

## EIR Investigation

# U.S. AID to Central America: Swap debt for birth control

by Gretchen Small

The U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) is drawing up plans to transfer foreign debt titles into financing for “family planning” programs, according to a document entitled “Economic Assistance Strategy for Central America, 1991-2000,” released in January 1991. The study announces that since “expanding access” to “family planning” is one of the most important goals of its health program in Central America, AID staff members have been assigned the task of helping “explore the use of debt swap arrangements to support sustainable provision of family planning services through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).” In this way, the document explains, continued funding for “family planning” can be assured even as AID’s budget is cut back because of the U.S. economic crisis.

AID’s use of “family planning” programs as a cover for genocide was revealed this year when a scandal broke out in Brazil over the fact that between 20 and 25 million women have been sterilized there in the past 20 years. More than 300,000 women *a year* are still being sterilized there, and the rate of abortions is rising. AID provides financing and resources for most of the “NGOs” involved.

The new program is modeled on already operating “debt-for-equity” and “debt-for-nature” programs. Under these schemes, developing-sector nations hand over ownership of their means of physical production (“equity”), or their territory (“nature”), in exchange for tiny reductions in their foreign debt. Now it is proposed that Third World debt be transformed into funding for mass sterilization and murder of the unborn: a “debt-for-genocide” program in which the U.S. State Department, under which AID operates, offers financial incentives to governments and private agencies which agree to kill their nation’s richest resource, its people.

### Increasing mortality rates

Besides broadening “family planning” services in the area, AID’s only other objective for health services is to get Central American governments to cut health care expenditures. This, in an area where half the 25 million inhabitants lack basic health services, the average government expenditure on health in several countries is less than \$10 per capita per year, and the Pan-American Health Organization has predicted some 600,000 people may come down with cholera by the end of 1991.

One proposal for cutting expenditures, is for governments to finance “low-cost paramedical personnel” instead of costly hospitals. This is argued in the name of increasing “basic preventive health care” at the expense of “curative” care.

This program fits exactly the prescription of the anti-population fanatics for ways governments can deliberately increase the rate of deaths in their countries without being overthrown. In a September 1980 interview published by *EIR*, a leading theoretician of the population lobby, William Paddock, suggested that programs adopted in the name of decreasing birth rates can simultaneously serve to *increase the rate of deaths*. Paddock argued that if governments channel more of their limited health care budgets into birth control programs and decrease the amounts spent on other health items, such as care for the elderly or clean water systems, mortality rates will increase—but only the “budget crisis” will be blamed.

### ‘Maquiladora’ colonialism

AID’s vision of the future for Central America follows from an evil malthusian view: AID teams and money are

deployed in an effort to transform the region into a large “nature preserve,” in which a dwindling number of human beings are ground up in *maquiladoras*, the labor-intensive plants producing for export in order to pay foreign debts.

The emphasis placed on keeping the population uneducated and unskilled in the “Economic Assistance Strategy” report is downright fanatical. From the outset, the report states that AID’s “key premise” is that governments must remove the “exchange-rate, credit, and fiscal distortions that have made capital arbitrarily cheap,” so that “employers will place a higher value on labor.” That translates into a death warrant for any technology-intensive industry, which requires cheap credit. The report specifies that a “new model” of development is required, ending even the minimal industrial development associated with past import substitution attempts, because those accentuated “the deterioration of the region’s natural resource base that was already underway because of population growth and lack of attention to environmental concerns.”

Thus, AID’s “new model” is the oldest one in the book: a colonial economy “focusing on agriculture, small business, and export industries.” Intra-regional trade is to be encouraged only to the degree that it does not “substitute for exporting to markets outside the region, but as a complement to it.” The report demands that economic policies which “continue to discourage labor intensive production,” which foster “inappropriate technology development and transfer” and “rapid population growth,” be eliminated. Since growth in demand for labor “should particularly favor unskilled workers,” government expenditures on higher education programs—such as universities—can then be cut.

Central Americans, evidently, do not merit more than a “basic education.”

There is also a direct relationship between AID’s fanatic birth control program and the *maquiladoras*. In *maquiladoras* along the U.S.-Mexican border, women workers are warned that they will be fired immediately if they become pregnant. Women working in similar assembly plants in Honduras are forced to take birth control injections, leaders of the Workers Confederation charged on July 3. Foreign companies—mostly U.S. and South Korean—force women between the ages of 25 and 30 to receive the shots or be fired, in order to save on maternity costs and lost work-time. And the women fear that they may have been sterilized, the union reported. The Labor Ministry has opened an investigation.

### **Reserves for manatees and panthers**

The insistence on a low-technology, low-energy economy is sold under the label of assuring “broad-based, sustainable economic growth.” Despite the fact that Central America sits near the bottom of the ladder of world energy use per capita, “Economic Assistance Strategy” argues that energy conservation is crucial. Resources should be more “appropriately concentrated on efforts other than the financ-

ing of physical infrastructure,” such as privatization, establishing a common structure of rates, and expanded use of geothermal and small hydroelectric plants. “Sustainable agricultural practices”—such as minimizing the use of pesticides through strengthened pesticide regulation—are needed. Investment is to be wasted on “integrating” into the economy the marginal economic activities of the “informal sector,” the fraudulent euphemism for street vendors, minuscule cottage-industry, and other forms of unproductive economic activity scraped together by the desperately poor to survive.

This goes hand in hand with the other major economic objective of the AID program: to encourage “management of wildlands and protection of biological diversity.” Here the idea is that governments and private sector organizations dedicate their efforts to protecting national parks and reserves, and managing “priority wildlands.”

Although the Economic Assistance Strategy report does not specify it, AID is already funding, to the tune of \$1.6 million, the project of a consortium of international environmental organizations, including the World Wildlife Fund, the Nature Conservancy, and the Wildlife Conservation International, to establish a chain of national parks from one end to the other of Central America. The project seeks, its promoters say, to “protect” the wettest rain forest in the Caribbean, the largest nesting aggregation of green turtles in the Western Hemisphere, a sizable population of manatees, and miles of coral reefs from the ravages of development, safe for the enjoyment of rich foreign tourists.

Named “Paseo Panther” (Path of the Panther), the project foresees the creation of a “vegetative corridor between the two continents” of North and South America, based on the historic migration route of the panther! The Central Americans who live in the area are to be moved out, to make way for the animals and the “ecotourism” needed to finance this “habitat protection,” according to the project’s sponsors cited by an Associated Press wire in June. Ever thoughtful, the environmental groups involved—financed by AID—are drawing up plans to create “buffer zones” around each park, which “would allow limited development and provide a home for any people moved out of the park.” They also propose that “an international tourism authority” be created to collect funds which could finance the parks.

### **All in the name of ‘democracy’**

AID has encountered resistance to this program, from governments and private interests who insist upon a broader vision of their nations’ future, but has committed itself to eliminating that resistance by restructuring the politics and institutions of the region in the name of establishing “stable democracies.”

The AID report declares that its “Strategic Objective Number One” in Central America is to reshape the political institutions. Much of the agency’s resources and manpower

will be shifted under the direction of the "Democratic Initiatives Office," and greater emphasis will be given to coordination with the U. S. State and Justice Departments.

Chief among its efforts is to reduce the powers of the state in the region, through decentralization of government services, including the provision of health care, energy, and education. The report asserts that "the roles of municipalities, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations in development should be increased," built up in *opposition* to a centralized state. Such changes are not considered optional: "The Central Americans, with AID assistance, will strengthen democratically elected local governments through decentralization of real authority and resources," the report states.

"Administrative and financial authority of local governments, including the power to generate revenues, will be increased, while that of central bureaucracies will decrease."

A corollary of the reduction of the centralized state is the crushing of the military, denounced for its "authoritarian history" of "influence over government." Civil and human rights advocates are being trained at AID expense, while the AID trains civilian leaders on how to "decrease military involvement in conflict resolution," and sets up the programs for demobilization of the military ("the integration of former military and police force members as productive civilians in the society"). This, even as narco-terrorist insurgencies gain ground in several countries of the region.

---

# FAIR refugee policy 'reform' would aid genocidalists

by Leo F. Scanlon

At a recent press conference, the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) presented a program for an overhaul of the refugee and asylum policies of the U.S. government which cited the population theories of Paul Ehrlich and other figures in the Zero Population Growth (ZPG) organization as the basis for a drastic reduction in refugees admitted into the United States. The group pointed to Chinese parents fleeing the "alleged" one child per family policy as a prime example of the type of refugee who should not be granted asylum, and proposed that refugee admissions should be counted as part of the limited number of immigrants allowed from each country under the U. S. quota system. Only those refugees who have a "well-founded fear of persecution," adjudicated on a case-by-case basis, should be granted political asylum, according to FAIR.

FAIR spokesman Dan Stein, who identifies himself as the grandson of Ukrainian Jewish immigrants, said that the group's assessment of the crisis in U. S. refugee policy is based squarely on the demographic theories of the zero population growth movement: "If you don't believe in population stabilization, these issues are insignificant," he said. "If you do accept the fact that there are limits, and that tough choices have to be made," then you have to accept the proposition advanced by FAIR that "the United States has no responsibility

to accept unlimited numbers of refugees fleeing" the apocalyptic disasters predicted by the group and its co-thinkers.

According to citations in the proposed reform packet, discredited over population hysteric Paul Ehrlich is the prime source for FAIR's vision of the future. Said Stein, "This is a new age in the history of the human race. There will be billions of people displaced by civil war, environmental disasters, and catastrophes. . . . The refugee issue will be on the agenda for the next two decades." This is so, he said, mostly because "world population has grown in countries with low per capita income . . . Middle East, Africa, Central America. . . ."

According to the 1991 World Refugee Report prepared by FAIR, "Population stabilization is an issue with very few advocates in the administration or on Capitol Hill. And without a comprehensive population policy that includes immigration, the U. S. will never be able to get a handle on the potential for explosive growth, and the concomitant social and economic instability that lies just around the bend."

The crisis envisioned by FAIR is global and brutal, and is in fact the real future of George Bush's new world order. "How many millions more will come from Eastern Europe, Hong Kong, central Asia, East Asia, and Latin America? It is terrifying to imagine the world refugee problem in several