

CAIRO CONFERENCE

U.N. ABORTION AGENDA STOPPED



Vatican Representative Archbishop Renato Martin leads the attack in Cairo to keep abortion on demand out of the family planning measures of the U.N. Population Conference.

By Rep. Christopher H. Smith

The real story of a major pro-life victory at the recent United Nations population control conference held in Cairo is yet untold.

After months of scheming, plotting and arm-twisting — and packing the conference with a legion of Planned Parenthood operatives — the Clinton Administration and its allies suffered a stunning defeat in their attempt to impose abortion on demand on the rest of the world.

The final conference document, called *Programme of Action*, was all things considered a remarkable victory for global pro-life forces and the 100 countries throughout the world that protect the lives of their unborn children.

Led by a highly skilled and tenacious Vatican delegation, dozens of African, Central and South American countries joined Muslim states to resist abortion lobby bullying, despite vigorous opposition from the Clinton delegation at preparatory meetings in New York and Cairo.

The final conference document affirmed all nations' "sovereignty" to protect and cherish the precious lives of unborn babies, and said that "in no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning."

This consensus language, which even the U.S. reluctantly swallowed in the end, is identical to the wording won in Mexico City in 1984 under then-President Ronald Reagan.

EXPORTING ABORTION ABROAD

Let there be no mistake about it. This anti-abortion policy wasn't in the Clinton script for Cairo. The State Department in March underscored the extreme pro-abortion position the U.S. was promoting in an "action cable" sent to every U.S. ambassador and envoy abroad.

The cable directed U.S. officials to lobby foreign governments for legal abortion, noting:

"A comprehensive strategy begins with the need to ensure universal access to family planning and related reproductive health services, including access to safe abortion. The United States believes that access to safe, legal and voluntary abortion is a fundamental right of all women ... the United States delegation will also be working for stronger language on the importance of access to abortion ser-

vices."

It is sad but true that the United States has one of the most permissive abortion policies in the world, forced on us not by the legislative actions of the U.S. Congress or even the Executive Branch, but decreed by the U.S. Supreme Court in the now infamous 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision.

That decision nullified the legal personhood of an unborn baby at any time prior to birth.

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TRAGIC RESULTS AT HOME

The nightmarish results since then have been emotionally and physically scarred mothers — the walking wounded desperately in need of reconciliation — and more than 30 million dead children: a national scandal.

Every year more than 140,000 women are brutally raped, a 300-percent increase in the number of rapes since the legalization of abortion. Incidents of child abuse and neglect have risen approximately 400 percent since legalization of abortion and, in like manner, spousal abuse has skyrocketed over the past two decades.

Every year approximately 25,000 people are murdered in the United States — a substantial increase in the heinous crime from the days when life was protected. And violence of abortion itself has shot up. Every year more than 1.5 million unborn children are killed by abortion — one child's life exterminated every 20 seconds.

Under presidents Reagan and Bush, the pro-life movement was making incremental gains in re-establishing protections for the unborn. The election

of Bill Clinton, however, was a major victory for the "culture of death."

President Clinton is trying to force U.S. taxpayers to pay for abortion on demand at any time before birth, as part of his health care reform. He is trying to expand the number of abortion clinics.

The president is using the federal bureaucracy to accelerate the importation of the French abortion drug RU-486. He has, by presidential decree, reversed the long-standing policy protecting live unborn babies from dangerous experimentation and fetal tissue transplantation.

CULTURAL IMPERIALISM

Bill Clinton's full-court press in Cairo not only failed to establish a "fundamental" global right to abortion, but triggered a serious backlash against the government of the United States.

Hardball tactics employed by the Clintonites were deeply resented in the developing world where family is revered and children are seen as blessings to be cherished, not burdens to be eradicated. The Cairo results call into question America's moral leadership, prestige and basic ethics.

The push for global abortion on demand, with President Bill Clinton taking the lead, is an ominous turn from a decade ago — and smacks of cultural imperialism. The rich nations of the world are seeking to impose a cruel doctrine on the emerging democracies and developing countries. This "doctrine" treats babies as burdens rather than as blessings, and the policy treats children as a kind of pollution rather than as bearers of solutions to the challenges posed by environmental degradation.

Despite this, the pro-abortion movement did make some inroads. The conference gave legitimacy to abortion for the first time.

This contradicts numerous U.N. and regional human rights covenants that regard protections for the unborn child as basic human rights. Article 4 of the *American Convention on Human Rights* states, "Every person has the right to have his life respected. This right shall be protected by law, and in general from the moment of conception."

Even the 1989 U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child acknowledges that "the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth."

The billions of dollars in pledges required to carry out the priorities of the Cairo Conference put the very survival of an entire generation of children at risk. Some of the world's richest and most powerful elitists think there are just too many people walking around, and they are proposing draconian steps to rid the planet — once and for all — of big families and hundreds of millions of little children.

THINNING THE HERD

Abortion on demand is being touted as a means of thinning the herd, as if human beings were cattle or deer. Children are not animals, but precious gifts from Almighty God. The Cairo mentality absolutely devalues, devastates and dehumanizes unborn babies of all races, colors and genders. The Cairo Conference had the potential to alter public attitudes to say "Children are no longer welcome on planet Earth." We can't let that happen.

Cairo could have been a watershed event for the abortion rights movement. It was not.

Still, no one doubts that President Clinton's well-oiled population-control machine will continue to "push the envelope" at future U.N. conferences in Copenhagen and Beijing. Nor is there any doubt that U.S. taxpayers will be forced to subsidize a portion of the enormous new population control funding goals established in Cairo.

Nor will friends of the family and vulnerable unborn children be lax, uninformed or unprepared to meet the challenge.

Congressman Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ) was an official observer at the U.N. Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, Egypt. ★