

Eat your way to population control

As Americans were celebrating Labor Day, the United Nations Population Conference opened its meeting in Cairo. Also on Labor Day, as the Malthusian mavens labored in Egypt, millions of women all over the world were in labor, adding to the population, bringing forth millions of new people who will never become laborers because they won't have jobs to labor at. Marx and classical communism won't be able to help these new arrivals, who will never be "workers of the world" with "nothing to lose but your chains" because they will have nothing at all. Classical capitalism won't be able to help them because they are increasing faster than capitalists can create wealth. The debate about whether the best way to population control is by economic development or by birth control is essentially useless and thus irrelevant to western democratic countries. There can be no economic development sufficient to improve the lives of the earth's several billion poor people without rapid destruction of the environment and exhaustion of natural resources. And only in totalitarian societies like China can the government force people to use birth control.

Meanwhile, genocide is back in vogue as various slavic tribes in what was once Yugoslavia murder the language by calling murder "ethnic cleansing." In central Africa the Hutus and Tutsis decided not to carve up their country, preferring to carve up each other with machetes. Genocide is not all it's cracked up to be, however, because, despite its popularity in this century (Armenians, Jews, Gypsies, Cambodians, etc.), the human species is now the second most numerous in the world, exceeded only by New Orleans cockroaches.

Noticeably absent from the agenda of the Cairo U.N. population conference is the suggestion of cannibalism. Some politically conservative and morally judgmental persons may find it abhorrent to suggest that the practice of consuming our excess numbers could simultaneously feed the starving and decrease the population, but outrageous problems demand creative solutions. Because we're in an era of politically correct sensibilities and general disdain for the rules and moral value system inflicted by western civilization on vulnerable indigenous societies, we should not be judgmental about anthropophagy (p.c. word for cannibalism). Insensitive Euro-centric students of literature, for instance, see Robinson Crusoe as a "hero" for removing the cannibal Friday from the dark evil of his culinary habits and bringing him to England where the "Age of Enlightenment" was flourishing. Crusoe

was, rather, a cultural and environmental pillager bent on destroying the misunderstood practices of the inhabitants of the Orinoco River region and their delicate balance with the natural world. After all, unlike war and genocide, cannibalism doesn't waste the bodies of its victims.

It certainly will be a hard sell to bring anthropophagy into general acceptance, but selling is done by language, and just changing its name from "cannibalism" is a beginning. Remember that the trendy health food we now call "tofu" didn't catch on until it had a name change from "soybean curd" to an exotic, Japanese word. Check out the popular Canola oil; it wouldn't sell if it were called by its real name, Rapeseed oil.

But anthropophagy needs more. Recipes with foreign names would give the heretofore repulsive practice the snob appeal and cachet that it needs to get into general acceptance. A dish in a Mexican restaurant might appear as "Carne Asada de Tia Maria," suggesting roast with a coffee liqueur sauce, but the literal translation is accurate: roasted Aunt Mary. Julia Child could demonstrate new recipes on television with elegant French designations. How do "Epaule de Voisin" and "Pied de Parrain" sound? Not too bad when you realize that one is your neighbor's shoulder and the other is your godfather's foot. Maybe Paul Prudhomme can be enlisted to develop a spicy "Terrine de Petit-Frere," which is meat loaf made from Bubba.

What?! You've lost your appetite?! Bon appetit. Δ

— Earl Higgins

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