

# Minorities Not Only Culprits in Population Growth

By ELEANOR NORTON

When the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future was first established, it was viewed with suspicion by many in the minority community. The thought that a group appointed by President Nixon was going to make recommendations to solve a population "problem" filled many with concern that blacks and other minorities would be viewed as the "problem."

However, those appointed to the Commission including blacks, Spanish-speaking people, and women proved themselves fiercely independent. They produced a report that obliterates the myths about minorities and population growth.

The report rejects the notion that minorities are primarily responsible for the bulk of population growth. It shows that minorities could benefit from a slower rate of total population growth. It also speaks strongly in favor of the basic personal

right to have children by choice, not chance. The report rejected all appeals that have been made to coerce people to reduce their childbearing.

The document produced by the Commission is important to all of us and deserves our attention. One of the key points made is that the nation will realize no specific benefits from continued population growth. Our population will grow by at least 50-75 million more people by the year 2000. Eventual stabilization according to the report would afford the nation a better opportunity to deal with some of its more persistent problems. However, stabilization would not guarantee solution of any of these problems. We will have to choose to make the best of the additional time in terms of allocating resources in order to solve problems of national importance.

For me the Commission's recommendations on human repro-

duction were by far the most important. The report states very strongly that minorities are not primarily responsible for the bulk of population growth. A study conducted for the Commission proves that fact.

The study showed that in 1969, among all women between the ages of 35 and 44, the Spanish-speaking, Indians and blacks together only contributed 30 percent of childbearing in excess of replacement needs. The white majority contributed the rest. Had no black or Spanish-speaking children been born in the 1960s, the population would be only 4 percent smaller than it is now.

However, another study, the National Fertility Study of 1970 showed that unwanted fertility among minorities is extremely high. This high rate of unwanted fertility represents the general exclusion of minorities from access to the economic mainstream

of American life and to basic health services.

All Commission studies indicated that families were large not because individuals preferred more children, but because of a lack of information, education, and participation in the economic mainstream of American life. This was true of families from all races.

The Commission stated that people should be able to have only as many children as they choose and recommended a policy to reduce unwanted fertility and improve the outcome of pregnancy. They urged that laws which restrict access to contraceptive information and services be abol-

ished, that the government extend its support of voluntary family planning programs, and that the government vastly increase research and development of improved methods of contraception.

All too frequently unwanted pregnancy is the result of contraceptive failure. The most effective contraceptives presently on the market are "the pill" and the intrauterine device, "IUD." There are 8 million women using the pill, and a smaller number who use the IUD. However, both of these methods have proved far from perfect.

With regard to reproduction, it's important to note that the Commission rejected all measures

which would have the effect of forcing people to reduce their childbearing. The Commission examined the various programs and tax policies, and found them all totally unacceptable. This is important to members of the minority community, because the consequences of these coercive proposals would fall most heavily on us.

The Commission was also concerned that measures which penalize childbearing ultimately affect the child more adversely than the parents. According to the report, "To penalize children in order to motivate their parents is not justifiable."

The real issue for black people

and other minorities is how to improve the quality of their lives, in other words, getting better education, jobs, and social services. We must demand the right to access to better contraceptive and to family planning services so that we can be free to have children when we want them. The ability of individuals to control their own fertility is at the root of controlling their own lives.

Eleanor Holmes Norton is chairman of the New York City Commission on Human Rights and serves as a co-chairman of the Citizens' Committee on Population and the American Future.

## Listen Up—

# Energy Conservation Methods Noted

Editor:

It is doubtful that anyone can now claim that there is not an energy shortage—if not crisis—due to the short supply of fuel. We feel that much can be achieved if everyone is aware of the seriousness of the problem and the need for voluntary action.

Wherever a person lives, there is much that a person can do to cut back on energy waste without too much discomfort. We all have become used to having a lot of unnecessary appliances and we should consider whether or not any electrical appliance needs to be turned on in the first place and if so, for how long. TV schedules could be consulted before the TV is turned on, perhaps to find that nothing is on.

Stereos can be played at levels that don't drive neighbors up the wall. Lights can be turned off whenever they are not being used (at this time, the bulb life might be considered less important than the energy wasted) and fewer lights can be used. Refrigerators can be unplugged when not in use. Thermostats, where possible, can be turned down or turned up and off when everyone is gone.

Energy is also needed to purify and heat water. Shorter, cooler showers should be considered.

When walking or bike riding to or from anywhere, it is not practical or convenient, we recommend trying to use buses or carpools. A bus can carry a large number of people and waste a lot

less fuel than would the number of cars required to carry the same number. By the same token, where buses are unavailable or inconvenient, one car can carry several people and waste less fuel than if each person takes his or her own car. Slower driving speeds will help, also. The main idea is a reversal from what we've grown used to: don't drive alone when you can ride with others; and don't ride when you can walk or use a bike.

Please call us if you have more suggestions or would like additional information.

Greg Smith, 693-4098  
Greg Johnson, 845-4079  
John Rosenbaum, 845-1830

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Editor:

In regard to the Batt Commentary, "Vote 'No' Tuesday," and have several comments to make. Several good points are brought out in the article, such as the need for increased constituency input into the selection process of appointed Senators. This has nothing to do with the amendments to be voted on today. These amendments simply provide a means for the Senate to discipline their own members. The first two amendments are nothing more than standard University policy, and should therefore be incorporated into the Student Government Constitution. The third amendment, which allows the Senate to punish its

own members, is flexible enough to allow its use as the situation arises. The Senate passed these amendments by a vote of 51-7 and I urge the students to pass them, also. The commentary should have been published early enough to allow time for replies before the voters go to the polls.

David L. White  
Student Government Treasurer

We concede to your last statement, and agree with the simple motives behind the amendments. But, students need more ways to have input into the method of replacing their own senators, as Randy Ross indicated to The Battalion Monday that he would start doing. Our opinion on the first two was given in the column earlier in the semester.

—Ed.

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Editor:

Re: Taylor Sealy on suicide. I have spent the last three weeks in one of the most interesting studies of my academic career—the study of moral issues of suicide. During this time a few things have become evident. Weakness of character is not to be considered a virtue. However, the most heinous crime in many suicides is not the one committed by the victim, but the one committed by an apathetic society. It is a society which is often completely devoid of love or sympathy for those who

are hurt, lonely, or suffering from great mental or physical anguish.

Many people who finally commit suicide have lived for long periods of time under circumstances so difficult that no one else can comprehend them. Mr. Sealy, if I were convinced that all the world was without the insight and compassion you seem to lack, there would be little hope or reason for continuing. I hope that someday you experience a severe depression or need someone when there is no one there. Perhaps your understanding and tolerance will increase.

Karen Banks

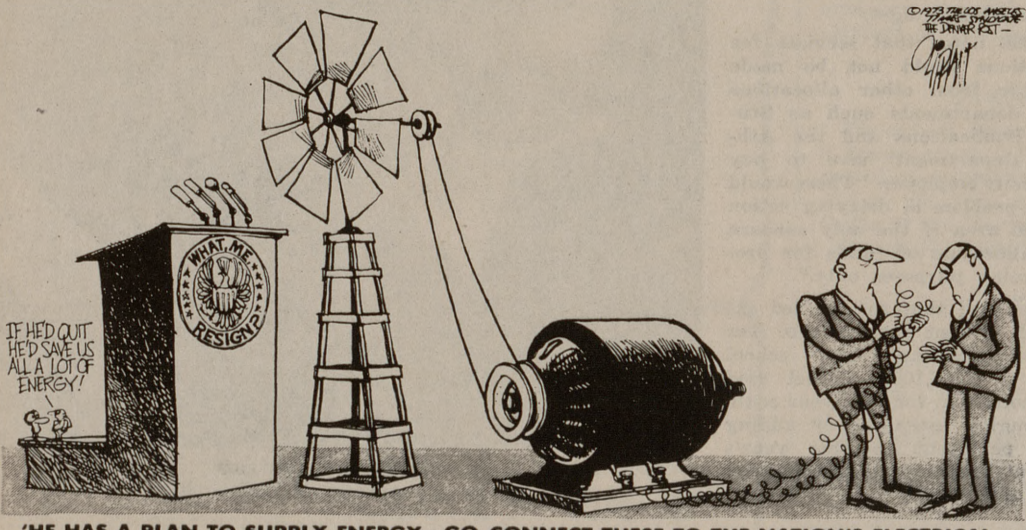
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Editor:

According to a recent article in "Newsweek" (Oct. 29), more than 250 eminent intellectuals signed a manifesto which, among other things asserted that an individual has the inalienable right to kill himself. Furthermore the article continues, that in Germany and Scandinavia, suicide is considered "as honorable a way of dying as any other."

Indeed, the world is full of mysteries to Taylor Sealy and the chief of these mysteries is that there is a "two percent." It's almost as if TAMU were some sort of university and not a religion.

Cassandra Klos '75



## Batt Commentary

# Everyone's Information

"... It is hereby declared to be the public policy of the State of Texas that all persons are, unless expressly provided by law, at all times entitled to full and complete information regarding the affairs of government and the official acts of those who represent them as public officials and employees. The people, in delegating authority, do not give their public servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know. The people insist on remaining informed so that they may retain control over the instruments they have created..."

HB No. 6, Sec. 1  
Legislature of the State of Texas, 1973

The Battalion accepts seriously its responsibility to the University and community publics to provide full and complete information pertaining to the affairs of institutional government both at TAMU and community. University officials have time again tried to avoid giving official data to the Student Government and The Battalion, usually to find students using a back door or pressure to get information in the end.

Some officials at TAMU try to treat information as if it is classified and should be shown only to the highest of University leaders. The truth of the matter is that most information wanted consists of simple routine facts, not personnel, personal, investigative material.

The Battalion has many times had great difficulty in getting information from the student services administration, especially involving police matters. With constant prodding, though, the information is generally released. The sources quite frequently want to remain anonymous, however.

House Bill 6, passed last spring by the Texas Legislature, states that all information collected, assembled or maintained by governmental bodies is public information—with certain exceptions, including "records of law enforcement agencies which are maintained for internal records and notations of such law enforcement agencies which are maintained for internal use in matters relating to law enforcement." The exception, as The Daily Texan in Austin pointed out several weeks ago, is somewhat broadly and vaguely worded.

In the words of the Texan, "Indeed, not to release the requested information would be to deny the public's right to know the activities of their government, and to undermine public confidence in the University..."

Life around A&M could be accomplished without so much of the pushing and pulling that is necessitated in the endeavor to seek information—information that many times ends up public anyway. The sooner this is realized by everyone, including students, the sooner it will be accomplished.

# The Battalion

Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editor or of the writer of the article and are not necessarily those of the University administration or the Board of Directors. The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting enterprise operated by students as a University and Community newspaper.

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Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words and are subject to being cut to that length or less if longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit such letters and does not guarantee to publish any letter. Each letter must be signed and show the address of the writer.

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# SHOULD PRESIDENT NIXON BE IMPEACHED?

## NATIONAL STUDENT OPINION POLL ON IMPEACHMENT

The following questions have been distributed by the National Student Lobby to students across the country in order to determine by a wide-spread and fair sampling the feeling about the impeachment of President Nixon. Please send your reply as soon as possible to: Communications Director, National Student Lobby, 413 East Capitol Street, S. E., Washington, D. C. 20003, or call, (202) 547-5500.

- Notwithstanding the agreement by President Nixon to submit Watergate-related tapes subpoenaed by the Court:
  - A. I feel the House Judiciary Committee should hold extensive hearings on the question of impeachment, although not necessarily vote to impeach.
  - B. I feel President Nixon should be impeached by the House.
  - C. I do not feel there is reason for House action on impeachment.
  - D. Don't know.
- In regard to potential further investigations and prosecutions arising from Watergate and the 1972 Presidential campaign:
  - A. I feel a Special Prosecutor should be appointed by President Nixon, and be removable by the President through the Acting Attorney General Robert Bork. (As proposed by President Nixon on Friday, Oct. 26, 1973)
  - B. I feel a Special Prosecutor should be appointed by Judge Sirica and the U. S. District Court, and be removable by the Court. (As proposed by American Bar Assn. on Saturday, Oct. 27, 1973 and proposed House and Senate legislation.)
  - C. Don't know.
- In regard to actions taken by the National Student Lobby:
  - A. I feel it is important for NSL to express student opinion on the impeachment issue based on the findings of this survey.
  - B. I feel NSL staff should not actively lobby, but should serve as a clearinghouse for impeachment information and local, campus activities regarding impeachment.

NAME ..... SCHOOL .....

ADDRESS .....

ZIP .....

.....I would like further information:

- .....American Civil Liberties Union handbook on local impeachment committee operations.
- .....House Judiciary Committee report on Impeachment — cost: \$5.00.
- .....Information packet — cost: \$1.00.
- .....Statement on impeachment by American Bar Association.