

Demographic Winter: The Greatest Crisis Humanity Will Face This Century

Speech by Don Feder to the 36th Annual March for Life Rose Dinner
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Ladies and gentlemen, I'm honored to be with you and grateful for the opportunity to address the 27th Annual March for Life Rose Dinner.

I would like to speak to you this evening about a phenomenon that's called Demographic Winter – an expression used to denote the worldwide decline in birthrates. Specifically, I'd like to discuss how it relates to abortion.

Besides the obvious connection (killing 44 million children a year tends to depress the birth rate), these life issues are linked in a more fundamental way.

Both are supported by a culture of selfishness – a culture which refuses to acknowledge an obligation to the past or a responsibility to the future – a cultures which views the family as optional, faith as an impediment to human happiness, and personal gratification as the only measure of a life well-lived.

How serious is our demographic problem? Very. It could result in the greatest crisis humanity will confront in this century.

All over the world, children are disappearing. Worldwide, there are six million fewer children under 6 years-of-age today than there were in 1990.

Out of a population of 6.5 billion, 6 million may not seem like much. But it's just the initial tremor of a coming earthquake. In Europe, the number of children under 5 has fallen by 36% since 1960. If present trends continue, by 2050, the earth will hold 248 million fewer children under 5 than it does now.

In the Western world, birthrates are falling and populations are aging. The consequences for your children and grandchildren could well be catastrophic. Imagine what Global Warming would be like – if Global Warming was real. Demographic Winter is very real – and very scary.

Simply put: Humanity is failing to reproduce itself in sufficient numbers to maintain our civilization.

In this regard, one number is crucial – 2.1. That's the number of children the average woman must have in her lifetime just to maintain current population. This is known as a replacement-level birth rate.

In 30 years, worldwide, birth rates have fallen by more than 50%. In 1979, the average woman on this planet had 6 children. Today, the average is 2.9 children, and falling. According to the United Nations Population Division, by the middle of this century, worldwide fertility will be below replacement.

Most developed nations are already there. Remember, you need a birth rate of 2.1 just to maintain current population. In the countries of the European Union, the average birth rate is 1.5. In Italy and Spain, it's 1.2. And in Russia, it's 1.17. By 2015 – in just 6 years - - there will be more deaths than births each year in the European Union. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of childless women who reached the end of their childbearing years doubled – from 10% to 20% -- in the last 30 years.

To put this in perspective, demographers tell us that with a birthrate of 1.3, everything else being equal, a nation will lose half of its population every 45 years.

We have sown the wind and we will reap the whirlwind. To put it another way, there's a flock of chickens coming home to roost that would do Frank Perdue proud.

Russia is a sneak preview of a disaster movie in the making. Through a low birth rate, abortion (in Russia today, there are more abortions than live births) and shorter life-spans, Russia is losing three-quarters of a million people a year. Its current population of 143 million is expected to shrink to 112 million and could go as low as 77 million by 2050.

Dick Cavett used to say: "If you're parents didn't have children, chances are you won't either" – nonsensical, I know. But it alludes to a profound truth.

Those missing children I mentioned earlier, in turn won't have children or grandchildren of their own. This will create an ever-accelerating downward spiral. We could even reach what demographers call population free-fall, where the survival of civilization is threatened.

In the developed world, fewer and fewer workers will be called on to support a growing number of elderly. In Europe today, there are four working-age people for every individual over 60. By 2050, the ratio will be two to one.

Currently, in industrialized nations, 20% of the population is over 60. By mid-point in this century, the proportion of elderly in developed nations will rise to 32%. By then, these nations will have two senior citizens for every child. Schools will be turned into nursing homes. Playgrounds will become graveyards.

The problem of paying for pensions aside, how will we even begin to care for a growing number of elderly with fewer and fewer people in their 20s and 30s? Can you say euthanasia?

Who will run our factories and farms? Where will the police, doctors, nurses and emergency personnel come from? What about the soldiers to defend our frontiers and freedoms? How will our economies deal with an ever-decreasing supply of producers and innovators?

Over the past 200 years, the world's population grew from 980 million to 6.5 billion. That population explosion fueled every advance from the industrial revolution to the computer age. The same period witnessed a phenomenal growth in productivity, scientific advances, health and material well-being.

But what happens when populations begin to decline? We've built a civilization that depends on people – and lots of them. What happens when more and more becomes less and less?

Demographic Winter is the terminal stage in the suicide of the West –the culmination of a century of evil ideas and poisonous policies. Among them:

- Abortion – As I mentioned a moment ago, worldwide, we're killing 42 million people a year. It's as if an invading army killed every man woman and child in Italy – then repeated the process every year.
- Contraception – For the first time in history, just under half the world's population of childbearing age uses some form of birth control. Some of us remember when births weren't *controlled* and pregnancies weren't *planned*. With all of wailing about man-made Global Warming, carbon footprints and the ozone layer, wouldn't it be ironic if what did us in wasn't the SUV but the IUD?
- Delayed marriage. People are marrying later and later After 35, it becomes progressively harder for a woman to have children.
- The decline of marriage and the rise of cohabitation. Not surprisingly, in relationships without commitment, people have fewer children. By the way, the left's contribution to the coming population crisis is to push the one type of "marriage" (and I use the term advisedly) that can't conceivably produce children.
- But perhaps the most important factor is a culture (including Hollywood, the news media and academia) that tells people that children are a burden, rather than a joy; that pushes an ego-driven, live-for-the-moment ethic; a culture that tells us that contentment comes from careers, love, friendship, pets, possessions, travel, personal growth – anything and everything except family and children. It's a culture that can look at Sarah Palin and her beautiful family and ask why she had to have 5 children and why she didn't abort her child with Downs Syndrome?

Abortion and declining birth rates are different aspects of a culture of death.

What can we do about the crisis that's almost upon us? A good place to start is with the documentary, "Demographic Winter: the decline of the human family" – the first documentary about plummeting birth rates.

Speaking of falling birth rates, here's a depressing thought: Maybe it's God's way of telling us that – having abused the privilege – we don't deserve children. Deuteronomy 30:19: "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you. I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live."

Think about it. What could be more fair? You choose life, and you get life – including descendants. You choose death – in the form of population control, contraception, abortion, alternative lifestyles (so-called), secularism, environmentalism, consumerism and materialism – and you get death, including no descendants.

Here's a simple formula for understanding Demographic Winter: Those who have faith in the future have children. Those who don't, don't. Where does faith in the future come from? It comes from faith.

The pro-life position is based on the premise that each life, born and pre-born, is infinitely precious. How often have we heard the catch-phrase "the children are our future." To put it another way, without children, there is no future?

Once people truly understand this, perhaps they'll stop aborting their children. Perhaps they'll stop preventing conception. Perhaps they'll start having large families again. Perhaps they'll give children the love they need and deserve. If humanity is to have a future, this is where it starts.

See the Demographic Winter website at <http://www.demographicwinter.com/index.html>