

Cape Cod has an acute lower-&-lower-middle housing shortage, so many of the "hewers of wood & drawers of water" (the Bible's now-quaint way of referring to low-income service workers) have to commute from off Cape. Further, we have a near acute clutch of ecological problems because we're becoming overpopulated because so many want to move here from overpopulated areas. I'm soon dead so not to worry--unless I care about the quality of human life and the rest of nature on CC in the future. Which I do. Not only on CC; on this globe the Creator calls "good."....So human flesh is increasing on CC by importation as well as directly from the womb. Now, womb products (ie, babies) vary greatly in their potential for being part of the problem/solution to today's and tomorrow's ecopolitical crises, the lowest-quality baby being from an unwed teen (ie, the lowest-quality prospect for quality "nurture," whatever a particular baby has by "nature"). So, biologically, the worst thing CC can do ecopolitically is to increase production of unwed-teen infants. But that's what our state, MA, decided yesterday (30 July 86) to do: we're getting \$764,000 to build Cape Cod's "first home for unwed teen-age mothers." Now a CC teen can get pregnant, have her baby, and be assured of free housing, free education, and free job-counseling. The unregulated womb state-rewarded. Insanity, which is Latin for "unhealth," the promotion of sickness in society. In the name of compassion, yes; and reason? Given CC's & the world's ecopolitical realities, reason votes to shut down on the babyfaucet, not open it wider.

Well, as free-association therapy has it, "What comes to mind about that?" For instance (in the order things come to mind: like many thinksheets, this one is not all thought out ahead of my fingers on the keyboard):

1. Democracy is profoundly threatened by the unregulated womb because, whereas democracy requires self-disciplined citizens, the unregulated womb spews out babies at the social level at which self-discipline is weakest. These babies grow up unrealistically imagining they can have the full benefits of democracy without meeting its fundamental need, viz, self-disciplined living and socially-responsible participation in the ecopolitical processes. To say that these babies don't have an equal chance is only to state the problem in another way. To say that our society should provide them with an equal chance is fatuous: our society is ecopolitically incapable of doing so and drifts ever farther away from that capability as the lowest classes continue to produce the highest number of babies. I'm embarrassed and saddened that so many of my friends haven't caught up with this reality; they continue to preach old social remedies instead of addressing the painful fact that the radically new ecopolitical situation, ours and the world's, calls for radically new situation definitions and action proposals. I can understand the hesitance to see-preach-act afresh: some of the freedoms stated and freedom assumed in our old vision-and-praxis of democracy will have to be qualified, some even replaced.

A few pertinent quotes on democracy: (1) The old Roman historian Tacitus: It's "easier to be applauded than realized." (2) Emerson: "Everybody's wanted, and nobody's wanted much." (3) Fosdick: It's "based upon the conviction that there are extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people." (4) Hutchins: It "hasn't failed; our intelligence has failed face-to-face with the problems we're created."

2. The close correlation between the unregulated womb and unregulated (ie, undisciplined-by-self) living gives society a tough choice between (1) social womb-regulation or (2) the containment (apartheid!) of the unregulated by the self-regulated--both, Hobbesian. The I-think unworkable alternative would be the successful promotion of self-discipline at the social level at which the unregulated womb accounts for a higher percentage of births than at the other social levels. (NB: I'm not talking about "morality" in general; in our permissive society it's loose-low at all levels. I'm talking about baby-making responsibility.)

3. And now a word about types of regulating the womb:

(1) The TRADITIONAL, still the only way permitted by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, is the duty to regulate babies by regulating intercourse: no sex unless intending a baby. Besides requiring folks to be saints in self-discipline, this view demeans sexuality by failing to address either the play-joy element or the communion element.

(2) The TECHNICAL. Babymaking is a right, not a privilege or a duty; and technology enables control thereof --mechanical, chemical, and surgical--without limiting intercourse to the babymaking intention.

(3) The SOCIOPOLITICAL. Babymaking is a privilege, not a right or a duty. As now one must meet certain qualifications to adopt a child, soon one will have to meet certain qualifications to babymake (ie, bring a new citizen into society). That I can think of, the only thing worse than this bureaucratization of "having babies" is not to institute sociopolitical control over the womb. I see no prospect, in our nation or elsewhere, that human hyperfertility can be kept from reducing the quality both of humanity and of the environment otherwise than by government control--China being the best model so far, with Japan a distant second.

4. The biblical command to "fill the earth" (Gn.1.28) assumed (1) a decent human society under God and (2) a liveable ecology in God's garden. These tacit restrictions on babymaking are as biblical as are the words of the command, and it's ignorant or malicious to quote the command out of the context of these assumptions.

5. Note the convergence of two doomsayers: (1) Malthus predicted STARVATION from mouths' increasing faster than food; (2) Packard predicted STAGNATION from production's increasing faster than consumption. Ag technology would enable food to outrun mouths, at the present rate of mouths-production, for about another 30 years (straightline projecting both agtech development and the seemingly inevitable decline in soil quality). But the % of mouths able to feed themselves (ie, having income sufficient to purchase sufficient food) is rapidly decreasing, so the motive-and-means for producing food for these mouths is also decreasing. What's indicated is a polymorphous homeostasis: balances of "man" with the world-and-local ecopotential, balances of capital/labor (under whatever type of government), balances of population sectors vis-a-vis land, balances of interests between humanity today and humanity tomorrow. Without radical social intervention, the ecopolitically unnecessary masses will force the world into locally-appropriate tyrannies.

6. I'm speaking not coldly but realistically of "the ecopolitically unnecessary masses," the excess population as viewed in the light of both economics and politics--such as about 60% of northern England. Or 70% of S.Africa. Or 80% of Ethiopia. And of course my criterion of excess is "what it takes to run the (particular) country given its present economy and government." The "kingdoms of this world" need indeed to become the "Kingdom of our God": shalom is my daily cry through the Lord's Prayer. But in the interim we should make better use of our God-given intelligence (1) in situation definition (including calling it as we see it) and (2) in participation in processes, movements, and institutions concerned with prohuman-profuture planning and action.

7. Eg, (1) LATIN AMERICA, whose median age is steadily declining. (2) ISRAEL, whose majority, were "the territories" "returned," would be nonJewish: how deny firstclass citizenship to the majority? (3) SOUTH AFRICA, which has successfully denied firstclass citizenship to the majority but may be losing the power to do so as the black pop-explosion is reducing the white % and also the black potential for self-government. (4) USA (what used to be called) "pockets of poverty."