Resistance!

Nations concerned over the U.S. agenda

Algeria

Argentina: President Menem alerted Latin American countries early in the summer to beware of the draft document language that would ultimately undermine morals.

Bangladesh: Home of coercive population control measures, they assumed their prime minister would support the Cairo plan.

At the last minute, she cancelled her plans to attend.

Costa Rica **Iran**

Dominican Republic **Jordan**

Ecuador **Libya**

El Salvador **Kuwait**

Guatemala **Malta**

Honduras

Nigeria: A "pre-conference conference" was scheduled to announce the support of 90 million Nigerians for a birth-control declaration. The information was leaked to the public, and the uproar among Nigerians was so intense that the conference was canceled.

Pakistan **Peru**

Philippines: One million people took part in a protest aimed at the government's support for the Cairo agenda on abortion and birth control. The government modified it's position as a result.

Syria

Turkey: The Turkish prime minister refused to take part in the conference.

Vatican City **Yemen**

"choice" for a woman to kill her unborn offspring.

The United States, responsible for presenting a draft agenda for the conference proffered a 113-page document which included among other things: abortion-on-demand as a basic human right; tacit approval of sex outside of marriage and with a partner of either sex; distribution of contraceptive equipment to minors without parental consent or notification; and a redefinition of "family" that could include any nurturing network including homosexuals and bureaucracies.

Delegates to the conference raise concerns over what the United States and abortion-friendly media continually refer to as "one short paragraph" in the 113 page document. In truth, the language problems surrounding abortion spice up several paragraphs and pages throughout the text. However, the United States applies a heavy defensive strategy claiming that any opposition to the document and its "family planning" agenda are only a result of the Vatican City delegate. The Pope, according to those who are abortion-friendly, is simply acting as a spoiler.

The United States, even on the opening day of the conference, is accused of attempting to promote abortion as a "basic human right" — to institutionalize *Roe v. Wade* — on an international scale. Catholic, conservative, and Moslem nations voice strong opposition to draft statement language concerning "safe abortion" as well as language which implies an acceptance of premarital sex and odd "couple" arrangements that would recognize sexual partnerships between members of the same sex.

The Vatican delegate, Juaquin Navarro-Valls, is actually hissed and booed while voicing his objections on the floor. The United States is offended by any accusation that there is an agenda to promote abortion, particularly as a basic human right.

The Promotion Before the Conference

In preparing for the Third International Conference on Population and Development, the draft committee and the United States have laid groundwork in hopes that the agenda spelled out in the draft statement will go uncontested. The abortion agenda has been of particular importance to them. The nation which claims to not support abortion for family planning purposes, the nation which denies an agenda to compel other nations to adopt a right to abortion has left a disquieting, unconvincing trail.

- April 4, 1993—At a White House news conference, DeeDee Myers, the White House press secretary, proclaims to the media that the Clinton administration considers access to abortion "part of the overall approach to population control."
- May 5, 1993—Tim Wirth, in a formal address before the United Nations, gives a subtle but scathing rebuke to member nations that he considers less progressive. He states, "a government which is violating basic human rights should not hide behind the defense of sovereignty. Difficult as it is, we must also discuss thoroughly the issue of abortion." He goes on to define the Clinton policy by stating, "Our position is to support reproductive choice, including access to safe abortion."
- October, 1993—The U. S. State Department sends a cable to all of the diplomatic posts around the world in order to affirm the stance articulated by Wirth in May. The cable states, "This [Clinton] administration will pursue" in the Cairo conference an agenda that "stresses. . . family planning and related family health services, including safe abortion."
- March 16, 1994—The State Department sends an "action cable" to all overseas embassies again. The purpose of the cable is to urge diplomats to support U.S. priorities for the Cairo conference. The cable reads, "The priority issues for the U.S. include assuring. . . access to safe abortion. . .The United States believes that access to safe, legal and voluntary abortion is a fundamental right of all women. The current text [of the proposed Cairo draft statement]. . .is inadequate as it only addresses access to abortion in cases of rape or incest. . . The United States delegation will also be working for stronger language on the importance of access to abortion services."

The "safe abortion" buzz phrase has by this time become rhetoric to suggest that the U.S. has the welfare of all women at heart, and that those in opposition would leave women in an unsafe position. It can only then be construed that nations who fail to embrace abortion are violating basic human rights.

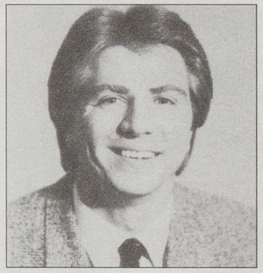
Even before the conference begins, there are delegates who counter the Clinton agenda with protest.

- August 25, 1994—Clinton, feeling a threat to hopes for a win in his 1996 reelection bid, sends ex officio Al Gore to calm the storm of accusation and protest. In a craftily worded speech before the American Press Club Gore states, "the Unites States has not sought, does not seek, and will not seek an international right to abortion." His oft-repeated claim is that the U.S. does not support "abortion as a method of family planning." However, with a trail of public statements and embassy cables, Gore's credibility is at an all-time low.
- August 31, 1994—The Vatican responds to the U.S. by as much as calling Gore a liar. Juaquin Navarro-Valls declares that Gore is "misrepresenting" the draft document, and that Clinton/U.S. intentions are far more radical than the public is being led to believe.

Meanwhile, the media all but ignores allegations of misrepresentation. Mention of any disagreement over the document always includes reference to the Vatican and never to groups like the Council on American-Islamic Relations or the Southern Baptist Convention. By the time the conference begins in September a strong cadre of dissenters are organized and ready to take America

Vice-President Al Gore addressed the conference on crutches following foot surgery.

Anti-abortion observers detained



Tucci

Cairo, Egypt—The Reverend Keith Tucci, former leader of Operation Rescue National, and a fellow activist posing as journalists in Cairo were arrested on the orders of Timothy Wirth, Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs.

Undersecretary Wirth and a female activist with the Feminist Majority Foundation spotted Tucci at a press conference soon after his arrival in Cairo. Later, while reporters gathered for another meeting, Wirth ordered security to confirm Tucci's identification pass. The pass was confiscated and not returned immediately as guards alleged that the signature was smudged and illegible.

Tucci was arrested by Egyptian police after being escorted away from the conference room. Another anti-abortion activist, David Haddon observed the arrest of Tucci and was subsequently taken into custody also. Both men, though not regular members of the media, were carrying valid press credentials.

Release of Tucci and Haddon came after more than twenty hours with credit given to Rep. Robert Dornan, R-Calif., who intervened for a speedy release.

Dornan released a statement about the incident saying, "The arrogance of the U.S. delegation to Cairo reached its inevitable culmination when the First Amendment rights of. . .Americans were violated at the order of Timothy Wirth."

Dornan concluded his statement by adding that the arrest without probable cause only added "more tarnish on the sterling silver bowl" in Wirth's office "from which he dispenses condoms."

Following his release, Tucci criticized the Cairo conference and accused the "family planning" lobby for running the agenda. "They are the ones synchronizing it," he stated. "This is not a population and development conference, this is a birth control, kill-the-babies, eradicate the humans conference." ■