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American Birth Control League, 1934-1937.

AMERICAN BIRTH CONTROL LEAGUE, INC.

689_ MADISON AVENUE

NEW YORK CITY

My dear Rabbi Silver. Will you do us the honor of being a Patron for this dinner? due hope to have you with us and feel that your name would be of the utmost value as a Very sinearely yours. Nabel W. Blagdon pu a.P.12.

January 3rd

January 5, 1934. Mrs. Dexter Blagden, 689 Madison Aye., New York, N.Y. My dear Mrs. Blagden: Thank you for your kind note. I am sorry that I will not be able to attend the dinner on the eighteenth as I must remain in the city on that date. I am enclosing a small contribution to help cover the expense. With all good wishes, I remain Very sincerely yours, AHS: BK Enc.

The American Birth Control League DINNER

Thursday, January the eighteenth at seven-thirty o'clock

The Park Lane
299 Park Avenue, New York
BUILDING THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

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Dr. C-E. A. Winslow

PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Dr. Warren S. Thompson

DIRECTOR, SCRIPPS FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH IN POPULATION PROBLEMS

Dr. Harry A. Overstreet

PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY, COLLEGE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Dr. Henry Pratt Fairchild, PRESIDING

PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY. PRESIDENT, POPULATION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA.

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February 6, 1934

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and the Officers

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver The Temple East 105th Street at Ansel Road Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

As you know, the Board of Directors of the American Birth Control League, in planning our financial program for the coming year, has voted to endeavor to raise the entire budget of \$39,000 within the next two months rather than to depend entirely on such membership dues and contributions as may come in from time to time through the year.

In order that every member of the Board may be informed of the details of the plan, I enclose with this letter a copy of the program as approved by the Executive Committee. The Budget Committee, appointed by the Executive Committee, is composed of Mrs. Dexter Blagden, Chairman, Mrs. Francis N. Bangs, Mrs. Robert McC. Marsh, Mrs. Louis deB. Moore, Mrs. F. Robertson Jones, Mrs. Frederic Cromwell and Miss Ruth Topping.

While this Committee will have full responsibility for the work, obviously they cannot do it all and we count on the wholehearted cooperation of every member of the Board. Very shortly we shall write you again suggesting specific ways in which you may help.

In the meantime, will you acquaint yourself with the general plan and let us have any suggestions which may occur to you to make our program more effective.

Cordially yours,

Mrs. Francis N. Bangs, President

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Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
East 105th Street at Ansel Road
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Rabbi Silver:

Recently I wrote you sending you a copy of the campaign plan, which we are following in raising our budget for this year. We have just received from the printer a booklet which has been prepared and which, I am sure, you will be interested in reading.

Of course, the problem of raising our budget is a difficult one and one in which we shall need the thought and help of every member of our Board. May I ask your assistance at this time by sending to me a list of people whom you know to be interested in birth control or who you believe would be interested if they knew more about our work. Will you indicate on such a list those people whom you would be willing personally to approach and ask for a contribution, and also those whom you do not wish to approach yourself but with whom we might use your name as an introduction.

We feel that we have already made considerable progress in making new friends for our work through the parlor meetings which we have already had, and we are very hopeful that through our combined efforts this interest may be translated into financial support.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Francis N. Bangs, President

BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

Vol. I, No. 6 (New Series) Published by the American Birth Control League

March, 1934

BIRTH CONTROL AND SOCIAL CHANGE

THE changes which must occur before a social movement may become a successful reform are usually given less attention than are the hoped-for effects. Yet any social change becomes possible only because certain prior changes have taken place. In the case of birth control, for instance, the effects of the reform in mitigating poverty, improving the health of mother and child, aiding the eugenics movement, or diminishing overpopulation and war, are given more emphasis than are the antecedent changes which have brought the movement about. This neglect of the study of social causes is, to some extent, a natural one. The reformer does not write for the general public on the mechanics of his reform, any more than a railroad company advertises its locomotives rather than the beauties of Banff.

Yet it should be remembered that every social change stands in a genetic relation to other social changes and is possible only because of certain antecedent developments. Many of the social changes which have made the birth control movement possible are of a general sort, effective for other social reforms as well. Under this head come the growth of modern communication, the power of public opinion and voluntary organization, the weakening of the traditional standards of morality and the loosened grip of family, clan, and autocratic religious group. The development of contraceptive devices, cheap printing, popular education and a high standard of living are also among the causes of the birth control movement. Thus reforms are not effectuated entirely through public opinion, but through a myriad of other social changes as well.

Frequently social changes are tied together in what are called cultural complexes or "adhesions," and people adopt a new practice not because they appreciate it particularly at the time, but because it comes to them with some other change which they are glad to adopt. Birth control is often accepted or rejected in terms of such cultural settings or chance accompaniments. At one time, for instance, it was thought of as a "godless" reform associated only with radicals. Later it broke loose from such connotations. And although at the present time there is a lingering association with woman suffrage, companionate marriage, and anti-war sentiment, there will seem little reason at a later date why these reforms should be thought of together.

An idea of the number of social changes with which birth control may be allied can be gained from the report on Recent Social Trends made by President Hoover's Commission. In the two summary volumes there are a dozen references to birth control, and the thirteen special monographs also make frequent references to the subject. The relation of birth control to divorce and its effect on the family; its effect on food ratios and natural resources with the economic implications; the influence of the use of contraceptives on codes of morality; its relation to prostitution are but a few of the phases touched upon. Warren Thompson, in the chapter on "Population," remarks that "if a continued decline in the birth rate is a desired end, it seems that the present mode of life can be little improved upon." He points out the numerous penalties placed upon parenthood in business; the difficulties of housing faced by parents with children; and the increase of urbanization with apartment house and restaurant existence. Hornell Hart in the same volume, after an analysis of the changing tides in reform sentiment, suggests that changes in sex attitudes, including birth control, may even be connected with such technological devices as the automobile. Substitution of scientific criteria for religious control tends also to favor family limitation.

The effect of organized reforms on social changes was omitted in the social trends study, but the importance of such efforts was often implied. In this connection it may be added that organized reform movements are irregularly aided or hindered by the progress of other social movement. Thus, the organized effort for eugenics, sex hygiene, maternal and child health, and the movements for outlawry of war, have unquestionably built up opinions which logically support birth control. A study of the American Birth Control League also shows that its members come from a social stratum which gives a disproportionate number of members to reform organizations of the type just named and further emphasizes the fact of the congeniality of such movements.

Yet there are not an unlimited number of ways in which the reformer's goals can be fitted into a complex social order. His task must be to gauge correctly the social trends, the deep, elemental changes of his time, and to gear his work to them.

F. M. VREELAND, DePauw University

THE FEDERAL HEARING

MOST of the people who attended the American 1 Conference on Birth Control and National Recovery held in Washington January 15-17 were of the same mind as far as the birth control idea is concerned. Naturally, there were differences of opinion and points of view on plans and proceedings, but fundamentally all present agreed upon the underlying principles of the need for judicious family planning. The situation was quite different at the Hearing which followed. A Bill designed to exempt the medical profession from the restrictions of the Federal Law was introduced in the House by Congressman Pierce of Oregon and came up for hearing before the Judiciary Committee on January 18 and 19. Here two opposing forces met, forces which varied in their fundamental ideas, in their viewpoints and outlook, in their total perspective. The resulting encounter was charged with tension and drama.

Oddly enough, those for and against birth control time and again used the same facts, but drew different conclusions. Rabbi Israel of Baltimore, speaking for the Bill, appealed on the basis of morality and the sanctity of marriage, the family and the home. "Marriage," he said, "must have a spiritual unity and beauty which can only exist when there is compatibility and freedom from worry. Birth control will abolish immorality and make for early marriage. A change in the law is necessary to preserve family life in the United States." The opposition urged the defeat of the bill on the basis of the same moral issues: It will destroy marriage and the family; it will lead to gross immorality and depravity; it will make marriage a bed of prostitution.

Professor Henry Pratt Fairchild, of New York University, appealed for the Bill on the ground that our present population growth is dysgenic. The more intelligent people, he said, are resorting to birth control measures while the underprivileged have less opportunity to obtain this knowledge. A wide dissemination of birth control information, which would result from the passage of the Bill, would serve to balance the present unequal population growth. Father Coughlin, of the opposition, admitting the evils of a differential birth rate, and deploring the fact that the Negroes, the Poles and the Italians are outnumbering the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic races in this country, nevertheless appealed for the defeat of the Bill on this very basis.

Dr. Fred J. Taussig, of Washington University, favored the Bill because he was of the opinion that the wider dissemination of birth control knowledge would be the most effective weapon in the control of abor-

tions, while a doctor of the opposition urged its defeat on the ground that it would "legalize abortion."

In speaking for the Bill, the writer mentioned the present menace of the commercialization of contraceptives in this country and stated that its passage was necessary in order that proper control and supervision could be instituted. Congresswoman Norton, speaking against the Bill, also mentioned the dangers of commercialization and appealed for the defeat of the Bill for this very reason.

Congressman Pierce urged everyone to read a recent article "Birth Control's Business Baby" in the New Republic so that they might realize how necessary this legislation is. The opposition also urged everyone to read this article in order to realize how dangerous the passage of this Bill would be!

Opposition to the Bill came almost entirely from Catholic sources and it was well organized. Men and women representing all kinds of Catholic organizations appeared before the Committee to express their disapproval - the Council of Catholic Women, the Catholic Alumnae, the Catholic Nurses, the Knights of Columbus, the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Knights of St. John, the Daughters of Isabella, etc., etc. And there was, above all, Father Coughlin. Father Coughlin was easily the "ace" of the opposition. Because of his wide radio following it was naturally assumed that his words would carry most weight with the Congressmen. If they did, however, this was not due to any logic or reason on the part of Father Coughlin; he managed to pervert completely the meaning and purpose of birth control.

It was he who said that "birth control would transform marriage into a bed of prostitution," implying that any man or woman who uses any measure for the prevention of conception is morally depraved. "The primal commandment," he stated, "is to increase and multiply. There are not enough hungry mouths in this country to consume the wheat we raise." Father Coughlin came out very strongly, as someone remarked, for the "free and unlimited coinage of babies." He constantly mingled his monetary theories with his opposition to birth control, and even managed to drag in the spectre of communism.

In the rebuttal Dr. Prentiss Willson of Washington answered incisively the statements made by Drs. Howard Kelly and Wm. A. Morgan of the opposition. He pointed out the inconsistencies of the American Medical Association's stand towards birth control and concluded with the statement that "the demand of the women of this Country is for birth control" and that those who are opposed to it "should bear in mind the experience

of King Canute when he told the tide not to come in."

In a brilliant closing speech, Margaret Sanger pointed out that the accusations of commercialization made against her were entirely unfounded, and that no one connected with her work is in any way associated with any commercial organization. She, herself, had been offered a quarter of a million dollars to broadcast on a program sponsored by the manufacturers of a certain chemical preparation which is used as a general disinfectant, and had refused because her broadcasting might have been construed as an endorsement of that particular product for contraceptive purposes. She stressed the fact that the passage of the Bill would not make it compulsory for anybody to employ birth control methods, and that those who are opposed to it on moral or religious grounds would be free to act according to the dictates of their conscience. She also pointed out that the advocacy by the Catholic Church of the "Safe Period" as a means for the prevention of conception is, in effect, an advocacy of birth control, differing only in the type of method advised. Relating the story of her life's work she urged the passage of the Bill for the benefit of the "Forgotten Woman" of America.

Politics, obscurantism, mediaevalism and superstition are still, no doubt, the controlling factors in the attitude of many of our legislators towards the problems of birth control. To those of us, however, who were present at the Hearings, it seemed that if the issue is to be decided upon the basis of facts, reason and social need, the Bill should unquestionably be favorably reported out of Committee.

HANNAH M. STONE, M.D.

Medical Director, Birth Control

Clinical Research Bureau

NUGGETS FROM THE CONFERENCE

The quotations which follow are taken from papers presented at the Washington Conference.

"It should be as easy and natural for a woman to consult her doctor about prevenception as about rheumatism. Notwithstanding the application of some outdated but unrepealed statutes, there is nothing more obscene about preventing conception than about preventing rickets. The legitimate reasonable need for contraceptive knowledge is just as common as marriage. In medical terms, the indication for contraceptive teaching is maternity. It should be routine during postpartum care to teach the mother protection against a prompt next pregnancy."

A. LOVETT DEWEES

"Birth Control constitutes an integral part of any rational economic system and opposition to it constitutes a tariff on the fit for the purpose of subsidizing the unfit."

JOSEPH J. SPENGLER

"The regulation of conception is a medical problem which should be handled by medical people and under medical supervision. Advances made in the study and understanding of factors regulating conception have aroused a tremendous amount of interest. Progress, rapidity and success are dependent upon continued study of these factors. Clinical and research findings should be put to some form of regular communication so that we may be familiar with work done by other men."

GEORGE LYFORD

"The economic crisis through which we are passing is bringing universal realization that the number of children which a family should have, is no longer merely a private or family matter to decide, but is essentially a community concern. Particularly is this true in the case of families on relief, since the community, city, state and nation, has to support their members out of the public treasury or community charity funds."

LEROY S. BOWMAN

"If at a time when we are carrying on relief between three and four million families, we are going to deny and to legally forbid these families the use of agencies and methods which will permit them sanely to control their reproduction in the light of their present circumstances, then we are rejecting the philosophy underlying man's ascent from the jungle. To deny to self-respecting families in distress the right of selfdetermination in the sacred function of bringing new life into the world seems just about inconceivable. What are the added effects upon these families of having new babies when they are on public relief? This, in turn, leads to the larger question: What of the sex relationships between husband and wife in these normal, selfrespecting families, now on public relief? Shall they add further to their misery and their imposition upon the public treasury by having children at its expense, or shall they become the celibates of the New Deal? Apparently, our leaders are unwilling to face this question, or to permit these families legally to consider it."

JAMES H. S. BOSSARD

"It is in the preparation of the children today for the world of tomorrow that the birth control movement finds its highest aspiration. Not in limitation, but in preparation of the children do we find our goal. Our endeavor is to create a population which by its skill, ability and efficiency, by its flexibility and receptiveness in the face of new conditions, will be able to keep its lead."

T. WINGATE TODD

"The decrease in the size of the family is generally admitted to be due very largely to the use of contraceptives. Young people with limited income, knowing that they can have some control over the size of their future family, are more willing to marry than they would be if they knew that marriage would almost surely entail additional economic burdens in the form of children."

WILLIAM F. OGBURN

"Most visibly we need birth control, to protect the health of the mother and that of the children; to conserve the strength of the father also, that he need not have more to provide for than he is able; to ensure better living conditions for the family; and in a larger social responsibility to so guard our numbers as to end forever that deadly 'pressure of population' which is the one perpetual cause of war."

CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

Proceedings of the medical and biological sessions of the Conference will be issued by the National Committee on Federation Legislation for Birth Control, and may be ordered from that organization at 1343 H Street, N.W., Washington, D. C.

A CORRECTION

The resolution on contraceptive supplies printed in the February Review was inaccurately worded. It should read as follows:

WHEREAS, The manufacture of contraceptive articles is increasing, and

WHEREAS, contraception is an increasingly important medical problem requiring medical supervision, and

WHEREAS, under the present laws there is no possibility of supervision of contraceptive manufacture, be it

RESOLVED, that a central scientific committee consisting of prominent physicians, biologists, and other scientists, be organized to formulate standards for the manufacture, advertising and testing of contraceptive products.

This resolution was adopted by the American Conference on Birth Control and National Recovery and by the American Birth Control League at its annual meeting.

NEWS FROM MASSACHUSETTS

The Birth Control League of Massachusetts has sent the following letter to the chairmen of all Welfare Committees throughout the State:

You must realize only too clearly in these times the tragedy that the conception of another child would bring to each family you are trying to help where the number of children is already overtaxing the physical powers of the mother or where want and ill-health threaten the existence of the family life. Family limitation, by medically sound means, would go far toward lifting the mental, physical and economic burden of these people.

These mothers need instruction in control of conception. They have a right to this instruction. There is no Massachusetts law nor Federal law which denies this right. Ninety percent of the Protestant Churches of Massachusetts have voiced their approval of birth control.

The Catholic Church of Rome has taken a similar stand in the encyclical of Pope Pius XI dated December 31, 1930, which says: "Nor are those considered as acting against nature who in their married life use their right in the proper manner, although on account of natural reasons of time or of certain defects, new life cannot be brought forth." The two churches differ only in the manner or means of control, but not on the fundamental need nor the divine and human right.

One of the Catholic methods of Birth Control is stated in *The Rhythm*, "published with Ecclesiastical Approbation."

The Protestant Church goes further and approves the use of the most modern, safe and sure contraceptive means known to the medical profession. For the majority of married women who seek to keep the family together, the use of such means is a necessity.

If your Committee wishes to consider the Catholic method, it may be procured with *The Rhythm* device, patented in the U. S. Jan. 1934, from the Latz Foundation, Box 752, Republic Bldg., Chicago, Ill., or *The Rhythm* may be bought from T. J. Flynn & Co., Church Supply Business, 64 Essex Street, Boston, Massachusetts. We do not recommend that method because, to the best of our knowledge from medical advisors, it has not been proven to be sure or practical.

If you wish to inform any of these married women about the safe and tested method, the Birth Control League of Massachusetts will be glad to give you the name of the nearest reputable doctor, who is trained to give this service for medical reasons, and willing to do so for economic reasons because of the existing

emergency. Or, if necessary, we will arrange to have such a physician go to your town as soon as possible, for consultation.

Many families who are just making ends meet now, will be on your welfare lists in another year if one or more babies are added. To conceive unwanted children who could not have even the necessities of life and whose mothers would lack prenatal, confinement and postnatal care except at public expense, is a shocking addition to the sum of human misery.

At this time when people are trying to raise huge sums of money for public relief, will you make this far-reaching and vital contribution to the National Recovery program — that of making available to every married couple, if they wish it, the knowledge of how to space the conception of their children?

BLANCHE AMES AMES

For the Welfare Committee of the

Birth Control League of Massachusetts

PUERTO RICO'S PROBLEM

It is a pressing actuality. We have only to consider official vital statistics to be convinced of this. In the calendar year 1931 the birth rate in the Island was 41.7 per thousand, the death rate 20.4 per thousand, the net population increase 33,554 persons, and the density of population on July 1, 1932 was 485.5 persons per square mile. For 1932 (calendar year) the birth rate was 41.5 per thousand, the death rate 22.3 per thousand, the net population increase 30,822 persons and the density on July 1, 1933 was 472.7 per square mile.

Puerto Rico is an agricultural island, much of it mountainous. Abject poverty is the perennial lot of great numbers of the people and unemployment is chronic. Conditions which have existed for years must excite (and quite properly) the active interest and sympathy of any person with humane and civilized instincts, but many well meaning people fail to see that with a continued increase in population, there is not the remotest hope of making prevail an average standard of living which can be called satisfactory. Improvements in agriculture, new industries, etc., never catch up with the constantly augmenting population. As happens in most places, the highest birth rate is among those classes least desirable from a social, economic and eugenic standpoint.

The depression is not the cause of all the trouble in Puerto Rico today. It has affected us as it has affected the world, though perhaps to a less degree. Most of our economic trouble, the greater part of social ills and even our health problems go back inevitably to the basic question of how to take care of nearly 500 people per square mile. Tuberculosis is here an economic disease, as is also hookworm and to a less extent malaria. The vicious circle of poverty, high birth rate, inefficient and poorly paid labor, more poverty, must be broken somewhere before this Island can truly be the "Isle of Enchantment," it is frequently called because of its scenic beauties and pleasant climate.

JAMES R. BEVERLEY, Ex-Governor of Puerto Rico

POSITIVE EUGENICS

BIRTH control must have as one of its purposes the prevention of a further decline of the hereditary capacities of the human species. Reference to any recent issue of the Census Bureau's Birth, Stillbirth and Infant Mortality Statistics for the Birth Registration Area of the United States impresses one anew with the well-known fact that in the occupations wherein required skill is great, birth rates are low; whereas in occupations requiring little skill and little native capacity, birth rates are high.

As an average, approximately twice as many children are born of unaccomplished persons as are born of the accomplished. Possibly the practice of contraception will eventually reach down far enough to decrease, in some measure, the unsocial disproportion in births. Let us hope so. But there is a risk that contraception will not soon enough forestall the intellectual bankruptcy of humanity; and that, as one far-reaching result, the democratic solution of social problems will have utterly vanished long before there is an approach to equal birth rates.

It seems imperative, if we would maintain present average capacities, that the present methods of birth control by contraception and sterilization be supplemented by measures to increase the birth rates among the accomplished. We must examine our folkways. We must weigh new proposals with a caution against too much worship of earlier organization. We must be open-minded, and alert. We must prepare for various experiments in positive eugenics.

Elmer Pendell,
Pennsylvania State College

Have you friends who might be interested in seeing a copy of the Review? Send us their names.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE EUGENIC PREDICAMENT, by S. J. Holmes. Harcourt Brace, New York. 1933. \$2.00.

THIS is one of the sanest, well-informed popular books—in the best sense of the word, popular—ever published on eugenics in any language. Every birth control organization that has a circulating library, every leader of discussion groups should possess it. The author not only knows the recent technical literature, but he presents his case in a clear, readable fashion, the supporting statistics appearing in appendices. Many discussions of eugenics lack scholarly judgment; but here we have it in full flowering.

There are chapters on "The Heredity of Superior Ability," on "The Sources of the Birth Supply," and on "Natural Selection." In Chapter VI Dr. Holmes so devastatingly exposes the fallacies of certain prominent but illogical critics of eugenics as to leave one wondering what will become of their scientific reputations if this book should be widely read. But it is a fair assumption that the same errors will bob up again and again; such is the vitality of error when approved by strongly-held sentiments. The book ends on a constructive note as to what can be done in the present impasse.

NORMAN E. HIMES, Colgate University

BIRTH CONTROL IN PRACTICE, by Marie E. Kopp. Robert M. McBride, New York. 1934. \$3.75.

THE materials for life as interpreted through chemistry and physics find a far easier reception from the public than the facts relating to the very fabric of our life itself. Biologists have scarcely as yet accustomed themselves to the discharge of their evident responsibility in relaying to the public all new knowledge of practical significance as it is acquired. To a certain extent this is understandable though not excusable. There is a personal aspect about biology which does not appear in chemistry or physics. In the beginning however it has always been sentiment that has required this service of science and sentiment, with increasing directness, compels reluctant science to share her knowledge and discoveries in every field.

Miss Kopp's volume records the experience of one center devoted to eugenics in its most practical aspect, namely the bearing of children only under conditions which predispose to mental and physical health and a favorable environment. Other centers may produce results differing in detail: but the implication of

these data is clear. The safeguarding of conditions of birth appeals ever more powerfully as our cultural level rises and is now vocal and insistent in all classes of responsible society. Sentiment has almost won.

T. WINGATE TODD,
Director, Brush Foundation

BOOKS RECEIVED

APPLIED EUGENICS, by Paul Popenoe and Roswell Hill Johnson. *Macmillan*, N. Y. \$2.60 (revised edition).

BIRTH CONTROL IN PRACTICE, by Marie E. Kopp. Robert McBride, N. Y. \$3.75.

HEREDITY AND ENVIRONMENT, studies in the Genesis of Psychological Characteristics, by Gladys C. Schwesinger. *Macmillan*, N. Y. \$4.00.

MENTAL HYGIENE IN THE COMMUNITY, by Clara Bassett. Macmillan, N. Y. \$3.50.

SEX HABITS: A Vital Factor in Well-being, by Drs. A. Buschke and F. Jacobsohn. *Emerson Books*, N. Y. \$2.50.

THE SINGLE WOMAN, by Robert Latou Dickinson, M.D. and Lura Beam. Williams and Wilkins, Baltimore. \$5.00.

HUMAN SEX ANATOMY, by Robert L. Dickinson, M.D. Williams and Wilkins, Baltimore. \$10.00. (For Physicians only.)

"Lack of exact knowledge of many important fundamentals in anatomy and physiology has handicapped the scientific study of the sex life... The new Atlas deals with the pelvic organs and their psysiological activities as science deals with every other region of the body."

SPECIAL MEETING

A Special Meeting of the American Birth Control League will be held at 10 A.M. on Thursday, March 8th, at the Bank of the Manhattan Company, Madison Avenue at 64th Street, New York, for the purpose of amending the By-Laws. Changes are proposed effecting principally Section III, Membership Associations and Section IV, Dues.

A pamphlet The Next Step Forward, describing the work of the American Birth Control League and its program, is just off the press. Complimentary copies may be had on request.

A new Book List of up-to-date and authoritative books and pamphlets on birth control and related subjects is now ready. Send for a copy and order your books through our Book Department.

\$39,600 NEEDED TO CARRY ON IN 1934

Organization

To increase the number of birth control clinics by:

- 1. Forming new state leagues in unorganized states and assisting in their development.\$11,685
- 2. Aiding existing state leagues to strengthen and expand their present work 5,560

The main requirement is competent field work.

Medical

To continue and extend co-operative service to medical societies and schools, hospitals, physicians, etc., including distribution of outline of contraceptive technique, under the direction of the League's Medical Director

8,25

Educational

To support the above activities through adequate publicity; to publish the BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW, important reports, leaflets, newspaper and magazine articles, etc.; and to develop the much needed bureau of information and reference

6,925

National Headquarters

The League is entirely dependent on voluntary contributions, including those which may be received from affiliated state leagues. It has no endowment, no assured income from any source.

FROM BIRTH CONTROL TO EUGENICS

THAT we want to get rid of most of all is the miserable social problem group, which is a fertile source of so much of our human wreckage and failure. If charity officers, social workers, physicians, and others in touch with people of this kind would exert their influence to induce these people to go to birth control clinics where the necessary information and devices would be furnished free of cost, much might be done to limit the propagation of a class which it would not be feasible to segregate or subject to compulsory sterilization. Many of this group would doubtless be only too glad to stop having children if it could be done without taking too much trouble or costing any money. Unfortunately the technique of contraception is not entirely foolproof, and moreover, some of the more shiftless and improvident would continue to procreate children through sheer negligence and inertia, but a large proportion of those who should not have children might

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MATERNAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF MISSOURI 4817A Delmar Blvd., St. Louis

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PENNSYLVANIA BIRTH CONTROL FEDERATION 1700 Walnut Street, Philadelphia

RHODE ISLAND BIRTH CONTROL LEAGUE 168 N. Main Street, Providence

VIRGINIA BIRTH CONTROL LEAGUE 2023 Monument Ave., Richmond be led to limit their families if doctors, social workers, and I should like to add priests and ministers—all those who stand in the relation of guide, philosopher, and friend to these struggling souls—were to give them the benefit of their judicious counsel.

Eugenic education, I am convinced, cannot fail to be of service in positive eugenics. Many people are seriously concerned over the probable quality of their future offspring. Students of biology have not infrequently told me that their attitude towards marriage and having children had been radically changed as a result of what they had learned about heredity. Most intelligent young people who are contemplating marriage have at least the intent to choose wisely, and they usually want a number of healthy and intelligent children, although of course not too many. There are good reasons for believing that a little knowledge of heredity makes them more discriminating in the choice of a life partner.

Sexual selection is a means by which ideals of manhood and womanhood may, in a measure, effect their own realization. If such selection is to achieve its best results these ideals should be high and widely prevalent. The education of our youth should include the knowledge which would prepare them to make the proper choice in marriage, not merely on account of the happiness of the contracting parties, but for the sake of the children which may result from the union. Galton has remarked: "The passion of love seems so overpowering that it may be thought folly to try to direct its course. But plain facts do not confirm this view. Social influences of all kinds have immense power in the end, and they are very various. If unsuitable marriages from the eugenic point of view were banned socially, or even regarded with the unreasonable disfavor which some

attach to cousin marriages, very few would be made."
S. J. Holmes,

University of California

-From "The Eugenic Predicament."

RECENT MAGAZINE ARTICLES ON BIRTH CONTROL

BIRTH CONTROL, by C. C. Little, Scientific American, September, 1933.

BIRTH CONTROLLERS ON PARADE. Time, January 20, 1934.

BIRTH CONTROL'S BUSINESS BABY, by Elizabeth H. Garrett. The New Republic, January 17, 1934.

Do You Believe in Birth Control? by Mildred Adams. Delineator, September, 1933.

Modern Trends in Birth Control, by Stella Hanau. Junior League Magazine, February, 1934.

POPULATION AND PEACE, by Guy Irving Burch. Tomorrow, The Human Outlook, March, 1934.

Symposium on Birth Control. Practitioner (England), September, 1933.

THE AMERICAN FATHER OF BIRTH CONTROL, by Robert E. Riegel. The New England Quarterly, September, 1933.

THE QUESTION OF STERILIZATION. Readers Digest, November, 1933 (Summary of Sterilization Number of Birth Control Review).

Washington Conference, by Stella Hanau. The Nation, January 31, 1934.

Woman of the Future, by Margaret Sanger. Unity, (Chicago), November 27, 1933.

BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

Published monthly by the American Birth Control League, Inc. 689 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Vol. I, No. 6 (New Series)

MARCH, 1934

Sent to all members of the American Birth Control League and affiliated State Leagues

THE aim of the American Birth Control League is to promote constructive birth control, or birth selection, in the United States. The first need is to make scientific contraceptive information generally available: that is, both to those who can afford a private physician and those who cannot.

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August 17, 1934

My dear Dr. Silver:

Knowing of your interest in birth control, it occurred to us that you might like to see the enclosed pamphlets which describe our work and the attitude of religious bodies toward it.

With from ten to thirty per cent of our communities on direct relief, social workers are writing to us constantly to learn how contraceptive advice may be made available to mothers with large families who, for health and economic reasons, should not bear additional children at this time.

To safeguard the dissemination of this advice, it is imperative that ministers, doctors and others who mold public opinion and minister to the needs of the community assume leadership. Only in this way can we hope to counteract exploitation of the public and the indiscriminate spreading of birth control information by the unscrupulous.

We shall welcome suggestions from you regarding our program.

Sincerely yours.

S

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and the Officers

"Birth Control Comes of Age"

A DINNER TO COMMEMORATE THE

21st Anniversary of the Birth Control Movement in America

February 12, 1935

MAYFLOWER HOTEL

WASHINGTON, D. C. January 3, 1935

Room 1204 1343 H Street N. W. Washington, D. C. National 4780

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Dear Rabbi Silver:

I have been advised by Mrs. Margaret Sanger of your assistance to her last January in permitting the use of your name as a Sponsor of the AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON BIRTH CONTROL AND NATIONAL RECOVERY.

I am writing to ask if you will aid the efforts of this Committee in a similar way by allowing us to include your name among a list of approximately 500 civic leaders representing every State, who will sponsor a public dinner to be held in Washington, D. C., on February 12th, to commemorate the 21st ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH CONTROL MOVE-MENT IN AMERICA.

With 4,000,000 families on relief and over 233,000 children born into these homes during the past year, the need for making birth control information accessible to all classes is obvious. With the recent endorsement by the Episcopal Church and other conservative groups, we feel that the long fight to amend the present Federal laws should be - and must be - successfully completed during the present session of Congress.

There is no obligation of any kind entailed in your acceptance, although my Committee hopes you may also find it possible to attend the dinner.

Among those who have already consented to serve as Sponsors are Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, Dr. John Haynes Holmes, Mr. George Blumenthal, Mr. Hubert Herring, Rev. Karl Reiland, Mrs. Otto Kahn, Rabbi Sidney Goldstein, Dr. A. A. Brill, Rev. Russell J. Clinchy, Mrs. Felix Fuld, Prof. E. A. Ross, Dr. S. Adolphus Knopf, Mr. Robert J. Caldwell, Mr. Morris Ernst, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Prof. E. M. East, Mr. Kermit Roosevelt and Dr. Hendrik van Loon.

A return envelope is enclosed for your convenience. May we hear from you soon?

Lo Cordially your,

CHAIRMAN DINNER COMMITTEE

JBH/R

January 7, 1935. Mrs. J. Borden Harriman, 1343 H. Stret, N.W., Washington, D.C. My dear Mrs. Harriman: In reply to your kind letter of January 3, permit me to say that you may include my name among the list of men who are to sponsor the anniversary dinner on February 12. Very sincerely yours. AHS: BK

AMERICAN BIRTH CONTROL LEAGUE, INC.

· 515 MADISON AVENUE ·

· NEW YORK CITY ·

Wickersham 2-8600

Room 912

May 13, 1935

My dear Dr. Silver:

To the enclosed formal acknowledgment card, may I not add a word of thanks from all of us for your contribution to the American Birth Control League.

It is most encouraging in these difficult days to feel that you are interested in this constructive and much needed work.

Sincerely yours,

Comelia Gromwell

Mrs. Frederic Cromwell Treasurer

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Moral Aspects of Birth Control

Some Recent Pronouncements of Religious Bodies

- The Committee on Marriage and the Home of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America
- The Lambeth Conference of Bishops of the Church of England
- The General Council of Congregational and Christian Churches
- The Universalist General Convention
- The Unitarian Association
- The Central Conference of American Rabbis
- The New York East Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church
- A Special Committee of the Women's Problems Group of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends

Committee on Marriage and the Home of the

Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America

105 East Twenty-second Street

New York City

1934

"The problems related to maternal health as affected by child-bearing, and the whole subject of the spacing of children and limitation of the size of families, which has unfortunately become involved in acrimonious controversy, should be re-examined dispassionately, from the point of view of morality and hygiene, with due regard to the best means of maintaining desirable standards of living and fully discharging the fundamental obligations of parents to each other and to their children."

A statement adopted by the quadrennial meeting of the Federal Council of Churches, 1932.

THE STATEMENT BY THE FEDERAL COUNCIL'S COMMITTEE ON MARRIAGE AND THE HOME, 1931

"Birth control is nearing the status of a recognized procedure in preventive and curative medicine. Knowledge of contraceptives is also widely disseminated, and the question of their use has become one of great social importance. The public therefore has a right to expect guidance from the church on the moral aspects.

"In conception we are in the presence of the wonder and mystery of the beginnings of human life. In this mystery the two mates, knowingly or unknowingly, are acting creatively with God. When so understood, the circumstances and incidents of conception, growth and finally of birth are astonishing manifestations of divine power, and inexpressibly beautiful. To be a mother is seen to be the supreme fulfillment of womanhood, as to be a father is of manhood. It becomes apparent, also, why sex relations are guarded as by a flaming sword, why prostitution is abhorrent to the conscience of mankind, and why the instinct of the race regards intercourse between unmarried persons as immoral and anti-social. A man, said Christ, expressing the pure ideal, is not to harbor the thought of adultery in his heart.

"But in the sex relations between husband and wife we are also in the presence of another mystery. 'From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female,' said our Lord. 'For this cause,' He continued, 'shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh.' We have here the passing of shame and the realization of the meaning of sex in the divine economy, which make the union of the two mates a supreme expression of their affection and comradeship. These relations, therefore, have their source in the thought and purpose of God, first for the creation of human life, but also as a manifestation of divine concern for the happiness of those who have so wholly merged their lives.

"The moral problems of birth control have to do with these two functions of sex. They arise in connection with the spacing of children, the limitation of the number of offspring, the safeguarding of the health and ofttimes of the lives of mother and child, on the one hand; and, on the other, they arise in considering the rightfulness of intercourse in itself without the purpose of children, and consequently the rightfulness of the use of contraceptives.

"Physicians have long known that under certain physical conditions of the mother, pregnancy is hazardous to mother and child, and that large numbers of women are so imperilled. Although there are few women who do not desire children, the fear of untimely pregnancy rests as a recurring anxiety upon most married women for two decades after their marriage. Even with a healthy mother and a

sound inheritance of bodily and mental vigor on both sides, too frequent and too numerous pregnancies are to be avoided, as undermining the mother's health and as taking her from the care of her living children. When the mother is not entirely well and the endowment is not of the best, spacing and limitations are the more necessary.

"Economic considerations also enter into most cases, and in families where the mother must work outside the home the question of the number of children and of the intervals between them is most acute. Very large families tend to produce poverty, to endanger the health and stability of the family, to limit the educational opportunities of the children, to overstrain the mother and to take from her her own chance for a life larger than the routine of her home.

"The problems of overpopulation are also involved in the consideration of birth control. While overpopulation, with its consequent lowering of living standards and provocation to war, is not likely to become a general condition in this country for a considerable period, and, with the development of science and more Christian standards of production and distribution, may never become so acute as in many countries of the Old World, it is nevertheless now pressing upon great numbers of homes in which the family is too large or the income inadequate.

"As to the necessity, therefore, for some form of effective control of the size of the family and spacing of children, and consequently of control of conception, there can be no question. It is recognized by all churches and all physicians.

"There is general agreement also that sex union between husbands and wives as an expression of mutual affection, without relation to procreation, is right. This is recognized by the Scriptures, by all branches of the Christian church, by social and medical science, and by the good sense and idealism of mankind.

"As to the method of control of conception, two ways are possible. One is the use of contraceptives, or methods other than abstinence, which may be classified as such. The other is self-control or abstinence for longer or shorter periods of time. Both may be considered as forms of birth control.

"As to the rightfulness of the use of contraceptives, Christian opinion is not united. The problem in its present form is a new one. The Scriptures and the ecumenical councils of the Christian church are silent upon the subject. The Church of Rome inflexibly opposes the use of contraceptives as contrary to Christian morals. In the Anglican communion opinion is sharply divided, as indicated by the fact that at the Lambeth Conference of 1930 the resolution approving birth control under certain conditions was the only vote during the conference which indicated division of opinion upon a question of fundamental importance. It is known that opinion in the churches of the United States is divided, as is also the medical pro-

fession, but nobody knows as yet the prevailing opinion. Under the circumstances, the problem requires unprejudiced study, and guidance should be sought from the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life. It should be expected that guidance will find expression through the researches and experience of physicians and men of science as well as through the corporate conscience of the church.

"Whatever the final conclusion may be, the committee is strongly of the opinion that the church should not seek to impose its point of view as to the use of contraceptives upon the public by legislation or any other form of coercion; and especially should not seek to prohibit physicians from imparting such information to those who in the judgment of the medical profession are entitled to receive it.

"So far, the Committee on Marriage and the Home is in agreement. But at this point it has been found necessary to express divergent views. Perhaps such honest differences, frankly expressed, may have compensating value in helping Christian people to face the issues involved, especially since they mirror also the perplexity in the public mind.

"A majority of the committee holds that the careful and restrained use of contraceptives by married people is valid and moral. They take this position because they believe that it is important to provide for the proper spacing of children, the control of the size of the family, and the protection of mothers and children; and because intercourse between the mates, when an expression of their spiritual union and affection, is right in itself. They are of the opinion that abstinence within marriage, except for the few, cannot be relied upon to meet these problems, and under ordinary conditions is not desirable in itself.

"But they cannot leave this statement without further comment. They feel obliged to point out that present knowledge of birth control is incomplete, and that an element of uncertainty, although it is small, still remains. More serious is the fact that all methods are as yet more or less subject to personal factors for their effectiveness. Married couples should keep these facts in mind and welcome children, should they come.

"The public should be warned also against advertised nostrums, which are beginning to appear in thinly disguised forms in reputable periodicals, and so-called 'bootlegged' devices at drug stores, for which there is no guarantee of safety against injury or of suitableness for individual cases. It is essential to consult the family physician or to go to established clinics or health centers for information or assistance.

"That serious evils, such as extra-marital sex relations, may be increased by a general knowledge of contraceptives must be recognized. Such knowledge, however, is already widely disseminated, often in unfortunate ways, and will

soon be universally known. Guided by the past experience of the race as to the effects of scientific discovery upon human welfare, we should expect that so revolutionary a discovery as control of conception would carry dangers as well as benefits. Society faces a new problem of control with each fresh advance of knowledge. If men generally cannot properly use the knowledge they acquire, there is no safety and no guarantee of the future. These members of the committee believe that the undesirable use of contraceptives will not be indulged in by most people, and that if the influence of religion and education is properly developed the progress of knowledge will not outrun the capacity of mankind for self-control. But if the sex impulse and the use of contraceptives are to be kept under moral control, the church and society, including parents, must give greater attention to the education and character building of youth and to the continued education of adult opinion.

"A minority of the committee believes that sufficient stress has not been laid upon the idealistic character of the teachings of Jesus concerning marriage and its obligations. His sayings concerning divorce seemed 'hard' to the Disciples. They said to Him, 'If the case of a man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.' His answer was, 'All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.' In another connection He said, 'With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.' The command governing all cases of conflicting duties is the command of the absolute: 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.'

"In view of the widespread doubt among Christian people of the morality of the use of contraceptives, and the scruples experienced by many in making use of them, it appears to these members of the committee to be the plain duty of the Christian church, when control of conception is necessary, to uphold the standard of abstinence as the ideal, recognizing it as a counsel of perfection, and that Christian morals are much more exalted than is generally supposed. But they would point out that the grace of God is sufficient for those who are conscious of a difficult and high vocation; and that we have as yet but touched the fringes of spiritual power which is all about us like God's gifts of air and sunshine. Those who adventure and trust are rewarded, and they know the joy and strength which accompany all victories of the spirit.

"The method of abstinence is therefore to be used to meet conditions and situations in which otherwise contraceptives would be necessary. This does not mean that sexrelations between married people as an expression of mutual affection are wrong, but they are to be denied when childbearing is hazardous to the well-being of mother or child or the household. That this is possible is shown

by the large number of unmarried people who lead chaste lives, and by the number of married couples who practice self-control at all times and abstinence when necessary.

"Finally, the entire committee unites in calling attention, and most earnestly, to the importance of a spiritual adjustment of the physical relations between husbands and wives. All natural desires, however sound and wholesome, must be kept within bounds. If this applies to eating and drinking, how much more to the fateful and powerful impulse of sex. If marriage centers upon sex indulgence, it is sure to result in unhappiness and usually in disaster. A high degree of self-control, especially during the early years of married life when marital habits are forming, is necessary to the happiness of the mates and the spiritual life of the home.

"To attain this command of the sex impulse, and this mutual and sensitive consideration for one another, husbands and wives are urged to keep ever in mind that marriage is a divine institution and that they are cooperating with God in their union and in the conception and rearing of children. Their personal relations are therefore sacred and in the divine care. These relations are always at their best when the two live together in the daily consciousness of the presence of God. Things they might not be able to accomplish unaided are abundantly possible through His help.

"If marriage is recognized as a divine institution, if God is an unseen presence in the home, if the child has its great place in marriage, if sex experiences are kept as a mutual expression of comradeship and affection, then marriage becomes the happiest, the noblest and the most enduring of human relationships."

LAMBETH CONFERENCE, 1930

"We now pass on to consider one of the most urgent and perplexing problems of our day, the decline of the birth rate throughout the civilized world. This is largely due to the increasing use of methods which are deliberately adopted to limit the size of the family. We strongly denounce the practice of abortion which has as its aim the destruction of life which has already come into being. It is contrary to the law of God and of man. We have reason to know that the sale of drugs designed to procure abortion is large. These always are, we believe, harmful to the woman and also to the child if it survives. Their use, like all other methods of abortion, is sinful and ought to be regarded with abhorrence by all right-minded people.

"There is no doubt, however, that the diminution of the birth rate in modern times by 50 per cent is mainly due to the knowledge and use of methods which prevent conception. These methods are now widely used in every class of society. There are many who advocate them as the solution of social and personal problems, there are

others who condemn them as sinful, there are many who are sorely perplexed as to the legitimacy of their use. We feel, therefore, bound to give troubled consciences some guidance on this matter.

"It must be recognized that there is in the Catholic Church a very strong tradition that the use of preventive methods is in all cases unlawful for a Christian. We acknowledge the weight of that testimony, but we are unable to accept that tradition as necessarily final. It must be admitted that it is not founded on any directions given in the New Testament. It has not behind it the authority of any Ecumenical Council of the church. Moreover, it is significant that the communion which most strongly condemns in principle all preventive methods, nevertheless in practice recognizes that there are occasions when a rigid insistence on the principle is impossible. If our own communion is to give guidance on this problem, it must speak frankly and openly, with a full appreciation of facts and conditions which were not present in the past, but which are due to modern civilization.

"We are convinced that many of the results which have followed from the use of the discovery of more effective methods are very grave. They have encouraged illicit intercourse among the unmarried by removing the fear of consequences. They have been frequently used to avoid the responsibilities of parenthood and as a means of escaping from the self-control which should be exercised in married as well as in single life. They have become a danger to many civilized nations by a disproportionate reduction of their best stocks. We think that some of those who are most active in the advocacy of birth control do not give sufficient weight to these considerations.

"It will be admitted by all that there are circumstances in married life which justify, and even demand, the limitation of the family by *some* means. The church is concerned with the moral principles which must govern all such limitation. There are certain principles which must always be axiomatic for Christians. These principles are to be discerned in loyalty to Christ, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, whose strength is sufficient for all human needs.

"It is axiomatic that parenthood is for married people the foremost duty; to evade or disregard that duty must always be wrong. It is equally axiomatic that the state of marriage is a divinely ordered relationship in which intercourse between man and woman calls for the highest exercise of the Christian virtues of self-discipline, self-control and self-sacrifice. There are multitudes of married people who have found in that mutual sacrifice a bond of deeper unity as well as an ever-increasing moral strength. It follows, therefore, that it can never be right to make pleasure or self-indulgence the motive for determining to limit or refuse parenthood. Equally it can never be right for intercourse to take place which might lead to conception, where a birth would involve grave danger to the

health, even to the life, of the mother, or would inflict upon the child to be born a life of suffering; or where the mother would be prematurely exhausted, and additional children would render her incapable of carrying out her duties to the existing family.

"The primary and most obvious way of dealing with such circumstances as seem to make the limitation of parenthood obligatory is total abstinence from intercourse, even it may be for long periods. Such abstinence brings with it to those who claim and receive divine grace the opportunity for the highest exercise of Christian love and self-denial.

"Yet there exist moral situations which may make it obligatory to use other methods. To a certain extent this obligation is affected by the advice of medical and scientific authority. But in all such cases, as in those where abstinence is the way chosen, the final decision must still be determined by reference to the spiritual ends for which marriage was ordained; and the attainment of these still calls for the same exhibition of Christian self-discipline and virtue. Each couple must decide for themselves, as in the sight of God, after the most careful and conscientious thought, and, if perplexed in mind, after taking competent advice, both medical and spiritual.

"In our judgment the question which they should put to themselves is this: Would conception be for any reason wrong? If it would clearly be wrong, and if there is good moral reason why the way of abstinence should not be followed, we cannot condemn the use of scientific methods to prevent conception, which are thoughtfully and conscientiously adopted.

"Other reasons are often urged for the use of such methods—circumstances of income, housing and education, are all advanced in justification. These need careful scrutiny. We are unable to accept conception control as the right solution of unsatisfactory social and economic conditions which ought to be changed by the influence of Christian public opinion.

"Plainly we cannot provide a complete list of circumstances affording a good moral reason for avoiding conception. But as it seems to us the principle involved is this: Children are the primary end of the intercourse to which marriage leads. Married people do wrong when they refuse to have children whom they could train to serve God and add to the strength of the nation. But intercourse has also a secondary end within the natural sacrament of marriage. Where for any morally sound reason the first end is to be ruled out, it does not necessarily follow that the secondary end must be ruled out also, provided that self-control is exercised, and husband and wife have truly examined their consciences upon the matter.

"In all these matters of sex, self-deception is all too easy. Let none forget that in this as in all relationships of life Christ calls to a heroism to which by His power His servants can attain."

General Council of Congregational and Christian Churches — 1931

"Resolved that the General Council of Congregational and Christian Churches endorse the majority report of this Seminar, entitled, "The Moral Aspects of Birth Control," of the Committee on Marriage and the Home of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, issued on March 21st, 1931, as a constructive and prophetic statement of Christian morality, and recommend this report to our churches for study and dissemination."

By vote this resolution was amended to include the following finding by the Seminar (11, Referred to as finding III, Voluntary Child-Bearing.)

"Recognizing the moral and spiritual values inherent in and arising from the relation of marriage and the institution of the home, we believe the church has an important and inescapable responsibility for the creation and support of intelligent, high-minded and Christian standards for these fundamental human values.

"We believe in the ideal of marriage as the complete union of one man and one woman, who, forsaking all others, give themselves wholly unto each other. This ideal, we are convinced, cannot be realized without mutuality and freedom resulting from physical and spiritual oneness. We believe in the right of children to be wanted and the right of husbands and wives to assume parenthood. Therefore, we favor the principle of voluntary child-bearing, believing that it sacramentalizes physical union and safeguards the well being of the family and society."

Universalist General Convention, 1929

"It is our obligation as sentient beings to recognize the facts of life which growing experience reveals. It is our added duty, as members of a religious body that proclaims religion as an exalted way of living, to deal with these facts in a consecrated fashion, and use them to highest ends.

"Your Committee was appointed to investigate the relationship between religious living and the practice of birth control. In a survey of the field we find that the control of conception is not a theory which we may accept or reject, but is actually one of the most important facts of modern life, giving to man the power to control the future of the race.

"Misconceptions as to the purpose of birth control largely grow out of the confusion of contraception with abortion and obscene practices, which arose through the passage of the Comstock laws by Congress and 24 states in 1873. These laws prohibited the transmission of all contraceptive knowledge, although contraception itself is not illegal, and medical science and obscenity were included in one ill-considered prohibition.

"Birth control is the prevention of conception only, and is not the destruction of embryonic life, which is abortion. It involves the conscious control of procreation, with resultant important bearings on social and individual life.

"This committee finds that birth control is one of the most practicable means of race betterment, and hereby recommends:

- "1. That this Convention urge the immediate repeal of such federal and state laws as interfere with the prescription of contraception by physicians; and
- "2. That where legal barriers do not exist, socially minded persons be urged to establish in every center of population clinics where those needing it may receive contraceptive advice under medical supervision."

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION, 1930

"Whereas, It is becoming increasingly clear that, in the interest of social betterment, racial progress and a more wholesome family life, parenthood should be undertaken with due regard for the mother's health and the children's welfare, both physical and moral, be it therefore,

"Resolved, That the American Unitarian Association recommends to its constituent churches and members an earnest consideration of the fundamental social, economic and eugenic importance of birth control to the end that they may support all reasonable efforts in their communities for the promotion of the birth control movement."

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS, 1929

"Recognizing the need of exercising great caution in dealing with the delicate and complicated problem of birth regulation in view of the widespread dissolution of the old sanctions affecting the institution of marriage and the ties of family life; earnestly desiring to guard against playing into the hands of those who would undermine the dignity and sanctity of these precious bonds through reckless notions and practices having to do with sex relations; especially mindful of the noble tradition obtaining among the Jewish people with respect to the holiness and the crucial importance of domestic relations; but realizing at the same time the many serious evils caused by uncontrolled parenthood among those who lack the prerequisites of health and a reasonable measure of economic resources and intelligence to give to their children the heritage to which they are entitled;

"We, the Central Conference of the American Rabbis, urge the recognition of the importance of the control of parenthood as one of the methods of coping with social problems:

"We furthermore recommend to the executive board of the Central Conference of American Rabbis that a portion of next year's program be devoted to one or more papers on this subject."

New York East Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, 1931

"In harmony with previous statements by this conference on the control of conception, the recent pronouncements of the Lambeth Conference and the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America have done much to create an increased interest in this important subject. The Lambeth Conference 'believes that in the exalted view of marriage taught by our Lord is to be found the solution of the problems with which we are faced. His teaching was reinforced by certain elements which have found new emphasis in modern life, particularly the sacredness of personality and the more equal partnership of man and woman.'

"We recommend such legislation as will permit a physician to render medical information on this subject. In this connection we direct attention to the doctor's bill. Should this bill be enacted into law, it would give greater freedom to physicians, hospitals and clinics in extending to needy persons such information as would be in accord with the highest principles of eugenics and the best health of the individual."

A SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WOMEN'S PROBLEMS GROUP OF PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS 1933*

In May, 1929, a concern arose in the Women's Problems Group of the Social Order Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Arch Street) for a study of Birth Control. Several of the Group felt that the subject was a matter of vital importance, both as a social problem and as a factor in the lives of many of our own Quaker families. A committee was accordingly appointed and instructed to study the subject.

The Committee presented its first report at a meeting of the whole Group in April, 1930. At that meeting the Committee was re-appointed with the addition of several members, and authorized to prepare a written statement of its findings. This paper is offered in compliance with that request.

We are concerned that the present prohibitive legislation be changed to conform to modern accepted thought on the subject. Well established committees of the birth control organizations are working vigorously to this end. It is our opinion, that specific information regarding the technique of contraception should be the responsibility of the medical profession. Our paper, therefore, deals only with the eugenic or social and the personal aspects of the question. It contains, in addition, a summary of Quaker medical opinion.

In the minds of a great many people the term "birth control" has come to mean but one thing: limitation or prevention of the birth of children through contraceptive methods. We understand it to imply much more than that.

^{*} Here given in slightly abbreviated form.

We use the term in a broad sense to mean voluntary parenthood by the regulation of the number of children and the time of their conception. This means planning for children and spacing them according to the best interests of the family.

Sociology and eugenics emphasize birth control continually as an important means of basically improving the quality of the human race. Obviously there should be a relatively large number of children from those parents who can support and educate them, and a relatively smaller number from less qualified parents. Dr. Elsworth Huntington recently made a study of Yale graduates from 1922 to 1926 and found that the children of large families excelled physically, mentally and from the point of view of general success in life; while an only child is frequently at a disadvantage in all points considered.

We are not concerned in this paper with the population factor in the science of political economy. The world may be moving from a deficit to a surplus economy, in which this earth may be made to support a growing population at an increasing level of well-being. The fact remains, however, that millions of families are facing a severe economic problem in which the size of the family is a matter of grave consequence. The problem is a perennial one, but is rendered more acute by the present abnormal extent of unemployment and low income. The addition of a new baby at such a time seriously increases the burden of a family. Increasing demands for food, clothing and shelter may put the family below the poverty line, even when both parents are industrious and frugal. The social aspect of birth control is much broader, however, than such a problem of financial inadequacy. Contraception seems imperative when the husband is alcoholic or otherwise unfit either morally or physically. It should be possible for a mother under such circumstances to have control over the number of children which she must bring into the world.

There is also the problem of mothers who are physically weak—particularly those who have tuberculosis, or suffer from heart or kidney diseases. When these women become pregnant they are often warned by the doctor not to become pregnant again. Until very recently no scientific instruction in methods of contraception has been given in our medical schools. For this reason and on account of existing laws the physician's advice very often could not include definite help in preventing future pregnancies.

We believe that some impetus is being given to the scientific control of the problems outlined above. An increasing number of doctors are giving adequate information to their private patients upon request, or they are volunteering the information when it is needed to preserve the health of the mother. Maternal Health Centers are endeavoring to give definite help to those who are fortunate enough to reach them.

The nervous strain of family management and active business or professional life is frequently a hindrance to the fullest joy and health of a married couple. They vitally need the varied benefits of a rich and harmonious sex experience. It is a part of the fine art of living, with all the creative and recreational values that go with artistic expression. If the experience is mutual it may form an ever strengthening bond of spiritual unity between them.

The full expression of the sex relation requires a large measure of freedom and spontaneity. It is clear that the fear of pregnancy creates an atmosphere in which such freedom and spontaneity are impossible. Even when undesired or inadvisable pregnancy does not result, the fear of such consequence is effective in preventing the free expression of this vital aspect of married life. If safe and healthful methods of contraception were known and used at times when pregnancy could not be considered safe or wise the course of a happy, healthy sexual life could be continuous, contributing a fund of spiritual and physical blessings to the married couple.

There are those who feel that continence is the most satisfactory or perhaps the only effective method of birth control. We believe, however, that the great majority of married couples would profit physically and spiritually, if the matter of contraception were freed of the inhibitions and ignorance that so often surround it.

Psychologists are emphatic in their opinion that children who grow up in homes where the parental relationship is normal and satisfying are almost without exception the children who present no real problems for the teacher or the nerve specialist. On the other hand the difficult, unadjusted or delinquent child is often bearing the burden of his parent's maladjustment. Children are quick to feel the atmosphere surrounding them. In these days of unparalleled anxiety we must do all in our power to give them a background of serenity and security.

In this connection we would express a brief opinion concerning the education of children. From the nursery, the children should be given some knowledge of reproduction. It is right as they approach adolescence and need to know more, that they should have their questions answered frankly and honestly. Parents are the natural ones to give this information but unfortunately too many parents have gone through life without much knowledge of the processes involved in reproduction and sex expression, and so feel unequal to the task of meeting the demands of their children. More and more the task of adjusting the young people to-life is falling to the schools and colleges. But as parents we should make every effort to give our children every possible help to enable them to meet marriage intelligently and creatively, impressing them with the fact that much of happiness or unhappiness depends on the information they have at hand and the spirit in which their important decisions are made.

In order to obtain a consensus of medical opinion on this subject we sent a questionnaire to fifty-two Quaker physicians, twenty-four of whom replied.

In response to the question "How does birth control influence society at large?" the doctors in general felt that it would be wise to make accessible the best scientific information both to married people and to those who are engaged. Our young people have some knowledge, but it is often unscientific and dangerously inadequate. These doctors felt that the unmoral group, for the most part, have the knowledge of how to control conception and therefore will not be greatly influenced one way or the other. In connection with this matter of the unmoral group we need to remember that venereal infection, illegitimate pregnancy and abortion, have been social problems for countless generations. Today doctors, nurses, and welfare agencies are realizing that these problems can be somewhat relieved by the general spread of contraceptive knowledge.

There was very general approval of birth control, and several of the doctors mentioned the need for legislation which will legalize the giving of information through the medical profession. They believe that the most modern methods of contraception do not lead to sterility and feel that scientific information should be given when asked for.

Our investigations and group discussions have led us to the following general conclusions:

- 1. Birth Control does not necessarily mean family limitation alone but planning for and spacing children as the whole welfare of the family may indicate.
- 2. The proper use of approved contraceptive methods may contribute to the social and economic welfare of the home, and to the physical and mental health of parents and children.
- 3. Sex expression for spiritual and physical reasons as well as for procreation is essential to normal family life. This relation is beautiful and sacred and should be exercised through the full span of married life. It should lead to the integration of personality by linking the spiritual with the physical and making them one in a way that no other single act in life can.
- 4. Young people should know the physical and spiritual facts about the sex experience at the time of marriage so that they can more intelligently face their new lives and make the adjustments which are necessary to their happiness.
- 5. Modern society has need for more Maternal Health clinics to deal with matters of disease prevention, conception control, sexual adjustment and other problems of married life.

AMERICAN BIRTH CONTROL LEAGUE, INC.

515 MADISON AVENUE •

· NEW YORK CITY ·

Wickersham 2-8600

Room 912

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
East 105th Street at Ansel Road
Cleveland, Ohio

August 28, 1935

My dear Rabbi Silver:

The President of the Maternal Health League of Michigan contemplates calling a regional conference in the Fall. She has asked me to write tentatively to several interested individuals in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky which, with Michigan, would be invited to take part.

Regional conferences are now being organized by the New England states, the Middle Atlantic states; and it is likely that the Central Southern and Minnesota Regional group will do likewise. It was the notable success of Minnesota's five-state conference in 1934 which has motivated this regional activity.

The cause of birth control has made giant strides during the past year. Of the many events, perhaps most significant were the resolutions passed by the Gen. Fed. of Women's Clubs, the American Association of University Women, and the American Medical Association.

The American Birth Control League assumes that all workers sense the greatly altered public philosophy regarding birth control. To consolidate past gains and to discuss ways and means with fellow workers is certainly wise, and particularly indicated at this stage of development. We are no longer pioneers but a full fledged public health movement concerned with techniques and an ever-widening horizon of activity. People say, "too many meetings!" But the fact remains that no other device produces such far-reaching results as an exchange of thought between workers in a common cause.

May I ask you to send your reactions to this proposed conference plus your suggestions regarding location directly to Mrs. Morton Keeney, 1222 Lake Drive, Grand Rapids, Michigan? She and I will greatly appreciate any suggestions you care to make.

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Marguerite Benson

Executive Director

MB:C

Birth Control

AN OUTLINE FOR GROUP STUDY



Prepared by

THE AMERICAN BIRTH CONTROL LEAGUE
515 Madison Avenue, New York

NOTE Unless otherwise stated, all publications listed in this outline may be secured from the American Birth Control League, 515 Madison Avenue, New York City. The books recommended may be secured also from the publishers. Among the publications listed are two on the "natural" method of birth control, which is endorsed by the Roman Catholic Church.

1. 1) What Would Happen If We Did Not Check the Natural Increase of Population?

- (A) Our biological capacity for reproduction.
- (B) Nature's way of checking our increase: famine and pestilence.

2) By What Means May Population Increase Be Checked?

- (A) Increasing the death rate by (a) infanticide (b) war
- (B) Decreasing the birth rate by (a) postponement of marriage (b) abstinence (c) abortion (d) sterilization (e) birth control: the voluntary regulation of reproduction by methods that temporarily prevent conception, but do not interfere with normal marriage relations.

Ri

EADING:	
For I-A and B, 2-A	
"Control—by Man or Nature?", Henry Pratt Fairchild \$.02
"Population Problems," E. B. Reuter, Chapters VII and VIII, J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, Pa.	2.00
"The Problem of Population," Harold Cox, Chapters I and II. (Out of print. Obtainable from libraries and, by loan, from the Amer- ican Birth Control League.)	
For 2-B	
(a) Malthus' Essay on Population, or article on Malthus in any encyclopedia.	
(b) "Birth Control—Its Use and Misuse," Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, Chapter III, Harper & Bros., 49 East 33rd Street, New York City	2.50
(c) "Wasting Women's Lives," Helena Hunt- ington Smith (in pamphlet, "For Legalized	
Birth Control") "Birth Control—Its Use and Misuse," Dor-	.25
	2.50
(d) "Eugenic Sterilization," E. J. Gosney (publication of Human Betterment Founda- tion, Pasadena, California. May be secured	
through A.B.C. League)	.02
"Birth Control—Its Use and Misuse," Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, Chapter XII	2.50

I. How Does Birth Control Affect:	
 Marriage The Welfare of Mothers The Welfare of Children The Economic Well-being of the Family International Peace The Development of the Race 	
READING:	
For 1	
"A Preface to Morals," Walter Lippman, Chapter XIV, Macmillan Co., 60 Fifth Avenue, New York City	1.00
For 2 and 3	
"Child Spacing," Frederick C. Holden, M.D. 40¢-100	.02
"Birth Control—Its Use and Misuse," Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, Chapter II	2.50
For 2 , 3 and 4	
"Pivot of Civilization," Margaret Sanger, Chapters II, III and V, Brentano, 586 Fifth Avenue, New York City	2.00
"Woman and the New Race," Margaret Sanger, Chapters IV, V and XI, Brentano	2.00
For 4	
"New Public Relief and Birth Control," James H. S. Bossard—\$1.00-100	.02
For 5	
"Standing Room Only," E. A. Ross, D. Appleton-Century Co., 35 West 32nd Street, New York City. Chapter XIV	3.00
"The Problem of Population," Harold Cox, Chapter III (Out of print. Obtainable from libraries and, by loan, from the American Birth Control League.)	
For 6	
"What Is Eugenics?", Leonard Darwin (Out of print. Obtainable from libraries or, by loan, from the American Birth Control League.)	
"Applied Eugenics," Popenoe & Johnson, Chapters VI, X and XV, Macmillan Company, 60 Fifth Avenue, New York City	2.60
"New Decalogue of Science," A. E. Wiggam, pp. 15-111, 171-185, Bobbs-Merrill Co., 468 Fourth Avenue, New York City	3.00
"Tomorrow's Children; The Goal of Eugenics," will be published in September, 1935. Write the American Eugenics Society, 185 Church Street, New Haven, Connecticut, for details.	3.00
Price probably	1.25
III. What is the Present Status of Birth Co. in the United States?	ntrol
1. Legal	
2. Moral 3. Medical	

4. Practical (Reliability of contraceptive methods; of "safe period" method; clinics—types, number, location, etc.)
EADING:
For 1 and 3
"Birth Control—Its Use and Misuse," Dorothy
Dunbar Bromley, pages 185-187, Chapters VIII and XIII
For 2
"Moral Aspects of Birth Control," (Publication of Federal Council of Churches.) May be secured through A.B.C. League. \$2.00-100 .05 "Legitimate Birth Control—According to Na-
ture's Law, in Harmony with Catholic Morality," Rev. John A. O'Brien, Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Indiana. (Imprimatur: John Francis Noll, D.D., Bishop of Fort Wayne)
For 4
"Birth Control—Its Use and Misuse," Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, Chapters IV, IX and XIV 2.50 "The Rhythm of Sterility and Fertility in
Women," Leo J. Latz, M.D., Latz Foundation, Republic Building, Chicago, Illinois. (Published with ecclesiastical approbation) 1.00
V. What Can This Group Do to Promote Eugenic Birth Control?
 Education — of the public, of physicians and social workers.
(a) Discussion at regular meetings of clubs and churches, and at specially organized meetings.
(b) Distribution of leaflets and pamphlets. Write to the A.B.C. League for literature in quantity.
(c) Publicity—get the newspapers to report your meetings and other activities.
 Legislation — Support bills introduced in Congress and Legislature to amend laws which class birth control information with obscenity.
 Organization — of clinical service in hospitals, welfare centers, or independent quarters.
READING:
For 1
"Birth Control Review," articles in current and back numbers, per copy\$.10
For 2
Leaflets of the National Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control, 1343 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C. Price on application.
For 3
"How to Start a Contraceptive Center"10 "How to Start a State League"10

BIRTH CONTROL offers one of the most challenging of present-day topics for discussion and study. It is a measure which vitally affects maternal and child welfare, social security and international peace.

WOMEN'S GROUPS in particular are turning their attention to this problem. The General Federation of Women's Clubs at its annual convention in June, 1935, went on record by an overwhelming majority in favor of the dissemination of scientifically regulated birth control information through the mails. Thirteen State Federations and over seven hundred local clubs have taken like action, as have the American Association of University Women and many Parent-Teacher Associations and Business and Professional Women's Clubs. In many communities, women's groups have taken the lead in the organization of clinics where contraceptive advice is given by physicians to mothers who need and want it. Such clinics throughout the United States number more than two hundred: a remarkable gain of over 160 clinics in the past five years.

of birth control logically leads to organized action to provide or to extend clinic service in the community. The League will be glad to help any group to draw up a program of work adapted to the needs of the community, to recommend speakers for meetings, to provide samples of its publications, and to send to licensed physicians the medical manual, "The Technique of Contraception," by Eric M. Matsner, M.D., Medical Director of the League.

American Birth Control League

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• 515 MADISON AVENUE •

• NEW YORK CITY •

Wickersham 2-8600

Rem 912

December 17, 1936

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
The Temple
E. 105th St. at Ansel Road
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Dr. Silver:

In preparation for the Annual Meeting, at which time nominations to the Board will be made, we are faced with a difficulty regarding a working quorum.

I find to my regret that your term as Director of the American Birth Control League expires in January 1937. We deeply appreciate and do not wish to lose the interest and moral support of those who have loyally upheld the work of the League. It has been suggested that those Directors, who because of distance or time are unable regularly to attend Board meetings, might be appointed to the National Council.

The members of the Council would be sent regular reports so that they may follow the work in detail, if they so desire.

May I hope that you will send me your consent to join the Council? We should be most grateful for your continued support of this important work.

Sincerely yours,

Course Gomwell

(Mrs. Frederic Cromwell) Chairman, Nominating Committee

December 22, 1936 Mrs. Frederic Cromwell, American Birth Control League, Inc., 515 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. My dear Mrs. Cromwell: Permit me to thank you for your kind letter of December 17. I shall be very happy to join the National Council of the American Birth Control League. I regret that my distance from your headquarters has made it impossible for me to attend the meetings of your Board of Directors. With all good wishes, I remain Very cordially yours, AHS: BK

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

requests the honor of your presence at the

Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the

American Birth Control League

at

The Hotel Roosevelt

Wednesday and Thursday

January twenty-seven and twenty-eight

Nineteen Hundred and Thirty Seven

Program

Sixteenth Annual Meeting American Birth Control League

ROOSEVELT HOTEL, NEW YORK CITY, JANUARY 27TH AND 28TH

Wednesday, January 27th

9:30 a.m. Registration, Mezzanine Floor

10:30 a.m. Annual Business Meeting New York State Birth Control Federation Reports and Election of Officers

1:00 p.m. Informal Luncheon, Blue Room (\$1.50)

2:15 p.m. Round Table: Problems of Clinic Administration Speaker: Mary Fisher, Ph.D., Department of Child Psychology, Sarah Lawrence College "Birth Control and Marital Adjustment"

LEADER: Mrs. Ruth Backus, Rochester
Discussion by clinic representatives

10:30 (E.S.T.) BROADCAST ON THE COLUMBIA NETWORK

SPEAKERS: Eduard C. Lindeman, Ph.D., Department of Social Philosophy, New York
School of Social Work

William H. Cary, M.D., National Committee on Maternal Health

"The Doctor and the Social Scientist look at Birth Control"

Thursday, January 28th

10:30 a.m. Annual Meeting of the League and Election of Directors

11:00 a.m. Meeting of Board of Directors and Election of Officers

Annual Luncheon

12:30 p.m. — Ball Room

Democratize Birth Control

Presiding: Mrs. Louis deB. Moore Chairman of the Board

CHAIRMAN: Eric M. Matsner, M.D.

Secretary, National Medical Council on Birth Control

GUESTS OF HONOR:

Mrs. Margaret Sanger Mr. Morris L. Ernst

Speaker: Clarence C. Little, Sc.D.

President, American Birth Control League

Director, American Society for Control of Cancer

2:00 p.m. State League Reports

AMERICAN BIRTH CONTROL LEAGUE

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Mrs. Frederick G. Atkinson, Mrs. Richard Billings, Vice-Presidents Mrs. Dexter Blagden, Mrs. Union Worthington Treasurer Gilbert Colgate Mrs. Robert McC. Marsh Secretary

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AMERICAN BIRTH CONTROL LEAGUE, INC.

515 MADISON AVENUE •

· NEW YORK CITY ·

Wickersham 2-8600

Room 912

February 23, 1937

My dear Dr. Silver:

We are indeed most grateful to you for your willingness to become a member of the National Council of the American Birth Control League.

So that you may know who are your associates, I am listing below the names of those who have accepted membership to date, and you will be advised of additions to the list as they are received.

Within the next ten days you will receive a copy of the full report of the League for the year 1936. This is a somewhat exhaustive account of the year's activity, but, I believe, will be worth your time to read since it presents facts as well as a background showing the scope and extent of our work. The monthly staff reports which are to follow are necessarily not so illustrative of the League's entire program as is the full annual report.

I shall be only too happy to answer questions and to receive your suggestions.

With appreciation, I am,

Allison Piera Mone

Mrs. Louis deB. Moore Chairman of the Board.

Members of the National Council of the American Birth Control League

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George Blumenthal
Paul Douglas
Stephen Duggan
Miss Willystine Goodsell
Frank Hankins

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