

PRE-WAR EUROPEAN POPULATION POLICIES

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THE population policies considered in this article may be defined as a set of measures introduced or supported by the government of a country for the express purpose of promoting population growth. Before the war such policies were in operation in five European countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, and Sweden; and in several other countries the question of adopting a population policy had become the subject of considerable public discussion. The object of this article is to describe in broad outline the main provisions of the pro-population measures actually in operation in the five countries named before the outbreak of the war. No attempt is made to discuss the influence of the war on any of the measures; adequate material for such a discussion is not available. But it is not unlikely that in some of the countries the measures are no longer in full operation, and that in others various developments contemplated have not been carried into effect. And it is possible that when hostilities have ceased post-war and pre-war conditions may differ so widely that what was done in pre-war Europe to check declining fertility may be of little practical significance. At the present time, however, the European population policies, the circumstances in which they were adopted, and the movement of fertility in the respective countries before and after adoption are of considerable interest to students of population, especially in countries such as the United States, Britain, and Australia, where a period of declining fertility seems likely to be followed at varying but not remote times by a period of declining population.

Policies designed to promote population growth are far from being of recent origin. Laws to encourage marriage and increase fertility were enacted by Augustus Caesar nearly two thousand years ago; and in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries European statesmen generally regarded population increase as desirable in the

national interest, as a means of augmenting the economic and military power of a nation, and encouraged it by such expedients as the imposition of disabilities upon bachelors and the offer of pecuniary rewards and other special privileges to parents of large families. There is no evidence that these measures had any effect on fertility. According to Tacitus, who, like many other eminent Romans of his time, was a childless man, the legislation of Augustus failed to achieve its object, "so powerful were the attractions of childlessness."¹ Malthus, whose population studies were far more comprehensive than is generally supposed, devoted attention to this aspect of the subject he did so much to make prominent, and concluded that without the influence of religion little could be done by legislation to check declining fertility:

Positive laws to encourage marriage and population, enacted on the urgency of the occasion, and not mixed with religion, as in China and some other countries, are seldom calculated to answer the end which they aim at, and therefore generally indicate ignorance in the legislator who proposes them; but the apparent necessity of such laws almost invariably indicates a very great degree of moral and political depravity in the state . . . On this account I cannot but agree with Wallace in thinking that Hume was wrong in his supposition that the Roman world was probably the most populous during the long peace under Trajan and the Antonines. We well know that wars do not depopulate much while industry continues in vigor; and that peace will not increase the number of people when they cannot find the means of subsistence. The renewal of the laws relating to marriage under Trajan indicates the continued prevalence of vicious habits and of a languishing industry, and seems inconsistent with the supposition of a great increase of population.²

There are, however, modern population scholars who take a more confident view. Professor Reuter writes:

The downward trend of the birth rate may, of course, be arrested at almost any point desired. A simple removal of financial and other burdens that accompany parenthood in the present situation would be the

¹ ANNALS, iii, 25.

² ESSAY, Book 1, Ch. xiv.

first step. With the higher standards of modern life it will perhaps also be necessary to insure that the child produced shall have some opportunity for education and development. In the past an appeal to sentiment and a use of various cheap methods have usually been sufficient to insure an adequate supply of workers and soldiers. But these cheap and heretofore effective methods seem likely to prove insufficient when the control of the situation passes into the hands of the people themselves. Children will doubtless always be wanted and they will come in sufficient numbers when society decides to remove the handicap that production engenders.³

Professor Fairchild has expressed an equally confident view:

If a restrictive policy were put into effect today, and a hundred years from now it were decided that there had been too much check on population growth, it would be relatively easy to correct the deficiency by some positive policies. But if we permit and encourage a steady growth, and then find that there has been a serious surplus of people, it will be very difficult to bring about a reduction.⁴

The pre-war population policies of France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, and Sweden seem to have been adopted in the confident belief that fertility may be increased by legislation. All aim at checking the decline in the birth rate which, though characteristic generally of Western civilization, has proceeded with varying rapidity in different countries. In France towards the end of the Nineteenth Century it had proceeded so far that the population would have begun to diminish years before had it not been for a large immigration from neighboring countries, chiefly Italy and Spain; and France was the first country to start an organized movement to increase fertility. It began some years after the Franco-Prussian War with the formation of voluntary associations whose chief objects were to bring out the significance of the decline in the French birth rate, to give it a wide publicity, and to agitate for the adoption by the

³ Reuter, E. B.: *POPULATION PROBLEMS*. Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Company, 1923, p. 181.

⁴ Fairchild, H. P.: *PEOPLE: THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF POPULATION*. New York, Henry Holt & Company, 1939, p. 292.

legislature of a positive policy to increase fertility. About the end of the Century the movement received the support of a publicist of unique power in Emile Zola, the best-selling writer of his time, who, in 1899, while in exile in England, wrote his famous novel, *FÉCONDITÉ*, in which he attacked the prevalent voluntary restriction of fertility in France as a symptom that boded ill for the nation.

Side by side with these efforts to increase fertility, there developed a movement to attack the problem of depopulation by reducing infant mortality. The most dynamic pioneer in this advance was Dr. Pierre Budin, and the most effective agency employed was the infant consultation, the first of which was established in 1892 by Budin at the Charité Hospital, Paris.⁵ The movement achieved remarkable success. Infant mortality in France fell steadily from 164 per 1,000 births in 1891-1900 to 66 in 1938. But reductions in infant mortality alone can do relatively little to raise the excess of births over deaths. Professor Spengler points out that at the French mortality and natality rates of 1936 a hundred per cent decline in infant mortality would have had no more effect in raising natural increase than would a 7 per cent rise in natality.⁶

The most important element in the French population policy is the family-allowance system, by which wages are automatically increased as the number of dependent children in the wage-earner's family increases. The system attempts to graduate wages in proportion to family expenses, and so equalize the costs of bringing up a family. It is based on the assumption that the causes of the decline in fertility are to a large extent economic. Family allowances were given by a few public-spirited employers as far back as 1854, not, however, to increase fertility but as a measure of social amelioration; it was not until much later that such wage adjustments were adopted for the purpose of checking the decline in the birth rate. Family

⁵ McCleary, G. F.: *THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE INFANT WELFARE MOVEMENT*. London, H. K. Lewis & Co., 1933, pp. 42-45.

⁶ Spengler, J. J.: *FRANCE FACES DEPOPULATION*. Durham, Duke University Press, 1938, p. 250.

allowances became more general during the war of 1914-1918, and were made compulsory in a large number of occupations in 1932.

In France the entire cost of family allowances is borne by the employers, and it amounts on the average to about 3.5 per cent of the total sum expended in wages. The system is administered by local organizations, the Equalization Funds, which assess and collect the contributions payable by each local employer, the contributions forming a local fund from which the allowances are paid to the workers. The contribution of each employer is in proportion to the total number of workers, single and married, he employs; he gains nothing by employing childless men instead of fathers of families. The allowance is paid in cash and usually by postal order sent directly to the mother.

The allowances make but a small addition to wages, although in recent years they have been gradually increased. Mr. D. V. Glass, whose study of the family-allowance system is the most comprehensive yet made, estimates that in 1932 the average allowance increased the basic earnings of an unskilled worker with four dependent children by between 4 and 5 per cent for each child, and that in 1938 the average increase had risen to between 4.7 and 8.2 per cent. In some Departments, however, the allowances shortly before the outbreak of the war were at considerably higher rates. For example, a Parisian worker with basic earnings of 14,000 francs a year would in 1938 have received annual allowances at the rate of 720 francs for the first child, 1,200 for the second, 1,800 for the third, and 2,400 for the fourth and each subsequent child.⁷

⁷ Glass, D. V.: *POPULATION POLICIES AND MOVEMENTS IN EUROPE*. Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1940, pp. 116-119.

The French family-allowance system was profoundly modified by the *Code de la Famille*, promulgated on July 29, 1939, which requires allowances to be paid to all occupied persons including independent workers and employers. The allowance for the first child was discontinued, a birth premium being paid instead, and the minimum rates were fixed at 10 per cent of the average adult monthly wage in each Department for the second child and 20 per cent for the third and each subsequent child. The total allowance payable in respect of a family of four dependent children would thus amount to 50 per cent of the basic wage. The *Code*, among other measures, set up a marriage loan system for persons engaged in agriculture, revised the income tax in favor of married couples with children,

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In Belgium the payment of family allowances, which began as a voluntary measure, was in 1928 made compulsory for all firms under contract with the Government, and in 1930 for other firms. But, as in France, the sums paid as allowances do not make adequate provision for the additional costs necessarily incurred in rearing the children in respect of whom the allowances are made.

There is no evidence that either in France or Belgium family allowances have done anything to check the decline in the birth rate, which in the period 1926-1930 to 1938 dropped from 18.2 to 14.6 per 1,000 in France and from 18.6 to 15.6 in Belgium. It would, however, be unsafe to conclude from the experience of these two countries that family allowances can do nothing to increase fertility; for in neither country have the allowances been on a sufficient scale to equalize the variations in family expenses due to variations in the size of the family, or substantially to counteract the economic advantages enjoyed by unmarried persons and childless married couples.

Italy's population policy is much more comprehensive. It was inaugurated in 1927 by Signor Mussolini, who laid it down that the fate of nations is bound up with their demographic power, and that Italy to count for something in the world must have a population of at least 60 millions at the beginning of the second half of the century—in 1927 it was about 40 millions. The first step was to impose disabilities upon bachelors, who were subjected to special taxation and to serious disadvantages as candidates for government appointments. Family allowances were introduced, and a variety of measures adopted to promote rural settlement and check urbanization. Special privileges and marks of public approval were bestowed upon the parents of large families. Increased penalties were imposed for illegal abortion, and birth control propaganda and the sale of contraceptive appliances were prohibited. In spite of these and other measures the birth rate fell from 27.7 in 1926 to 23.6 in 1938.

made the teaching of population problems compulsory in schools and increased the penalties for illegal abortion. The effect of the war upon the *Code* is uncertain.

Ibid., pp. 122-123, 214-217.

Germany's population policy was initiated by the National Socialists, who came into power in 1933. In that year the German birth rate, which in 1871-1875 was 38.8 per 1,000, had fallen to 14.7 per 1,000, and the births were 30 per cent below the number required for replacement. The first important measure adopted to increase fertility was a law passed in July, 1933, authorizing the granting of loans to couples who wished to marry but were unable to do so without financial assistance. The loans are given not in cash but in tokens that may be exchanged for furniture and other household requisites. No interest is payable, but the loan must be repaid at the rate of one per cent per month, and one-quarter of the original sum borrowed is canceled at the birth of each child. Up to 1938, the number of loans granted was 1,030,000 and the total sum lent was 650,000,000 marks. The number of births to couples receiving loans was 870,000.

A family-allowance system was introduced in 1936 and greatly extended in 1938. In 1935 provision was made for the payment of lump-sum grants on the birth of a child in a needy family with not fewer than four children. The German population policy includes many other measures designed to increase fertility, such as the imposition of disabilities on bachelors, the according of special privileges to the parents of large families, rural settlements and other expedients to check the tendency of the rural population to migrate to the towns. Illegal abortion is regarded as a serious crime and severely penalized. In addition to such special measures to encourage population increase, the German populace is taught by a variety of publicity agencies that marriage and the procreation of healthy and racially-sound children are duties to be fulfilled in the interests of the whole German race, that the family is an institution to be venerated and kept free from disintegrating influences, and that the voluntary limitation of the family is unworthy of the German people. The German birth rate since 1932 is shown on page 112.⁸

⁸ STATISTICAL YEAR-BOOK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS 1938/39, Geneva, 1939, p. 43.
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<i>Year</i>	<i>Births per 1,000 Population</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Births per 1,000 Population</i>
1932	15.1	1936	19.0
1933	14.7	1937	18.8
1934	18.0	1938	19.7
1935	18.9	1939	20.3

According to Dr. Burgdörfer the annual number of births reached replacement level in 1939 for the first time since 1925. He estimates that of the additional number of legitimate births that have occurred since 1933, one-third may fairly be attributed to the increase in the number of marriages and two-thirds to the increase in the fertility of marriages. The statistical data at his disposal enable him to show that there has been an increase not only in first and second births, but in third, fourth, and later births.

To what extent may the increase in German fertility since 1933 be attributed to such special measures as the granting of marriage loans and family allowances—measures that aim at equalizing family economic burdens—or to other factors? This question is discussed by Dr. Burgdörfer, who concludes that these special measures, though important and indeed essential in any effective policy designed to check declining fertility, have played but a minor part in the remarkable increase in marriages and births that has occurred in Germany since the National Socialists came into power. He attributes this increase chiefly to the new world-outlook that the Revolution of 1933 gave to the German people—the new confidence in themselves and in their future, the readiness to renounce ease and personal comfort and shoulder family responsibilities in order to safeguard the future of the race. He concludes, in short, that a policy seeking to check a decline in fertility should rely more on spiritual than on economic factors.⁹

STATISTICAL YEAR-BOOK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS 1939/40, Geneva, 1940, p. 37.

Note: The above figures relate to boundaries of Germany in 1937, including the Saar Territory.

⁹ Burgdörfer, F.: *VÖLKER AM ABGRUND*. Munich, Lehmann, 1936, 57 pp.; *Bevölkerungs-*

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The latest country to adopt a population policy is Sweden, where the birth rate began to go down in the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century. The decline was specially marked after 1920, and in 1934 the gross reproduction rate had fallen to 0.815 and the birth rate to 13.7 per 1,000. The decline in the birth rate was not, however, generally regarded as a matter of public importance, the prevailing opinion being that if there were any cause for concern about the population it was the danger of over-population. But at the end of 1934 this attitude was upset by the appearance of a remarkable book, *CRISIS IN THE POPULATION QUESTION*,¹⁰ by Professor and Mrs. Myrdal, which by the middle of 1937 had sold 16,000 copies, equivalent on a population basis to a sale of some 334,000 copies in the United States. The authors showed that in Sweden the annual number of births had fallen far below the number required for replacement and that the population was heading for a decline. The upheaval in public opinion created by the book led to the appointment in 1935 of a Royal Commission, on whose recommendations a population policy was initiated in 1938.

The Swedish population policy differs in some important respects from the policies adopted in other countries; and to place it in a clearer light it will be useful to consider the demographic position reached by Sweden after a decline in the birth rate that has gone on for some seventy years. Sweden has a population of about 6,300,000 and, according to Professor Myrdal, the net reproduction rate, which for the whole country is somewhat below 0.75, is a little above 1.00 in the agricultural districts, 1.20-1.30 in the sparsely-populated northern provinces, 0.50 in the towns, and somewhat under 0.40 in Stockholm. He states also that, except in Stockholm and some other cities with very low reproduction rates, there is "a strong negative

wissenschaft und Bevölkerungspolitik im neuen Deutschland. *Jahrbuch der Hochschule für Politik*, 1939; *Bevölkerungstatistische und bevölkerungspolitische Rundschau. Jahreskurse für ärztliche Fortbildung*, Vol. 1, 1940, p. 49.

¹⁰ Myrdal, Alva and Myrdal, Gunnar: *CRISIS IN THE POPULATION QUESTION*. Stockholm, Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1935, 403 pp.

correlation between income and social status, on the one hand, and number of children, on the other."¹¹ The agricultural districts, in which the net reproduction rate is unity, contain one-third of Sweden's total population, but the relatively high rate of these districts is more than counterbalanced by the remarkably low rates of the large towns, especially Stockholm. In Professor Myrdal's view, the low reproduction rates in Sweden represent an advanced stage of a dynamic development that may be noted in other countries of the Western World and create a problem that he defines as follows:

At present the practical problem in western countries is not, as it was a hundred years ago, the inevitable pressure of population against the limits of the available means of subsistence, nor, as it was fifty years ago, how to substitute birth control for vice and misery as checks on population growth. Today the problem is how to get a people to abstain from not reproducing themselves.¹²

In attacking this problem Sweden has adopted a policy that contains no element of repression. It is based on the postulate that parenthood should be voluntary, that there should be no births of unwanted children. The policy therefore places no restrictions on birth control propaganda; on the contrary, it includes measures for spreading information on contraceptive technique particularly by the development of birth control clinics, of which when the policy was initiated there were only five in the whole country, four municipal and one voluntary, with a total attendance in 1935 of not more than about 1,000 patients. Birth control is frankly accepted as a need:

We do not want to keep up the birth rate by causing the birth of unwanted children, who have to thank ignorance or bad luck for their existence.¹³

Another important feature of the Swedish policy is that it extends the grounds on which abortion may legally be performed. This was

¹¹ Myrdal, Gunnar: *POPULATION: A PROBLEM FOR DEMOCRACY*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1940, p. 47.

¹² Myrdal, *ibid.*, p. 20.

¹³ Myrdal, Gunnar: *Population Problems and Policies*. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, May, 1938, pp. 200-215.

effected by an Act passed in May, 1938 which legalized abortion performed for "eugenic and ethical" as well as therapeutic reasons. These measures are in accordance with the opinion expressed by the Swedish Royal Commission on Population, that the homes of the poor should not be burdened by excessive numbers of children.

The policy, being nonrepressive, makes no attempt to discourage the gainful employment of women. Here it differs from the German policy. In Germany the marriage-loans scheme was introduced not only to encourage marriages, but to induce women to give up paid employment and devote themselves to home duties. The loans, therefore, were granted only in cases in which the bride had been gainfully employed for at least nine months in the previous two years, or, if doing housework at home, was to be replaced by a domestic servant. As unemployment among men diminished in Germany, this provision was relaxed, but it never formed part of the Swedish marriage-loans scheme. The Swedish Population Commission recommended that the gainful employment of married women should not be discouraged, but on the contrary should be safeguarded, and in particular that married women should be accorded suitable periods of absence during pregnancy and childbirth without risk of dismissal. This principle has been adopted for women employed by central and local governmental authorities and, in deference to public opinion, by a number of private firms.

It is noteworthy, as emphasizing the nonrepressive character of Sweden's efforts to increase fertility, that no disabilities are imposed upon unmarried persons. Bachelors are not, as in Italy, subjected to special taxation or placed at a disadvantage in applying for government appointments. Such measures are deemed to be incompatible with democratic ideas. It is held that in a democratic country no attempt should be made to goad people into assuming the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood. The central idea underlying the Swedish population policy is that in a democracy any steps taken to encourage population growth should form part of a comprehen-

sive, integrated program of social amelioration, which should aim at reducing mortality and morbidity as well as increasing fertility, and should, therefore, include measures designed to improve the housing and nutrition of the people and generally to promote the public health. It is thought that as the conditions under which the mass of the people live are improved and offer greater security for the future there will be less disinclination to bring children into the world. It is realized, however, that parenthood involves not only increased responsibilities but increased expenses, that with every additional child the economic position of the parents tends to become more unfavorable, and, therefore, that an effective population policy must include measures affording economic support necessary for persons who are prepared to fulfil the function of parenthood.

Prominent among such measures in the Swedish policy is the provision of loans for couples who married not more than six months before the date of application for the loan, or who intend to marry. Under this measure, which came into operation on January 1, 1938, loans up to a maximum of 1,000 kronor may be granted to couples in need of assistance to enable them to obtain necessary household equipment. The loans, which are given in the form of tokens exchangeable for furniture and other household requisites, bear interest at the rate payable for government borrowing, which at the inception of the scheme was 3.25 per cent, and must be repaid in quarterly installments of sufficient amount to refund the whole of the loan within five years. Unlike the German scheme, the Swedish scheme provides no cancellations when children are born. The chief aim of the loans scheme is to set up an economical substitute for the hire-purchase system, provision being made for repayment of the loan during the early years of marriage, when expenses are low.

Another special measure is the payment of a lump sum of 75 kronor on the confinement of a woman whose income, or whose husband's income, does not exceed 3,000 kronor a year. This income limit was adopted in 1937, the previous limit being 500 kronor, and

its effect is to entitle about 92 per cent of all mothers to this maternity grant, which for necessitous mothers may be increased up to a maximum of 300 kronor.

A similar measure is the provision of government grants for orphans, fatherless children, and the children of disabled parents, the grants varying from 300 to 420 kronor a year according to the cost of living in the district in which the child lives. The grants are paid until the children are 16 years of age.

Special provision is made for unmarried mothers and their children. This is a matter of exceptional importance in Sweden, where about 14 per cent of all live births are illegitimate. Legal guardians are appointed to watch over the interests of these mothers and children and to act on their behalf. As in other countries, difficulties are experienced in securing the regular payment of the maintenance allowances adjudged by the courts to be payable by the fathers of illegitimate children. These sums, which vary from 15 to 30 kronor a month, may be advanced by the Government. The national exchequer bears 75 per cent; the local authority, 25 per cent.

In the Swedish population policy, the measures that provide various kinds of awards for the direct encouragement of marriage and fertility are integrated with other measures that aim primarily at alleviating the condition of the poor. Prominent among these is housing reform, the need for which was brought out by the housing censuses taken in 1933 and 1936. Since 1933 large sums have been appropriated by the Legislature for granting loans to contractors undertaking to build new houses or to repair existing houses that have become dilapidated. In 1935 a beginning was made with a project for rehousing families with three or more dependent children living in overcrowded dwellings. For this purpose loans are granted by the central government to the local government authorities for the erection of new dwellings, and it is stipulated that the dwellings must be so designed as to provide such amenities as communal laundries, play centers, day nurseries, and access to open spaces. Special

grants are made to the local authorities on condition that the rents charged are reduced in proportion to the number of dependent children in the family, the reduction varying from 30 per cent for a family of three children to 50 per cent for a family of five or more children. The dwellings built under the rehousing project are let at rents much below those paid generally in the same neighborhood. Whereas in Stockholm an apartment of two rooms, kitchen, and bathroom, with central heating and a constant hot water supply would let at an average rent of 1,124 kronor a year, an apartment built under the project in the same city would be rented at 550 kronor a year for a family with three children and at 400 kronor a year for one with five children.

The provision of free meals for children attending public elementary schools in districts where unemployment is prevalent is another measure which, though primarily aimed at improving public health, is regarded also as tending to encourage population growth by lessening the economic disadvantages falling upon the parents of large families.¹⁴

The chief characteristics of the Swedish population policy are:

1. It is based on democratic concepts, which are held to be inconsistent with repressive measures such as the special taxation of unmarried persons or the prohibition of birth control propaganda. Measures of this kind form no part of the policy.
2. It assumes that no children unwanted by their parents should be brought into the world, and therefore it seeks to make information on birth control methods widely available and to extend the grounds on which abortion may legally be performed.
3. The special measures designed for the direct encouragement of marriage and fertility, such as the granting of marriage loans, provide assistance not in cash but in kind.
4. Such provisions are associated with measures aimed primarily at promoting public health to form an integrated system of social amelioration.

¹⁴ Glass, D. V.: *POPULATION POLICIES AND MOVEMENTS IN EUROPE*. Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1940, p. 334.

According to Professor Myrdal, Swedes are more interested in the physical, intellectual, and moral quality of the population than in its quantity, and he holds that in Sweden, with its homogeneous population, quality depends not on racial differences but on environment and especially the living conditions of the young generation:

As so very much is still lacking in the child welfare of our country, we can safely direct all our population policy to the qualitative aim, and rely on the quantitative aim only as a general and broad argument for all such reforms.¹⁵

The Swedish population policy has not been in operation for a sufficient time to furnish material for an appraisal of its effect on fertility. It is too soon to say whether it is likely to be successful in checking the tendency of the population to decline. The aim of the policy from the quantitative point of view is to raise the net reproduction rate to 1.0 and keep it at that level, and so bring about a stationary population. Professor Myrdal thinks that any further reversal of the present downward trend is unattainable, not only in Sweden but in the Western World generally, "a stationary population constituting the maximum possibility even with the strongest population policy." In his view this maximum will be difficult enough to attain:

To achieve a fertility rate sufficient to maintain population, the majority of nonsterile marriages must produce four children. Ordinary citizens making up the bulk of every nation—the workers, farmers, clerks, and all the others whose means are small—these ordinary citizens will certainly be privately inclined, from mere prudence and sense of responsibility, not to follow such a population policy unless vast distributional reforms in the interest of families with children are enacted, reforms so radical that public opinion at present is certainly not prepared to accept more than a small fraction of them at most. The ordinary person will be inclined, on the contrary, to restrict the number of his children still more.¹⁶

Professor Myrdal does not, however, regard the problem as hope-

¹⁵ Myrdal, Gunnar: *Population Problems and Policies. Op. cit.*, pp. 200-215.

¹⁶ Myrdal, Gunnar: *POPULATION: A PROBLEM FOR DEMOCRACY. Op. cit.*, p. 57.

less. With a more equal distribution of wealth, it should be possible, he thinks, to convince the ordinary citizen that a family of the size necessary to maintain a stationary population is the kind of family that will give him the maximum satisfaction. There must be "a kind of psychological identification of the individual with the people." Individuals should not be urged to produce children merely as a duty to the State.³⁷

The experience of the European countries that have adopted population policies seems to support Malthus's conclusion that such measures "when not mixed with religion, as in China and some other countries, are seldom calculated to answer the end which they aim at." In France and Belgium family allowances appear to have had no effect in raising fertility, though it may reasonably be argued that the allowances have not been on a sufficient scale to influence fertility. In France, however, they were reinforced by considerations of national defense, which, widely publicized as they were, might have been expected to do something to check the trend towards depopulation. In Italy the many-sided policy adopted in 1927 did not prevent the fall in the birth rate from 27.7 per 1,000 in 1926 to 22.4 in 1936. It is true that the birth rate rose to 23.6 in 1938, but a similar increase took place in countries with no population policies, and was probably due to an increase in marriages following partial recovery from economic depression.

In Germany the annual number of births, which in 1933 was 30 per cent below the number required for replacement, steadily rose until in 1939 it reached replacement level. But the circumstances in which this remarkable result was achieved were very exceptional; and it is attributed in Germany not so much to the special pro-population measures as to the new *Weltanschauung* of the German people, which, some would say, has brought into the German population policy that element of "religion" which Malthus regarded as necessary for the success of laws to encourage population growth.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 84 and 223.