

MEMO

TO: Harry Weyher
FROM: John Tanton
DATE: May 9, 1997

You asked for my opinion, and it is that your letter is too long and too defensive - as I mentioned yesterday, the best defense is a good offense. Such a letter must also stand alone, for many people who see it will have missed the article, or have thrown it away so they can't go back and check its details. This same philosophy of writing letters-to-the-editor applies to responses to the Barry Mahlers of the world in general. Don't defend — attack! Otherwise put: don't explain; your friends don't need it, and your enemies won't believe it.

Roger Pearson's citation of authorities is helpful, but is also too long and not specific enough. I think that my shorter list with specific examples that people may actually have heard of is better ... but then I guess that we all like our own materials better!! Here's what I would send:

First paragraph - the same.

1. The Sanger language that Mr. Mosher finds offensive was commonplace during her lifetime, and antedated today's politically correct and antiseptic euphemisms. Many other famous Americans spoke the same way. For example, we have Teddy Roosevelt's "no more hyphenated Americans," or Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.'s "three generations of imbeciles are enough." Does Mosher — or anyone else — think our language today will stand the test of time? How will it sound in 75 years, not to mention next week?

2. His speculations about Margaret Sanger's possible position on China's population policies are just that: pure speculations. In any event, China is a mature nation with six times our population and a far longer history. The Chinese are fully capable of charting their own population future in ways congruent with *their* culture and analysis of their situation, without Mr. Mosher's or the United States' imperialistic intervention. And they will do so in any case.

3. A review of current research on the disproportionate reproduction at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder, and at the bottom of the intelligence ladder as well, confirms that Margaret Sanger was ahead of her time, even though she had to make her assessments without today's information.

4. *The Birth Control Review*, like any scholarly journal, published differing views on

various topics without necessarily endorsing them. Did *The Wall Street Journal* agree with all of the opinions of Alexander Cockburn that it published?

5. The bottom line is this: Mr. Mosher would prefer rule by a theocracy of his choosing, one that starts with received precepts ...I won't say knowledge. The majority of us prefer to start with facts as best we can determine them and reasons to general governing principles, however unpalatable or politically incorrect.