

file population

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR GLOBAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

May 26, 1994

Dear Ray:

It was good to see you yesterday and to have such a productive discussion about how we can clear the air and correct any misimpressions about the International Conference on Population and Development and relations with the Holy See.

As you know, in response to your advice, significant efforts were made prior to the recently concluded preparatory meeting for the ICPD to ensure that we were listening to and working closely with the Holy See on these issues. I met with as many Church leaders as I could -- including the Holy See's representative to the United Nations, representatives of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the head of the Holy See's delegation, Monsignor Martin. These were positive and productive exchanges that identified the significant common ground we share. I was pleased but not surprised that the Holy See had several excellent suggestions and viewpoints to contribute to our own approaches to this important and very serious conference. In fact, to highlight our common ground, I made a specific point of altering my opening statement at the Preparatory meeting to emphasize these areas of shared interest and emphasis, including:

- * the importance of the family - our statement emphasized the family as the basic unit of society and the need to strengthen the family, which I said is "of highest value to my government and its 260 million constituents;"

- * the importance of development - we highlighted our hope that the ICPD would help revitalize the process of development. Sustainable development, it was noted, is aimed at broad-based economic growth, environmental protection, the promotion of democracy and human enrichment, as well as social justice and improved quality of life for present and future generations;

The Honorable
Raymond Flynn,
U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See.

- * the importance of improving women's status - this is a central aim of our work and we have highlighted this on many occasions, particularly with respect to the need for enhanced educational opportunities and equity for women, but also in advancing the role of women in the development process.

- * the need to address adolescent responsibility - we emphasized for special attention promoting among youth an understanding of interpersonal relationships and the responsibility of sexuality for delaying pregnancy and encouraging the full development of young people through pursuits other than child-bearing.

In addition, these themes were underscored in the statements of the U.S. delegations, and in correspondence between Washington and the Vatican.

It is also worth noting that in private discussions with our delegation about priorities for the preparatory meeting, I made a special point of highlighting to our delegation that it was logical to expect that the media and others would probably overstate and overhype areas where many nations and the Catholic Church disagree. Given our profile as the world's superpower, I said that it was likely that some would portray these disagreements as an argument between the U.S. and the Holy See. I emphasized to our delegation that the United States has a long and productive history of working with the Catholic Church and that we are deeply indebted to the Holy See for its engagement in the promotion of sustainable development, social justice and morality all over the world. Therefore, I instructed our delegation to be respectful of and to work closely with the Holy See's delegation at all times -- emphasizing the significant areas of agreement we have with the Holy See's delegation.

No doubt, there are several issues contained in the draft Program of Action or raised by delegations in the preparatory work where our views are significantly different from those of the Holy See. As we continue to prepare for Cairo, we must realize that we may have to agree to disagree, but we also must do so with the deepest respect for reasonable differences between the responsibilities which we have in dealing with the problems that plague the world.

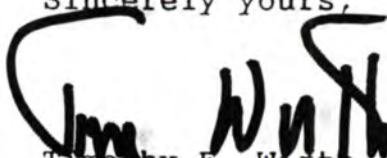
Finally, I want to tell you how much I appreciate and value your suggestion that I redouble my efforts to consult with Church leaders in the months leading up to Cairo. Pursuant to your suggestions, the attached letters to the leaders you

recommended represent a start on this commitment to broader consultations. I will do whatever I can to meet with these leaders in an effort to explain the history and background of our positions and to seek even broader agreement and understanding on all issues. I will keep you informed as these consultations progress. As always, I greatly value your professional judgement and recommendations.

In closing, Ray, I want to reiterate how important I believe close working relationships with religious leaders are on these issues. When we were in the Senate, Vice President Gore and I sought to work with religious and scientific leaders to forge partnerships on issues of sustainable development. We made great progress in developing constructive suggestions about how these communities could forge common cause on behalf of the environment, population, equity and development. These efforts and my own faith and reflection have led me to appreciate even more the obligation we have to be stewards of God's creation. And I have been emphasizing this theme in public statements for a number of years. This commitment to the moral dimensions of sustainable development is stronger than ever. That is why I welcome your suggestions and guidance and look forward to doing all that I can to help ensure that the Cairo conference is a success and that we continue to forge a strong alliance with religious leaders. Let's keep in touch!

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,



Timothy E. Wirth

Attachment:

Letters to Church Leaders

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"New Perspectives on Population: Lessons from
Cairo" by Lori S. Ashford

PRB

POPULATION BULLETIN

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New Perspectives on Population: Lessons from Cairo

by Lori S. Ashford



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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 29, 1994

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

The Benjamin Franklin Room
United States Department of State
Washington, D.C.

9:06 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Now, the next time someone asks me -- some irate, self-proclaimed expert in these matters -- (laughter) -- asks me, why in the wide world did you ever appoint Tim Wirth at the State Department, I'll say, well, I had to get Ted Turner up off the floor. (Laughter.) Didn't have much to do with public policy; couldn't stand to see a man with all that energy prone for the rest of his life. (Laughter.) Seemed like an incalculable waste of human potential. (Laughter.)

Thank you. Thank you, Ted, and thank you, Jane. When I was down in Atlanta the other day to do the global press conference, which is one of the most exciting experiences I have had as the President or, indeed, in my entire public life, and I loved meeting all the journalists from around the world and trying to answer their questions and communicating with them. When it was over, I got a handwritten note from Jane Fonda that said, well, you did a pretty good job on that, but don't forget about population. (Laughter and applause.) It was more formal, more polite, but that is the distilled essence of the letter that I got. (Laughter.)

So for both of them, I thank them for being here, although I do believe being on a stream in Montana is a way of supporting sustainable development that all of us could appreciate.

I want to thank, also, Dr. Bruce Alberts and the staff at the National Academy of Sciences; the Shorenstein Barone Center of the Kennedy School, and the Pew Global Stewardship Initiative for this event. And I do want to say a special word of thanks to Tim Wirth. All of you who care passionately about this issue know how well he has done; what a great advocate he has been for bringing the world's attention to the kinds of challenges that will command all of us for decades to come. It's not always easy, and it's now almost become trite to say that anyone who wants to truly change things has to be willing to be misunderstood. And sometimes I think Tim is competing with me for first in line on that subject. (Laughter.) But the country is in your debt, sir, and we thank you very much. (Applause.)

I've been trying to prepare to go to the G-7 meeting in Naples. And I've been working on this organization for the last, well, year and a half -- as long as I've been in office -- to try to first get them to focus on global growth in the short run, about what we can do in our nations and together; and then to think about what the world will look like in the next century and what we must do. And I must tell you, I am of two minds. I am so happy and proud to be going there, basically to say that what we agreed to do is working; in the near-term, it is clearly working.

MORE

The United States has 40 percent of the gross domestic product of the G-7. But in the last year, we've had 75 percent of the growth, almost 100 percent of the jobs, twice the investment rate, twice the export increase rate, the highest rate of productivity growth. We've got the second lowest deficit; next year we'll have the lowest deficit of all of the G-7 countries. These things are heartening to me. And as a group, our economy is in the best shape it's been in in four years. There is a sense that we're working together, and that our nation is fortunate enough to lead the way.

But when you look at the long-run trends that are going on around the world -- you read articles like Robert Kaplan's article in The Atlantic a couple of months ago that some say it's too dour -- still, if you really look at what is going on, you could visualize a world in which a few million of us live in such opulence we could all be starring on nighttime soaps. And the rest of us look like we're in one of those Mel Gibson "Road Warrior" movies.

And I was so gripped by many things that were in that article, and by the more academic treatment of the same subject by Professor Homer Dixon. And I keep trying to imagine what it's going to be like to bring children into this world in this country, or that one, or the other. That is really what we are forced to come to grips with. And when I think about it, my mind starts bursting in those ways that some people say are undisciplined, but I think are productive. (Laughter and applause.)

If you look at the landscape of the future and you say, we have to strengthen the families of the globe; we have to encourage equitable and strong growth; we have to provide basic health care; we have to stop AIDS from spreading; we have to develop water supplies and improve agricultural yields and stem the flow of refugees and protect the environment, and on and on and on -- it gives you a headache. And of course, on that list, you have to say, if you look at the numbers, you must reduce the rate of population growth.

Tim was talking about Haiti. My daughter and I once were talking about Haiti a few months ago, and I was telling her about how her mother and I had gone to Haiti once many years ago, shortly after we married, and what sadness and hope I had seen there at the same time, and what had happened since then. And she said to me, I know all that, Dad, because I've seen aerial photographs from in space. And if you look at the island, you can see where the Dominican Republic ends and where Haiti begins. And there couldn't be all that environmental destruction without all those other problems you talked about. It was a stunning thing from the perspective of an American schoolchild that sort of wraps all this up.

I say that to make this point: We have to be disciplined in saying, well, all right, how much time and how much money and how much energy have we got; and we have to order our priorities. But we cannot be naive enough to think that it is so easily to isolate one of these issues as opposed to another, that there is some silver bullet that solves the future of the world.

If you look at the rate at which natural resources are disappearing, and you look at the rate at which the gap between rich and poor is growing, if you look at the fact that the world's population has doubled since only 74 nations met in Rome 40 years ago, it is clear that we need a comprehensive approach to the world's future. We call it under the buzzword of sustainable development, I guess, but there is no way that we can approach tomorrow unless we at least are mindful of our common responsibilities in all these areas.

During the nine days of the upcoming Cairb conference, more than two million people will enter our world. More than two

million new babies will be born into a world in which one-third of our children are already hungry, two of every five people on Earth lack basic sanitation, and large parts of the world exist with only one doctor for every 35,000 or 40,000 people. Reversing these policies will require innovation and commitment and a determination to do what can be done over a long period of time, while all of us around the world are busy with our own business within our borders.

It will require us to be willing to think anew about the relationship of human development to what is going on in all of these nations; to cast aside a lot of our ideas in the past -- when it was always tempting to believe that there was one single thing we could do, some silver bullet, that would make everything all right.

To bring about shared prosperity, as Professor Homer Dixon has written, the nations of the world simply must move forward on many fronts at one time. Reducing population growth without providing economic opportunity won't work. Without education, it's hard to imagine how basic health care will ever take hold. Ignored, these challenges will continue to divide people from one another. We simply have to solve these problems together; both the problems together, and together as the people of the world.

I'm really proud of the fact that the G-7 has agreed to address some of these issues in a serious way this week in Naples. We're going to talk about what we can do within the G-7 to promote not just growth, but more jobs -- because a lot of the wealthy countries are finding they can't create jobs even when they grow their economy. And then, when they can't do that, they lose the constituency at home to engage the rest of the world.

We're going to talk about how we build an economic infrastructure for the 21st century. What's this new world trade organization that we create with GATT going to look like? And what should the World Bank and the IMF do? We're also going to talk about how we can help economies in transition, like the states of the former Soviet Union, and what we can do with the economies that are not in transition or, if anything, are going the wrong way, to address our common responsibilities.

This is quite a unique thing, really, for the world's advanced nations. And I'm quite pleased that, with all the economic problems that exist in many of these countries, they are willing to have a serious look at where we should be 10 or 20 years from now -- far beyond the election prospects of all the world leaders who will be there.

As we head for the Cairo conference, I think that same approach has to guide us. The policies we promote must be based on enduring values -- promoting stronger families, having more responsibility from individual citizens, respecting human rights, deepening the bonds of community. Here at home and around the globe, that's where the future lies, beginning with our families. When they're whole and they function, families nurture and care for us. They provide role models. They communicate values and enable people to live together in peace and to work together for common objectives. Therefore, that is the most important thing we can do.

Since the beginning of this administration, we have worked to promote policies that would permit families to grow in strength at home and abroad. I reversed the so-called Mexico City policy because I thought that doctors and medical workers around the world should be able to really work on family planning and provide a full range of family planning information. (Applause.)

Since then, we have increased by about 50 percent, at a very tough budget time, the Agency for International Development's budget for international family planning and support services. To

bolster families here at home, we passed a big increase in the earned income tax credit to help keep 15 million working families off welfare, out of poverty and in the work force. We increased Head Start availability and nutrition programs to hundreds of thousands of children; cracked down on delinquent child support payments; increased immunization funds so that we can increase by literally more than a million the number of children who are immunized.

We're working to reduce out-of-wedlock and teen births. Through the Family and Medical Leave Act, we're working to make it possible for people to be successful workers and successful parents -- a big issue everywhere in the world now, where more and more parents must work. In any society which forces people to choose, we are doomed to failure. If people have no option to work, and we all need people to continue to bear children, surely all of our parents must be successful workers, and our workers must be able to succeed as parents.

Our population policy is rooted in the idea that the family should be at the center of all of our objectives. Therefore, there must be a support for the concept of responsibility -- of parents to their children, of men and women to one another, and of our current generation to future generations.

Progress brings freedom; freedom requires more disciplined responsibility. And we must teach our young people to choose wisely, and tell them that their choices must include abstinence. Our policy has always been rooted in the ethical principles of compassion and justice and respect for human rights. We have supported every individual's dignity and worth. And we will continue to oppose and to condemn all forms of coercion in family planning. (Applause.)

Helping to translate these principles into reality is the charge that the Vice President will take to Cairo in September. No one is better suited to this task than he is. He has shown his commitment to these long-term challenges, and he has been thinking in large ways about them long before they were politically unpopular, or even the source of much current discussion.

In Cairo, we'll join the international community in pursuing a new plan of action to attack the population problem as part of the larger issue of sustainable development. At the top of our agenda will be active support for efforts to invest in the women of the world. (Applause.) Maybe over the long run, maybe the most important thing that Cairo policy will call for is that every nation make an effort to educate its children on an equal basis, to put an end to the widespread practice of withdrawing girls from school and forcing them to go to work before boys do.

To ensure that nations can develop at a more rapid pace, it will call on each of us to recognize women's work and development, and to engage them fully in the work force. It will help to give women the full rights of citizenship and to end discrimination which exists still nearly everywhere and slows progress wherever it exists.

At Cairo, the United States will also join the international community in launching new, high-quality, voluntary family planning and reproductive health programs. Our goal is to make these programs available to every citizen in the world by early in the next century. Parents must have the right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children.

Now, I want to be clear about this. Contrary to some assertions, we do not support abortion as a method of family planning. We respect, however, the diversity of national laws, except we do oppose coercion wherever it exists. Our own policy in the United States is that this should be a matter of personal choice,

not public dictation. (Applause.) And as I have said many times, that abortion should be safe, legal and rare.

In other countries where it does exist, we believe safety is an important issue. And if you look at the mortality figures, it is hard to turn away from that issue. We also believe that providing women with the means to prevent unwanted pregnancy will do more than anything else to reduce abortion. (Applause.)

Finally, let me say, we must take to Cairo the same basic commitment to provide health care for every citizen of the world that we have brought to the public debate here in America. (Applause.) I must say that there is less disagreement among the representatives of the 174 countries going to Cairo than there is among the 535 members of Congress. (Laughter.) Maybe we can bring the spirit back home.

Experience shows that investing in maternal health, prenatal services, preventive care for children, does not only save lives, it eventually gives people the confidence they need to know that their children will survive. And that changes all kinds of attitudes that affect the way children are raised. Every country has committed itself to improving the health of women and children. And everyone that has really done that has seen a decline in population growth and a rise in prosperity.

The Cairo conference, therefore, can do a great deal to advance our vision of sustainable development and stabilized population growth, to help us fulfill a vision of a world of intact families in which every member is cherished; a world that has the wisdom and the strength to tackle challenges head on, instead of to talk about them and use words to divide people so they don't really address them; a world that will lead to equal opportunity and shared prosperity.

When President Roosevelt died in 1945, there was a typed manuscript of his last speech which was found with just a single sentence written in his own hand. This was the last sentence of the last speech that Franklin Roosevelt had written -- one that he never got to give. His handwritten sentence said, "The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today. Let us move forward with strong and active faith." In the face of so many seemingly intractable problems, it is certainly tempting to let those doubts take control.

But I think those of you here tonight believe as I do that we can, instead, search for and find solutions that will help generations yet to come. President Roosevelt governed at a time when doubt was a luxury the American people could not afford. I say to you tonight, doubt is a luxury the world can no longer afford.

I commend you for your compassion and your commitment. I urge you to turn this faith into action and to help me to do my job to do the same.

Thank you very much.

END

9:36 P.M. EDT

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United Nations Population Fund -

Consensus and Progress

Hillary Rodham Clinton Addresses the Hague Forum

The Hague, Netherlands February 1999

Consensus and Progress

**Hillary Rodham Clinton
Addresses
The Hague Forum**

**The Hague, Netherlands
February 1999**

Sponsored by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) as part of the five-year review and appraisal of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action.