



RECONCILIATION REPORT

Reaping Where We Have Not Sown

The video "Muslim Demographics" on You Tube has played over 7.7 million times. Its message is that Muslim immigration and birthrates threaten to turn Europe Islamic in the next decades. While there are significant inaccuracies in the statistics¹, the basic thesis is probably correct at some date, unless trends change. More broadly, every developed nation, including the US, has a Total Fertility Rate (TFR)² below the 2.1 children per woman (in

her reproductive years) required to maintain a given population level. The 2009 estimate for the US is 2.05.³ The average TFR among developed nations is 1.6.⁴

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The issue isn't simply a culture or civilization war. If Muslims gain control of a country, conservatives and radicals will do what they can to institute Sharia law--Muslim law--as has happened in Lebanon⁵, northern Nigeria, the Swat valley in Pakistan (where Christians were attacked when the Taliban entered⁶), and most notably in Iran. It's the proven goal of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) to make radical Islam America's religion.⁷ While the vast majority of Christians don't seek Christendom--the institution of a Christian state domain--many Muslims do seek an earthly Islamic rule--a global Islamic caliphate--Dar Islam.

Christians and Muslims do contend for the souls of the globe, and neither will concede, but Christians generally aren't seeking a secular counterpart of Dar Islam. Most Christians await the return of Christ to institute His kingdom on earth, when we believe every knee will bow before Him (Phil. 2:9-11). However, the motive for sharing Christ with Muslims should be that of love, not ethnic or national preservation.

Why has the TFR declined so dangerously in developed nations? One reason is abortion. In 1995 developed nations had a higher abortion rate(39 per 1,000 women⁸) than developing nations. The consequences are now here. Another is divorce. The US has the highest divorce rate among Western nations, as well as the highest average number of cohabiting sexual partners.⁹ Nine of the top ten divorce rates per thousand are found in developed, Western nations¹⁰, while only four of the twenty nations with the highest divorce rates are predominately Muslim, as of 2004. Another factor is the rise of cohabitation as an alternative to marriage. Cohabitation without marriage generally results in higher rates of dissolution than for marriage, even when children are present, as well as fewer children per couple.¹¹ Even so, the percentage of all births to unmarried women in the US in the mid 2000s is 38.5 (a 19% increase from the mid-1990s), which is essentially the average of Western nations.¹² A related factor in low TFR is the introduction of the birth control pill in the 1960s. In America the pill and the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision liberalizing abortions in 1973, dropped the TFR to 1.7 in 1976.¹³ It's impossible to calculate the full effect of contraceptives on the birthrate, except to conclude it is always negative. Referring to the sexual revolution in America in the 1960s, David Popenoe, wrote for the National Marriage Project about marriage, cohabitation and child wellbeing in cross-national perspective:

With women now socially permitted to have sex before marriage, far more women became sexually available to men and men no longer had to marry to regularize their sexual lives. Men reacted by pulling back from marriage and from having children, expanding their now notorious "inability to commit."¹⁴

Women are marrying less, and marrying later in life, shortening their opportunity to bear children. In 1995 there were 50.8 marriages per thousand women aged fifteen and above, while in 2005 there were 40.7, a 19.9% decrease. Such marriages declined by an average of 14.5% within the same period in other Western countries.¹⁵ The first-marriage

rate in low-fertility nations declined from 0.9-1.0 per woman in 1970 to 0.4-0.7 by 2000.¹⁶ In contrast, Muslims are permitted four wives, and Muslims generally don't accept birth control methods.¹⁷ Of 46 Muslim-majority nations, 25 have an average TFR of 4.6, while 21 have a TRF of 2 or less, as of 2008.¹⁸ Although economic and cultural factors interplay, Islam does impact fertility rates.

The US, among low-fertility nations, has the highest percentage of women who have not married by age 40--20%.¹⁹ In the US the average age of first marriage moved from 21.8 years in 1970 to 26.4 years in 1998, and that delaying trend is found throughout developed nations, at least through 2000.²⁰ In 2007 in the US, the average age at marriage was 27.5 for men, and 25.6 for women.²¹ Marriage is postponed for reasons of higher education and career stabilization. High rates of divorce caution against marriage.

Economics can directly impact fertility rates. Rates declined significantly in Eastern Europe with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. When countries have provided financial incentives to have children, fertility rates have sometimes risen, as with Russia's 2006 law providing about \$9,600 for couples having a second child.²² Particularly in the West, the desire for a higher standard of living and high mobility rub against the cost and responsibilities of child rearing. Couples can have a short-sighted egoism á deux--an insulated relationship. If all these disincentives to procreation aren't sufficient, the British Optimum Population Trust encourages couples to have one less child to reduce carbon emissions, recommending a maximum of two emitting offspring.²³

God commands and encourages us to have children, notwithstanding. God told Adam and Eve, as well as those surviving the Flood, to "... be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it" (Gen. 9:7, NIV)--showing God's inveterate love for sinners. Children are a reward from God (Ps. 127:3). It's a "good deed" to raise children (1 Tim. 5:10)--not environmental pollution. God does not simply want kids, He wants godly offspring--a reason why He hates divorce (Mal. 2:14-15). A stable Christian family, not a succession of partners, is a garden for such children.²⁴ Global population growth is slowing. The global TFR is 2.56 children per woman (2005-2010), and is expected to drop below replacement rate to 2.02 by 2045-2050, indicating population decline, according to the UN's "World Population Prospects" (2008 revision).²⁵ This population decline is from lower fertility rates, not from higher mortality rates, indicating the UNs understanding that the earth is capable of supporting a population of 8 or 9 billion people by 2050.

Even Christians hesitate having children--society being so corrupt that we don't want to bring children into it. God considers any offspring of a married Christian to be "holy"(1 Cor. 7:14). Do we doubt the power of God to keep what is committed to Him? The darker the world, the more it needs the light of the world--Christians, so darkness should motivate to have godly children. The world desperately needs them, and God can protect them from the Evil One and evil people (2 Thess. 3:2-3). As my pregnant wife pulled a wagon wiggling with our three kids to the grocery store, she was angrily accosted by our affluent next-door neighbor (with two children). How irresponsible! How could we [missionaries] provide them a college education? Judy replied that God would provide. All four have at least five years of undergrad or graduate education, two have masters degrees, and one a second BA. Would God command multiplication and fail to do the math, as His people work and depend upon Him?



By failing to sow, we may reap a "demographic implosion" of Europe and most of the West, potentially opening the gates to peaceful takeovers of formerly Christian nations (delighting Moammar Qadaffi²⁶). We reap nations unable to maintain their workforce, that depend upon immigrants who may not share values²⁷, and that have insecure social security systems. Christians able to have children but who opted out for reasons selfish or fearful, or who irreparably postponed childbirth, face an unnecessarily lonely exit from this life, having deprived the planet of progeny who can best serve and offer it hope, through the grace and power of God.

Jim Sutherland

Footnotes: (websites accessed May 2009)

1. <http://www.strategicnetwork.org/2009/05/mission-researchers-respond-to-the-muslim-demographic-video/>
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Total_fertility_rate
3. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html>
4. <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2008/2008wpds.aspx>
5. see Brigitte Gabriel, *Because They Hate: A survivor of Islamic terror warns America*, 2008 ed., ISBN: 139780312358389.
6. <http://www.mnnonline.org/article/12617>
7. <http://www.frontpagemag.com/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=4734>
8. http://www.gutmacher.org/pubs/fb_IAW.html
9. Andrew J. Cherlin, *The Marriage Go-Round: The state of marriage and the family in America*, 2009, ISBN:9780307266897, p. 4.
10. http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/peo_div_rat-people-divorce-rate
11. <http://marriage.rutgers.edu/Publications/NMP2008CohabitationReport.pdf>, p. 14-16
12. <http://marriage.rutgers.edu/Publications/NMP2008CohabitationReport.pdf> p. 6
13. http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-12-19-fertility_N.htm
14. <http://marriage.rutgers.edu/Publications/NMP2008CohabitationReport.pdf> p. 5
15. <http://marriage.rutgers.edu/Publications/NMP2008CohabitationReport.pdf>, p. 5
16. <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/reprobehavior/partrepro.pdf> p. x
17. <http://www.prb.org/Articles/2009/karimpolicyseminar.aspx?p=1>
18. <http://www.prb.org/Articles/2009/karimpolicyseminar.aspx?p=1>
19. <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/reprobehavior/partrepro.pdf> p. xii
20. <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/reprobehavior/partrepro.pdf> p. 15,17-18.
21. http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2008-11-09-delayed-marriage_N.htm
22. <http://www.prb.org/Articles/2008/tftrtrendsept08.aspx>
23. www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,21684156-5009760,00.html "Children 'bad for planet'"
24. Cherlin, p. 5.
25. http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wpp2008/wpp2008_highlights.pdf p.11
26. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvyN3rnr34c>
27. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *Infidel*, 2007, ISBN: 139780743289696 illuminates difficulties of Muslim immigration to the Netherlands, including her own struggle to survive after exposing Islamic treatment of women. Christians are to welcome and help aliens. The problem comes if aliens seek to take over a country and take away the freedom to openly worship and share Christ.



RMNI is planning a two-week trip to Southeast Asia in the Fall of this year. If you are interested, please call Jim at 423-822-1091 for more information about this trip.

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Mobilizing the African American Church for Global Mission

www.RMNI.org

Ministry Update

1. The survey/census of African American missionaries contains forty names to date. This research continues.
2. Our lead couple at the Westside housing project in Chattanooga were formally married in May. Even after years of living together, the husband noticed definite changes for the good in their relationship. Currently 1-3 volunteers serve each week. "K" (a mother) made a profession of faith through the ministry of Lois, who is following up with Bible studies.
3. Pastor Jonathan Soi visited Chattanooga May 29-June 1 and spoke to three African American churches, including a missions conference. We became familiar with Pastor Soi, who heads an orphanage in Eldoret, Kenya, during ministry trips there in 2004 and 2006.
4. **A blog particularly for those interested in African American missions should be available by June 21—go to www.RMNI.org/blogs**
5. The average visits per month (not hits) to www.RMNI.org for January through April 2009 was 2,623.
6. RMNI conducted a Budget Workshop at Church of the First Born on May 30th.
7. Feel free to become a "friend" of Jim Sutherland on Facebook.



Prayer and Praise

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Please ask God for two more choice people for our fall SE Asia trip. Please pray for much wisdom, grace upon all involved. ↑ God continues His faithful financial provision. ↑ Fresh enthusiasm is needed as we encourage local Christian leaders at the Westside housing project and evangelize. ↑ Please pray for greater cooperation and help with the AfAm missionary census/survey, and the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> diligence to successfully complete it. ↑ We need prayer for God's direction as ministry trips for 2010 are investigated. ↑ Ask the Lord to direct new visitors to our website and for its maximum potential to be realized and please pray for wisdom in search engine optimization. ↑ Please pray for effective and consistent training of church planters in S. Sudan by | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> our coordinator Patrick, and for ten viable churches to be eventually planted. ↑ Daughter-in-law Stephanie graduated from Texas A&M with a BA degree and 4.0 average! ↑ Jim's Dad is now mobile with a walker. He is reading through the Bible. |
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