

tional background, or age range, should adopt as a social and family ideal the principle of the 2-child family."

Commenting on this, Dr. Paul Ehrlich recently stated: "In view of the seriousness of runaway population growth in the United States and in the world as a whole, no informed or patriotic American couple should have more than two children. I congratulate the AVS on its resolution on the desirability of the two-child family..."

Let us understand clearly that overpopulation is not only one of the main roots of poverty, mental illness and crime in the U.S., but it is also the basic root of the environmental pollution that concerns all of us today. Regardless of the most energetic efforts on the part of scientists and technicians to turn back the tide of pollution, their fight will be lost unless effective population control is made a fact in the very near future. Dr. Allan J. Brooke, an ecologist at the University of Minnesota, said in a recent lecture: "If we want to save ourselves, we must stop putting our heads in the sand, and think about sterilization programs and relaxation of abortion laws. We must achieve a change in all our attitudes. We have got to change to the point where we recognize that it is now socially unacceptable for people to have more than two children." Remember, this man is an ecologist—one who understands far better than most of us what the roots of dangerous environmental pollution really are.

Listen to Dr. Wayne H. Davis, who teaches in the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Kentucky. He comments as follows: "I define as most seriously overpopulated that nation whose people by virtue of their numbers and activities are most rapidly decreasing the ability of the land to support human life. With our large population, our affluence and our technological monstrosities, the United States wins first place by a substantial margin. Let us compare the U.S. to India, for example. We have 203 million people, whereas she has 540 million on much less land. But look at the relative impact of people on the land... I want to introduce a new term, which I suggest be used in future discussions of human population and ecology. We should speak of our numbers in 'Indian equivalents.' An 'Indian equivalent' I define as the average number of Indian citizens required to have the same detrimental effect on the land's ability to support human life as would the average American. This value is difficult to determine, but let's take an extremely conservative working figure of 25."

Emphasizing that this figure of 25 for an "Indian equivalent" is very conservative, Dr. Davis adds that it has been suggested that a more realistic figure would be 500. He concludes, therefore, that in Indian equivalents, the population of the U.S. is *at least 1/4 billion*, and the rate of growth is even more alarming. We are growing at 1% a year, a rate which would double our numbers in 70 years. India is growing at 2.5%. Using the "Indian equivalent" of 25, our population growth becomes 10 times as serious as that of India. *One year's* crop of American babies can be expected to use up 25 billion pounds of beef, 200 million pounds of steel, and 9.1 billion gallons of gasoline during their collective lifetime. Even more serious are the demands on water and land for our growing population. We are destroying our land at a rate of over a million acres a year. We now have only 2.6 agriculture acres per person. By 1975, this will be cut to 2.2, the critical point for the maintenance for what we consider a decent diet. By the year 2,000—if we survive that long—the projection would be 1.2 agricultural acres per person, insufficient to feed Americans.

In assessing realistic means of bringing about the acceptance of the two-child family as a social and family ideal in America, we cannot neglect the need for private and governmental education toward a basic change in family attitudes. It has been correctly pointed out that regardless of available birth control technology, if couples want to have more than two children, they will do so (barring any direct and stringent government action). On the other hand, a broad acceptance of the two-child family ideal among all Americans would still be to little avail unless completely reliable birth control methods, especially sterilization, are readily available to all. As you already know, this is not now the case.

What is less generally known is that sterilization is the most reliable method of birth control known today, and is finding increasing acceptance among millions of American men and women. It is estimated that over 2 mil-