

The Eye on Abortion

November 2004



A DISTURBING LOOK INTO THE MIND OF MARGARET SANGER - PART 1

There was an individual in American history that desired to transform our society to fit her ideals through drastic measures. Her name was **Margaret Sanger**. She was a supporter of **eugenics**, which is the study of hereditary improvement of the human race by controlled selective breeding, which we will discuss in my next newsletter. She was also the founder of the organization that we now know as **Planned Parenthood**.

WHO WAS MARGARET SANGER?

Margaret Higgins Sanger was born in New York in 1883 and died in 1966 in Arizona. She was born into a large family, being the sixth of eleven children. When her mother, Anne Higgins, died from tuberculosis at the age of fifty, Margaret pointed to her mother's frequent pregnancy as the underlying cause of her premature death.

Sanger became a nurse who often worked in the poor areas of New York City. After seeing the conditions of impoverished mothers and their families in those neighborhoods, she became an activist promoting birth control as her main focus. She had hopes of seeing it become legalized, and eventually she did.

Sanger had a vision. You know, the American dream that consists of a nice house with a white picket fence, two cars and TWO kids? Yep...that's it! That was the ideal for Sanger. Three was iffy, but the idea of *four* or more was simply *too many* children. According to Sanger, having more than two children would render their mother a "physical wreck...incapable of enjoying life" or a "chronic invalid!"



In her book, Woman and the New Race, (where you can find all of the quotes used in this newsletter), she has a chapter entitled "The Wickedness of Creating Large Families." That chapter begins with this quote, "The **most serious evil** of our times is that of encouraging the bringing into the world of large families. The **most immoral practice** of the day is breeding too many children." Those are pretty strong statements, but you will see as you read on that Sanger was very straightforward about her views and didn't mince words (now *that's* putting it mildly!). Her writings are always *high on drama!*

In that same book, Sanger addresses the situation in which a mother has "too many" children. She writes, "Motherhood becomes a disaster and childhood a tragedy...She can contribute nothing to the well being of the community. She is a **breeding machine and a drudge**; she is not an asset but a **liability** to her neighborhood, to her class, to society. She can **be nothing** as long as she is denied means of limiting her family." She also refers repeatedly to women who have "too many" children as being "**slaves!**"

She tried to accomplish this (among other things that I will touch on in my next newsletter) through the **legalization of birth control**, preferring that above abortion. However, she seemed to condone abortion as a justifiable means of "controlling the population" of one's children, if the mother had not been given access to birth control. Sanger writes, "Family

limitation will always be practiced as it is now being practiced; either by birth control or by abortion. We know that. The one means health and happiness; a stronger, better race. The other means disease, suffering, death." Then she defiantly states, "Contraceptives or Abortion; which shall it be?"

Sanger spoke harshly against the Catholic Church and the state, which both upheld laws restricting the distribution of birth control information. She wrote, "And the child who has no place to play except in the street, who lacks mother care, whose chief emotional experience is the longing for the necessities of life? We know too well the end of the sorry tale. The forlorn figures of the shadows where lurk the girls who sell themselves that they may eat and be clothed rise up to damn the moral dogmatists, who mouth their sickening exhortations to the wives and mothers of the workers to **breed, breed, breed.**"



Here, in April 1929, after Boston authorities threatened to bar her from the stage of Ford Hall Forum, she appeared in a gag while Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., read her speech. She reminds me of some of the college students I have dealt with!

Surprisingly, in Woman and the New Race, the only way Sanger refers to abortion is in a very negative light. She calls abortion, "a

horror," "violent" and "an abhorrent operation which kills the tenderness and delicacy of womanhood." She also calls it "a humiliating, repulsive, painful and too often gravely dangerous operation." Amen to that! She even labels abortion "**foeticide,**" a great term that I plan to add to my vocabulary pronto!

Ironically, Sanger thought that the legalization of contraceptives, which she thought was a "certain" means of preventing conception, would **remove any need for abortion.** She wrote, "Try as they will they cannot escape the truth, nor hide it under the cloak of stupid hypocrisy. If the laws against imparting knowledge of scientific birth control were repealed, **nearly all of the 1,000,000 or 2,000,000 women who undergo abortions in the United States each year would escape the agony of the surgeon's instruments** and the long trail of disease, suffering and death which so often follows."

I would like to make a few observations. First, did you notice that the number of abortions that she sited being performed way back in the *early 1900s*, (when she wrote the book) is the *same number* of abortions that are still being performed *today* with legalized birth control? (she usually sited the statistic at 1,000,000) Amazing, huh? Today, the number of abortions *that we know of* that are being performed yearly in America is about 1,300,000. Unfortunately, birth control hasn't reduced the number of abortions at all.

Second, I find it very interesting how Sanger referred in the statement above to "the surgeon's instruments." Many pro-abort folks are quick to point out that if abortion is made illegal, women will have to "go back" to suffering back alley abortions with coat hangers. Oh, and it has to be *rusty* coat hangers (I wonder how many times I've heard that one ☺). Sanger did not say "coat hanger," she said "**surgeon's instruments.**" In reference to abortions in her day, she would also refer to "**operation tables,**" not "back alleys." The "back-alley abortion" is just one of many fallacies that pro-aborts cling to in order to try to make their point. I will write more about Margaret Sanger in my next newsletter.

For the least of these,

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