
Interview: Nancy Carter

State Dept. hack reveals population as key UNCED goal

Nancy Carter, the State Department's Coordinator of Population Affairs, has been intervening at pre-UNCED conferences across the country, urging NGOs and other groups to exert pressure so that the Earth Summit adopts a strong stance in favor of strict population control.

In the following interview, conducted at a conference last November, Nancy Carter reveals how the U.S. manipulation to get population on the agenda of the Rio summit. Carter also rails at EIR for its recent exposés of the U.S. Agency for International Development's (AID) role in sterilizing 25 million Brazilian women, and of National Security Study Memorandum 200, a 1974 U.S. government document which laid out a policy to drive down Third World population levels in order to ensure U.S. access to cheap raw materials in the developing sector. The interview was made available to EIR by 21st Century Science & Technology magazine.

Q: You've talked about a link between environmental degradation and population growth. How important do you think this is?

Carter: Very important. . . . People have traditionally approached population only as family planning or the abortion issue. We're trying to broaden the perspective on population issues from environmental degradation to resource utilization, distribution of populations, as well as rapid [population] growth, aging issues, anything that relates back to population, how it interacts with economic development or resources issues.

Q: What will the U.S. propose on the population issue to the Rio meeting?

Carter: There were two interventions which the U.S. delegation made [at Prepcomm III], one on human settlements and the other on poverty and population considerations. They addressed the urban migration problem, as well as integrating women into the economy, partly as a fertility control measure, and partly because it's good for the overall economy and good for women. We also talked about incorporating population factors into economic planning, and doing assess-

ments as part of an environmental review that will give more emphasis to population issues.

Q: You said there had been a lot of resistance by developing countries to incorporating the population issue at all into the agenda for Rio.

Carter: Quite so. . . . One of the things you have to keep in mind is that there is a process of negotiations leading up to UNCED. The developing countries were approaching the population issue in a defensive position, as defensive as the developed countries were approaching the consumption issue. What they were doing is reacting to a fear that if population growth was put on the agenda it would skew the negotiations toward looking at culpability on the part of the developing countries, because 90% of rapid population growth is there, and that they really felt the interest in these negotiations should be on the culpability of the developed countries' consumption patterns.

What we have tried to do, and I think with the cooperation and assistance of some very bright and forward-thinking developing country representatives, is to agree not to be pointing the finger of culpability. It's not a complete agreement, because we still have to go back in and butt heads on the same issues. But we basically have agreed that both consumption and rapid population growth have a role to play in the discussions at Rio, and so they both have to be on the agenda. So we have agreed that we need to balance the discussion of population growth with the discussion of resource consumption.

Q: Will there be any attempt at Rio or the 1994 conference, to put caps on population growth for various countries?

Carter: What was done in the Amsterdam Declaration [on population] was to establish as a goal the stabilization of population. It didn't adopt any specific numbers or target levels, only that we recognized there could be a problem associated with having too rapid growth, too poorly distributed population and that we have to come to grips with those problems, and thereby, in doing so, we would probably have

to look at the need to stabilize population of the global community. . . .

The crux of the Rio conference is to deal with environmental and development issues, and not to deal with population per se. That's to be done in the 1994 world population conference; many of the issues that are most contentious will probably be deferred until then. What we need to do now is to establish recognition of, and some action plan for dealing with, the relevant factors attributable to population issues that affect both environment and development considerations.

Q: Are countries which have rapid population growth being persuaded to factor in environmental considerations?

Carter: Many of them are coming to see a correlation between rapid population growth and their prospects for economic development, and also environmental considerations. We have regions where there are problems with water, providing adequate food, and I think they realize that these all factor into how many people they're going to have to provide for. . . . We hope that other countries adopt a system similar to the U.S.'s environmental impact statements, which would consider population factors.

Q: I received a press release some months ago from a group that had obtained some national security documents—

Carter: [interrupts] NSSM 200.

Q: Yes, that's right.

Carter: Lyndon LaRouche. *Executive Intelligence Review*.

Q: These documents are very shocking. Are they real?

Carter: It came as quite a shock to me, too. The only thing real about them is that there is a document called NSSM 200, National Security Strategy Memorandum 200. But the document is 100% diametrically opposed to what it is reported to be in *EIR*. When I first read or heard about it, I, too, said, "What!" And I ran to my files, where NSSM 200 is, and I pulled it out and read it. And I read the references that were quoted, or more accurately stated, misquoted, in the *EIR*. For example, it [*EIR*] references one specific point about Brazil. And it says that the U.S., USAID, and UNFPA and the World Bank had targeted Brazil, among other countries, for sterilization of their women in order to undermine the political and economic strength of Brazil and the region.

What the section [of NSSM 200] says—and this is not an exact quote, but I can tell you it is an accurate restatement of what it says—it says that Brazil has the potential to be an economic and political power in the region, yet its population growth is producing at such a rate that it is undermining the economic stability and development status that it could otherwise achieve. And that without implementing population or family-planning programs, Brazil will not be able to achieve the political and economic status that it otherwise it would. And we think it would be in the best interest of the

region, as well as of the United States, for Brazil to have a stable, democratic government.

This was the opposite of what *EIR* said. They said we were sterilizing Brazilian women to keep it weak and poor. That's absurd!

Q: Was there any reaction in Brazil?

Carter: Certainly! The issue has appeared repeatedly in various news articles in Brazil, and the minister of health is aware of it and has commented on it. And he has assured our ambassador that he gives it no credence. Unfortunately, though, misinformation is always more interesting, and it is hard to correct the wrong. If you were to stop by my office, I would pull out the document and show it to you. It doesn't make sense to misreport what's there. However, it worked toward whatever goal or objective that group [*EIR*] had. It's unfortunate.

It is not the U.S. government, or AID, which is coming in and sterilizing the Brazilians. . . . All I can tell you is that NSSM 200 has been severely misquoted.

Q: I thought LaRouche was in jail?

Carter: What I understand is that he is in prison, but that his group is still very active.

Q: Does your office deal with the question of how religious or cultural values act as obstacles to family planning efforts, Islam, for example?

Carter: Well, the Grand Mufti of Egypt has actually issued a proclamation declaring that family planning is indeed consistent with Islamic values if used for the purposes of birth spacing. . . . Our program recognizes the difference in cultural and religious values, and allows for and very much supports choice for couples from the full range of contraceptive methods, including natural family planning. The only one we don't present is abortion. But the interesting thing is that for the 1994 international conference on population, there have been three countries that have offered themselves as hosts, and they are all Islamic countries: Tunisia, Turkey, and Egypt. That shows that, indeed, these countries are embracing family planning and that the religious teachings do not find that what is being proposed inconsistent with those values.

Q: Do you know what the theme of the 1994 population conference will be?

Carter: Yes. And this will prove to be a very contentious issue. It is, "population and development within the context of sustainable development, environmentally sound sustainable development." We will be looking at environmental considerations and the impact of population at the 1994 conference, just as we are looking at population issues at the 1992 conference. My office will be coordinating the preparations for the conference.