
Interview



Part II: Stephen Mumford on the American Church

Below is the second and final part of an interview with Stephen Mumford of the International Fertility Research Program in North Carolina, conducted on Nov. 6 by *EIR*'s European Editor, Vivian Freyre Zoakos.

Mumford, the author of an article in the January-February issue of the *Humanist* magazine castigating the Vatican's opposition to population-reduction policies, was identified by *EIR* founder Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., in a Nov. 17, 1981 *EIR* article titled "The Jesuits Charge that LaRouche Is 'An Agent of the Vatican,' as a spokesman for both the schismatics within the Roman Catholic Church who seek to destroy the Augustinian commitment to science and progress, and for their secular counterparts who drafted the *Global 2000 Report/Global Future Report* under the Carter administration, advocating reduction of the world population by some 2 billion people by the turn of the century.

Those circles, including Mumford, wrote LaRouche, sincerely but wrongly view him as an agent of the Vatican, out of wishful thinking that such a characterization would weaken LaRouche's credibility.

In the first part of the interview, Mumford stressed his belief that "the American Church must break away from the Roman Church, and with this break will come a sharp decrease in power of the central Church. . . . "I don't think there's any other activity coming under way that is leading more to schism than the Church's opposition to this *Global 2000 Report*." He defends the *Global 2000 Report* as a scientifically based document, and cites his own book, *Population Growth Control: The Next Move is America's*, as an elaboration of his view that world population growth is a national-security threat to the United States.

Zoakos: Returning to the Church for a moment: one comment I wanted to make is that I would like to commend you on the fact that you were able to zero in on the Augustinian tradition as representing the kind of thinking which is the stumbling block to the success of

the population-control proposals. That is the kind of historical depth of thinking that we find very seldom, except among people who are elites in one form or another. Would you comment on how you zeroed in on the Augustinian tradition and the implications of that?

Mumford: Well, I looked for what was inhibiting the birth-control efforts. I looked at many, many different factors over several years, and ultimately I zeroed in on this. I see nothing else having anything like the same impact that this tradition of the Church is having on population-growth issues.

Zoakos: Do you see that tradition as being alive—and if so where—within the American Church?

Mumford: I think that certainly it is alive within the conservative leadership of the American Church, very much so. I think this fanaticism on the part of the ultra-conservative leadership threatens U.S. and global security. Religious fanaticism drives the entire anti-abortion movement. The energy and organization and direction of this movement is derived from religious fanaticism. Notice I said movement. Not all people who are anti-abortion are religious fanatics, but most people who are anti-abortion gain considerable reinforcement from the religious fanatics who lead the movement. Last week I received a memo from another population organization which indicated that population organizations were being infiltrated by the Church for certain purposes. This is religious fanaticism. There is no difference between these fanatics and religious fanatics in Iran, and Egypt, and Saudi Arabia.

Zoakos: I have seen you mention Father Andrew Greeley, I believe in the same *Humanist* piece where you discuss Father Murphy. I have been reading some of Father Greeley's writings lately. First, let me ask if you agree with the views of Father Greeley? I know you share similar concerns.

Mumford: Yes.

Zoakos: Well, I think there are some very shocking moral questions that he raises. I know in one of his books, he talks about the need for priests to be the erotic symbol of the community, and takes off from there. Also, he discusses the Virgin Mary as a sex symbol. I bring this up, because you were talking about religious fanaticism from the conservative side, but, looking at the liberal side, tell me what you think of this type of component morally? Let me add that—as you must know better than I, since you have cited him—I am not putting words into Father Greeley's mouth when I say this. He is quite explicit on all this.

Mumford: I tell you, I haven't read all of Father Greeley's work. He has published 80 books and I've only read a couple of them. I've read other articles that he's written, but I would not want to make any generalizations on his work, because I'm certainly not familiar enough with it to do so.

Zoakos: What about your own work, Mr. Mumford? What do you do to realize your concerns in these matters? What kind of work is the *Humanist* itself involved in, as well as yourself as an individual?

Mumford: Let me first tell you that I was invited by the *Humanist* magazine to publish this report there when Georgetown University elected not to publish it. I do not claim to be a humanist. I'm a rather inactive Methodist and have been for years.

Zoakos: What, then, properly do you consider your work to be?

Mumford: I work in an organization that evaluates new and improved contraceptive technologies.

Zoakos: Which is something very much related to the types of things you are talking about in your writings, it seems to me. Correct?

Mumford: It's related, but rather distantly.

Zoakos: Do you, for example, maintain connections either by attending public forums or seminars, or through private correspondence, or whatever, with Catholic circles in the United States?

Mumford: Yes, but on a very limited basis.

Zoakos: Presumably these being circles which share your point of view?

Mumford: That's right.

Zoakos: Then let me ask you something as an insider in this. How do you see the schism developing in the Church, and how do you gauge the chances of such a thing occurring?

Mumford: I think there is virtually a 100 percent chance it will occur. It's still unclear to me what the mechanics will be, but I'm convinced—from studying this issue for

a number of years—that American Catholics are divided into two groups. In one group you have about 50 million intellectually honest Catholics who think very much like I do. Then, in the other group, you have a couple of million who tend to believe in infallibility and/or are intellectually dishonest, and unfortunately, at this point, the conservative leadership of the Church finds itself very much in this latter group. I have seen signs already that this schismatic movement is taking hold.

Zoakos: What kinds of signs are these?

Mumford: Articles, primarily, and discussions with Catholics. I think it's a matter of time, I think it will move very fast, and—as I said earlier—nothing has assisted in promoting the schismatic movement more than the conservative leadership's attack on the *Global 2000 Report*. I hope that you will read this Volume II. You are obviously very bright and I think that it would be difficult not to come to the same conclusions as the writers of that report. It is not just that there is a thin thread throughout that report. There are so many different projections that make it obvious that times are going to get very difficult, and we're going to pay a deep price in the number of lives of children as the disparity between food supply and numbers continues to grow.

Zoakos: Continuing on the subject of the Church, you cited repeatedly the conservative leadership within the American Church. It seems to me that it would be difficult to have a schism unless the issue of a conservative leadership were dealt with in some way. How do you see that being dealt with? Or are you thinking in terms of 30 to 40 years hence, when we would have, through whatever means, cardinals and bishops in the United States who are not conservative? But you seem to be talking about much sooner than that.

Mumford: Yes, I am talking about something certainly for this decade. I think there is developing a movement within the Church to break away from the existing leadership, and whether or not the group or groups who lead the breakaway will include any of the current cardinals and bishops, I'm not certain. I believe that this movement will include at least some bishops.

Zoakos: Which ones in particular do you have in mind?

Mumford: I wouldn't care to say at this point.

Zoakos: So you are talking about a movement à la Luther? That is, a grassroots groundswell from more local leadership?

Mumford: That's right.

Zoakos: But for such a thing to succeed you would have to have in place some fairly impressive communication networks.

Mumford: I think this communication system already exists.

Zoakos: Do you mean through the publications that already exist?

Mumford: That's right. I think there already exist the groups, both Catholic and non-Catholic, leading the breakaway in communicating with the grassroots. There is a growing awareness that the Church is being very effective in thwarting population-control efforts, and there are tens of millions of American Catholics who recognize that this is suicidal, and are looking for leadership—even breakaway leadership that they can support—and see through this schism the only hope of saving the American Catholic Church—the American Catholic Church and the world Church, which is obviously very threatened by this insistence that population-growth control not be undertaken. At some point I think this movement will move very fast once it starts, because Americans have been educated in large part—not nearly as much as they should be—but there is an awareness on the street that the conservative leadership of the Church is leading the Church to doom. You are aware of the fact that, since 1965, the number of men going into the priesthood has dropped catastrophically. It is now one-fourth of what it was in 1965, a mere 16 years ago, and this is just one symptom of this growing awareness in the United States, that we cannot continue as we are now in supporting this conservative leadership of the Church.

Zoakos: Our thinking on this is that various Catholic educational institutions, including many of the seminaries, are very much a part of the kind of schismatic movement you are talking about. Do you agree with that, and if so, which institutions?

Mumford: Well, I wouldn't want to name any particular institutions.

Zoakos: You cited Georgetown University, for example, as having been the people who commissioned this article of yours for the *Humanist*. Would you consider Georgetown to be a part of this?

Mumford: Well, I think that is pretty obvious.

Zoakos: Yes, we think so also. What about places like Notre Dame University, of Father Hesburgh, who is so very close to Father Greeley and those same networks?

Mumford: I think it's wrong to try to identify a few institutions. I think this movement is coming from certain groups from within all of these institutions, the higher-education institutions.

Zoakos: Are there other, non-Catholic institutions which you see as playing a part in this, institutions such as the Heritage Foundation, which are not Catholic as

such, but which would be involved in this? After all, if we're talking about the Church's stance on population control as being a national-security problem, then you would expect to see institutions in the United States, whether Catholic or not, being involved in trying to deal with the obstruction represented by the Church.

Mumford: I think that certainly there is going to be a growing number of institutions that are not Catholic that will be promoting this schism, due to the fact that the Church is, in its opposition to birth control and abortion, threatening the security of all nations, including the United States. At this point abortion has become a national-security issue. That point is no longer debatable. It is going to be spoken of much more in the near future. It is becoming increasingly apparent that some members of Congress and some members of the administration are recognizing this fact. After all, it takes only simple calculations to show that, in the absence of the 40 to 50 million abortions that take place every year worldwide, the world growth rate would be 50 percent greater than it is today, or about 120 million per year. And if overpopulation threatens the security of all nations—which is rapidly being recognized by more and more people in and out of government—then it follows that those who oppose abortions for those who wish to use it threaten the security of all nations, including the United States.

Zoakos: We in our work have seen some of the institutional connections as being particularly interesting. For example, Georgetown University's diplomatic training school provides something like 50 percent of key personnel for the State Department. It is a well-known fact that it is the State Department from which these population-control policies have originated at the level of government institutions. This is one fact which is especially compelling. Also we have noted, and have been told, of Alexander Haig's connections with liberal Church networks, which we generically term Jesuit. His policy orientation is also very much the one that you are talking about. Would you agree that these kinds of connections are not just accidental?

Mumford: I question whether training at an institution is necessary to arrive at the conclusion that overpopulation is threatening security. I have no such training myself. It is also obvious that abortion has become a national-security issue, and you really don't need to be trained in this. You use a little common sense, and put a few numbers together, and it becomes very obvious. So I think it is more a matter of common sense than any institutional training. Certainly if Stephen Mumford could have arrived at these things without any training, I'm sure a lot of other people could have too. I don't know whether there is any connection between these two or not.