

human being in her own eyes and the eyes of her family, only to be returned to the depths of the ghetto, to carry and bear her unwanted child—such a tragedy has far-reaching implications and ramifications that can escape only the most obtuse and unfeeling human mind.

If unplanned pregnancies increase, as we are beginning to suspect that they will because women have become frightened and turned to less effective methods of birth control, or worse, no method at all, it can only again widen the gap between groups of women.

For many years, adequate means of family planning have been the primary prerogative of the private patient who knew that such help was available and could afford to pay for it. During the past few years this care was increasingly being made available to the poor women as well.

Today, once again, we have created two groups, the haves and the have-nots. When a woman of means finds herself pregnant and wishes not to bear her child, a safe, clean abortion is within her reach. When one of my clinic patients finds herself in the same situation, she usually has one of three choices:

She may bear the unwanted child, she may attempt to abort herself, or she may have a cheap, dangerous, dirty, illegal abortion.

No matter what her decision, such a woman, her family, and society in general will be the ultimate losers. A similar disparate and unfair situation unfortunately obtains when sterilization procedures are examined. The private patient with three or four children who wishes to terminate her child-bearing finds it infinitely easier to do so than does her clinic counterpart with nine or 10. This double standard of medical practice is a gross miscarriage of justice.

Hopefully, legislative and legal measures now under consideration will free the hands and minds of doctors who abhor the situation in which they currently find themselves, disturbed, fearful, and helpless.

There has been much discussion here of the use of women for experimentation and their "internal pollution" with oral contraceptives. I would like to submit that the larger and far more critical and lethal experiment is underway—what happens to these women and society as a whole if we continue our present relentless march to inevitable doom via overpopulation and pollution?

What will happen if individuals and nations are deprived of their ability to control their population size, whether by law, ignorance, or fear? These are obviously rhetorical questions to which we all know the answers. The unplanned pregnancy, the unwanted baby, the battered child, delinquency, illegitimacy, crime, drug abuse, the endlessly repeated chain of events encircling our society at all levels is only too apparent.

Opponents of oral contraceptives always talk in terms of the treatment of "healthy women." Those of us who have to treat women who are pregnant with an unwanted baby do not feel that she can be considered to be healthy. The World Health Organization has declared that, "Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."