

# Yale's Prof. Paul Kennedy catalyzes new malthusian offensive

by Mark Burdman

A qualitative new phase in the Anglo-American establishment elites' drive to impose malthusian population-reduction measures in the southern hemisphere has been ushered in with the February 1993 publication of the latest book by British historian Paul Kennedy, *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Random House, 1993). Kennedy has introduced a conception that might be called "malthusian geopolitics," or perhaps "geopolitical malthusianism," in which global political and economic relations are seen as being defined by the "threat" posed by "rapid population growth" in the developing sector nations. Kennedy, who is the director of the International Security Program at Yale University in the United States, has defined a conceptual paradigm around which the liberal establishment is rallying, using the book as a pretext to stage a new "debate" about which measures might best achieve their goal of reducing populations in the non-white areas of the world.

## A new Thomas Malthus

Writing in the Feb. 14 *New York Times* book review section, U.S. liberal economist-ecologist Robert Heilbroner stated: "Inevitably, Mr. Kennedy's book will be compared to Thomas Malthus's famous essays on population," which Malthus began writing in 1798.

Kennedy had earlier become widely known for his book, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*. This put forward the view that the United States was heading down the same path of decline as had imperial Hapsburg Spain in the 17th century, ostensibly because it was suffering from a phenomenon known as "imperial overstretch," in which the domestic economy was being strained to the breaking-point by assuming the military and related burdens of a worldwide extension of power. While that book made some sobering judgments and diagnoses about the state of affairs in the United States, Kennedy displayed little understanding of how the processes of physical economy work, and what might be done to regenerate the American economy as it entered the 1990s. He did, however, accumulate a great deal of historical data, and demonstrate a capability for sensing which way certain trends in thinking were developing in the United States.

From early excerpted versions of Kennedy's new book, it is clear that Kennedy has collected piles of facts and foot-

notes to back them up, but that his powers of judgment and understanding of scientific reality are terribly flawed. Here even more than in his earlier work, Kennedy has revealed his penchant for adapting his historical work to trendy assumptions.

## Does Islam lead to global warming?

Kennedy premises his neo-malthusian argument on acceptance of the fraud of so-called "global warming." He writes: "Whereas birthrates in richer societies plunge well below the rates that would replace their population, poorer countries are experiencing a population explosion that may double or even treble their numbers over the next few decades. As these fast-swelling populations press upon the surrounding forests, grazing lands, and water supplies, they inflict dreadful damage upon local environments and may also be contributing to that process of global warming first created by the industrialization of the North a century and a half ago."

As *EIR* has repeatedly documented, with input from leading scientists around the world, there is no proof whatsoever of the phenomenon of "global warming," and certainly no causal link with "the industrialization of the North a century and a half ago."

Kennedy's copious use of threatening adjectives ("fast-swelling," "dreadful") and verbs ("press," "inflict") sets the stage for his mode of analysis. So, he places the entire continent of Africa into the category of a basket case, with population growth allegedly raging out of control. His only qualifier is that AIDS *might* substantially reduce the continent's population, but it is hard to figure out where "objective analysis" ends and a macabre kind of wishful thinking begins.

Likewise, tailoring himself to the prevailing portrayal of the Arab-Islamic world as the new "enemy image" of the western powers, Kennedy discovers an ominous demographic threat from that direction: "There is, moreover, little likelihood that population growth will fall in the near future. Since infant mortality rates in many Muslim countries are still high, further improvements in prenatal care will produce rises in the numbers surviving, as is happening in the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia. . . . As elsewhere, politics intrudes: many regimes are deliberately encouraging women to have large

families, arguing that this adds to the country's military strength. 'Bear a child,' posters in Iraq proclaim, 'and you pierce an arrow in the enemy's eye.' Countries such as Iraq and Libya offer many incentives for larger families."

Indeed, "politics intrudes," but in this case from the side of the author. Strangely, Kennedy has apparently had a sudden bout of amnesia about the Gulf war, which has helped to significantly reduce the threat from "Iraqi children," since tens, if not hundreds of thousands of them were killed or irreversibly handicapped, either during the war or by the effects of the sanctions which have gone on unabated from autumn 1990 until today. Oddly enough, Kennedy himself had published some cogent critiques of the Gulf war during 1990-91. Is it amnesia, or has he decided that wars like that against Iraq are effective in reducing population? Is that the real content, albeit unstated, of his new brand of malthusian geopolitics?

Kennedy had displayed a similar ability to be less than faithful to the truth at the annual Davos "World Economic Forum" in January. Stressing that "the single greatest challenge in the coming period will be the expected doubling of the world population from some 5 billion to about 10 billion over the next decade in the food-deficit countries of China, Africa, Asia, and Latin America," he forecast social upheavals and "many Somalias" resulting from this "excessive" population growth. He claimed that the problem was worsened by the "unfulfillable" demands created by Third World populations watching American such TV shows as "Dallas" on CNN. The only solution? Substantial economic "sacrifice" and active population control measures. For his European audience, Kennedy insisted that the number-one agenda item for Europe in the coming two decades would be population growth in North Africa.

Leaving aside the contention that Third World populations have nothing better to do than to feel envy for the degenerates on "Dallas," Kennedy's Davos contribution was plagued by a distortion of reality that has become all-too-accepted: that there is a North Africa "demographic threat." According to leading French demographer Prof. Youssef Courbage of the French National Institute for Democratic Studies in a speech last Nov. 28, the United Nations has systematically distorted the potential population figures for the North African countries by overestimating the fertility rates of Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, rates which in fact have been falling rapidly. As a result, the number of people that these countries will have midway into the next century has been greatly overstated, according to Courbage—whose findings were certainly available to Kennedy before he spoke in Davos.

### **Repressive population policies**

But truth is one thing, and establishment policy is another. Just days after the book's publication in the United States, establishment commentators began rallying behind its thesis.

*New York Times* commentator Anthony Lewis, in an article in the Feb. 20 *International Herald Tribune*, wrote that Kennedy's work must necessarily reanimate a push for population control and help bring the United States back into supporting such programs, following the Reagan-Bush administrations' cutoff of U.S. support. Wrote Lewis: "Here is a problem that President Clinton can address quickly. He has ended the Reagan-Bush distortions of domestic policy on birth-related matters. The need for change in foreign policy is even more urgent: the need to face a reality more menacing in the long run than just about any on earth." Lewis lauded a recent article in the Council on Foreign Relations' *Foreign Affairs* magazine by Michael S. Teitelbaum, attacking the "self-inflicted blindness" of the United States under the past years' Republican administrations in refusing to back population-control programs.

The same day's *Daily Telegraph* of London ran the banner headline, "Bangladesh Population Could Equal that of U.S.": British Professor Issues a Doom-Laden Warning to Whole World." The paper stated: "In pondering the future in the countdown to the year 2001, Professor Kennedy begins with the continuing, accelerating population explosion and the key point that it is concentrated almost entirely in the Third World. In the next 30 years, world population is set to rise from 5 billion to 8 billion; 95% of the increase will take place in the Third World. The population of Bangladesh may equal that of today's United States. This offers the possibility of much of the world living as the Haitians do today. But it will not be a problem kept safely beyond the theoretical borders of the First World. Rather, argues Professor Kennedy, world demographics will be the cauldron from which pressures arise on every aspect of the developed world's coming struggle to maintain its civilization. These pressures will include regional conflicts, unprecedented migration, economic upheaval, and accelerating environmental damage."

Some commentators are insisting that Kennedy does not go *far enough* in coming up with draconian measures in response to the problems he identifies. In the *New York Times* review, Heilbroner expressed anxiety that Kennedy lacks "the willingness to face up to the severity of the challenges, in terms not of the damage they are likely to inflict but of the full measure of the social and political remedies they may require. . . . What form of political leadership will suffice to halt the juggernauts of demographic, economic and ecological change? Can demographic explosions be halted without recourse to severe, even repressive population policies? . . . Can an allocation of carbon emission rights be instituted or enforced without military force? . . . To complete this malthusian inquiry requires a degree of intellectual fearlessness equal to that which emboldened Malthus himself, a God-fearing clergyman, to argue against charity because it was a cause of population growth and thus of human misery."