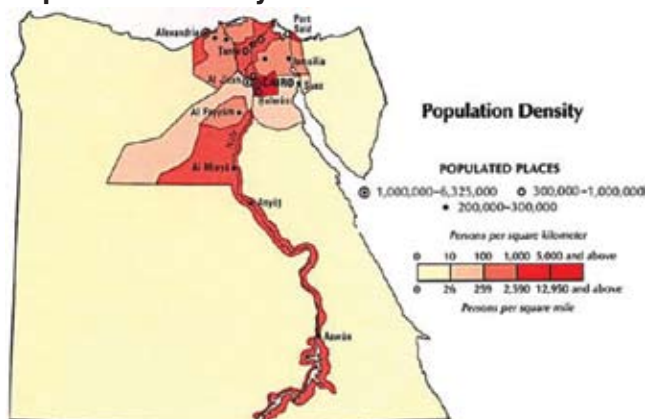


The Myth of Overpopulation in Egypt

by Hussein Askary

Feb. 10—Egypt was featured as one of the 15 nations in Henry Kissinger's 1974 National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) 200 that were targeted for depopulation. Kissinger's silly argument, which has its roots in the British malthusian and Nazi ideologies of *Lebensraum* (living space), that population growth in developing nations was a threat to the national security of the United States and its allies (i.e., Britain), because these nations will resort to higher levels of technology to sustain a growing population, and use the natural resources

FIGURE 1
Population Density



available in their countries for their own consumption. These resources, according to Kissinger’s argument, should be preserved for the future security of the U.S., Britain, and other European allies. It is true that these target nations would and have resorted to higher levels of technology to sustain their growing population, but the insane criminality of this malthusian ideology disregards the fact that humans are the most important resource in an economy.

The criminal stupidity is evident in a quick look at Egypt’s demographics. When NSSM 200 was being written in the early 1970s, Egypt’s population of 33 million was inhabiting and using less than 5% of its land area (see **Figure 1**)! Still today, more than 80 million Egyptians are living on, and utilizing less than 7% of their land area. The fact that 80 million people are packed into a slim strip of land, on the banks of the Nile River, and in Cairo and the Nile delta, does not prove anything regarding overpopulation. It is the lack of technological and infrastructural development which is the problem, not the number of people. Egypt has been denied real development for more than 30 years.

After the 1952 republican revolution by Gemal Abdul Nasser, and throughout the 1960s, a rapid industrialization process was carried out. Interestingly, the rate of population growth slowed during that period, because more women were being educated, and recruited to the labor force.

Nonetheless, the “overpopulation danger” was still being propagated in international institutions, such as the UN and UNESCO, where former British Eugenics Society chairman Julian Huxley had a leading position. Nasser’s government launched a limited family planning pro-

gram, but, in the 1970s, the program was neglected, as President Anwar Sadat launched the slogan “Development is the best contraceptive,” and focused on economic development rather than population control.

When Sadat was assassinated in 1981 and Hosni Mubarak became President, the program was re-launched, this time under pressure from USAID, the World Bank, and other donor organizations (such as the pro-eugenics Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, and the Population Council in New York), promoting contraceptive use by married women. Reportedly, these efforts doubled contraceptive use from 24% in 1980 to 50% in 2000, and reduced the fertility rate from 5.3 births per woman, to 3.5 births per woman. Hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars were spent on birth control rather than infrastructure development.

Robert McNamara, president of the World Bank at the time, lied, after a visit to Egypt, that “some progress has been made, and there are chances for progress, but population growth will eat up 75% of all investments until the year 2000.”

That was the policy imposed on Egypt.

Contrary to this, Lyndon LaRouche’s and *EIR*’s policy for Egypt was to expand the land area utilized by the Egyptian population through massive investments in infrastructure to bring water to reclaim and develop large portions of the Egyptian desert.

But very little was done on that front, and instead, fanciful tourist resorts were built on the beaches of the Red Sea. Unfortunately, the Egyptian government and a large part of the political elite and the population swallowed the myth that this was “development,” and organized massive media campaigns, especially in the last few years.

However, Mother Nature and the mothers of Egypt refuse to be constrained by the lie of limited resources. The Egyptian population has more than doubled since 1970. In one ironic incident, following an intensive campaign in Egyptian television channels and newspapers, begging Egyptians to restrain the birth rate, an Egyptian woman gave birth to 11 babies in 2009! You can call that a protest!

The Egyptian population is a very young one. Among the 80 million Egyptians, there are now: 6 million above the age of 60; 37 million under the age of 15; and the rest, about 37 million, between 15 and 60, with most of them under 30. This is a great wealth and a resource for the world, if the global economic breakdown crisis is reversed towards real physical economic development.