

BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

Published by The Birth Control Federation of America

MAY, 1939

VCL XXIII

NO 8

•

Creating the World of Tomorrow

Messages from

Winthrop W Aldrich
Harry Emerson Fosdick, D D
Albert G Milbank
Woodbridge E Morns, M D
Margaret Sanger

Why Let Them Die?

News from the States

•

BIRTH CONTROL REVIEW

Published monthly from October through June by the

BIRTH CONTROL FEDERATION OF AMERICA, INC

Formerly American Birth Control League Inc and Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau

501 Madison Avenue, New York, N Y

SENT TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE FEDERATION AND ITS AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS
COPYRIGHT 1939 BY THE BIRTH CONTROL FEDERATION OF AMERICA

Editor Mabel Travis Wood

Consulting Editors

Clairette P Armstrong Ph D
Robert C Cook
Henry Pratt Fairchild Ph D
Rabbi Sidney E Goldstein
Ernest R Groves

Mrs Sidonie M Gruenberg
Frank H Hankins Ph D
Frederick C Holden M D
Ellsworth Huntington Ph D
Mrs F Robertson Jones

Foster Kennedy M D
Eduard C Lindeman
Clarence Cook Little Sc D
Eric M Matsner M D
William J McWilliams

Carl G Roberts M D
Edward A Ross Ph D
Raymond Squier M D
C E A Winslow Dr Ph
Rev L Foster Wood Ph D

VOL XXIII

MAY, 1939

NO 8

The First Three Months

THE Birth Control Federation of America has been in existence for three months. During that time it has made a splendid start in establishing a comprehensive and unified program, hitherto impossible with two organizations in the field. Also, it has advanced farther toward its goal of making birth control an accepted part of public health procedure.

Another state has begun to establish birth control as a state wide public health service, following North Carolina's example.

One new state league has been organized, the Tennessee Birth Control Federation.

In the South and Far West a practical program has been initiated for reaching directly the thousands of families who are living below subsistence level and cannot afford the services of private physicians.

The Federation has developed, in addition to its executive committee and Board, active functioning committees, which are meeting every two weeks to direct the operation of its various service departments.

In resources, the Federation has three offices—two in New York and one in Washington. Its staff consists of 31 full time and four part time workers, more than ten of whom are in the field. Affiliated with it are 29 state member leagues and almost all of the nation's 483 birth control centers.

Immediately available for the development of improved techniques and procedures, are the Clinical Service Bureau at 17 West 16th Street, New York City, and the thirteen birth control centers maintained by the New York City Committee of Mothers Health Centers. The Federation has issued films for both physicians and laymen, and it publishes the only medical and lay magazines dealing with birth control.

The Federation's initial period of reorganization ended on May first with the arrival of its new general director, Dr Woodbridge E Morris. Under his leadership the Federation begins to build the organization required to attain one major objective—the establishment of birth control as an integral part of every voluntary and public health program.

The Federation's General Director

A PHYSICIAN from the public health field has accepted appointment as the chief administrator of the birth control movement in America. Dr Woodbridge E. Morris, who became full time general director of the Birth Control Federation of America on May first, has been for the past three years director of the Division of Maternal and Child Health and the Crippled Children's Service of the Delaware State Board of Health.

Dr Morris' deep conviction in the necessity of birth control has led him a number of times spontaneously and courageously to advance its cause in his own state and nationally.

Graduated from Yale University in 1923, Dr Morris took a year of pre medical work at Western Reserve University and received his M.D. from Johns Hopkins University. He has also done graduate study at the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene. In Baltimore, Dr Morris was a field physician with the City Health Department and a resident physician at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Later he was a resident physician at the Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, before he assumed his post with the Delaware State Board of Health.

Before taking his medical training, Dr Morris was engaged in newspaper and magazine work, so he brings to the Federation a broad background in public relations as well as in medicine.

"The Federation is most fortunate in obtaining Dr Morris," stated Dr Richard N. Pierson, chairman of the board of the Federation, in a press release announcing Dr Morris' appointment. "He is unusually equipped for the administrative job he will undertake and to provide sound professional leadership for the movement as a whole."



Petrelle New Haven

WOODBRIDGE E. MORRIS, M.D.

Dr Morris was introduced to members and friends of the Federation at the dinner held by the Citizens Committee for Planned Parenthood on April 10th. He gave an address on "Health in the World of Tomorrow."

History shows that all great public health innovations have encountered prejudice and inertia, he pointed out. The determining factor in the public acceptance and use of these fundamental medical procedures has been enlightened public opinion.

"Let that be our major goal," Dr Morris urged. "When we achieve it—and, thanks to you, we are well on the way—birth control will be a public health fact."

Creating the World of Tomorrow

NO more significant messages in behalf of birth control have been made in recent years than those contributed by leaders in religion, business, science and medicine on the occasion of the dinner held by the Citizens Committee for Planned Parenthood on April 10th in New York City. That the quality of life in America and the physical, spiritual and economic future of our people depend upon making medical information on family planning available to all groups was urged by the speakers throughout a distinguished program.

Taking its theme "Creating the World of Tomorrow" from that of the New York World's Fair, the dinner marked the opening of the Committee's campaign to raise \$310,876 for the work of the Birth Control Federation of America. Four hundred were present, the large proportion of men indicating that birth control may no longer be called a "women's movement", but is enlisting the active interest of men in many fields. Dr. Richard N. Pierson, chairman of the Board of the Birth Control Federation of America, presided.

"Our generation is the first to possess enough scientific knowledge about man individually and collectively to allow us, if we will, to use this information to help solve our problems," said Dr. Clarence Cook Little, director of the American Society for the Control of Cancer, speaking from the biologist's point of view. "It is the quality of the individual, what he thinks, does, can comprehend, that determines whether a civilization can last."

The talk of Dr. Woodbridge E. Morris on "Health in the World of Tomorrow" is reported in part on page 203.

Dr. Morris said, "Our problem of the immediate future is, how is birth control to

be established as a widespread public health procedure, like toxoid? Knottier problems have been tackled successfully in the immediate past by just such voluntary health organizations as this. It is the democratic way of doing things."

"Let us so plan, so act in our cause that the world of tomorrow will thank us, as we thank the world of yesterday for the health it has provided us today," he concluded.

"Prosperity in the World of Tomorrow" was the topic of Albert G. Milbank, member of the law firm of Milbank, Tweed and Hope

"Society, through governmental agencies, such as police and fire departments, seeks to protect itself against the hazards of crime and conflagration," Mr. Milbank stated. "Nations pour billions into armaments in a mad race to achieve national safety against potential enemies. In striking contrast to all this, how little has been done or attempted, outside of the brilliant pioneering work of such leaders as Mrs. Sanger, to guard the individual and society against the undesirable consequences of a natural human instinct which is quite as strong as the instinct for self preservation."

Margaret Sanger, honorary chairman of the Birth Control Federation of America, in an inspiring address at the close of the dinner, declared, "Through public health agencies we should demand that birth control service be given to the underprivileged to enable them to help themselves. Only in this way can those unable to afford the services of private physicians secure this essential information."

Abortion, which is conservatively estimated to cost 8,000 lives in the United States each year, has become less a problem of mortality than of economic necessity, Mrs.

Sanger said "Contrary to popular belief, nine out of every ten women who undergo abortions are married. The greatest increase in the number of abortions is noted primarily among mothers of three or more children. Were contraceptive knowledge available and accessible to these women before pregnancy occurred, they would not go knocking on the doors of abortionists."

Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, pastor of Riverside Church, New York City, could not be present, but sent the following letter, which was read at the dinner:

"The tragedy of unplanned parenthood: our children's children will look back upon as utterly inhumane. It is just as much a man's problem as it is a woman's to see that this inhumanity is done away and that voluntary parenthood is established as the normal functioning of family life. This is the more important because voluntary parenthood is becoming more and more the practice of the well to do and the medical information which makes this possible should be available to the whole body of the population. Authorities estimate that from one third to one half of the population of this country can afford little or no medical care. It is small wonder, therefore, that the least well to do go on having families far larger than they want and far larger than they can adequately care for. Until birth control is made as available to these as it is now to the well to do, they will continue to be victimized by worthless, commercially exploited products as were the sufferers from cancer and tuberculosis until public opinion came to their aid.

"The goal of the Federation and the progress which it has already made toward that goal, of making medically guided birth control information everywhere available through public health agencies, is to be

highly commended. I am glad to align myself with those who think that this campaign is one of the most fundamental of all attempts to improve man's lot on earth."

Mrs. Diego Suarez, chairman of the Committee, emphasized the fact that young men and women today are ready and eager to aid the cause of planned parenthood.

"The future of this nation is in the hands of a generation of young people too fearless not to support publicly what they believe and too honest not to know that it is neither right nor democratic that opportunity for some should not be made opportunity for all," she said.

The importance of planned parenthood to the nation's economic future was emphasized in a message cabled from London by Winthrop W. Aldrich, chairman of the board of the Chase National Bank. It read in part:

"The time has come for leaders of commerce and industry to recognize the fundamental importance of birth control to the future of America.

"In the United States today a very large group of our population is living close to a level of bare subsistence. This is both economic and human tragedy. The community should make and is making every effort to ameliorate the condition of this group.

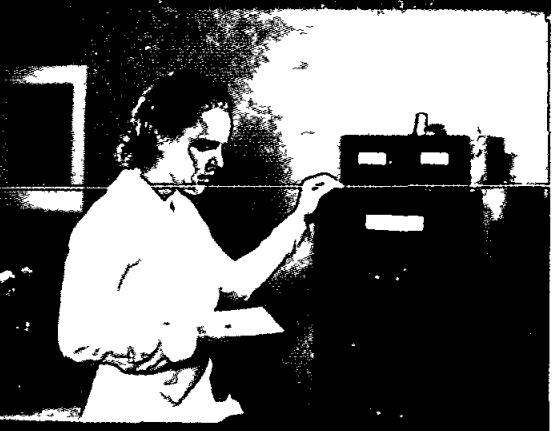
"One of the most important contributions which could be made toward improving the economic condition of the members of this group would be to see to it that the scientific knowledge on family planning which they wish to obtain and which they now almost entirely lack is made as available to them as it is to the well to do."

"If we are to survive as a nation we must plan wisely in every way possible to prevent economic, human and spiritual waste. In such planning birth control is, in my opinion, one of the most important elements."

New Film Aids

The Dramatic Talking-Slide
Wins Acclaim and Wider

**WHY
LET THEM DIE?**



NOW public opinion on birth control is being aroused and informed through the same medium so successfully employed in America's war on venereal disease, the talking slide film "Why Let Them Die?" a presentation of the Birth Control Federation of America, has been shown with great success before general audiences and such specialized groups as clubwomen, social workers and public health officials.

State and local birth control leagues are finding the film most valuable in fund raising and in arousing active interest in the extension of their work. Among the state leagues which have leased the film are those of Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, New Jersey and South Carolina. In twelve additional states, clinics have used the film to advance public understanding of the movement.

The film is divided into three parts, covering all phases of the social, economic and moral aspects of the birth control problem. As the stirring sequence of slides unroll, the accompanying sound discs describe the story. The material has been presented from a sociological, rather than from a controversial viewpoint.

Among the national authorities who participate in the film are Margaret Sanger, Dr. Robert L. Dickinson, Prof. Henry Pratt Fairchild, Rabbi Sidney E. Goldstein and Rev. Harry Emerson Fosdick.

The Pictures—Left, top to bottom (1) The film begins (2) Ignorance of birth control has caused the physical breakdown of Martha Hayes and her husband's moral breakdown. They cannot provide for the seven children they have, and another is expected (3) The last desperate measure. A neighbor tells Martha of a so-called doctor who can be "persuaded" (4) Miss Guthrie of the Welfare Society, "I don't know why Martha's card is still in our active file. Yet, somehow, I hate to move it for the last time. Even at the end, she seemed so young."

Right (1) Miss Guthrie can still hear Martha saying "You can split a quart of milk three ways, or four ways. But, honest, when you try to split it seven ways—" (2) The need for child spacing graphically portrayed (3) Family planning makes happy mothers, sturdy, self-reliant children (4) America has the answer

MAY 1939

Birth Control

Film "Why Let Them Die?"
Support in Many States

WHAT THEY SAY

"I feel that such a presentation of the conditions that justify the program of birth control has great educational value and will enlist the active support of many who, heretofore, have been either antagonistic or misinformed"

John Overton, M D
City Health Officer
Nashville, Tennessee

"I am glad that the economic and social implications are so clear I wish every member of every local board and Family Relationships Committee could see that film"

Janet Fowler Nelson, Secretary
Family Relationships Committee
National Board, Y W C A

"We have shown the film to over 2,600 people—82 different groups—since January 27 and are constantly receiving requests for subsequent showings"

Mrs Ben Humphries Gray
Executive Secretary
Illinois Birth Control League

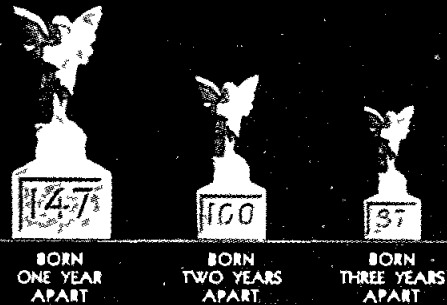
"I showed the film to my luncheon club, who voted my program the most instructive of the year Every person who mentioned it spoke of it in the highest terms of praise Each time that I saw it I gained some additional information"

N M Burnett, M D
Lamar, Colorado

For information as to how the film may be shown in your community, write the Birth Control Federation of America, 501 Madison Avenue, New York



BABY DEATHS PER THOUSAND BIRTHS



News from the States

Florida

The annual meeting of the Florida Maternal Health Federation was held on April 5th in St Petersburg. Representatives of the clinics at St Petersburg, Lakeland, Tampa and Bartow were present. Mrs J H Rutland was elected president and Mrs William DeBeck, vice president.

It was decided that each member clinic of the Federation should have a representative on the executive board and state medical advisory board. The Federation is working toward making its program better known and extending centers in various parts of the state. Recently it has had inquiries from several communities interested in establishing clinics.

Indiana

During National Negro Health Week, April 3-7, the Maternal Health League of Fort Wayne had an exhibit at the Negro social center and distributed literature on birth control. Great interest was shown in the exhibit, reports Mrs F B Mead, Jr, corresponding secretary of the League. Attendance of Negro mothers at the clinic has increased as a result.

Kentucky

During its sixth annual membership campaign, launched on March 24th, the Kentucky Birth Control League secured more than 400 new annual members. Mrs Harold Walton was chairman of the campaign and forty young women served on the teams.

"The educational value of the drive, the publicity, and the interest of so many new friends, will be of inestimable help in forwarding the work here," reports Mrs Charles G Tachau, president of the League.

It was reported in drive publicity that the typical mother served in Louisville clinics is 27 years old, has had four pregnancies, and sometimes several abortions, is physically ill, and must provide for her family on an income of \$12 a week.

Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Mothers' Health Council is the new name ratified by the former Birth Control League of Massachusetts at their annual meeting in Boston, April 18th, as "stating our purpose in the simplest and most generally acceptable words." A new constitution, also accepted at this reorganization meeting, sets forth the Council's objects as "to educate the public in the medical, social, economic, democratic and scientific aspects of voluntary parenthood as part of a well rounded state program of public health."

Mrs Cornelia J Cannon became president pro tem of the new organization, Mrs Leslie Hawkrige, president during the League's past strenuous four years, becoming a member of the executive committee. The list of vice presidents is headed by Dr Benjamin S Wood and the Rev Frank Jennings, executive secretary of the Massachusetts Council of Churches. The Council's board of directors includes 75 prominent men and women representative not only of the different regions of the state, but of many important branches of public life.

One of the first undertakings of the new officers will be to secure an executive director for the forthcoming intensive state wide educational work. The Council is settled in new offices at 143 Newbury Street, Boston, where its work can be carried forward with greater efficiency. It plans to give this spring in a number of communities demonstra-

tions having as their theme the building of better families and the rights of tomorrow's children

In the past few months, leading physicians of the state have formed a Committee for the Defense of Medical Rights "to organize the doctors of the state in an attempt to alter ultimately the statute relative to the right of the physician to give contraceptive information for medical reasons"

Minnesota

The annual meeting of the Minnesota Birth Control League will be held on May 16th at the Citizens Aid Building in Minneapolis. Outstanding physicians will discuss the relation of birth control to various aspects of public health.

During the fiscal year ending April first, the Minneapolis clinic served 679 new patients, of whom 358 were on relief.

In a letter of April 4th to members of the League, its president, Mrs. Frederick G. Atkinson, pointed out, "We are proud of the clinic, but contraception belongs in and must become part of the public health program. Our promotional work along this line steadily continues."

Texas

Representatives of nine cities of the state attended the annual meeting of the Birth Control League of Texas, held at the Maternal Health Center in Houston, April 11th and 12th. That birth control as a social health problem must become a part of state public health work was emphasized throughout the sessions.

Mrs. Haywood Nelms was reelected president of the League. It was reported that last year six centers in key cities of the state had advised 2,500 patients.

Mrs. Martha S. Mumford, field representative of the Birth Control Federation of

America, gave an address in which she stressed the importance of maintaining high professional standards and the need for extending birth control service into rural areas.

One of the high points of the meeting was the showing of the film "Why Let Them Die?"

West Virginia

Social workers attending the Tri State Welfare Conference in Huntington showed great interest in the exhibit of the West Virginia Maternal Health Federation, reports Mrs. Joe Bekenstein, secretary of the Federation, who was in attendance at the booth. There was pronounced eagerness to secure further information and service, and a number of leading social workers expressed the need for birth control in their communities.

Georgia

Resolutions passed by two influential groups of Georgia during April will greatly advance the progress of birth control in that state.

The Georgia State Medical Society on April 28th resolved that the State Board of Health be requested to furnish contraceptive information upon the application for the same by any licensed physician, public health official or county health officer of the state. "It is understood," the resolution stated, "that this information be furnished only to those patients for whom the physician deems it necessary for the proper spacing of pregnancies and for the protection of the life of the expectant mother."

The Georgia Conference of Social Work, in a resolution adopted April 20th, urged "the inclusion of contraceptive service in the national, state and local health and welfare services" and stated that it endorsed efforts toward this objective.

Three Birth Control Sessions at Social Work Conference

At the National Conference of Social Work, to be held in Buffalo, New York, June 18-24, the Birth Control Federation of America and the New York State Birth Control Federation will have an exhibit and will conduct three meetings. A cordial invitation is extended to all who will attend the Conference to be present at these sessions in the Erlanger Theatre and to visit the booth, where consultation service will be available throughout the week on the organization and administration of birth control services.

Outstanding authorities in science, public health and social work have been secured to address the birth control sessions. "A Population Policy" will be the theme of the Federation's first meeting at 4:00 P.M. on Monday, June 19th. Dr. P. K. Whelpton of the Scripps Foundation for Population Research will discuss population trends in the United States and their social significance.

The New York State Birth Control Federation will conduct a meeting on "The Birth Control Clinic as a Community Resource" at 3:30 P.M. on Wednesday, June 21st. Miss Helen Harris, director of the National Youth Administration for New York City, will speak on "The Settlement Birth Control Center" and Dr. Woodbridge E. Morris, general director of the Birth Control Federation of America, on "The Public Health Department Clinic." "Case Work Procedure" will be the topic of Mrs. C. Ely Rogers, field representative of the New York State Federation. Mrs. C. Luther Fry, vice president of the New York State Federation, will preside.

A session on "Birth Control as a Public Health Measure" will be conducted on Friday, June 23rd at 2:00 P.M. Dr. Haven Emerson, Professor of Public Health Practice, Columbia University, New York City,

will give an address on "Public Health Service—A Contribution to Human Biology." Dr. Roy Norton, Assistant Director of the Division of Preventive Medicine, North Carolina State Board of Health, will describe the public health birth control program of his state.

A new exhibit is being designed especially for the Conference. During the week the Federation's film "Why Let Them Die?" will be shown several times at the Family Relations Institute of Buffalo.

The national birth control movement participated in the Conference for the first time in 1928. In each succeeding year it has won wider support from social workers.

Crime and Child Spacing

The problem of juvenile delinquency was discussed by Dr. William E. Cole, head of the Sociology Department, University of Tennessee, at a meeting of the Ossoli Circle in Knoxville. He suggested a number of plans for decreasing the proportion of juvenile delinquency in this country, among them "birth control made accessible, so as to permit the proper spacing of children and control the size of the flock within the means of the family."

—Knoxville, Tenn. *News Sentinel*, Mar. 20

At a meeting of the Southern Association of Private Schools in Memphis, Tennessee, March 30th, C. C. Menzler of Nashville, director of the State Training School, stated that a major cause of juvenile delinquency is the "lessening of parental authority" and that unemployment and adverse economic conditions are also "tremendous factors" in the situation. As remedies, he recommended birth control, sterilization and strict enforcement of the habitual criminal laws.

—Louisville, Ky. *Courier Journal*, Mar. 30

BIRTH CONTROL FEDERATION OF AMERICA, INC.

formerly American Birth Control League
and Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau

501 MADISON AVENUE NEW YORK N Y

Administration
Regional Organization Department
Public Information Department

17 WEST 16th STREET NEW YORK N Y

Medical Department
National Clinic Service
Clinical Service Bureau

OFFICERS

Honorary Chairman

Margaret Sanger

*Chairman of the Board
President Pro Tem*

Richard N Pierson M D

General Director Woodbridge E Morris, M D

Vice-Presidents

Robert L Dickinson M D
Henry Pratt Fairchild Ph D

Frederick C Holden M D
Clarence Cook Little Sc D

Secretary

Mrs Stephen Whitney Blodgett

Treasurer

Gilbert Colgate

THE FEDERATION'S SERVICE DEPARTMENTS

MEDICAL COMMITTEE

Chairman

Richard N Pierson M D

Acting Medical Director

Eric M Matsner M D

NATIONAL CLINIC SERVICE

Chairman

Mrs George C Barclay

Director

Elmira Conrad

Medical Director

Clinical Service Bureau

Hannah Stone M D

MEDICAL TEACHING

Chairman

Frederick C Holden M D

MEDICAL PUBLICATION

Chairman and Editor

Abraham Stone M D

REGIONAL ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

Chairman

Mrs Henry J Mall

Director

Marguerite Benson

Regional Director for the South

Clarence J Gamble M D

PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Chairman

Margaret Sanger

Executive Vice Chairman

Mrs Mary Woodard Reinhardt

Acting Director

Cecil A Damon

LEGAL COMMITTEE

Chairman

Chauncey B Garver

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chairman

Gilbert Colgate

Mothers Still Die Needlessly

This month, as the nation pays tribute to motherhood with flowers and gifts and ceremonies, let us not lose sight of the fact that in the United States, each year

12,500 women die from causes directly connected with pregnancy and childbirth, in many instances because they were not physically able to undertake motherhood

1,500 others who are pregnant or recently delivered die from conditions such as tuberculosis, chronic nephritis or heart disease. In medical opinion, women having such conditions should not become pregnant

8,000 women die as a result of abortion. The majority of them are mothers of several children and in poor economic circumstances. The spread of reliable birth control knowledge will reduce this unnecessary waste of life

35,000 children are left motherless, many of them to become dependent on the community and many to become potential delinquents

No nation holds motherhood in truly high esteem until every mother may plan her family so that each child is wanted, born in health and reared in decency. That planned parenthood may be possible for all groups, medical birth control information must be extended as a part of public health and welfare service