conference of the Philippine Sociological Society, held in Cebu City, May 30-31, 1962. (The papers of this conference are to be published in the *Philippine Sociological Review*.)

⁵ For example, see the following works: United Nations, **Population Growth and Manpower in the Philippines** (New York: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United

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Nations, 1960), pp. 3, 38-39; Edith Adams, Notes on the United Nations' Population Projections for the Philippines," p. 1, and "Estimates of the Crude Birth Rate of the Philippines by Method of "Reverse Survival," pp. 2-4 (Typed memoranda prepared for the statistical offices of the Philippine Government).

⁶ Mr. Pido's respondents were drawn by two-stage probability sampling, in which the first stage was based upon block area-sampling, and the second stage upon systematic sampling of households on the block but in such a way that the danger of systematic bias was nullified. A table of random numbers selected the respondent family in houses where more than one family lived. In the RIMCU study, the three barrios were picked purposively and represented one mountain, one inland, and one coastal barrio with varying degrees of isolation. The inland barrio was completely enumerated; in the remaining barrios, samples of 62 and 33 per cent were drawn by completely listing the households and drawing the sample units by means of a table of random numbers.

In both studies, marital birth rates by five-year age groups of married women were developed in terms of births occurring to women of the specific ages as related to the total number of person-years lived by these married women at those ages. These rates were then applied to the appropriate age groups of Misamis Oriental married women enumerated in the 1948 Census. (For the Census did not published such data for the Cagayan Municipality.) When the resulting number of expected children were related by age group of mother at birth to the number of women of all civil statuses for those age groups in the 1948 Misamis Oriental population, the estimates of particular age-specific birth rates were obtained. The crude birth rates were obtained by relating the number of expected children to the entire population of Misamis Oriental.

⁷ The model life-table employed had a life expectation at birth of 43.57 years and a death rate ($1/e$) of 22.95 deaths per thousand population. It was drawn from Vasilios G. Valaoras, "Standard Age and Sex Patterns of Mortality," *Trends and Dif-*

ferentials in Mortality (New York: Milbank Memorial Fund, 1956), p. 148, Table 3, no. 24.

⁸ **Population Index**, XXVII, 2 (April, 1961), 189-198.

⁹ For example, see Basilio B. Aromin, "The Demographic Situation in the Philippines," **Statistical Reporter**, II, 3 (July, 1958), 1-6; "Demographic Aspects of Philippine Economic Development," *Ibid.*, III, 4 (October, 1959), 11-23; "On the Population Problem in the Philippines," **Faculty Journal of the Lyceum of the Philippines**, I, 1 (December, 1961), 94-110; and Edward R. Kiunisala, "Too Many Filipinos," **Free Press**, LV, 9 (March 3, 1962), 10ss.

¹⁰ **Census of the Philippines: 1939**, II, 1, **Summary of Population, Tables 2-4**, pp. 234-36; **Census of the Philippines: 1948**, III, 1, **Summary of Population, Tables 2-4**, pp. 192-194; **Philippine Statistical Survey of Households, "Demographic and Socio-Economic Data," Philippine Statistical Survey of Households Bulletin, Series 2, Vol. I (April, 1957), Tables 10-12**, pp. 21-25.

¹¹ Angelina H. Manalo, "Measures of the Level of Literacy in the Philippines," **Statistical Reporter**, IV, 3 (July, 1960), 7-13.

¹² Conrado R. Pascual and Associates, "Nutrition Survey of 189 Households in Two Regions in the Philippines," **Statistical Reporter**, II, 1 (January, 1958), 6-18.

¹³ United Nations, **Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East: 1961** (Bangkok: Secretariat of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, 1962), 74.

¹⁴ Computations based on data from the National Income Branch, Office of Statistical Coordination and Standards, cited in Aromin, "On the Population Problem in the Philippines," p. 105. The computations of the rates of increase are those of the present writer.

¹⁵ See Benjamin Higgins, **Economic Development**, pp.

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.648ss., and Ruben Trinidad, Joint Legislative-Executive Tax Commission, as well as Richard W. Hooley **Savings and Capital Formation in Mining, 1951-1959**, all cited in **Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East: 1961**, p. 76, note 18. This note also points to underestimates in the agricultural sector.

¹⁶ **Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East: 1961**, pp. 81 and 75.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁸ Paul Ladame, **Le Role des Migrations dans le Monde Libre** (Geneva: Libraire Droz, 1958), cited in A.T. Bouscaren, "International Migration Since 1945," **Thought**, XXXVI, 142 (Autumn, 1961), 441-455.

¹⁹ There were 243 American priests, seminarians, or Brothers and 398 religious women for every 100,000 Americans, while there were 22 Filipino priests, seminarians, or Brothers and 19 religious women for every 100,000 Filipinos. Statistical data for the United States' clergy and religious were taken from the flyleaf folded in after p. 1256 of **The Official Catholic Directory: 1959** (New York: P. J. Kenedy and Son, 1959) and for Filipino clergy and religious from **Catholic Directory of the Philippines, 1962** (Manila: Catholic Trade School, n.d.), from the summary statistics following p. 728. The United States population for January 1, 1959, was taken from the estimate of the U. S. Bureau of the Census, **Current Population Estimates, Series P-25, no. 237**, Nov. 16, 1961. The Catholic population was determined by multiplying this by a factor computed from the ratio of Catholic to total population given in the **Catholic Directory**, *loc. cit.* (23.58 per cent), while the Filipino population for 1962 was estimated by using the annual growth rate, 3.18 per cent, and applying this to the February 15, 1960 base population for the time period, 1,8772 of a year. The Catholics were then determined by use of the ratio 81.5 per cent.

²⁰ This computation assumed the same age distribution of women aged 15-24 as was reported in 1948 Census, and the same

percentage of married women in each of these age groups as in 1948, if there were no delaying of marriage program. Thus the number of married females, aged 15-19, would be 217,100 and of those aged 20-24 would be 689,800 in the February 15, 1960 population. Assuming that these married females would have the same birth rates as the age-specific marital birth rates found in rural Cagayan women, 387.72 and 458.94 respectively, then the number of expected births of women aged 15-24 out of the 27,456,000 population of the 1960 Census would be 400,751. On the other hand, the expected number of births at 49 per thousand from the same Census population would be 1,345,344. Now if no woman married before age 25, the net result would be 1,345,344 — 400,751 births, or a crude birth rate equal to 34.4 births per thousand population.

²¹ John L. Thomas, S.J., "The Catholic Position on Population Control," *Catholic Mind*, LVIII, 1147 (January-February, 1960), 9; John Marshall, *Medicine and Morals* (London: Burns and Oates, 1960), p. 48.

²² See for example, Anthony F. Zimmerman, S. V. D., "Morality and the Problems of Overpopulation," *Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Convention, Catholic Theological Society of America* (New York: Catholic Theological Society of America), pp. 19-27. Incidentally, in the discussion that followed the reading of this paper, the opposite opinion was ably defended by many of the clergy present.

²³ John J. Farragher, S.J., "Notes on Moral Theology," *Theological Studies*, XXI, 4 (December, 1960), 603; John R. Connery, S.J., "Notes on Moral Theology," *Theological Studies*, XIX, 4 (December, 1958), 565-567, 569-571; *Ibid.*, XX, 4 (December, 1959), 625-626; Gerald Kelly, S. J., "Rhythm in Marriage: Duty and Idealism," *America*, LXXXVII (May 3, 1952), 128-30, *Medico-Moral Problems* (St. Louis: Catholic Hospital Association; 1958), p. 174; John J. Lynch, S.J., "Notes on Moral Theology," *Theological Studies*, XXI, 2 (June, 1960), 228-229; and Dietrich von Hildebrand, "Marriage and Overpopulation," *Thought*, XXXVI, 140 (Spring, 1961), 81-83, 92-93, 97-100. See also Paul Hilsdale, S.J., "Birth Control or Rhythm?," *America*,

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CII (November 21, 1959), 236-238; L. L. McReavy, *Clergy Review*, XLV (May, 1960), 295-300. Edward McNally, S.J., "Extent of Obligation to Conserve the Race," *American Ecclesiastical Review*, CXXXVIII (January, 1958), 24-30; this author takes a somewhat different position than Kelly and others, but his position is reconciled with that of Kelly by Connery, *Theological Studies*, XIX, 4 (December, 1958), 570.

Briefly, the present author's argument runs as follows:

1. Several competent moral theologians hold that having four or five children is in itself alone sufficient reason for the use of Rhythm to avoid having further children.

McReavy (*op. cit.*) admits the extrinsic probability of this view, disputes its theoretical foundation, but states that in the practical order such couples will seldom lack sufficient reason. He has in mind the contemporary American environment.

2. Kelly (*op. cit.*) believes that the obligation to have children should be limited to four or five children (several other theologians say less) because of the population growth of the world.

McNally (*op. cit.*) disputes Kelly's view that all couples would be excused from further propagation of children after they had borne their fourth or fifth. The obligation to have children arises from the common good and is determined by capacity to contribute. Young couples therefore would have greater obligations — beyond four or five children. Connery (*Theological Studies*, 1958, p. 570) notes that the obligation to propagate is measured by the needs of the community, not by the capacity of the contributors. Total capacity might go far beyond the needs of the community and turn the world into a slum. However, capacity should be taken into account; he believes that Kelly had vigorous young couples in mind when he limited obligation to four or five children. Persons who were older at time of marriage would probably have less obligation.

3. Connery, Lynch, Kelly, Farragher, and Von Hildebrand explicitly state their opinion that American couples would, in view of present world population pressures,

have sufficient reason for the practise of Rhythm to avoid having further children beyond a reasonable limit. Connery and Kelly, together with numerous other theologians, place this present limit at which a general excusing cause is found at four or five, or even less children. (Some say as few as two or three children.)

4. Connrey (op. cit., December, 1959, pp. 625-626) and Farraher (op. cit., December, 1960, p. 603) dispute Father Zimmerman's opinion that Pope Pius XII prescribed the use of Rhythm as a solution for population pressures, and say that although this opinion is entitled to the respect due to any competent scientist's opinion, still it has no more weight than that of a private opinion.
5. If the use of Rhythm is licit because of world population pressures in the United States, where the standard of living is much higher than in the Philippines and where no distressing population pressures are being felt, how much more is it licit in the Philippines which is growing so rapidly and whose rural masses are living in conditions of near destitution? The Philippines is not only feeling a vague uneasiness because of population pressures in the rest of the world; it is experiencing very considerable population pressures right at home due to the swift rate of increase of its own people.
6. If a people may licitly practise Rhythm within certain limits because of population pressures present in their country which constitute a threat to their temporal welfare, the government of that people may assist them to reach a better population balance by making available to them information and assistance relative to the effective practise of Rhythm. For the primary purpose of the state is to promote the temporal prosperity of its people.