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Repository Citation

Hodgson, Dennis and Watkins, Susan, "From Mercantilists to Neo-Malthusianism: International Population Movement and the Transformation of Population Ideology in Kenya" (1998). *Sociology & Anthropology Faculty Publications*. 21.

<https://digitalcommons.fairfield.edu/sociologyandanthropology-facultypubs/21>

Published Citation

Hodgson, Dennis; Watkins, Susan. "From Mercantilists to Neo-Malthusianism: International Population Movement and the Transformation of Population Ideology in Kenya". Paper presented at the Workshop on Social Processes Underlying Fertility Change in Developing Countries, Committee on Population, National Academy of Sciences, 29-30 January 1998, Washington, D.C.

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September, 1999

**From Mercantilists to Neo-Malthusians: The International
Population Movement and the Transformation of
Population Ideology in Kenya***

Susan Cotts Watkins

Dennis Hodgson

Prepared for:

Workshop on Social Processes Underlying Fertility Change in Developing Countries,
29-30 January 1998

Committee on Population
National Academy of Sciences
2101 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC

- * We wish to acknowledge the invaluable help we received from Oscar Harkavy in pursuing this research. He searched the archives of the Ford Foundation for relevant documents, interviewed several key participants, and generously shared with us his great knowledge of the subject. We are also grateful for comments from Warren Robinson, Donald Heisel, Amy Kaler, and for the time willingly given by those who allowed us to interview them.

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Introduction:

The story of Kenya's adoption of a neo-Malthusian ideology, its development of a strong family planning program, and its ultimate experience of declining fertility is usually written in terms of classic diffusion theory: a transparent process in which a beneficial innovation is adopted by a receptive population. As this standard story has been told in Kenya, it privileges the rationality and initiatives of the Kenyan government: analyzing their census and survey data, Kenyan officials become convinced of the universal logic of neo-Malthusianism, conclude that they have a population problem that would constrain desired development, and take steps to solve it. (Robinson 1992; Krystall 1985; Likimani and Russell 1971; Ajayi and Kekovole 1998). The standard story, we propose, is only partial. The diffusion of neo-Malthusianism was a murkier and more nuanced affair in which powerful global networks disseminating this new population ideology promoted its acceptance with a combination of enticements and threats, and Kenyan officials were influenced by many factors other than the logic of neo-Malthusianism.

The diffusion process we describe below has rarely been examined by diffusion researchers. We focus on the diffusion of an ideology, not an object or a behavior, and on the interaction between groups, not among individuals. Our setting is international, not local, and the diffusion we examine was purposive, not accidental or serendipitous. Unlike much diffusion research which follows the path from “transmitters” to “receivers”, we consider the representatives of the Neo-Malthusian movement and the Kenyan elites to inhabit "a single analytic field" (Stoler and Cooper 1997:4): Each influenced, and was influenced by, the other, and each had considerations beyond an interest in population. We believe that this concrete historical diffusion research can offer insight to the current theoretical debate on explaining

fertility decline, as well as offering a framework for the study for other processes of global diffusion, such as the spread of newly-defined human rights from the United Nations and their institutionalization in national populations around the globe.

After World War II, a significant neo-Malthusian movement arose within the developed capitalist world that considered rapid population growth a major impediment to the development of agrarian regions, and recommended fertility control programs to curb that growth. A priori, developing countries at this time would not seem to be hospitable environments for the adoption of the population ideology that the neo-Malthusians were promoting. These countries, many newly independent, were developing an identity as a "Third World" with interests distinct from those of the capitalist and socialist developed worlds. They overwhelmingly possessed agrarian economies and cultural systems that favored early marriage and large families. The newly independent countries, with colonial domination behind them, were confident of their development potential and not predisposed to find neo-Malthusianism, with its crisis rhetoric and identification of a demographic barrier to development, persuasive. Yet in the past half-century, virtually all of these countries have adopted a neo-Malthusian population ideology and have implemented a national family planning program. Moreover, although in the West the interest in promoting neo-Malthusianism abroad has waned, the political leaders of Southern countries now are among the most ardent spokespersons of neo-Malthusian beliefs, and many have made fertility control programs central components of national development plans.

The transformation of Third World population ideology has followed general patterns, but the specifics of the story vary significantly by region and country. We will offer an analysis of the transformation that occurred in a sub-Saharan country, Kenya, part of a region that is late adopting

neo-Malthusianism. Kenya shares important attributes with much of sub-Saharan Africa: Colonial status until the 1960s; a low-income and highly agrarian economy; and cultural systems that favor large families. It differs from other sub-Saharan countries in its relative political stability, its high proportion of white settlers during its colonial period, and its early adoption of a market-oriented development model after independence. The details of Kenya's adoption of neo-Malthusianism, although unique, offer an instructive illustration of the interplay that occurred between two groups: Third World government leaders and key institutional players of the international population movement.

Our account focuses on the period from 1964 to 1978, the years when Jomo Kenyatta was president of Kenya and when Kenya followed a market-oriented development strategy that required western foreign investment and thus made Kenyan officials receptive to western economic advice and influence. Early in this period the government adopted a western recommended neo-Malthusian policy, even though many high government officials did not believe that a family planning program could succeed in a population which, understandably to them, still desired large families. When the increasingly powerful international population movement presents the "simple arithmetic" of neo-Malthusian population/resource ratios to Kenyan leaders, they initially counter with the mercantilist logic that increased numbers enhance a nation's wealth and power. Yet for a variety of reasons Kenya officially adopted a neo-Malthusian policy and accepted funds that establish a network of family planning clinics. Our account highlights the problems associated with supporting an unsuccessful fertility control effort during the 1970s that forced both Kenyan elites and institutional members of the international population movement to engage in a series of intricate negotiations.

In the period following Kenyatta's death in 1978 high government leaders in Kenya have come

to perceive it to be in their best interest to foster authentic fertility control efforts, and the majority of the Kenyan population have come to desire smaller families. These recent events have made it convenient to view the Kenyan government's conversion from mercantilism to neo-Malthusianism in simple diffusion terms, analogous to Kenyan couples adopting modern contraceptives: a useful innovation being freely adopted by individuals who perceive it to be beneficial. Our account focuses on the Kenyatta years, when neo-Malthusianism makes its first beachhead in Kenya. It disputes the historical accuracy of the standard version of events and questions the appropriateness of viewing the global spread of neo-Malthusianism in the second half of the twentieth century in crude diffusion terms. Kenya's adoption of neo-Malthusianism was the result of an intricate *pas de deux* that developed between Kenyan elites and members of the international population movement, two partners with initially very distinct visions of the problematic and the desirable. Understanding how neo-Malthusianism in fact came to Kenya is important for the light it sheds on the actual diffusion process of development ideologies at the national level in the second half of the twentieth century.

The central part of our story, concerns the clash of population ideologies and the maneuvering of our two central actors during the period between Independence in 1963 and the death of President Kenyatta in 1978. The clash of ideologies and actors, however, has its roots before Independence. Thus, we begin with a brief discussion of the two incompatible population ideologies, mercantilism and Neo-Malthusianism, the growth of the international population movement in the 1950s, and the events in Kenya leading up to Independence in 1963.¹ Setting the stage in this way facilitates understanding

¹ A longer and more detailed account of population ideologies in Kenya during the colonial period was presented in a paper presented at the Workshop on Social Processes Underlying Fertility Change in Developing Countries, held

the perspectives of the international population movement and the Kenyan government when their interaction began after Independence. We then turn to the Kenyatta years, when neo-Malthusian advisors offer their dour prognosis of the effects of population growth to a new Kenyan government full of optimism and enthusiasm. To illustrate the different agendas of the advisors and their audience, we compare the policy recommendations of a Population Council Mission that visited Kenya in 1965 with the responses of the Kenyan elite. The visitors talked with government elites, representatives of the private Family Planning Association of Kenya, personnel in health clinics and the women waiting to see them, yet their recommendations owe far more to conventional wisdom in the population establishment than to what they heard and saw in Kenya. Although some of the modernizing elite with whom the mission talked appeared to be genuinely concerned about population growth, our analysis of the verbal interaction between the visitors and the visited indicates that under the Kenyans' soothing words of support was a deep opposition to both population control and family planning, an opposition that the Mission uneasily recognized and ultimately overrode when it came time to make their recommendations. The Kenyan government adopted the Mission's recommendations as its population policy, but they were not convinced of the policy's appropriateness to their country. Examining which of the recommendations made by the Population Council Mission were implemented and which rejected offers insights into their objections, and leads us to discuss why the policy was adopted at all. Lastly, we provide a brief epilogue describing the eventual institutionalization of a national family planning program after President Moi succeeded President Kenyatta in 1978.

by the Committee on Population of the National Academy of Sciences.

Before Kenya's Independence

Throughout our account, we contrast two population ideologies, mercantilism and neo-Malthusianism. The two ideologies are profoundly contradictory, making it puzzling that Kenya and other countries that held these beliefs succumbed so rapidly. A brief discussion of these two terms is useful for understanding the diffusion of neo-Malthusianism in Kenya. We use the term mercantilism to refer to the view that a larger population is a wealthier population. Although it was developed as a coherent ideology primarily in response to Malthus, the term is sometimes used to describe the economic philosophy of western nations in the 17th and 18th centuries. Mercantilists consider that the aim of any state is to become wealthy. Wealth, in turn, buys state security (e.g. the hiring of armies) and military might leads to power in international affairs. When production is agricultural, wealth is achieved by producing a surplus which can be sold. Thus, the relationship is multiplicative: If each producer contributes surplus, the more producers there are, the more surplus, and the richer and more powerful the state. Malthus famously attacked the logic of mercantilism by making a ratio out of what had been a multiplicative notion: He shifted the analytic focus from aggregate wealth to per capita wealth. Although Malthus himself was opposed to control of fertility within marriage, others, the neo-Malthusians, saw the use of birth control within marriage as a solution to individual as well as state poverty (for an excellent history of the neo-Malthusian movement from its origins in the nineteenth century to the present, see Barrett 1995).

In the century and a half following Malthus the two philosophies, although incompatible, co-existed in the West. Malthus' contributions to the elaboration of political economy were far more central than those of the mercantilists, but the notion that a larger population is better -- or that a

declining population is problematic -- remained strong, leading at times to pro-natalist proposals either at the national level or, among the eugenicists, for certain groups within the population. At mid-century mercantilism had a natural appeal to the first generation of Third World leaders, many of whom had to engaged in mass mobilizations and armed conflict in their struggle for independence, activities in which numbers certainly did matter.

During the early 1950s in the United States an international neo-Malthusian movement that directly challenged mercantilist logic grows in strength and power. John D. Rockefeller 3rd, inspired by a 1948 trip to the Orient, sponsored a mission to the Far East by American demographers and Rockefeller foundation officials. Their report (Balfour 1950) identified rapid population growth as a major threat to "Far East" stability and stimulated Rockefeller to convene a conference in 1952 under the auspices of the US National Academy of Sciences to examine the growing imbalance in Asia's vital rates (Notestein 1982:676-677; Bachrach and Bergman 1973: 44-46). At about the same time, influential academics, particularly Frank Notestein and Kingsley Davis, become convinced that it is not necessary to wait for development to change the motivations for childbearing in the Third World, but that men--and particularly woman--can be persuaded to use the new methods that appear to make the widespread use of family planning by peasant populations an attainable goal(Hodgson 1983; Watkins 1993). In November of 1952 Rockefeller established the Population Council with a personal grant of \$100,000 and assumes its presidency. In 1954 the Ford Foundation gave \$600,000 to the Council, the first of what would be \$88 million of Ford Foundation grants to the Council (Harkavy 1995:13), and the international neo-Malthusian movement acquired the resources needed to expand globally.

In retrospect, the goals of the Neo-Malthusian movement seem quixotic: how could they

believe that it was possible to alter the reproductive behavior of millions of third world couples? Neo-Malthusians are children of the Enlightenment and draw from the dominant Western culture a widely shared explanation of how the transformations to the modern world have occurred. Modernity is seen as the growth of reason, defined variously as the growth of scientific consciousness, or the development of a secular outlook, or the rise of instrumental rationality, or an ever-clearer distinction between fact-finding and evaluation (Taylor 1996). A key cultural belief of the Neo-Malthusians is that reason and logic are the same the world over. Shweder (1984) distinguishes two variants of this belief. In the universalist variation, the dictates of reason are equally apprehensible by all; in the developmentalist version, rationality is itself universal, but must await its proper conditions to unfold. The transformation to modernity may be facilitated or hampered by certain cultural values (Taylor 1996). Where it is hampered, education is key to the awakening of rationality and the destruction of myths and superstitions. As we shall see below, Neo-Malthusians believe the developmentalist variant.

During the 1950s the movement seemed to have little interest in Africa. Africa did not have the high population densities of Asia, the desire for independence made many areas politically very volatile, and few thought that Africans could be induced to have small families. Frank Sutton, of the Ford Foundation, recalls that on his first trip to Africa in 1958 discussions of population control were taboo, one that African leaders did not want to discuss (interview with Harkavy, October 1997). In Kenya open rebellion complicates any discussion of population. In the fall of 1952 the "Mau Mau" insurrection, originating among the Kikuyu and led by Jomo Kenyatta, reached such serious proportions that a state of emergency was declared. During the four years it took the British to put down the rebellion, some 20,000 Kikuyu were imprisoned, 11,000 rebels were killed as are 2,000

African loyalists and 100 Europeans (Berman 1990:352). Kenyatta was imprisoned with an indeterminate sentence.

Although Kenya Colony officials depicted "Mau Mau" as an atavistic savage cult that in no way was related to legitimate Kikuyu grievances, influenced by the growing Western interest in aiding third world countries to develop they began a comprehensive reexamination of colonial development policies, policies that awarded the best lands to white settlers and restricted where the Africans could live and the economic activities in which they could engage. In 1954 "A Plan to Intensify the Development of African Agriculture in Kenya" (Colony and Protectorate of Kenya 1954a), was implemented. Although many Africans remained legally confined to Native Reserves, they would no longer be curtailed from growing and marketing cash crops even though their low-cost production might prove troublesome for the settler estates in the White Highlands. In many areas the Plan was implemented in conjunction with a land reform effort that consolidated small land fragments into more viable units. Colonial officials fostered modern production methods among African agriculturalists while knowing that these changes would generate a significant group of landless Africans. That same year the Committee on African Wages (Colony and Protectorate of Kenya 1954b:149) argued for a wage increase that would allow a Kenyan worker to cut permanently his ties to subsistence agriculture and life in the African reserves, and to support a family in the city.

The 1955 Report of the East African Royal Commission specifically dealt with the colony's population issues (United Kingdom 1955:30-40). It discounted the population/land concerns expressed by the former governor Philip Mitchell and argued that greater population densities might stimulate industrial development. With respect to family planning the Report noted that while "drastic

public measures" are not called for, modern contraceptives should be distributed "wherever they are demanded." Possibly the implausibility of recommending an African fertility control program at that time affected the Commission's thinking (Thomas 1997:260): "compiling their findings amid the Mau Mau rising, EARC members could probably not imagine how the Kenyan government would be able to stage the interventionist policies necessary to combat rapid population growth." The Commission's recommendation to make modern contraceptives available "wherever they are demanded" was not followed by the colonial government. However, private initiatives took up some of the slack, as they were to do during the Kenyatta years. In November of 1955 private clinics, encouraged by the IPPF (International Planned Parenthood Federation), began to provide some family planning services: "a few physicians and family welfare officials" organize the Family Planning Committee of Mombasa and a year later the Family Planning Association of Nairobi comes into being (Ndeti and Ndeti 1980:32). The associations merged in 1957 to form the Family Planning Association of Kenya and it established separate clinics for European, Asian and African clients. A Pathfinder Fund grant allowed the association to hire an organizing secretary in 1959 and in June of 1962 it became the first Tropical African association to join the International Planned Parenthood Federation. The IPPF became the chief source of funds for the Association (Radel 1973:47).

By the late 1950s political changes were unfolding in Kenya that would eventually lead to Independence. In 1957 the first African elections were held for the eight African seats on the Legislative Council to which hand-picked Africans had formerly been appointed. Tom Mboya, a moderate labor leader, won the Nairobi seat and Oginga Odinga, marshaling the support of the landless, won the Nyanza seat (Berman 1990:399). In March 1958 elections African representation

was increased to 14 on the Council, parity with the white settlers. That year, although Kenyatta still was in jail, Odinga put forth his name as a national leader, and there was "shocked outrage" by white officials and settlers on the Council (Berman 1990:399). With nationalist sentiment gaining momentum, the British participated in a constitutional convention for Kenya at Lancaster House in London in 1960 and agreed to eventual independence under majority African rule. Kenyatta was released from prison and became Kenya's first prime minister as full independence was achieved in December 1963. In 1964 Kenya became a republic with Kenyatta as president, Odinga as vice president, and Mboya as Minister of Economic Planning.

Although nearly all the European settlers left Kenya, the market oriented nature of Kenyan agriculture was not changed. Forty per cent of the White Highland lands eventually were distributed to 500,000 Africans who took out state loans, backed by the World Bank, to purchase their small plots. The remaining sixty per cent of the estates were purchased intact by wealthy Africans (Berman 1990:412-415). Kenyan industry remained in private hands and Mboya made it clear to workers that the new government would "not tolerate disorder, industrial strife and indiscipline which would adversely affect the economy and development programme by giving a poor image overseas..." (Berman 1990:413). Continuity in government policy was enhanced by having a number of key colonial officials and bureaucrats continue under the new independent government (Berman 1990:414-415).

In 1962 the last colonial census was taken with a special 10% sample survey conducted to determine birth and death rates. J. G. C. Blacker, the Government Demographer, and one of the colonial officials who remains after independence, reported that Kenya's population of 8,636,263 was

increasing at a 3% annual rate, a rate significantly higher than the last colonial planning documents had assumed (Blacker 1963). Blacker is a highly competent demographer and knowledgeable about developments in the field, such as Coale and Hoover's 1958 study, that identify rapid population growth as a serious development problem. His work helped the new leaders of Kenya's Ministry of Economic Development and Planning recognize the important role that family planning might play in Kenya's development (Ndeti and Ndeti 1980:31). With his census report he provided a set of population projections that clearly outlined the continuing problem that Tom Mboya and future Ministers of Economic Planning would face in finding productive employment for the burgeoning population of the new Republic. The stage was set for a confrontation between two sets of players with different population ideologies and different interests.

Neo-Malthusianism and an Independent Kenya

The neo-Malthusian advisor meets the Kenyan mercantilist in an independent Kenya full of optimism and enthusiasm. All over independent Africa there is a conviction that now that the colonial yoke has been lifted, the prospects for development are great. The enthusiasm for freedom and development prominent in independent Africa is considered an opportunity by the community of western advisors working in Africa at the time. Francis Sutton, in a paper written in 1966 for the Ford Foundation, captures the feeling (quoted in Sutton 1996b:34):

We would miss superb opportunities for service, and enlightenment if we did not respond to the openness and the urgent needs of the fledgling governments we are helping in this part of the world...We mix our efforts intimately with those of the governments we are assisting....We are in this sense in the stream of history....

A new "scramble for Africa" begins as foundations, western governments and international organizations offer African governments advice and money in a wide range of areas: agriculture, economic development, governance and law, as well as population.

The international population movement is experiencing heady times in the early 1960s. In March 1963 the Ford Foundation trustees enunciate (Harkavy 1995:39) a clear population ideology, stating their intention to "maintain strong efforts both in the United States and abroad to achieve breakthroughs on the problems of population control." That same year the Rockefeller Foundation Population Program enunciates a bold goal to (Harkavy 1995:44): "bring about reduction of the growth rate of the world's population and its eventual stabilization." Such a goal appears more plausible with the conversion of previously-reluctant First World governments to neo-Malthusianism. In January 1965 President Johnson in his State of the Union message urges the US to "seek new ways to use our knowledge to help deal with the explosion in world population and the growing scarcity in world resources." That year USAID -- bolder than the Colonial Government -- begins to provide technical assistance in family planning to countries requesting it. Oscar Harkavy, working at the Ford Foundation at the time, remembers the atmosphere: "we were full of optimism." First World government support is increasing, efforts are underway to have the United Nations adopt a neo-Malthusian policy, and breakthroughs in contraceptive technology -- the pill and the IUD -- have substantially expanded contraceptive choice. Additionally, there is the feeling that the management "know-how" demonstrated in the post-World War II Marshall Plan could shape programs that can bring about fertility decline: indeed, many early population activists in Asia had worked with the Marshall plan (Harkavy 1997, personal communication).

Kenyans are also optimistic about their capacities, but for different reasons. In Kenya the optimism is palpable. Kenya is being led by the towering figure of Jomo Kenyatta whose many years in jail for the uhuru cause give him great legitimacy among the people, by whom he is adulated "both as Messiah in the so-called Mau Mau hymns of the early 50s, and as the reincarnation of the past Kikuyu hero Waiyaki...."(Lonsdale 1997:4). He possesses a stature that makes "direct political challenges unthinkable" (Bates 1992:94). He is also a "cosmopolitan man who had studied at the London School of Economics...who had moved in wide-horizoned pan-Africanist circles" (Lonsdale 1997:4), making him particularly attractive to the West as well.

Kenyatta is every bit as full of optimism and the "can do" spirit as the Foundation officials in New York. In his Independence Day speech on December 1965, Kenyatta celebrates the new opportunities available to Kenyans (Lonsdale 1997:12):

The truth is simple. For the man today who wants to travel or to move his produce, new roads are there. For a man who wants a farm, there is the settlement programme. For the family seeking education, there are new schools...For the producer needing loans, there is machinery for this....

A few years later, Kenyatta's speech to Parliament is equally upbeat: the economy is growing, and Kenya has made up for ground previously lost to famine. Although unemployment remains a problem, there is less this year than last year. All that Kenya's future development requires is hard work and savings (Kenyatta 1967).

Kenyatta's optimism has much to support it. People's central concerns are about land and education. These are of "utmost importance to all politicians, whose constituents wanted more of both" (Widner 1992:48). With Independence, the limits on education and land that so troubled colonial

officials seem, for a time, to lift. With the government in African hands, educational opportunities seem to be a resource that need not be rationed. Already in the 1930s even rural Kenyans perceived education as the path to a better future, urging the government to provide more schools and sacrificing to pay school fees (Watkins forthcoming). Now, Kenyatta promises universal education, and expends great efforts in fulfilling that promise. In the decade after Independence primary school enrollments more than double, and secondary school enrollments quintuple (Widner 1992:50). By the mid-1970s Kenya's spending on education as a proportion of total government expenditure exceeds that for all but a few nations in the world. Only in the late 70s does the government put the brakes on spending for education. Land also appears to be abundant as well. The government buys white settler lands in the early 1960s, which "meant that significant amounts of unoccupied land were suddenly available, and former squatters, smallholders, and new commercial farmers could all expand their holdings without necessarily coming into conflict with one another....for a short period at the beginning of the Kenyatta period, land appeared to be available for all" (Widner 1992:43). This is true even as late as 1970 (Widner 1992:49): "Of the approximately 8 million acres of high-potential land under white control at independence, a large amount remained for distribution after 1970." There is grumbling about the process and pace of redistribution, but there is not the perception that land is unavailable.

In the years immediately following Independence, Kenyatta's optimism has a real foundation (Widner 1992:48):

To many Kenyans, growth was evident in the expansion of local school facilities, roads, and other amenities, as well as in the availability of food, which was produced in abundance and often exported....Moreover, the purchasing power of the Kenya shilling remained relatively constant. Until the 1970s, inflation averaged only about 2 percent per year.

During the 1960s Kenya's Gross Domestic Production increases at a 6% annual rate, its agricultural production at a 5.4% annual rate, and its industrial production at a 10.2% annual rate (World Bank 1981: 136). Kenyans, even though their numbers are increasing, experience noticeable improvements in living standards.

This success actually makes more difficult the task of neo-Malthusian advisors who arrive to help Kenyan officials formulate development policies. In the late 1950s western demographers and economists begin using population projections and simulation models to demonstrate the economic costs associated with rapid population growth. Quantifying the economic value of a five-point drop in the birth rate or even of "one birth permanently prevented" appears to be a very effective way of convincing policy makers of the need for birth control; predicting a "crisis" in food production, employment, or capital accumulation appears even more effective. Neo-Malthusians use the fear of development failure to sell the need for fertility control to Third World leaders.

It is understandable that the optimism of Kenyatta's 1963 Independence Day speech contrasts starkly with a dour report done that same year by Edgar O. Edwards, an American economic planning advisor to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning supported by the Ford Foundation (Edwards 1963). Summarizing the growth of the economy between 1954 and 1962, Edwards acknowledges past economic growth, but throws cold water on optimism for the future. He introduces his report by saying that "...past achievements can be seriously misleading if future plans are based too heavily on patterns of the past," and then launches into a standard pessimistic neo-Malthusian discussion. He begins with figures about the rate of population growth, and, following the highly influential example of Coale and Hoover, uses these rates to provide projected estimates of demand for education, health

care, employment, and land, as well as projected estimates of per capita income.² Edwards is an important figure in the story of Kenya's adoption of a population program, as we shall see below. It is unlikely, however, that many beyond the Ministry read his pessimistic report, or grant his predictions the same legitimacy as the optimistic visions of Kenyatta.

In addition to Edwards, there are other neo-Malthusians in Kenya in the period shortly after Independence. These are predominantly expatriates, and are posted primarily in the Ministry of Economic Development and Planning. Blacker, the Government Demographer, plays an important role in analyzing the 1962 census, using it to project the growth of the Kenyan population. Others visit from Pathfinder, the IPPF, the Population Council, Ford Foundation, and, later, the World Bank and the UNFPA. As far as we can tell, however, there are only a few Kenyans in positions of power in the 1960s who adopt neo-Malthusian views; these are in the Ministry of Economic Development and Planning along with Blacker and Edwards (Ndeti and Ndeti 1980). The two who seem to be particularly influential are Tom Mboya, the Minister of Economic Development and Planning and Mwai Kibaki, a technocrat who is Mboya's assistant minister and subsequently Vice-President for a time under President Moi. They, however, have nowhere near the influence of Kenyatta either in setting policy or influencing elites.

How, then, does Kenya become the first sub-Saharan country to adopt a neo-Malthusian policy? Although the Kenyan leaders and their neo-Malthusian advisers both want development to occur in Kenya, their population ideologies, their assessment of resources, and their time frames are

² Never aggregate income alone, which might not have made his case. As Weiner (1971) points out, a larger undeveloped country likely would have a larger aggregate income than a smaller undeveloped country.

clearly quite different. Virtually all accounts of Kenya's adoption of a neo-Malthusian policy credit the Kenyan government with coming to see merit of the neo-Malthusian logic. Most are written by people working for the population movement, either long-term or under contract. The history told in these accounts follows the same format in document after document.

A report by Likimani and Russell written for the Population Council in 1971 is a nice example of such an account. Dr. Likimani is at the time Director of Medical Services, responsible for the overall policy and planning of the national program; Dr. Russell is Medical Advisor to the Ministry of Health. Their report begins with a description of the population using categories relevant to neo-Malthusian analysis: The rural-urban distribution, literacy, and age structure. This is followed by a paragraph stating that if the death rate keeps falling, the growth rate will become higher -- unless fertility falls. Meanwhile rural-urban migration will continue, unemployment will increase, and efforts to provide adequate education to all will be increasingly difficult -- indeed, there are already "serious shortages" in the provision of health and education (Likimani and Russell 1971:4). They make the case for a family planning program by contending that the early activities of the Family Planning Association of Kenya "did demonstrate that a 'demand' for such services existed," although they point out that this was largely in urban areas, reflecting the assumptions of the time that there was a contrast between the modern urban sector, which was more likely to be educated and thus alert to the advantages of family planning, and the traditional rural sector (p. 5; see also Cooper 1997).

With this combination of neo-Malthusian and family planning arguments, they turn to the government's invitation to the Population Council: "In April 1965 the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development of the Government of Kenya wrote to the Population

Council requesting that a team of experts visit Kenya" (p. 5). For a period of three weeks beginning June 1965, "The advisory Mission studied data regarding Kenya; consulted with representatives of the government and of various official and private organizations; and toured the country visiting villages, government offices, hospitals and health facilities" (pp. 5-6). They note that "the team's report was based on the above explorations, supported by knowledge regarding economic and demographic trends in other developing countries and by experience with technical assistance to other governments. This report was submitted to the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development in the late summer of 1965...." (p. 6). Early in 1966 the government decides that it would "...pursue vigorously policies designed to reduce the rate of population growth through voluntary means" (p. 6). The national family planning program is launched in 1967, with the government to provide about 25% of the program costs. Likimani and Russell note that "opposition to the national program has been negligible and sporadic, and has stemmed mainly from the political arena" (p. 6). They characterize opponents as having "traditional attitudes," which lead them to maintain that large families are still desirable or that Kenya is not overcrowded.

Much is wrong with this story, and the many others like it. Although these accounts are sponsored by donors,³ the histories typically privilege the activities of the Kenyan government and virtually ignore the activities and funding of the population movement. They tell the story as if it were a series of logical steps from the demographic data of a census to a national family planning program. The steps are so obvious that no outside assistance beyond technical demographic advice (the Mission

³ The Likimani and Russell article was probably written by Russell, an expatriate advisor (interview with Linda Werner Archer, April 1997).

was asked to calculate an ideal rate of population growth for Kenya) and implementation suggestions were required. The accounts thus do not do justice to the influence of the population establishment. More generally, they ignore the intense interaction occurring between Kenyan elites and the global population movement.

The first Neo-Malthusian salvo in the effort to influence the Kenyan government appears to have been a memo from Blacker and Edwards to Mboya and Kibaki: Blacker provides the demographic data and projections based on his analysis of the 1962 Census, and Edwards provides their economic implications (interview with Blacker, October 1997).⁴ Although most accounts describe Mboya as a strong supporter of neo-Malthusianism, and although he did make supportive public statements (Ndeti and Ndeti 1980; Radel 1973), Blacker recalls (interview, September 1997) a more "ambivalent" Mboya who simply passed the memo to his Permanent Secretary, Kibaki. Blacker thought Kibaki was surely educated in the West, "probably at LSE," and was "very sophisticated.... He said family planning should be compulsory, because it made sense." Blacker was modest about the influence of this memo. When asked if his projections persuaded anyone, he was doubtful, pointing to the "dearth of educated Kenyans at the time." The memo's neo-Malthusian analysis, however, shortly appears in "African Socialism" an important 1965 Sessional Paper.⁵

Mboya tried to introduce neo-Malthusian ideas to his cabinet colleagues in 1964, perhaps on the basis of the Blacker-Edwards memo, but was rebuffed (Ndeti and Ndeti 1980). He is successful in

⁴The date of the memo is unknown, and the memo itself does not appear to have survived.

⁵ A sessional paper is one that is presented to a session of parliament.

April 1965 when parliament adopts "African Socialism." The paper is important at the time, and not only because of its population rhetoric. Recalling it, Meshack Ndisi, one of the founders of the Family Planning Association of Kenya, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Labour and Social Services, and an interviewee of the Population Council Mission in 1965, said (interview, October 1996): "We're all proud of that sessional paper... It came at a time when we had very brilliant people, eloquent speakers -- African socialism, they liked that."

This sessional paper undoubtedly was directed to an international as well as a national audience. As Bretton pointed out, "the economic position of Africa put its leaders in a double bind and generated the need for a good deal of double-talk. One style of discourse was needed for the world political and investment community; another style was needed for home consumption" (Bretton in Bourgault 1995:170-71). "African Socialism" sets out Kenya's free-market economic policy while rhetorically acknowledging a solidarity with other African countries that were rejecting western economic imperialism and taking a socialist route to development (e.g. Nkrumah in Ghana, Nyerere in Tanzania). Scholars agree that Kenya's economic liberalism can be attributed to the desire of Kenya for foreign capital (Widner 1992:52; Bates 1981:147). The Ndetis (1980:132) note the dependent position of the new government at the time of Independence:

Moreover, the state of the national economy was of crucial concern at the time the government changed hands. The country had already received an extremely bad image in the western press because of Mau-Mau activities and the massive out-migration of Europeans as independence came. To counteract this image for the sake of attracting western aid and investment the new government was willing to make major concessions and accept most advice concerning the direction its economy should take.

The population passage in "African Socialism" is one paragraph in length. It acknowledges the

need for population control but calls for family planning education, rather than the implementation of a government family planning program. The government of Kenya apparently recognized that demand was still limited in Kenya, and would need to be initiated through education -- a step congruent with views of neo-Malthusians of the developmentalist school.

Shortly after "African Socialism" is published the government invites the Population Council to send a mission to Kenya. The mission is chaired by Richmond Anderson (Director of the Technical Assistance Division of the Population Council), and includes Ansley Coale (Director of the Office of Population Research at Princeton University, and a leading academic demographer), Howard Taylor (Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Columbia University), and Lyle Saunders (Program Associate at the Ford Foundation). The specialties of each reflect the population movement's priorities at the time: The foundation representatives who organize the mission (chairing, keeping the trip report), the demographer who makes the scientific arguments for population control, and the medical expert who evaluates the issues involved in introducing family planning.

Although most histories of Kenya's population policy and family planning activities say that the Kenyan government invited the Population Council to send experts who would give it recommendations, the invitation is undoubtedly stimulated by the population establishment. Blacker recalled that it was probably Edwards who initiated the invitation to the Population Council (interview with Blacker, October 1997). The invitation sets in motion a chain of events that in retrospect we think had substantial repercussions. Since these events also suggest considerable ambivalence about a national family planning program, including from Mboya, one of the most ardent Kenyan neo-

Malthusians, it is important to examine the Mission's visit, its assumptions, and its Report in detail.

A comparison of the trip log kept by Lyle Saunders and an article by Bernard Berelson of the Population Council, "On family planning communication" published in the first issue of the journal *Demography* makes it clear that the recommendations offered by the Mission are drawn much more from the wisdom of the West than from the mission's experiences in Kenya.

As does the Mission, Berelson focuses on the necessity of a family planning program (1964:95):

What we are up against is nothing less than trying to change the behavior of couples just emerging from a traditional state, where most actions are specified by social custom and cultural arrangements of long standing -- behavior requiring sustained action by pairs of people on a matter of utmost privacy and delicacy, plus the complications provided by one of man's strongest drives, sex.

The array of obstacles, he says, is "impressive," including illiteracy, inertia and apathy, peasant resistance to change, lack of communication between husband and wife, desire for children, "occasional moral, religious, or ideological objections", lack of alternatives for women, lack of trained personnel, lack of supplies, etc. (p. 95). Understandably Berelson is more explicit about the obstacles than is the Mission report, a document intended to persuade the government, not discourage it. The Mission does, however, follow Berelson when it points out that:

Traditional attitudes and values -- although likely to change rapidly in the relatively near future - - will probably be a hindrance to family planning in Kenya for some time. Particularly relevant are value systems that assign a subservient status to women, that favor high fertility, that rely on land and family relations for social security, and that are oriented more toward maintaining the past than improving the future. (p. 47).

As had Notestein (1953) much earlier, the Mission predicts the weakening of the extended family system and its replacement by a greater emphasis on the nuclear family. "As these changes take place, the advantages of family planning become more apparent to couples and the practice of family planning

can be expected to increase" (Anderson et al. 1965: 47).

The Mission's advice on involving the government follows directly from Berelson (1964:100):

Persuasion is needed at one point in the society: governmental officers are badly in need of it, especially very high government officers. The people themselves, I think, need less persuasion than the public servants (especially at the elite level) who have ultimate responsibility for family planning programs.

To persuade government officers will require "Getting the true demographic situation and its implications brought to the attention of responsible governmental officers, and conducting surveys of attitudes toward family planning which measure desire for information and service, and bring them to official attention." Later in the history of the population movement there is to be less emphasis on government direction and more on popular education and provision of services. At this point, however, the foundations are in the lead, and as Donaldson (1990) points out, the foundations take a hierarchal "Catholic" view, while USAID develops a more populist "Protestant" view.

Berelson recommends, as did the Mission, the IUD, and for the same reasons: It does not require sustained motivation or repetitive action, and it is not coitus dependent. He is somewhat less than fully reassuring about its safety, however: "The newly developed intra-uterine devices are more nearly ideal from the communication and motivation standpoint, although all of the biomedical evidence is not yet assembled" (p. 96).

In contrast to the obvious symmetry between Berelson's formulation of neo-Malthusian ideology and that of the Mission Report, there is little evidence that the conversations the Mission representatives have during the three weeks they are in Kenya are in harmony with the content of their report. In Nairobi, where their conversations are with members of the "modernizing elite," primarily

governmental officials, those with whom they speak are polite and somewhat deferential. They express an interest in learning more about family planning, and in possible assistance. On the other hand, the Mission is irritated (though perhaps not as worried as they should have been) that high-level government officials are difficult to contact, or break appointments -- possible indications that they are not eager to talk with the Mission, or feel that they have better things to do.

One of the Kenyan officials considered by the expatriates to be most convinced of the constraints on development consequent on rapid population growth is Mboya, with whom the mission meets. By all accounts, Mboya should be persuasive in assuring the Mission of the genuineness of the government's interest in a population policy. Educated at St. Joseph's College in Philadelphia, and known to have American friends, he is recalled as "the darling of the West" (interview with Erik Krystall, March 1997). He heads one of the most important ministries for a government deeply interested in economic development, and is the nominal author of "African Socialism," with its free-market economic policies and its neo-Malthusian rhetoric. Even he, however, expresses considerable reservations about extending the neo-Malthusian logic to a government-run family planning program. For Mboya, it appears to be one thing to hold neo-Malthusian views about the necessity of limiting population growth, and another to take what the population movement considers the obvious next step: A government family planning program. He also tells the Mission that when "African Socialism" was debated in parliament, questions were raised by the conservatives about the family planning paragraph (Saunders 1965), and Mboya may have had this parliamentary opposition in mind when he tells the Mission that he prefers any government role to be "educational," with family planning services to be

supplied by the private Family Planning Association of Kenya.⁶ The Mission appears to be troubled by this, since they later ask Dr. McAllan, a former colonial official who is then the Health officer of Nairobi and one of the activists in the Family Planning Association of Kenya, about Mboya's emphasis on the Family Planning Association of Kenya. McAllan appears to try to relieve the Mission's concerns, suggesting that it is not that Mboya is not supportive, but rather that the government does not have the funds for a family planning program, whereas voluntary organizations might be able to raise funds from outside sources (Saunders 1965). We think it likely, however, that Mboya does indeed have deep reservations, in part because he is a Catholic (and became even more ambivalent after Humanae Vitae is published in 1968), and in part because he is undoubtedly sensitive to the political context and to the reservations that his Cabinet colleagues have already expressed when he proposed a neo-Malthusian policy to them in 1964.⁷

⁶ "Mr. Mboya said that the main ministry concern is to find ways of mounting effective educational programs for population. He feels that the situation is now such that there can't be a 'legislative program.' He preferred an emphasis on programming by voluntary organizations, especially The Family Planning Association of Kenya. He said that the start should be made in urban areas. There would be, he thinks, no problem of using government personnel and facilities if major responsibility were carried by The Family Planning Association of Kenya. He emphasized that the approach must be delicate.

Mr. Mboya is a Catholic. However, he said that this does not affect his personal evaluation of the situation. From the conversation I gathered that he is somewhat afraid of possible political repercussions from an FP program and that he is not well informed about the extent to which FP information may have been spread through the population and what acceptance there might be from the public." (Saunders 1965:7)

⁷ Mboya's widow does not recall that Mboya was a supporter of fertility control and family planning (except that he didn't want any more children after their five)(interview with Mrs. Mboya, 14 February 1997).

Among government officials outside of Nairobi, there seems to be more opposition to a government family planning program, or perhaps less concern about appearing cosmopolitan or supportive to the visitors. The main objections that the Mission hears from government officials in the provinces are based on the politics of numbers, a sort of mercantilism based on tribe rather than on nation—an ideology that the Mission did not hear in its conversations with the modernizing elite in Nairobi. When the Provincial Commissioner of Rift Valley Province describes the Province for the visitor, he begins with tribes: The Masai live here, the Kipsigis live there, what proportion of the population of the Provincial Capital, Nakuru, are Kikuyu from Central Province, i.e. interlopers. Tribal numbers, perceived to be important for tribal strength and prestige in colonial Kenya, retain their importance in the new democratic regime, where control of the government implies control of its resources. Both the Provincial Commissioner of Rift Valley Province and the Provincial Commissioner of Western Province say that before a population program could be considered, there would have to be a prior program in Nairobi and in Central Province (dominated by Kikuyu, Kenyatta's tribe). The Rift Valley Province's Educational Commissioner says that the government has to speak out firmly "so that all will know that this is not an underhand plot to limit the growth of certain tribal groups" (Saunders 1965:26). The Provincial Commissioner of Rift Valley Province points out that "there is considerable variation in receptivity of different tribes to any ideas that come from the government" (p. 26). Saunders comments (p. 2):

One got the impression in listening to him that he is somewhat resentful of the Kikuyu migration and gives the impression that there may be some tribal organized plan to take over the control of the Rift Valley Province. In any case the local tribal groups resent the migration and feel that there is some attempt or some danger of Kikuyu political domination.

At the Ministry of Health, the Mission finds little enthusiasm either for population control or for the family planning program that the Mission's report recommends that it implement. There is an almost formulaic etiquette in the reports of the Mission's visits with Ministry of Health officials. The officials represent their country to the visitors as ready for family planning. Then, however, they raise objections about the Ministry's role in implementation, and express a desire to turn that responsibility over to the private Family Planning Association of Kenya. The Mission meets with Dr. J. C. Likimani, Chief Medical Officer and Director of Medical Services in the Ministry of Health, with Dr. Aruwa, Director of Hospitals, and with the Personnel Officer, Nganga. All three raise objections based on the mercantilist view that a larger population is better than a smaller one. "There was some suspicion at first and some feeling that this might be an attempt by Europeans and/or Asians to limit African numbers." Although Likimani reassures the mission that "There seems now to be a growing acceptance of the idea.....The desire for fertility control is spreading rapidly.....", his colleagues proceed to raise objections to the family planning program that would be used to achieve fertility control. Dr. Aruwa "interjected a somewhat impassioned objection to family planning. A Red Cross survey, he said, shows that it is now easy for 'school girls, wives, and school teachers' to buy contraceptives even in rural areas and as a consequence morality is deteriorating" (Saunders 1965:8). Aruwa returns discussion to the theme of population size, saying that death rates are still high and birth control might reduce numbers to dangerous levels. Saunders dismisses this in a parenthetical remark in the log, saying that Aruwa "apparently has no notion of what a limited effect fertility control can have and sees it as capable of reducing absolute population size" (Saunders 1965:8). Aruwa and Nganga, the Personnel Officer, also contend that Kenya still has ample of land. At the end of the report for that day, Saunders says, "I got

an impression that in the health ministry there is only a moderate amount of commitment to FP and that there is a considerable body of opinion that is strongly opposed. We should consider this carefully before recommending the setting up of any program in this ministry" (p. 8).

Saunders then visits Dr. Gekonyo, the Director of Training at Kenyatta Hospital, the logical place where clinic personnel could be trained in family planning. As did Likimani, Gekonyo has soothing words, saying that there is sentiment in favor of family planning "throughout Kenya," and that "people will now accept discussion and activities that they would not have accepted some time ago." However, he goes on to say, he could not teach family planning because parents of some of the "girls" [nursing students] might object. Like Mboya, he proposes (Saunders 1965:11) that the best vehicle is the Family Planning Association of Kenya.

The Mission's apprehensions about the Ministry of Health are confirmed by a visit to USAID. The mission head says that USAID is positive toward family planning and population control (a position that cannot be taken for granted in 1965), and that he has money that might be used for such a program. He says, however, "that the Ministry of Health is not nearly so alert to possibilities as other Ministries and the others are likely to snatch all the funds before health even hears that they are available" (Saunders 1965:39).

On July 9, after drafting their report and discussing it with Edwards, the Mission meets with a group chaired by Kibaki that includes officials from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Services. Saunders says they are well

received by all except Aruwa from the Ministry of Health.⁸ Saunders comments in the log:

The guy is an idiot; but a determined one, and one highly enough placed in the Ministry of Health to have a dampening effect on the already faint enthusiasm of his colleagues in that Ministry. From this visit, as from an earlier one with a group of Health Ministry people, I came away with a distinctly unfavorable opinion about the ability and interest of the Health Services to design and operate an effective FP program. The components are there, and some of the local people we saw -- most of them -- were competent and keen, but the top leadership impresses me (in contrast to that of other ministries) as being weak, timid, uninformed, and perhaps inept. (Saunders 1965:32; in margin is written: "Not unlike many other countries!")

In the Mission's log, we do not find evidence that the Mission even asks about the acceptability or suitability of IUDs. Apparently convinced already that no other method would be suitable for the Kenyan population, they concentrate instead on the potential for implementing an IUD program. They do frequently mention numbers of IUDs inserted in various clinics they visit, sometimes noting that they are soon removed, but they seem to concentrate on asking whether paramedical personnel could insert them or whether insertion would need to be done by doctors (who, they understood, were in short supply in the rural areas where most Kenyans lived). In Nyeri, the mission talks with 40 women who have gathered at a Family Planning Association of Kenya clinic to receive IUDs.⁹ They have a question-and-answer session, which gives the impression of a staged event. In response to questions, the women agree that the ideal number of children would be four; if they were starting over they would

⁸ Aruwa again raises objections to population control and family planning: epidemics are wiping the population out, the Americans push birth control so they won't have to feed so many people in the world, and family planning would promote immorality and could lead to cancer and deformed children.

⁹This was probably skillfully arranged for the visitors, as our field experience in Kenya suggests that it is very difficult to get 40 women together at one time and one place, and even more difficult to imagine that so many in one time and place wanted to receive IUDs.

want four; yes, they would recommend four for their daughters. There must have been some skepticism among the Mission since Saunders (p. 31) argues that perhaps these views are genuine:

This is a semi-rural area but it is reputed to be a fairly progressive one and perhaps the experience here is not entirely typical of what one might encounter in other parts of the country. But this is also a very densely populated area and if what we saw here is any indication there should be a considerable receptivity to family planning information on the part of village women.

A week later, Saunders seems to be somewhat less optimistic about the IUD: "It may be significant that relatively few physicians attended the lecture and demonstration recently given by Dr. George Major who came down from Nairobi to discuss IUD's. Three were inserted at that time; two are already out" (p. 36).

In summary, when we compare the Mission's report with Berelson's wisdom and the Mission's log, we conclude that the Mission's report reflect more received wisdom than actual experience. It is a rather undiluted expression of neo-Malthusian logic, a "one-size fits all" approach that only occasionally shows sign of having been altered to fit the Kenyan context. Why, then, was the knowledge the Mission gained of the Kenya context overridden by their neo-Malthusian ideology? We think the answer is a sort of *folie a deux*, the interaction of a population movement, which despite its global reach was rooted in its local networks of academics, foundations, and other population players, and Kenyan elites, also rooted in their local context but reaching out to the global community by presenting themselves as more neo-Malthusian and interested in family planning than they were.

The Mission clearly believes scientific logic holds everywhere, and can be apprehended by all. Once the logic is understood, all that remains is implementation. Thus, in the Mission's log they are seen talking with civil servants in Nairobi about population growth, and talking with officials and

employees of the Ministry of Health and the Family Planning Association of Kenya in Nairobi and the Provinces about the details of implementing a massive IUD program: Training, delivery, etc. In the Mission Report there are pages upon pages of Coale-Hoover type projections to clarify the neo-Malthusian logic, and pages upon pages of quite detailed practical suggestions for implementing the delivery of IUDs. Obviously, they know the solutions already. In addition, they also bring political understandings from their own culture. The Mission seems to assume that the post-Independence government is a familiar sort of liberal democratic government. Kenya has held peaceful elections, and its new government is run under Westminster rules, with an executive, parliament and judiciary that on the surface are much like that of Britain. Remarks in the report suggest that they assume the majority political party to be similar to western political parties. With liberal religious tolerance, as well as knowledge of recent disagreements about family planning among western religions, the Mission's report urges respect for religious differences.

The Kenyan officials with whom the Mission meets are coming from a quite different place. They have their own history: They have experienced previous attempts by the colonial government to modify their reproductive practices. Central Province, Kenyatta's home, was where a vigorous anti-circumcision campaign had been waged by missionaries and the colonial government. And, in these post-Independence years, they are optimistic about the country's potential for development, and believe that neither land nor educational opportunities need to be rationed. On the other hand, they are polite to the visitors: Interest is expressed, doubts are, with but a few telling exceptions, muted during the Mission's visit.

The most striking omission both in the Mission's report and in the interactions with Kenyans as

recounted in the log, is the issue of tribal numbers. Although this issue is raised outside of Nairobi by the two Provincial Commissioners with whom the Mission talks, the comments appear to have been brief and, as with their discussion with Mr. Njoroge, whose worries about population decline are dismissed by Saunders in his log as a failure of understanding, not accurately assessed by the mission. Based on our own experiences in Kenya at a later date, we believe that those with whom the Mission speaks undoubtedly prefer to present their country as a unitary nation rather than as a tribal society. Nation-states are modern, "tribes" are traditional and backward. The Mission talks almost exclusively with members of the modernizing elites: Government leaders and medical personnel, many of whom have been educated in the West or, as in the case of some of the medical personnel, have a status that derives from their mastery of western medical knowledge (Rutenberg and Watkins 1997). In the international community of nations which Kenya has just joined at Independence, the model is that of nation-states (Meyer 1994). Thus, we believe these elites prefer to talk in terms of "culture" to indicate tribal opposition to family planning, perhaps recognizing that the language of culture is acceptable in international exchanges in a way that the language of tribe is not. Cultural differences, like religious differences, are to be respected. And the Mission can more easily deal with remarks such as those of Njoroge and the two Provincial Commissioners if they consider them to be cultural expressions and not legitimate tribal concerns. Archaic cultural values that impede the transformation to modernity will be eroded by education; the politics of numbers in a democratic multi-tribal society is not so likely to lessen in importance. Later, other westerners in the population movement will make the same comforting interpretation.

The Mission submits its report to the Kenyan government, which adopts it in 1966 and

published it, under the imprimatur of the Ministry of Economic Development and Planning, in 1967. For the population establishment this is a coup, and virtually every history of the movement in Kenya celebrates Kenya as the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to adopt an "official policy to reduce the population growth rate" (Nortman and Hofstatter 1980:19). Procuring such official policy statements is important because it legitimizes population activity in the country (Gwatkin 1970:19): "These accomplishments may seem modest, and perhaps they are. But they are also important. For they represent the base of interest and activity, necessary for any external aid agency to operate effectively;...." The fact that the policy is Kenyan -- in the sense of having been adopted by the Kenyan government -- distinguishes the movement from its colonial predecessor, and is politically important. In an astute review of the population problem written at that time by the US National Security Council, it is argued that the support and commitment of key Third World leaders is necessary (NSC 1974: section 33): "We must take care that our activities should not give the appearance to the LDCs of an industrialized country policy directed against the LDCs....Third World leaders should be in the forefront and obtain the credit for successful programs."

There is a considerable gap between the categorization of Kenya as having an "official policy to reduce the population growth rate" and what they actually do between 1967 and 1978. When the Kenyan program is implemented in 1968 it experiences one year of success. The number of acceptors increases from 11,700 in 1968 to 30,300 in 1969 and then virtually plateaus for the next two years (Radel 1973:95-96). It also becomes clear the continuation rates are quite low. Although the population movement remains enthusiastic about Kenya's progress in family planning for several years, by the mid-1970s disappointment has set in, and there are complaints. For example, in the mid-1970s

the World Bank sends missions four times a year to assess the progress of Kenya's family planning program. According to one observer at the time, the Bank would say to Dr. Kimani, the Ministry of Health representative, "you haven't done this, you haven't done this'. Kimani would answer, 'It's under way'. Everyone knew he was lying" (interview with Erik Krystall, March 1997). As transpired during the Mission's visit, the government appears to be been unwilling to voice objections directly to the international population community. Rather, they compromise, accepting those recommendations that are politically easier, and stalling on the implementation of the others. Examining which of the recommendations made by the Population Council Mission are accepted, and which rejected offers insight into their true beliefs.

The Mission views government support as critical. Government support is very limited, however, and largely confined to carefully situated neo-Malthusian rhetoric in the three development plans published between 1966 and 1974. Virtually everyone we interviewed says that Kenyatta does not support the family planning program that is to implement the policy. Ndisi, the Permanent Secretary of the Labour Department and one of the founders of the Family Planning Association of Kenya, recalls a story about Kenyatta illustrating his disinterest in family planning at a time before the population movement enters Kenya. Ndisi recounts that when Kenyatta had just been released from jail:

He found we [the Family Planning Association of Kenya] were talking about family planning and he inquired who was in charge, and was told Mwathi [one of the founders of FPAK] "You are treading on unsteady ground. I do not want to stop you. A person with eight children, he cannot educate them. I do not want to stop you, but I want you to go 'whispering'." Mwathi answered, "But sir, sometime people will be standing on the table shouting!". Mwathi said that Kenyatta "is the only person I could not argue with".

Later, Ndisi recalls, when Kenyatta was traveling as Kenya's leader, people came up and told him

"mzee, we are suffering, we have to pay school fees, there is little money, etc." Kenyatta answered, "reduce the speed of going to bed with your wife," According to Ndisi he was "laughing them off" [Interview with Ndisi, October 1996). Kenyatta's wife is said to have been a devout Catholic, which may have inhibited him, although he did bring her to see Dr. Mwathi.

Sutton presents a similar view of Kenyatta position on family planning (interview with Harkavy, October 1997):

Kenyatta talked a good game about family planning but really didn't believe in it. He had trouble carrying along the political classes; if you were a big man you were a polygamist. The latter did not want to dampen their personal production of children, but there was a rational realization that to sustain economic growth it was necessary to curb population growth. So for years after the Population Council mission there was no family planning program.

Tony Johnston¹⁰ presents Kenyatta as an astute politician. Although he never heard Kenyatta say that population growth was a problem, he is sure Kenyatta recognized it as such: "Kenyatta wasn't that stupid." But it was not his problem (interview with Tony Johnston, April 1997):

He knew it would never be a problem in his lifetime, it wouldn't land on his plate. And he had more important things in development that he wanted to do -- education, health services. So he was trying to cope with the present, not the future.

It appears that Kenyatta's objections may be tribal in nature. Erik Krystall, who begins working in population in Kenya in 1971, claims to have a tape of Kenyatta speaking on the Voice of Kenya to a Kikuyu audience in Kiswahili. During the middle of the talk he suddenly switches to Kikuyu and says

¹⁰ Johnston is an obstetrician-gynecologist. He arrived in Kenya in the 70s, supported by IPPF, with two aims: To tell obstetricians and gynecologists that they needed a structure in the medical association to deal with family planning, and to evaluate the Family Planning Association of Kenya in order to tap sources of assistance other than IPPF. From 1985-1991 he was with UNFPA, and during one period he was the Regional Director in charge of Research and Training in Population IEC.

"Don't listen to all these family planning people, you have as many children as sands in the sea."

Krystall interprets this as "let the other tribes use family planning, you increase," contending that Kenyatta "would have liked to limit other groups" (interview with Eric Krystall, March 1997).

Kenyatta does, however, permit statements about population and family planning to appear in the successive 5-year development plans produced by the Ministry of Economic Development¹¹ -- plans that are undoubtedly not widely read. In two of the three (the 1966-70 and 1974-78) the two prongs of the Mission's recommendation, government acknowledgment of a population problem and implementation via family planning, are separated, with the former included in discussions of the nation's economy and the latter in the section on the Ministry of Health. In the 1970-74 plan, where the population language seems to be taken directly from western neo-Malthusian academics, family planning is seen as a "long-term" solution, but there is a single bare mention of implementation in the Ministry of Health section. In all three, the population language is confined to the section on unemployment, suggesting perhaps that it is in the modern wage sector that the government most easily recognizes -- or thought others would recognize -- a population problem.¹² In the Third Development

¹¹ This Ministry changes its name several times over the period. For consistency we will refer to it as the MED.

¹²The 1966-70 Development Plan, which had been produced before the Mission's visit, is revised after the visit and strong Coale-Hoover rhetoric added: Lower population growth would help the economy, and, even more importantly, would help families with health, schooling and employment. The Soviet Union, the United States and Europe are explicitly held up as models to emulate. In terms of implementation, the Plan proposes five measures that should be taken under the rubric of "family planning education." Only one of these refers to services, and it says they will be provided by the private Family Planning Association of Kenya. In the second Development Plan, 1970-74, it appears as if the government is now backing off somewhat from its population policy. Population presents an employment problem, but not for other areas of the economy. Although family planning is presented, as it had not been in the previous Plan, as the solution to this problem, it is

Plan (1974-78), perhaps because the government is in the process of negotiating with the World Bank for a large loan to expand family planning services, family planning is second on the Ministry of Health's list of aims.

Although neo-Malthusian rhetoric is in these development reports, they also document the failure of the family planning program to lower fertility; in fact, they document an increasing total fertility rate. One explanation for the failure of the program offered is that Kenyans, elites as well as the general populace, do not understand the importance of controlling population. This is happening because they lack the appropriate information, or they misunderstand the information that the movement provided. Thus, the solution is to provide new information, communicated clearly and effectively. Radel (1973), employed by the Ford Foundation at the time, develops "An elite oriented population education program" for Kenya. Even when there are indications that the activists understand that there is conscious opposition to their projects, they appear to prefer to reinterpret this as an absence of information (Miller, December 1970:16):

The general view of government officials is that family planning is a health activity that must be couched in such terms [so] as to avoid publicity and resistance. Most middle-and lower-range officials are uninformed or misinformed about the program.

The movement also acknowledges that the problem is sometimes its failure to communicate. Thus,

Radel writes in 1968 in an astute trip report following his visit to Uganda:

The major weakness in all family planning efforts that I observed was their inability to communicate effectively the basic ideas behind family planning. The Family Planning Association... is, I think, still plagued with the middle-class bias of most voluntary movements. Its literature clearly uses the rhetoric of a minuscule portion of the population.

presented as a "long-term" solution. In the Ministry of Health section, there is only one mention of family planning.

Another, and increasingly popular, explanation for failure is "culture". The population movement does recognize that there are cultural differences between the West and Sub-Saharan Africa that are relevant for reproduction. It had been possible for Kenyan colonial officers to dismiss local cultures as "superstitions," (and Kenyan elites still use this language to describe the rural folk who are less educated than they). But the population movement can no longer use the language of "superstition." During the 1970s the context changes, in part because of the enthusiasm about development following Independence, and in part because of the politics of the West, particularly the sensitivities that are central to the new social movements on race and gender that arise during that decade. Moreover, the donors come to take "culture seriously." In order to educate themselves about Kenyan culture, the Ford Foundation sponsors an anthropologist, Angela Molnos, to make a wide-ranging (and excellent) compilation of East African customs regarding fertility (1972). The project lasts several years and far exceeds the original estimates of its cost. A memo by the Ford Foundation's William Sweeney supporting the funding says:

We hope the results of her work will give us two kinds of material. First, the material [that] can be used for training fieldworker educators. Secondly, the material [that] can be used by people preparing family planning messages.

A subsequent memo (from David Anderston to Robert Edwards, 27 Jan 75, quoted in Teitelbaum 1978) shows that this project is considered a failure:

We have decided not to pursue our attempts to have the Molnos materials adapted [for program purposes]; all efforts in this direction have failed to elicit the interest of the Kenya Government personnel now in charge of family planning programs.

In this case, knowledge of the cultural determinants of high fertility is not easily convertible into an effective fertility control program. The officials of the Ministry of Health, we suspect, object to efforts

to integrate traditional belief systems into their modern medical system.

One obvious explanation for failure is carefully avoided by those evaluating Kenya's family planning program: a voluntary family planning program could not bring about substantial fertility decline in Kenya during the 1970s. Although the Mission Report (Anderson et al. 1965: 3) recommends a program which would make "every pregnancy the result of a voluntary choice" and predicts that it "might reduce fertility by as much as 50% in 10 to 15 years," it does so based on "studies in other countries" showing that a majority of couples "would like to limit the size of their families" (1965: 6).

When Donald Heisel, whom the Population Council funds to teach demography at University College in Nairobi, conducts a Kenyan KAP survey in 1966, it is clear that a majority of Kenyans do not want to limit the size of their families. Heisel finds that "ideals of family size, on the average, tend to remain near the average levels of achieved fertility" (1968: 641). The ideal family size is 6.03 (counting responses of 11 or more as 12), and the estimated achieved family size is 6.8. Regardless of what "studies in other countries" have found, in Kenya the KAP study documents a majority of couples wanting and having large families. By as early as 1968, therefore, it should have been "irrational" for population movement representatives to believe that a voluntary family planning program could cut Kenyan fertility in half over the next 10 to 15 years. Yet donors still willingly provide funds to build and staff hundreds of family planning clinics throughout Kenya in the hopes of substantially reducing fertility. They then spend more funds to discover what program characteristics are responsible for a minuscule turnout.

Why does the Kenyan government adopt a population policy so early and then do so little to implement it? In retrospect, the lack of implementation is not what needs to be explained. The neo-Malthusian ideology that informed the policy had little in common with the population ideology of the

Kenyan elites, and family planning was objectionable for a variety of reasons that over the years have been fully described by its promoters. What needs to be explained is the adoption of the policy at all. Lee et al. (1996:78) ask a similar question when they note that one of the surprises of their analysis "is the almost complete lack of evidence that perceptions of popular demand for contraception by political leaders or bureaucrats was an important influence on the creation of public sector family planning services." What we have added are the particularities of the Kenyan context that make the adoption of a government family planning policy even more surprising. Here was a country in the full flush of Independence and optimism about its future, with a perception that two of its priorities, land and education, were abundantly available, and with a view of population growth that saw it as self-evident that bigger countries were richer, more powerful, and more prestigious countries. Why would it adopt a population policy that most must have seen as coming from outer space, a policy that indeed was a direct translation of international neo-Malthusian ideology with virtually no adaptation to the Kenyan context? We suggest three reasons.

First, we think that key players in a major ministry, the Ministry of Economic Development and Planning, do appear to have been convinced by Neo-Malthusian logic.

Second, even those elites who were not convinced wanted to signal that Kenya was not a backward nation, that it was a member of a global community, a point that has been made more generally and with great elegance by John Meyer and his colleagues (Barrett 1995; Meyer 1994). Released from colonial control, Kenya was ready to play a part on a world-wide stage. A desire for recognition by the global community may have motivated other Sub-Saharan African countries as well, but may have been more critical in Kenya. Like other countries, Kenya was eager for foreign capital;

unlike many others, it had also rejected socialism for a free-market economic ideology. Signing on to something that western representatives clearly thought was important may have seemed to the government of Kenya as a way of signaling that it was respectable. They also may have predicted -- correctly, for a time -- that adopting a policy and implementing it were separate activities.

Kenyatta's great popularity, perhaps, allows his government to adopt a population position based more on international than domestic considerations. Only for a short time during Kenyatta's presidency is there a threat that the government's population policy would cause it internal problems. Oginga Odinga, Kenyatta original Vice President, resigns in April 1966 and leads the new opposition party, the Kenya's People's Union. As Johnson (1994:90) puts it: "Odinga had little patience with Mboya's idiosyncratic approach to African socialism; he saw no need to pander to foreign investors." In July 1967 Odinga also attacks family planning in a parliamentary debate on the Ministry of Health budget, saying (East African Standard, 14 July 1967): "We oppose family planning and don't even want to hear of family planning in Kenya." According to Ndeti and Ndeti (1980:41): "Odinga basically believed that black people were being gradually eliminated on an already sparsely-populated continent and that the Western races were expanding their wealth and populations at Africa's expense." Such beliefs were not uncommon in Africa at the time (Johnson 1994:90): "Throughout much of black Africa, it is fair to say, family planning at that time was seen as a 'white imperialist plot', a form of neocolonialism designed to ensure the continued subjugation of the black race to Western interests long after the last echoes of Uhuru have died away." In 1969 Odinga is arrested and his party, KPU, is outlawed. Although there are occasional outbreaks of tribal resistance to family planning (Wilks 1970), without an effective political opposition that might make use of anti-family planning sentiment, the

Kenyatta government has a small political price to pay for adopting an official neo-Malthusian policy not in harmony with majority opinion.

A third reason for adopting such a position are more direct financial incentives. The Population Council mission made it clear that outside organizations would likely provide support. Although the Mission said -- and subsequent donors repeated -- that eventually the government of Kenya would have to take over the recurrent costs of a family planning program, the Government of Kenya may have been very attracted by the value of current aid, and highly discounted future costs (in which they were correct: Kenya's family planning program is still largely donor-funded). Because family planning services were delivered through hospitals and, especially, clinics and dispensaries, funds that could be used for the expansion rural family planning also could be used to assist the Ministry of Health in providing maternal and child health care, a high priority for the immediately post-independence government in general, and, of course, for the Ministry of Health in particular.

In fact during the second half of the 1960s the resources of the international population movement expand tremendously. In 1966 Reimert T. Ravenholt begins directing the global population program of the U.S. Agency for International Development with a budget of \$2.3 million. By 1970 USAID's annual population budget is \$75 million and by 1985 it reaches \$288 million (Harkavy 1995: 50). In July of 1967 the United Nations Trust Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) is established. The fund is financed by voluntary contributions from governments as well as private donors. By November 1969 some \$4.9 million dollars had been contributed to the fund and 2.9 million obligated. By 1971 it is distributing 25 million dollars (Johnson 1987:66). In April of 1968 former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara becomes president of the World Bank. At his first address to the Board

of Governors (30 September 1968) he causes considerable controversy by stating that he wants the Bank to "seek opportunities to finance family planning program joining with others in programs of research to determine the most effective means of family planning and of national administration of population control programs." In the early 1970s the Bank's "new and relatively inexperienced staff was under substantial pressure to produce a 'bankable project,' particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa" (World Bank 1992:53).

Kenya is willing and able to provide an outlet for the Bank's largess. In 1974 the Bank funds a \$12 million dollar five-year population project in Kenya. The money goes to constructing rural health facilities and training schools: "89% civil works, 9% furniture and equipment, 2% technical assistance" (World Bank 1992:53). Although the project has a goal of reducing the population growth rate from 3.3% a year to 3%, when the project ends evidence suggest that the rate has increased to 3.9%. In fact, UNFPA and USAID advisors at the time objected to the Bank's emphasis on construction since it "would have little or no impact on the population growth rate during its lifetime" (World Bank 1992:53).

In addition, there may have may have been some less high-minded motives, at least from the point of view of donors. Expanding service delivery points provided opportunities to choose contractors and suppliers, and thus opportunities to forge or maintain patron-client relations, considered by political scientists to be a characteristic of African governance (Rothschild 1969). In addition, funds can be stolen -- or, as the newspapers often call it, "mismanaged." Money was flowing in, and there was very little monitoring and no sanctions. Eric Krystall recalls (interview, March 1997) that "The World Bank was terrified they'd give back the money. World Bank policy was that you couldn't get development money without a family planning program, so they were very keen that Kenya be spending

that money."

Our view -- crudely, that money talks -- is not one with which the Kenyans we interviewed agreed. We asked Ndisi, one of the founders of the Family Planning Association of Kenya and the Permanent Secretary of Labor at the time of the Population Council's Mission, about the influence of donors. He responded by saying that with the help of the donors they became the first family planning association in Sub-Saharan Africa, and for a long time the only one. We then pressed, asking whether there would have been times when they felt the donors were pushing too hard. Ndisi responded by saying "If they used me I didn't know it. Mwathi [the other founder of FPAK] and I were convinced, and we carried that message" (interview with Ndisi, October 1996). Nonetheless, we think that money does talk.

A steady flow of family planning funds eventually has an impact on the attitudes of Kenyan elites on population growth. In fact, by the time Kenyatta's regime comes to end in 1978, elite attitudes have begun to change, as evident in a survey of elites that Ndeti and Ndeti (1980) conduct in the late 1970s. They ask (p. 87) respondents a leading question about foreign influence, clearly expecting to find the perception that family planning is a Western import. Of the program implementers in their survey, however, over half say the program is basically Kenyan because it is run by the government, and because family planning is a traditional Kenya custom. One says (p. 88) that although family planning was introduced from outside, "now it is a Kenyan idea because the FPAK is a Kenyan organization." A decade of substantial international funding of family planning in Kenya appears to have domesticated the movement.

In August of 1978 President Kenyatta dies and Daniel arap Moi, Vice President since 1967,

assumes the presidency. Moi lacks Kenyatta's stature. He is a member of the small Kalenjin tribe and has to work to consolidate his power by organizing KANU youth groups and soliciting support among the armed forces. Factions in the air force attempt a coup in 1982, but Moi defeats them. That year legislation is passed to make Kenya an official one-party state, and Moi takes steps to remove the distinction between his KANU party and the state, and to crush all organized dissent (Widner 1992). At the same time, he amasses a significant personal fortune, as do his top officials in party and state. Widespread corruption and the absence of a multi-party democracy will make it increasingly difficult for western governments and donor agencies to maintain close links with the Moi regime during the later part of the 1980s and the 1990s.

With respect to Kenya's fertility control effort, however, Moi is a much more ardent supporter than Kenyatta, and his legitimization of neo-Malthusianism has been seen as crucial in Kenya's subsequent fertility decline (Sinding, personal communication 1997; Robinson 1992). While Kenyatta never publically endorsed family planning, Moi makes many explicit neo-Malthusian appeals. Moi has reasons to adopt a higher profile neo-Malthusianism. First, the Kenyan economy is growing at a slower rate than it had during the 1960s and, as a reading of the 1979-1983 Development Plan illustrates, neo-Malthusianism allows rapid population growth to be used as an scapegoat for economic stagnation. Secondly, program activists from those days say that Moi is shamed into it by Kenya's high profile in the population community. As the story goes, Moi returns from a meeting of Commonwealth nations saying "I'm sick and tired of being laughed at as the country with the highest growth rate" (interview with Erik Krystall, March 1997). Thirdly, Moi has to deal with population donors who have grown disillusioned by weak support for the family planning program among senior government officials,

especially in the Ministry of Health. When Kenya applies to the World Bank for a second population project to begin in 1982, Bank officials engage in "considerable analysis and soul-searching" (World Bank 1992:53) before funding the \$23 million project. The Bank sees to it that a "National Council on Population and Development," located outside the Ministry of Health, is established to direct the program. It makes its establishment "a condition for release of the second tranche of the Second Structural Adjustment Loan" to Kenya (World Bank 1992:54). When such a powerful institution uses its considerable leverage to link an effective family planning program and economic development aid, any leader is forced to take note.

By 1989 the first evidence of program success appears, and Moi experiences some political benefits for his support of family planning. The findings of Kenya's Demographic and Health Survey of 1988/89 indicate that a significant decline in the total fertility rate had taken place since 1984: from 7.7 to 6.7. Between 1986 and 1987 first visits to clinics increase from 93,000 to 377,000, and acceptors jump from 92,000 to 336,000 (National Research Council 1993:133). Such dramatic increases in clinic attendance indicate an ongoing fertility decline and the 1994 DHS survey finds a continuing drop in the total fertility rate to 5.4 children. Government leaders have not only adopted neo-Malthusianism, but the general population also has adopted the small family norm.

Conclusions:

Today most Kenyans have adopted neo-Malthusian views: they see many children as a burden for a family and a rapidly growing population as a burden for the nation. Family planning is considered to be a clearly useful innovation, for both individual couples and the nation. International members of

the neo-Malthusian movement have been motivated to write the story of the diffusion of neo-Malthusianism and family planning to Kenya as a simple one: National elites, and ultimately indigenous citizens, come to adopt a position and an innovation that are intrinsically useful and rational responses to changed conditions. A dramatic instance of planned social change is presented as the triumph of reason over outdated tradition; an inevitable transformation that is in little need of historical examination. International actors did play a role, but they only needed to provide Kenyans with information, education and communication, technical assistance and minimal resources, and to exercise patience, not power.

We have problems with this version of events. It ignores the fact that women in Nyanza today call contraception "white man's medicine" and use the English word "family" to describe it. In any historical account of Kenyans' changed thinking about family size and population growth, family planning is an obvious Western export. In our version, its exportation takes place in stages. The focus of this paper is on the first stage: the promotion of neo-Malthusianism to Third World elites. This stage begins seriously during the 1950s and 1960s when well endowed foundations, Western governments, and international institutions come to fear Third World rapid population growth and establish a substantial international neo-Malthusian movement. The leaders of this movement, correctly we think, believe that they first must convince Third World leaders of the harmfulness of rapid population growth before an infrastructure capable of bringing modern contraceptives to Third World populations can be established. Our narrative relates how this conversion of Kenyan elites was attempted during the 1960s and 1970s.

Rodgers offers (1983: 10) a classic description of diffusion: "the process by which (1) an

innovation (2) is *communicated* through certain channels (3) *over time* (4) among members of a *social system*" (emphasis ours). This definition helps clarify important points in our narrative. First, neo-Malthusianism is no simple *innovation*. It is a competing population ideology to mercantilism, a belief system that was well entrenched in the thinking of much of the Kenyan elite. Neo-Malthusianism encountered active opposition in Kenya, much like Cleland (1998: 2) describes occurred when the potato was introduced in France, and something more than simple "*communication*" was needed to foster its adoption. Movement representatives had to alternatively proffer and withhold valued resources to prod a skeptical national elite to implement fertility control measures. The relevant *social system* in which both movement members and the Kenyan elite interacted is a newly forming international one with few well-defined norms defining proper interaction. One obvious characteristic of this social system is its hierarchical nature. The two parties to this dialogue hold positions commanding quite different amounts of power and resources. This is not to say that Kenyan elites were pawns, dominated by more powerful First World agents. To the contrary: they realized the intensity of First World interest in the population issue and they actively exploited that interest to gain access to resources, and to use those resources in ways that they preferred.

Our narrative describes the intricate *pas de deux* that ensued *over time*. Visions of what is problematic or desirable invariable differ according to where one stands, and movement agents and Kenyan elites initially stood in quite different places. Over time, however, they did construct a common arena of action. Both parties learned to modify their stances and to compromise so that each could partially attain its goals. Today we tend to focus on only one result of the decades-old dance: The neo-Malthusian policies and programs adopted by the Kenyan government and the increasing

proportion of Kenyan women who have begun to use "family" to have fewer children. But these results are not the only consequences of the dance. Networks of health clinics were built and long-term development loans granted. Even the neo-Malthusianism of movement agents changed -- at both a theoretical and a practical level. The report that the Population Council Mission produced in 1965 simply could not be written today. No one would accept its optimistic presumption that in a society such as Kenya circa 1965 the application of a little logic and a modicum of resources might halve fertility within a decade. Three decades of toiling in Kenya, and elsewhere, has moderated the optimism of movement agents. They know now that simply opening a family planning clinic does not produce a legion of contraceptive users. More significantly, the questioning of movement goals and assumptions that ensued during these decades, both within and outside of Kenya, has even made it difficult for the movement to preserve a clear definition of "success." Within the reproductive rights framework adopted at Cairo, for example, Kenya's fertility decline is no longer synonymous with "success."

The debate about the causes of the global declines in fertility is usually depicted (Cleland 1998, Palloni 1998) as having clear battle lines drawn between two opposing camps: structuralists, who believe that changed conditions induce individuals to have smaller families, and diffusionists, who view ethnic and language networks as active agents that spread the inherently attractive innovation of modern contraception. Our narrative works to blur these sharp battle lines. What worried agents of the international population movement was precisely that what they believed to be the structural preconditions of fertility decline were not present in most Third World societies in the period after World War II. They thus deliberately attempted to alter the thinking of Third World elites about the

harmfulness of population growth so as to facilitate the diffusion of modern contraceptives within agrarian societies.

The adoption of small family norms and the legitimation of deliberate fertility control is another story, one that also has its roots in the colonial period, that involves changes in reproductive ideologies, and that occurs in particular local settings (Watkins forthcoming). Although the national government is more visible in this story than are the representatives of the international population movement, the interaction of the movement and the government elites during the Kenyatta years played a role. Propaganda campaigns that were initially anemic eventually reached throughout Kenya, and the financing of construction of rural health facilities by international donors made it possible for “family planning talks” by nurses trained in modern contraception to become a routine part of the activities of the government’s maternal and child health clinics. What were initially foreign ideas and behavior brought to Kenya by international agents of global social change became domesticated in myriads of Kenyan communities, as local men and women adopted modern family planning to limit their births, and became agents of local change themselves.

The presence, extent and timing of national fertility declines in the second half of the twentieth century present anomalies for researchers attempting to understand them. We believe that broadening diffusion research to include examining the purposive diffusion of neo-Malthusianism can help explain some of these anomalies, as well as help clarify the connection between population policy and fertility decline (Mason and Sinding, 1998), a topic that both structuralists and diffusionists have difficulty incorporating into their theories. One reason the timing, intensity and general effectiveness of Kenya's fertility control efforts differed from those of Malawi or Malaysia is because Kenyan elites had a

different pattern of interaction with agents of international population movement. Understanding these differences and understanding how arenas of action actually are negotiated by Third World elites and agents of the international population movement is vitally needed diffusion research. It has the potential of adding to our understanding of the spread of effective fertility control programs. Stories triumphing the victory of reason over outdated tradition -- ones in which the role of the international population movement are hidden -- do little to improve this understanding.

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