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# THE BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

DEDICATED TO THE CAUSE OF VOLUNTARY MOTHERHOOD



AN OBLIGATION FULFILLED

*By MARGARET SANGER*



## A STATEMENT OF FACTS—AN OBLIGATION FULFILLED

By Margaret Sanger

**T**HIS IS THE TWELFTH issue of *The Birth Control Review*, and as such marks the fulfillment of an obligation. To me a dollar given for the support of any movement such as ours—is more than one hundred cents, it is a pledge for the betterment of the world—of the human race. Thus it is doubly the attitude of those chosen to administer the monies contributed for such funds, to see to it that every cent of every dollar is rightfully expended and rightfully accounted for. Governed by this conviction I have issued the twelve numbers of *The Birth Control Review*, and have succeeded in bringing the magazine to a point where its future usefulness is assured. Before, however, forgetting the obligations of the past in the greater promises of the future, I consider it my duty to make plain to the subscribers of this magazine certain following facts. In October, the year of 1916 the task of stimulating the birth control movement through a monthly publication was undertaken by me with the assistance of Frederick A. Blossom former manager of the Associated Charities of Cleveland, Ohio. He came to me in Cleveland during the month of July, 1916, and volunteered his services to the movement for a period of six months. Despite the fact that he had had no previous experience in any modern or progressive movement nor scarcely any knowledge of the physical, historical or economic facts of birth control, I accepted his offer, for I believed that with his experience and assistance as manager much of the routine work would be taken off my shoulders, and that I would be able to devote more of my time to agitation, to lecture work, to the opening of clinics and to organizing more intensely some of the many details which had to be neglected because of lack of time. I also hoped to be of more general service in bringing together in closer and more constructive operation the various birth control centers which I had just organized in the United States. In October of the same year, Frederick Blossom was placed in full charge of the New York office of all the books, of monies received and spent, and generally of all financial affairs of *The Birth Control Review*. In fact, he was given a confidence usually earned by years of toil and sacrifice and accomplishment.

**I**T WAS EXPECTED THAT the first issue of the magazine would be issued immediately, but it was not until February of the following year, five months later that the first number came from the press. The third issue and incidentally the last of his eight months of management of the magazine came in May of that year. Then to my utter surprise, he proposed to abandon the publication, although he had accepted almost two thousand paid-in-advance subscriptions and had therefore incurred an obligation to continue the issuance of the mag-

azine to the end of the twelfth month. His explanation was he had spent on three issues all the moneys collected, a sum which by his own calculations should have been sufficient for twelve months. He also claimed the magazine owed him several hundred dollars. In May, 1917, Frederick A. Blossom resigned as manager of *The Birth Control Review* and was asked to discontinue his activities on my behalf. In leaving he took with him all the furniture and furnishings of the office that had been bought in the name of the *Review*, all books, vouchers, checks and business or financial records of every sort, leaving me with none of the equipments necessary to carry out the obligation to the subscribers of *The Birth Control Review*, with nine issues out of twelve yet to be published, and not one cent in the bank account of the *Review*. When Frederick Blossom thus abandoned his responsibilities as manager of the *Review*, I asked him to give me a complete report or statement of receipts and expenditures. This request was never complied with nor have I to this day been able to obtain the books from him, although this request was made at various times covering the period of a year, sometimes as often as once a week. I needed and asked for the following:

- 1 The total amount received from subscribers
- 2 The names and amounts received from contributors
- 3 Moneys received through cash sales of the *Review* other than through subscribers
- 4 Total amount received from sales of the "Girl" and "Mother" books and other literature, also
  - 1 The dates and amounts paid for printing the various issues
  - 2 Amount spent for postage, wrappers and other incidental disbursements
  - 3 Amount paid for "Girl" and "Mother" books

**H**IS ANSWER WAS that I could "count the number of subscribers on file and send to the printer for the printing bills" for any information. I then requested him, as I had not received a statement to send to me by return mail the book or books in which a full account of receipts and contributions had been kept, also the bank book, check book and vouchers of the *Review* account, saying that I would prepare a statement and submit it to him for correction before taking it to the committee of friends who were willing to help me. He refused flatly to do this and I then placed the matter in the hands of my attorney. Finally, one year after his resignation as manager of *The Birth Control Review*, he sent to my attorney not a financial statement of receipts and expenditures nor the books, vouchers, etc., but what purported to be a statement of bank deposits and withdrawals by checks which amounted to \$4,816.25. Upon

obtaining a transcript of this account from the bank, it was found that their account showed deposits and withdrawals to the amount of \$5,185 50 That discrepancy is a question between Frederick Blossom and the bank Much as the money involved is needed in the movement, its loss if loss there be, is overshadowed by the difficulties, the embarrassment and injury to the movement resulting from his failure to return to *The Birth Control Review* its documents and to give an accounting of his financial transaction of his stewardship All that we have to show covering that stewardship of eight months is the report of deposits and withdrawals, which does not agree with the banks and three numbers of *The Birth Control Review* This meeting was finally brought to a head by the interjection of the B C L of New York in the matter An annual meeting of the B C L of New York was called in Frederick Blossom's apartment on May 11th to elect officers The newly elected officers, of which Hiram Myers was president Mrs Eugene Stone, vice-president, Jonah J Goldstein, treasurer, Elizabeth Stuyvesant, secretary, requested Frederick Blossom, former treasurer of the League, to pass over to its newly elected officers all books, accounts, etc, of the League This he refused to do, and the treasurer and president issued a complain against him in the district attorney's office

IN THE MEANTIME the New York Women's Publishing Co, Inc, had been formed to take over the publishing of the *Review* and assist me in fulfilling my obligations to subscribers This statement would have been made earlier, but it could not be made until absolute proof had been given that all obligations included in a year's subscription had been discharged *The Birth Control Review* has made good its obligations to its supporters and to the movement—so far as we have been able to ascertain them—even in the absence of the records which Frederick Blossom has as yet not surrendered If anyone who has paid for a subscription to the *Review* has not received it, information should be sent to this office at once in order that the unavoidable omission may be made good Whatever the outcome of the disagreement—personal, petty in the extreme, it does not conflict with the work nor obstruct the goal that is to be reached Everywhere throughout the country, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the birth control idea is progressing and the future of the movement is assured

My dear Mrs Sanger

As there has been some comment concerning my action in requesting the District Attorney to institute an inquiry into the financial affairs of the New York Birth Control League I wish to state to you briefly my reasons for so doing

During the first year, following its inception, I was treasurer of the League

At the first annual meeting I was made assistant treasurer of the League, and since that time have found it absolutely impossible to get any adequate statement concerning the finances of the League

After making another attempt to secure accurate information, and failing in this, I instituted a John Doe inquiry through the District Attorney's office solely with the idea of protection of those who had contributed sums of money to the New York League, and in so doing have no doubt that my action was the only honorable thing to do, having been myself officially connected with the League's finances I understand that the investigation is still pending

I have recently heard from a majority of the members of the Executive Committee of the League, as constituted at the time in question and from many of the original members of the League, and have received their endorsement of my action

Sincerely yours,

HIRAM MYERS



Judge Returning Home After Sentencing a Birth Control Speaker to Six Months Is Met by His Two Children, Ages Three and Six

# THE CRYING NEED FOR BIRTH CONTROL

By Ida Wright Mudgett

## PART II

HERE comes a time when an utterly exhausted man, fleeing from an enemy, ceases to care whether he lives or dies. He wants just to rest. The strong instinct of self-preservation can no longer spur him on. In similar circumstances the strong instinct of mother-love becomes impaired in quality and languishes for lack of an adequate nervous system to sustain it. The overburdened mother is like a cow, and cow-like she hooks the yearling away to make room for the suckling.

This thought brings to mind the reference to prenatal influence. What chance has the pauperized mother of a too large family to give her offspring the right of being born with a well-organized body and healthy nervous system? What kind of prenatal nourishment can she furnish for her child? What possible good influence can she have upon the nervous system (upon which morality so much depends in mature life) of her offspring?

A breeder of good horses does not overwork his brood mares until they drop in their tracks, nor over-breed them until they foal inferior stock. But the lord of society may treat his wife in that way.

The most horrible blight on civilized society, the most unanswerable arraignment of the system, the canker in the eye which prevents civilization from looking savagery squarely in the face, is prostitution. Savagery does not have to blush for *that*. Civilization does! The more civilized it becomes, the less humane, the more utterly destructive to the surplus female it becomes. (Note A surplus female. One that can not be absorbed into the social body by the rules and regulations of organized society. As witness the arbitrary and ferocious methods of police machinery—the *male dealing with his female*—the organized vice trusts ramifying through every avenue of life, systematically roping, capturing and binding thousands of girls for the shameless traffic of civilization.) Yet men have the influence to affirm that prostitution is an absolutely necessary and inevitable function of society.

ONE OF THE CHIEF causes of prostitution is late marriages. All during the years when a man's passion is strongest and most uncontrollable he is trying to get himself in a position where he can afford to marry. In the majority of cases this desired aim could be attained quite early in life, if he could be assured that he would have only the support of his wife and a family keeping pace with his growing income. He could look with some degree of equanimity upon the idea of supporting a wife and a child coming every four or five years for twenty years, but he shrinks aghast from the idea of

possible offspring for every two years for twenty years. He will not venture to assume such a responsibility—not in this age when he is beginning to realize in his own person what lack of education, lack of opportunity mean. So he seeks satisfaction among women whom he feels to be "safe" in so far as possible progeny is concerned. To meet this demand, a large number of women is needed, women forever cut off from home and family life, women who would mostly have made good wives and built up good homes and had their share of children.

The great cosmic urge is upon the young female as well. She many times meets her male half way. The usual result for her is abuse, social disaster and sometimes a nameless grave.

Now, if a young man was reasonably sure that a too numerous brood would not follow at once upon the heels of the marriage ceremony, he would marry. For what normal young man would prefer the chance consorting with a mere female—under such circumstances she means nothing more than that to him—to life with the one girl a home and everything that it means. With this assurance he would marry, save himself from demoralization perhaps physical ruin.

UNCHECKED FAMILIES have a direct bearing on war. Overpopulation means pressing upon the means of subsistence, pressing upon means of subsistence means need of territorial expansion, need of territorial expansion means wars. The action of Germany in launching the present conflict proves the point.

There are only two serious arguments against birth control. The first is, that the ignorant stratas of society and the lower races would multiply beyond and soon swamp the better products. This would lower the status of humanity. This argument is based upon the assumption that the women in the lower walks of life cannot be reached with the knowledge of personal sanitation as related to this subject, either because they are too stupid to learn or too superstitious to heed. I have not come into personal contact with this aspect of the subject, so I cannot be certain about it, but I have been assured by several who, years ago in London worked in this matter, that such women were intelligent enough to learn and willing to practice. As for the lower races, biologists assure us that such races are mostly dying out from natural causes inherent in their organisms.

The second argument is, that the more desirable classes would refuse to have offspring. Undoubtedly this is, to a limited extent, true. Some of these women who now have children would refuse to have them at all if they had the requisite knowledge to prevent it. But they are the kind who push their babies away, refuse to nurse

them, largely neglect them, and eventually commit abortion. Their progeny is none too desirable, because of the mother's heartlessness and careless mind.

It has been my experience that both men and women, suitably situated, want a reasonable number of children, that they love them and know that their lives are not complete without them. These are the mothers who give every consideration, both prenatal and after birth, to the well being of their offspring. They bear them cheerfully because they want them, nurse them at their breasts and give them every personal attention. After all is said and done, these are the mothers who keep the race advancing physically, mentally and morally. The birth rate among these would not be lowered, but perhaps increased.

Some agree that to limit population is desirable, but do not agree that the use of artificial means is permissible. Only moral means, self-control abstinence are to be considered. If it were possible yes! But I take it that practical people use practical means to attain desired ends.

There are two fundamental functions inseparable from organic life, they are food desire and sex desire, the former for the preservation of the individual, the latter for the preservation of the species. It is as profitable to ask the race to refuse expression to the former as to ask it to refuse expression to their latter desire. The experience of moralists, as far back as we have any history, shows that it can not be done. The biological forces planted in the organisms of its units are too urgent, and to modify these forces to any extent the race as a whole must have time and opportunity to think, to meditate, to develop the artistic and ideal sense, and thus have something in its consciousness to exhaust its nerve force upon beside passion. If we expect its animal limitations to be outgrown, a leisure incompatible with overgrown families must be secured.

## MARRIED LOVE—A REVIEW

AMONG BOOKS DEALING with the love relations between men and women "Married Love," by Dr. Marie C. Stopes, is unique in at least two respects. It is exactly what it purports to be—a book for *all* married people. To the author's faithful adherence to her purpose to make it a book for normal, average people we owe the fact that her knowledge is given to us with clarity and directness, and that there is not a superfluous word in the book. One is not confused and waylaid by excursions into the realms of the abnormal and the morbid.

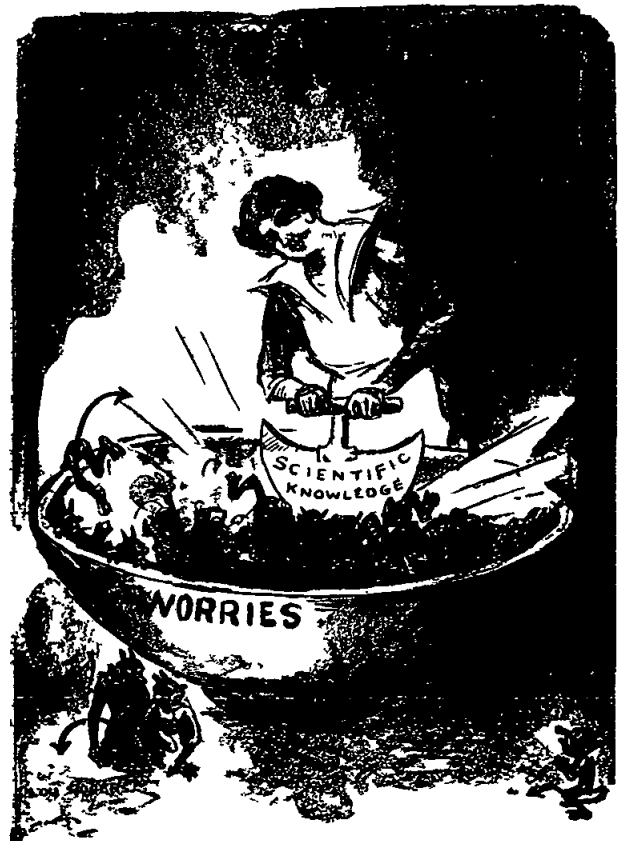
Another thing which distinguishes the book from all others of its kind is Dr. Stopes' discoveries in connection with the sex-life of women. This real beginning of a scientific study of woman is an encouraging sign that women will no longer acquiesce in the old, man-made dogma that woman is the passive instrument of man's

pleasure. Dr. Stopes' book is a convincing answer to Weininger's peevish complaint that women are so little interested in the wonder and laws of their being, that the only known description of the emotions of a pregnant woman was written by a man.

There is also a fine chapter on the cramping effect on married people of the perpetual propinquity of each other. It is not only that it takes courage of the highest order to leave one's mate free, but it is the rarest thing in the world to find married people who realize that the truest happiness lies that way. It is a truth we might all take to heart with advantage to ourselves that "even in a supremely happy marriage, which touches, as does the mystic in his raptures, a realization of the whole universe, there cannot lie in the *whole* of life's experiences."

Dr. Stopes' handling of the subject matter of her book is above reproach, but in form it could have been improved by giving the editor's comments in the form of footnotes, or as numbered notes at the end of the book. Nothing could well be more confusing to the reader than to have them as they are in the body of the text. It is not only disconcerting to find the author's views in one sentence contradicted by the editor in the next, but it is hard to follow her thought when it is interrupted so frequently.

BIANCA VAN BEUREN



Making Mince Meat

# THE NATIONAL BIRTH CONTROL LEAGUE

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Mrs. Max Heideberg Chairman  
 Jessie Ashley  
 Augusta Cary  
 Mrs. Walter Chambers  
 Mrs. Mary Ware Dennett  
 Mrs. William H. Greene  
 Dr. A. L. Goldwater  
 Max Heideberg

**OBJECTS**

(From the by-laws)

The objects of this association are  
 1 To secure the repeal or amendment of all laws prohibiting the giving out of information concerning methods of birth control through the prevention of conception  
 2 To collect and distribute facts in regard to the legal status of birth control education in the United States and other countries

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Paul Kennaday  
 Louise Kneeland  
 Mrs. Woodruff Leeming  
 Mrs. Amos Pinchot  
 Marion Nicholl Rawson  
 Mrs. Lillian R. Sire  
 Mrs. John H. Williams

200 Fifth Avenue New York City Telephone Gramercy 3139

EVERY MONTH ON this page the *National League* will suggest something to do to make your interest in birth control effective. You believe in birth control, of course, and very likely you have already whatever information you personally need, but that will not help the thousands of suffering mortals who need information and are deprived of it by our cruel laws,—people like the woman who wrote this letter to us recently

DEAR FRIENDS —

I am enclosing the blanks you asked us to sign. I do not know if they will do any good as we just came here from Canada four months ago. Though my husband and I were both born in the U S A

But I want to help all I can for my own benefit and also for the benefit of other poor mothers who need yes sadly need the knowledge of birth control. I am desperately in need of something sure and harmless as my health is about ruined and I live in dread and fear of another confinement as each month goes by. I am only twenty-six years old and have had six children and one miscarriage. My first baby is dead.

We live on a farm and I had a lot of hard work outside to do, and with a baby every year, no wonder I am what I am. Two doctors I have already asked for some knowledge as they knew my circumstances but all they told me was to be careful so many days before and after mensuration and single beds. That I knew and I told them you know that it takes two to make a bargain even like that.

Tell me how is it the wealthier class of people get information like that and those that really need it can't? I don't want to say that I don't want any more children because I love babies but I want a chance to get my health and get those I have a start in the right way. My husband only gets an average of \$16 a week, and there are seven of us. Oh, isn't there some one who can help me?  
 Sincerely, MRS. K. A. B.

NOW, WHAT IS TO be done about it? Why, *work as never before* to make every one you know understand what the birth control movement is, so they will join with us to get the laws changed at the next winter sessions of Congress and the state legislatures.

One of the best ways to get them to understand is to read "The Small Family System," by Dr. Charles V. Drysdale. It is a remarkable little encyclopedia of birth control data. The publisher has brought out a special edition exclusively for the National League, but the new postal zone regulations prevent giving the price. This article would be classed as an advertisement if we did, involving extra postage, the calculation of which by zones is impossible just as the Review goes to press.

This book convinces. Help us make it do a big work. People believe as soon as they understand. When they understand they demand that the laws be changed. When enough people demand the change, it will happen. Then *we shall be free to enlighten all the Mrs. K. A. B.'s. And the world will be a more "decent place to live in"*

MARY WARE DENNETT,

*Executive Secretary*

**TO THE STATE LEGISLATURE**

As a voter of this state, I hereby urge you to secure the amendment of the penal law, so that giving information concerning methods of birth control by the avoidance of conception may no longer be classed as a crime in the laws of this state.

Name

Address

Sign and return to

The National Birth Control League  
 200 Fifth Avenue - New York City

**TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES**

As a voter, I hereby urge you to secure the amendment of the Federal Penal Code so that the transportation of information concerning methods of birth control by the avoidance of conception may no longer be classed as a crime in the laws of this country.

Name

Address

Sign and return to

The National Birth Control League  
 200 Fifth Avenue - - New York City

## LET'S HAVE THE TRUTH

ONE HUNDRED AND ONE of the men and women who have worked hardest, longest and most fearlessly for the wiping out of social and industrial evils, as those evils are defined and dealt with by the I W W, are on trial in Chicago. The charge is conspiracy to obstruct the conduct of the war and 10,000 crimes are alleged against those now under prosecution. The charges, however, are being overshadowed by the great outstanding fact that the I W W, as an organization, is on trial for its life. America may be said to be divided into two camps—those who believe that such organizations as the I W W have a right to exist and those who believe that the members of such organizations should be hunted down, jailed or lynched as menaces to society.

This fact alone makes it imperative for the welfare of society that the full truth about the I W W be known. Any issue sufficiently keen and clear-cut as to divide the country into two sharply defined camps brings with it a demand that, for the benefit of society, the fullest possible light be shed upon the facts in the case. Society, jealous of its own well being, must see that the facts are known, in order that it may determine its future course.

Besides this consideration, the fate of the persons on trial is of little significance.

The trial of the I W W, however, takes on even a more compelling significance, when it is remembered that the evils with which that body deals in its own particular way are the same ones of which newspapers are constantly complaining, the same ones that occupy the greater part of the time of the courts, of congress, of legislatures and federal commissions, the same ones that claim chief attention of reformers, revolutionists, churches, economists, social settlements, and the great army of uplift agencies, to say nothing of labor organizations of every kind and description. The trial goes to the very heart of the things which are occupying the social consciousness—the things of which society at large talks and thinks all the time.

Moreover, the I W W is a distinctly American institution. It grew out of American soil, is the product of American conditions, deals with American problems. It is not an importation—it grew here. The problems with which it deals, its ideals and its methods are American. Until the problems are settled or conditions change, there will always be an I W W or its equivalent.

So far as society is concerned—and society is the chief party to the I W W trial—the demand rises clear, strong and unavoidable. "Let's have the truth."

THE CASE ITSELF gives the best available opportunity to get at the truth. The government's prosecutors and its army of detectives, backed by that great mass of employers, who hate the I W W, will present one side of the case. That much society at large can

be assured of but a trial is a legal battle and the prosecution does not concern itself with bringing out facts that might hurt its own side of the case, that is left for the accused to do. For every apparently sound fact brought out by the prosecution, there must, if the truth is to be known, be brought out another fact by the accused. It costs great sums of money to get at those facts—it means the employment of investigators and the bringing of witnesses from great distances, it means months of work for lawyers even before the case comes to trial.

The cost of the I W W trial will be at least \$100,000. This sum will not meet all the needs of the case, but it will assure the public of getting at most of the truth. Whether you agree with the I W W or not, you cannot escape the conviction, if you know even so much of the truth as has thus far seeped through, that these men have given up home, comfort and necessities—have risked liberty and life itself to bring an end to those evils which society itself is constantly struggling to eradicate. The membership of the organization has raised \$50,000 for the defense, the other \$50,000 must come from socially conscious persons who have a passionate devotion to truth.

Realizing this situation and its vast importance to society at large, a group of widely known liberals have formed a committee which is raising the second \$50,000. Albert De Silver, 2 West Thirteenth Street, New York City, is treasurer, and checks should be sent to him. The committee is

Robert W. Bruere, John Dewey, John A. Fitch, Percy Stickney Grant, Carlton J. H. Hayes, Walter E. Weyl, Inez Haynes Irwin, Helen Keller, Jas. Harvey Robinson, Thorstein Veblen, George P. West.

M H S

## POST OFFICE CENSORSHIP

Word has come to this office that the book "Married Love" written by Dr. Marie C. Stopes of London has been suppressed by the postal authorities. In other words this book cannot pass through the U. S. mails.

On another page of this magazine is printed a review of the book, and it is our intention to have it reviewed by several women who are acknowledged leaders of feminist thought in America.

Needless to say the postal authorities have gone far out of their way to find this book "obscene" for it might be safely said that there is not another book of this character in the English language whose approach to the subject is so delicate, fine and beautiful. The book was brought out in London a few months ago and received the most enthusiastic comment from some of the most conservative sources.

It has not been suppressed in England—why in America?