

Kissinger's NSSM-200 policy of genocide

by Joseph Brewda

On Dec. 10, 1974, the U.S. National Security Council under the direction of Henry Kissinger prepared a then-classified 200-page study entitled "National Security Study Memorandum 200: Implications of Worldwide Population Growth for U.S. Security and Overseas Interests."

The study was adopted as U.S. policy in November 1975, and outlines a covert plan to be implemented over generations which would lower the population growth rate throughout the former colonial sector. Contrary to public propaganda, the study argues that population growth in former colonies would *increase* the political, economic, and military strength of those former colonies.

NSSM 200 focuses on 13 "key countries" where there is a "special U.S. political and strategic interest" which requires imposing a policy of population control or reduction, precisely in order to prevent those countries from becoming more powerful.

These countries are: India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nigeria, Mexico, Indonesia, Brazil, the Philippines, Thailand, Egypt, Turkey, Ethiopia, and Colombia. The study stresses that even if population reduction programs are put in place there, "population growth rates are likely to increase appreciably before they begin to decline." Therefore these countries will become more important unless other factors intervene.

The hit list

For example:

Nigeria: "Nigeria falls into this category. Already the most populous country on the continent, with an estimated 55 million people in 1970, Nigeria's population by the end of this century is projected to number 135 million. This suggests a growing political and strategic role for Nigeria, at least in Africa south of the Sahara."

Egypt: "The large and increasing size of Egypt's population is, and will remain for many years, an important consideration in the formulation of many foreign and domestic policies not only of Egypt but also of neighboring countries."

Brazil: "Brazil clearly dominated the continent demographically." The study warns of a "growing power status for Brazil in Latin America and on the world scene over the next 25 years."

Kissinger's fears

Among Kissinger's fears was the fear that leaders of underdeveloped countries might realize that population reduction programs are intended to undermine their development potential:

"There is also the danger that some LDC [Lesser Developed Countries] leaders will see developed country pressures for family planning as a form of economic or racial imperialism; this could well create a serious backlash. . . . It is vital that the effort to develop and strengthen a commitment on the part of the LDC leaders not be seen by them as an industrialized country policy to keep their strength down or to reserve resources for use by 'rich' countries. Development of such a perception could create a serious backlash adverse to the cause of population stability. . . ."

"The U.S. can help to minimize charges of an imperialist motivation behind its support of population activities by repeatedly asserting that such support derives from a concern with: (a) the right of the individual to determine freely and responsibly their number and spacing of children . . . and (b) the fundamental social and economic development of poor countries. . . ."

"Beyond seeking to reach and influence national leaders, improved worldwide support for population-related efforts should be sought through increased emphasis on mass media and other population education and motivation programs by the U.N., USIA [U.S. Information Agency], and USAID [U.S. Agency for International Development]. We should give higher priorities in our information programs worldwide for this area and consider expansion of collaborative arrangements with multilateral institutions in population education programs."

Food as a weapon

While Kissinger thought such efforts might be effective, he also outlined steps to force countries to adopt population reduction measures if persuasion proved ineffective. The primary weapon seized upon was restricting food aid.

"There is also some established precedent for taking account of family planning performance in appraisal of assistance requirements by AID and consultative groups. Since population growth is a major determinant of increases in food demand, allocation of scarce PL 480 resources should take account of what steps a country is taking in population control as well as food production. In these sensitive relations, however, it is important in style as well as substance to avoid the appearance of coercion. . . ."

"Mandatory programs may be needed . . . we should be considering these possibilities now. . . . Will we be forced to make choices as to whom we can reasonably assist, and if so, should population efforts be a criterion for such assistance? . . . Is the U.S. prepared to accept food rationing to help people who can't/won't control their population growth?"