

paralysis is a disease of the geniculate bundles, lesions affecting it are particularly prone to be accompanied by the phenomenon of *rire et pleurer spasmodique*." He also lays stress on the fact that "corticofugal paths to the facio-respiratory centres in the pons and medulla are independent of the voluntary corticopontobulbar tracts to the same nuclei," that excitation will "modify the facio-respiratory synkinesis in the direction of either laughter or the reverse."

Now it is a well known fact that if a patient with a lesion, say of the right optic thalamus, is told a joke he smiles only on the right side, but when he assumes a smile both sides of the face act equally. But in a lesion of the right Rolandic area he smiles equally on both sides in response to a joke and an assumed smile occurs only on the right side, showing therefore that the motor element of emotion crosses to the opposite side is Monakow's rubro-spinal bundle. I suggest that this bundle subserves the function of the motor part of emotion that is involuntary. In addition there is a cortical portion of the system of motor neurons subserving the function of emotion connecting the cortex with the nucleus rubra. M. and Mme.

Dejerine describe such a system, the fibres of which they state originate from all parts of the cortex, especially the parietal lobe. They skirt the thalamus just above the radiations of the internal geniculate body, enter into the formation of the tegmentum and reach the red nucleus at its antero-external part, forming an upper segment of the emotional motor system.

I venture to suggest that the cause of pathological laughing and crying in cases of pseudo-bulbar palsy is to be found in the vicinity of the red nucleus, the lesion stimulating the ubro-spinal tract of Monakow, which may be considered the involuntary tract for emotion, and thus producing involuntary laughter or crying, at the same time cutting off the cortico-rubral tract described by Dejerine, which tract may be considered to exercise a voluntary control over Monakow's rubro-spinal tract.

The result is that when the voluntary control of Dejerine's cortico-rubral fibres is cut off, stimulation of the lower rubro-spinal tract produces involuntary laughing and crying without the registration in the association areas of the affective tone of emotion.

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SOME ASPECTS OF FAMILY PLANNING  
RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR'S BROADCAST

REGULATION of population growth, consistent with the demands of our national effort to produce a speedy advance on existing standards of community life, was



stressed by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Union Minister for Health, in a recorded talk broadcast in the National Programme series from the Delhi Station of A.I.R. at

8-30 p.m. today. Family planning, therefore, must receive the support of all thoughtful men and women in India, she added.

She said that, in attempting to devise measures to meet the problem, "methods which are in consonance with our past tradition and which help to preserve and maintain human dignity and faith in the spiritual values that have been the guiding light not only of India but also of other countries" should be adopted.

In the opinion of the Health Minister, a national campaign for family planning should be conceived as a broad and intensive programme of education of the people. She has advocated the adoption of the rhythm or the safe period method for a planned parenthood.

The following is the text of the radio talk:

I am glad I have this opportunity to place before my listeners the views I hold on the subject of family planning and to emphasise certain aspects of the problem of volitional control of reproduction which should receive, in my opinion, earnest and serious consideration from all those who are interested in the welfare of our people and are in a position to help in shaping public opinion towards socially desirable ends.

Students of human and animal ecology tell us that the question of adjusting the number in a community to the resources that are available has been an ever-present problem throughout the ages. Our own Planning Commission has emphasised the importance of the population problem in relation to the overall planning of national reconstruction and in its draft outline published in 1951 it drew attention to the fact that, at the present rate of growth of population, even the successful completion of the First Five Year Plan might help to bring the national standard of consumption in essential articles, like food and clothing only to the pre-war level of 1939.

#### SPEEDY ADVANCE

I have, therefore, no intention to belittle the importance or seriousness of this problem and am convinced that it must be faced squarely and dispassionately and that measures must be devised to promote a reduction of population growth consistent with the demands of our national effort to produce a speedy advance on existing standards of community life. I am also aware of the need for ensuring such advance with the least possible delay, because, with a large section of our people living at a level well below that necessary for health and comfort and with a democratic form of government which does not permit of adequate control over even unreasonable criticism of all that is being done to promote public welfare, national support and enthusiasm for sustained effort to improve the standard of living can be created and strengthened only by the demonstration of quick results.

Regulation of population growth, if it is essential at the present stage of the country's development in order

to make our national reconstruction programme a success, must naturally receive the support of all thoughtful men and women in India.

#### MAINTAINING HUMAN DIGNITY

I should like to say at the same time that, in attempting to devise measures to meet the population problem, it is fundamental to our national well-being to adopt methods which are in consonance with our past tradition and which help to preserve and maintain human dignity and faith in the spiritual values that have been the guiding light not only of India but also of other countries. For instance, in order to achieve quick results certain countries adopted, during recent years, legalised abortion on a large scale. Again, sterilisation has been advocated as an effective means of speedily bringing under control the rate of population growth. Such measures may produce spectacular results within a short period, but it requires serious consideration as to whether such steps are to be recommended to our people for acceptance. I have reason to believe that abortion has been now abandoned even by those who at one time advocated it and sterilisation too does not have universal support.

#### INDIVIDUAL COUPLES

Further, I would like to point out that the subject of family planning is of such intimate concern to the individual couples who have united their lives in order to build up a home and a happy family life, that its consideration becomes helpful and purposive only in the light of a total assessment of the relevant factors associated with the lives of those persons. These factors include social, economic, health, cultural and other considerations. Slogans such as "improvident maternity" after the third child appear to me, therefore, as not always appropriate and advocacy of the propagation of such slogans as part of the national programme for the limitation of births would only show that their sponsors are insensitive to the differences that exist between individuals as regards their appreciation and acceptance of social and cultural values.

All of us can bring to our mind individual families where the parents have deliberately chosen the hard and difficult path of rearing a large family, of rigorously eliminating waste and superfluous luxury and of bringing up their children as disciplined boys and girls who, in the atmosphere of a large home, develop the valuable characteristics of understanding and sympathy, of mutual adjustment and cooperation as against the self-centered individual whose demands on others are disproportionately high in relation to his own obligation to serve.

#### PLANNED PARENTHOOD

The small family system, with the unduly large measure of comfort and attention it helps to create, does not always promote good citizenship. The ultimate decision to adopt family limitation or not to do so and, if the former be the choice, the selection of the method

or methods to be employed to achieve this end rest with individual parents or prospective parents.

Let us not forget that what is intended to be accomplished through family planning is not merely a reduction in the size of families. Its meaning and purpose surely lie in the fact that planned parenthood should play a prominent part in promoting family welfare in all its aspects, the regulation of the number of children being only one of the many measures to be adopted to reach the desired objective.

#### NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

The national campaign for family planning should, therefore, be conceived, in my opinion, as a broad and intensive programme of education of the people in which imparting of knowledge regarding the spacing of births should be closely linked with the preparation of individual couples for approaching the problems of family life and its obligations with an adequate appreciation and understanding of all relevant matters such as the regulation of the sexual impulse in the interest of the family and of the community, the hygiene of married life including child-bearing and the rearing of children, and the possibility of extending the experience gained in building up a happy home to the wider sphere of organising community life on proper lines. The quality of the human material is as important as quantity and family planning, if wisely conceived and carried out, should have as its dual objective the regulation of the number of children and the rearing of them under optimal conditions.

It is considerations such as these that lead me to approach the problem of family limitation with the utmost caution and to urge that the steps that are advocated for the purpose should be taken after due consideration of their effect not only on the health and material comfort of the people but also of the effects that these steps may have, on the moral and spiritual planes, in relation to the life of the community.

#### RHYTHM METHOD

My advocacy of the rhythm or the safe period method has been unremitting and vigorous for the past several years, because I feel that it has many advantages. It is the least expensive of all methods for the control of conception. Its practice does not involve risks to the health of women such as those likely to be associated with the continued use of chemical or mechanical contraceptives. Above all the practice of the rhythm method introduces into family life a self-imposed control over the sexual urge and the sexual act and, where such control is accepted and exercised in adequate measure, the beneficial effect which this self-discipline produces will extend over the whole range of human relations inside the family and in the outer world. Persistent advocacy of the adoption of this method, which has been shown, if faithfully followed, to be as effective as the use of contraceptives is, therefore, in my opinion, the duty of all thoughtful men and women.

I say this deliberately to my sisters all over the country because the damage to health that may result from the indiscriminate use of various ways of preventing childbirth, which may range from chemical or mechanical contraceptives to crude methods of causing abortion, is truly their share. It is, therefore, disheartening to me when I find only too often that mine is a lone voice crying for the adoption of the hard, but ultimately the most desirable path of self-discipline rather than the pursuit of the easy and pleasant way of ignoring the need for self-control through the use of certain methods which may even cause harm of an irreparable nature when used as a long-term measure.

To fall in with the prevailing public opinion and to mould one's views to the pattern that is generally acceptable is easy and may add temporarily to one's popularity and even give a sense of happiness. But I have preferred in the past and shall continue in the future to stand up and fight for what I consider is a fundamental principle which should govern the life and conduct of individuals and of the community.

#### SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION

I have spoken with vehemence and some measure of emotion on this subject. But I should not be taken as a person who is blind to the realities of the present situation. Experimental studies in the use of rhythm method as a measure to promote a significant fall in the birth rate of our people have been in progress in a rural area in Mysore State and in Lodi Colony in Delhi among certain classes of employees of the Central Government. There are many difficulties in the successful application of this method, the most important being the unwillingness of the husbands to impose on themselves the restraint which their wives may be willing to accept. Therefore, while there is no reason to give up the fight in a good cause, it may become necessary to promote the simultaneously propagation of other methods.

#### GOVERNMENT MEASURES

The Government of India has accepted the advice given by a Committee, the Family Planning Research and Programme Committee, which I appointed about two years ago. These methods should fulfil certain criteria such as harmlessness to the health of the users, effectiveness, acceptability by the people and, above all, cheapness if widespread use is to be encouraged in a poor country like ours. Field studies to discover such methods are being promoted. Simultaneously arrangements are in progress for testing all contraceptives by both laboratory investigation and by their controlled use by selected groups of people in order to assess their true value and their innocuousness so that our markets may not be flooded by harmful drugs and contraceptives.

The Government of India is perhaps the only Government, with the exception of that of Japan, which has deliberately entered the field of family planning in order

to promote the development of a national campaign in this difficult sphere of social education. Its responsibility is, therefore, all the greater to ensure that the methods that are advocated are tested fully in order to fulfil the conditions that I enumerated.

#### CENTRAL AID

The Central Government is proposing to give, before the end of March 1956, a sum of Rs. 30 lakhs to State Governments and voluntary agencies as grants for setting up of family planning clinics on the condition that they fulfil certain standards regarding trained staff, equipment and efficiency in their functioning. In addition substantial amounts are available for promoting laboratory and field studies. But, pending the discovery of harmless, effective and cheap methods of controlling conception, the Central Government has decided not to give grants for the purchase and free supply of the contraceptives that are in general use today. In the first place they are costly and encouragement of their use through grants from public funds on a sufficiently large scale to produce a significant fall in the birth rate would result in such an inroad into the available resources as to leave little or nothing for urgent schemes in connection with our national programmes of development. Lastly steps are being taken to establish training facilities for producing the required number of skilled workers of various types for pushing ahead with the family planning campaign on a countrywide scale.

#### COURAGEOUS OUTLOOK

While referring at some length to the various steps that are being taken to promote family planning I must emphasize the view that I have always held that restriction of population growth is essentially a negative attitude towards the problem of man's adjustment to the resources that are available to him. The extent to which human ingenuity can be exercised to extract from nature all that man wants is an index of the growth of civilisation and, as modern science is making it increasingly clear to us, there is perhaps no limit to the progress that can be made in this direction. Therefore, our outlook should be one of courage and optimism.

A determined and concerted effort to develop the resources that the available to us is not only a step in the right direction but it is also a measure of our resiliency and determination to meet the challenge of the population problem with the positive steps necessary to the solution of that problem. Within the past seven years the existing Governments in our country have done more to promote national welfare on a planned basis and to move steadily towards socialism and the uplift of the common man than was accomplished over several decades under previous Governments. Let us get on whole-heartedly with this good fight and we shall do more to gain confidence in ourselves and to promote our self-respect than by merely adopting the negative attitude of birth control as the panacea for

all our ills. Please also remember that the moment the standard of life goes up, the birth rate will *ipso facto* fall.

#### PEOPLE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Above all let us educate our people in the basic facts of living not only for themselves but also for others. In the ultimate analysis the future of the nation lies in the hands of the people and all can contribute their share, by correct thinking and living, to the promotion of national welfare. If our people can be persuaded to abolish child marriage and to encourage the idea that both men and women should become adults before they marry, then quite a few years of active reproductive life will be put out of the picture in regard to population growth and that will itself have a tremendous effect on the population problem.

Education in the widest sense of the term is the true remedy for the population problem as well as for all other human ills. In any event I hope India will in this field be true to her traditions. I would like every one of my listeners both at home and indeed in the wider world to read Gandhiji's little book entitled "Self-restraint versus self-indulgence." The Father of the Nation, as we call him, instinctively knew what was best for India.

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(Reproduced from a WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION REGIONAL OFFICE FOR SOUTH EAST ASIA Press Release SEA/PR/54-23 dated, New Delhi,

21 September, 1954.)

*Role of non-political agencies in easing world tensions stressed by Prime Minister Nehru before WHO*

*Regional Committee.*

The significant contribution being made by non-political UN agencies such as the World Health Organization towards easing world tension and resolving conflict outside their own immediate fields of action was highlighted by India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru this morning in an address inaugurating the Seventh Session of the WHO Regional Committee for S. E. Asia at Patiala House, New Delhi.

The Regional Committee's five-day conference, bringing together representatives of nine S. E. Asian countries to lay plans for WHO's 1956 programme in this part of the world, opened with addresses by Prime Minister Nehru and India's Minister of Health, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. The inaugural meeting was presided over by the outgoing chairman of the Regional Committee, Dr. Abdul Rahim, Delegate from Afghanistan and director of that country's National Malaria Institute.

The Prime Minister dwelt at length on what he called the "indirect approach" to the settlement of controversial issues in human affairs. Pointing out that statesmen and politicians were engaged in efforts to solve world problems directly, he declared that the "indirect approach" through the type of work being done by