



## Article

# Charging Complicity in Abuses, Ignoring Beneficial Engagement: How American Conservatives Secured the Blocking of U.S. Funds for the UNFPA by Misrepresenting the UN's Efforts to Reform China's One-Child Policy

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**Abstract:** We describe a key moment during the world's attempt to come to terms with enormously expanding populations. China was an extreme case, both in the magnitude of its population explosion and in its government's control of reproduction through the One-Child Policy (OCP). The U.S. had been a founder and the main financial supporter of The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Starting in 1998, UNFPA's program in China attempted to move the OCP away from two decades of coercive family planning and toward acceptance of the women's rights-centered global consensus that emerged from the 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development. In 2001, a conservative U.S. organization, the Population Research Institute, claimed to have gathered evidence of UNFPA's involvement in Chinese coercion. Although several investigations, including one sent by President George W. Bush himself, refuted this evidence, and UNFPA had used no U.S. funds in China, conservative political power was sufficient to cause President George W. Bush to eliminate all U.S. funding for UNFPA's activities everywhere in the world. Ironically, this period was exactly when the UNFPA project had shown that coercion was unnecessary. China eventually followed the UNFPA's lead, liberalizing and eventually ending the OCP.

**Keywords:** one-child policy; China; United Nations Population Fund; Steven W. Mosher; Population Research Institute; George W. Bush; Colin Powell; Demographic Dividend; human rights; abortion



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## 1. Introduction

China's population control policies drastically altered the lives of one-quarter of humanity. From the 1970s, China's leadership deemed population stabilization an essential step in improving the nation's living standards (Greenhalgh and Winckler 2005, p. 55).<sup>1</sup> The resultant policies entailed an extreme degree of government control of citizens' intimate lives. They changed the fundamental circumstances of life—and the fundamental historical trajectory of China. These policies subjected the Chinese people to draconian and abusive anti-natal coercions (Wang and Zhang 2019). They also freed people (and especially women (Banister 1987, p. 152)<sup>2</sup> from the age-old burdens of constant child-bearing and the interminable struggle to support their families, and they facilitated, along with market liberalization, the explosive growth of the Chinese economy (Xu et al. 2016, pp. 100–5).

In the United States, the Christian Right (CR) was energized through its attacks on China's One-Child Policy (OCP).<sup>3</sup> China's introduction of the OCP in 1980 closely followed the launching of the “pro-life” movement in the United States by the New Right and its

constituent evangelical Christian organizations in the late 1970s (Critchlow 1999, p. 108). The OCP became a mobilizing issue central to the CR's criticism of China and to its broader cultural campaigns, at home and abroad, against family planning, abortion rights, and the concept of "overpopulation".

Some CR groups argued that the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) was complicit in the OCP's abuses. This assessment was not surprising given the CR's underlying hostility to any effort to address overpopulation. CR groups often see international population policy as "a horror story of devastation and destruction visited upon women and the 'natural family'" (Buss and Herman 2003, p. 63). Meanwhile, they view the United Nations as "a big, corrupt institution strangled by its own bureaucracy" (Buss and Herman 2003, p. 66) and the leading edge of a movement toward world government, in which other nations could dictate to the United States (Buss and Herman 2003, p. 37).

This paper examines the intersections of American politics, China's One-Child Policy, and the UNFPA. After describing China's policy choices, and UNFPA's program in China designed to demonstrate that coercion was unnecessary for a successful family planning program, we focus on critical events during President George W. Bush's administration. Congress had voted overwhelmingly to fund UNFPA. But, in 2001, CR activist Steven Mosher and his Population Research Institute (PRI) claimed to have gathered evidence of severe coercion in one Chinese county. These questionable reports enabled G. W. Bush to totally eliminate U.S. funding for all UNFPA programs. We describe the weakness of PRI's purported evidence and how five on-site investigations contradicted it.

Coercive practices in the OCP were sometimes extreme, and the CR deserves credit as one of the strongest voices objecting to them. However, the CR ignored the fact that the UNFPA was working effectively to reduce coercion in the OCP. In addition, despite the domestic political success of attacks on the OCP, these attacks had little effect on the gradual reform of Chinese population policies.

Our paper bridges several literatures. Historians of American politics have briefly overviewed the defunding of UNFPA, but few have explored deeply how the CR achieved this victory, and they do not integrate political maneuvers in the U.S. with the evolution of policy implementation in China (Buss and Herman 2003; Martin 1999, pp. 66–80; Critchlow 1999; Goldberg 2009). On the other hand, the literature focused on the workings of the OCP in China barely considers U.S. foreign policy (e.g., Greenhalgh and Winckler 2005, p. 307). As we lack adequate exploration of the interaction of events in the U.S. and in China (see, for example, Bashford 2014), this article seeks to sew together these sundered histories.

## 2. The Emergence of the One-Child Policy

After World War Two, civil war, and the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949, China experienced one of the largest population increases in history (National Population and Family Planning Committee 2007). Infant mortality declined and China's total fertility rate (TFR) averaged around six children per woman (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017). At that rate, the number of children would nearly triple in each generation. The Great Leap Forward famine of 1959–1961 caused 20 to 40 million Chinese to starve to death (Peng 1987, p. 649; White 2000, p. 96). The population then rapidly recovered; by 1964, the population had gained back 38 million people (China Daily 2010; World Bank 2023a). Between the 1964 census (695 million) and the 1982 census (1008 million) (Scharping 2003, pp. 343–45), China's population increased by 313 million—an increment equal to almost 150% of the total U.S. population at the time (232 million in 1982).

By the late 1970s, after a generation under the new government, China's economic situation remained precarious. The nation's population had nearly doubled since the revolution to almost a billion people (National Bureau of Statistics of China 1999), but per capita income languished at about 50 U.S. cents a day (World Bank 2023b). According to a wide swath of Chinese and foreign observers, China's success in increasing production had been "eaten up" by population growth (Sun 1987, pp. 252–54; Scharping 2003, p. 33;

and Greenhalgh and Winckler 2005, pp. 100, 118). Per capita grain production in 1977 was stuck at the 1955 level (Scharping 2003, p. 35). Innumerable speeches and written pronouncements documented the fear of a new famine (Scharping 2003, p. 34).

The nation's leaders decided that it was necessary to control the rapid growth of China's population. A fertility decline in the better-educated strata had been under way well before the introduction of major government programs (Lavelly and Freedman 1990, p. 357); urban fertility had already dropped in the 1960s from a TFR of about 5.5 to about 3.5 (Tien et al. 1992, p. 11, Figure 4). In the 1970s, the government acted to accelerate this trend, introducing the successful nationwide "Wan, Xi, Shao" policy (later marriage, longer intervals between births, and fewer children altogether). Like many policies in China, Wan, Xi, Shao was never codified into law, and it was implemented variably in different locations. Nevertheless, from 1970 to 1980, China's TFR fell by 60%—from 5.8 children per woman to 2.3 (Sun 1987, p. 168; F. Cai 2010, p. 113; Cai 2013, p. 2).

It is hard to attribute the 1970s fertility drop to economic progress, as China remained disastrously poor throughout the decade. Two other factors drove the fertility decline. First, the government successfully urged women to marry after age 23 (Zhang and Gu 2007, p. 126). The percentage of newly married women over 23 nearly quadrupled from 1970 (13.8%) to 1979 (52.8%) (White 2006, p. 75, Table 5). Second, contraceptives became widely available in this period and were freely distributed (Scharping 2003, pp. 43–50; Greenhalgh and Winckler 2005, p. 85).<sup>4</sup>

Scholars dispute the degree of coercion in the Wan, Xi, Shao period. Greenhalgh (2008, p. 68) described the policy as "a moderate and flexible set of rules that was acceptable to the rural majority". Banister (1987, pp. 165–68) described moderate methods like "the PRC tried to popularize the two-child family with slogans" and "most cities strongly discouraged . . . more than two children", but also a "pervasive and insistent family planning program" incorporating a "strong element of compulsion." Even a single author can make opposing statements on the matter of coercion in the 1970s. Y. Cai (2010, p. 422) described the Wan, Xi, Shao as simply having "urged" couples to have fewer children. "Urged" is also the verb used for the 1970s by White (2006, p. 59) and by Zhang and Gu (2007, p. 126). However, 5 years later, Y. Cai and his co-authors (Whyte et al. 2015, p. 152) write that "there can be no doubt that coercive enforcement of state-mandated limits on births played the dominant role".

Even with the low fertility reached during Wan, Xi, Shao, the demographic situation was poised to get more extreme. Because of the high birthrate fostered by earlier, Marxist-inspired pronatalist policies, China in 1980 had almost three times as many young women (age 15–19) coming into reproductive age as women ending reproduction (age 45–49) (Spence 1999, p. 648; Peng 1991, p. 24). Accordingly, the government decided that an even more drastic policy was required, and it introduced the OCP in 1979–1980 (Peng 1996)<sup>5</sup>. The number of women in prime childbearing age (20–29) was increasing so rapidly (it doubled between 1970 and 1990 (Goodkind 2017, p. 1383)) that, even under the OCP, the number of births rose from 1980, reaching a peak in 1987 and not falling back to the 1980 level until 2000.<sup>6</sup> After the startling TFR drop of 3.5 children per woman in the 1970s under Wan, Xi, Shao, the fertility rate fell only a further 0.5 child in the following 35 years under the OCP (Y. Cai 2010, p. 423, Figure 2).

Overwhelming evidence makes clear that the OCP, especially in its earliest years, was often implemented using coercive and sometimes extreme methods (e.g., Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1995). Individuals with 'unauthorized' pregnancies or births could be subjected to a variety of sanctions including fines and other economic penalties, mandatory use of IUDs, forced abortion, and sterilization (e.g., Whyte et al. 2015, pp. 144–59). Regions were subjected to birth quotas, and, when these were exceeded, cadres could be reprimanded or penalized. To avoid these penalties, cadres sometimes resorted to violent means, and corruption could result in extortionate fines. Because of these human rights violations, the OCP justifiably faced severe criticism from many groups and individuals. However, in some hands, the criticism may have gone too far. One of the

most important scholars of China at the time, Edwin Winckler, decried such overblown criticism, noting that “some people talk as though China is like Sierra Leone, some kind of group of thugs, running around acting in some unprincipled way or beating up on people for no purpose” (U.S. Congress 2002b, pp. 9–12).

In response to widespread opposition in China, especially from the countryside, the OCP was not uniformly enforced and was relaxed almost from its inception. In 1980–1981, some provinces rushed to add an exception allowing two children in certain circumstances (Greenhalgh and Winckler 2005, p. 108). In 1984–1985, couples in rural areas whose first child was a girl were permitted to have a second child after an interval determined by local authorities (Yang 2009; Zhang 2017, p. 145; Zhang and Cao 2007, p. 19). Given that the preponderance of Chinese were rural, and that about half of births are female, almost half of the citizenry was allowed a second child. The OCP had morphed into a one-and-a-half-child policy. Through cycles of relaxation and stiffening, the TFR never dropped below 1.5 children per woman. During the OCP period (1980–2016), China’s population grew by 400 million (World Bank 2023a), more than the total U.S. population of 323 million in 2016. Today, the total population of China is still increasing. It currently stands at more than 1.4 billion.

### 3. The Ascendance of Steven Mosher and the PRI in the Reagan Years

Early in the 1980s, the American Right generally, and the Christian Right more specifically, had little to say about China’s One-Child Policy (e.g., Buckley 1983; Walker 1980).

The CR’s mid-decade emphasis and attacks on China’s OCP derive from reports by Steven Mosher in the early 1980s. As an anthropology graduate student at Stanford, Mosher lived in southern China for a year (1979–1980), doing fieldwork in a village. Mosher attended meetings during which, he claimed, officials forced pregnant women who already had two or more children to have abortions.<sup>7</sup> Mosher publicized this information in a May 1981 Taiwanese magazine article<sup>8</sup>, in an April 1982 piece entitled “Birth Control: A View from a Chinese Village,” (Westley 1982) and in a July 1983 *Wall Street Journal* article, “Why are baby girls being killed in China?” (Mosher 1983).

In 1983, Mosher was banned from China and expelled from Stanford.<sup>9</sup> He then published a full-length book, *Broken Earth: The Rural Chinese*, which describes a campaign in his commune in the spring of 1980 that resulted in “over 300 women agreeing to terminate their pregnancies” (Mosher 1983, p. 225). *Broken Earth* also describes interminable pressure brought to bear by local officials to convince another 300 more recalcitrant women to have abortions (Mosher 1983, chp. 9). Mosher quotes the commune cadre in charge saying, “None of you has any choice in this matter. The two of you who are eight or nine months pregnant will have a caesarean [and] the rest of you will have a shot which will cause you to abort” (Mosher 1983, p. 226).<sup>10</sup> Later, Mosher published *A Mother’s Ordeal: One Woman’s Fight against China’s One-child Policy* (Mosher 1993). His opinion pieces accusing the OCP of coerced abortion and additional human rights violations have appeared in numerous national publications across the political spectrum.<sup>11</sup> These publications and Mosher’s early congressional testimony<sup>12</sup> led many social conservatives and CR organizations in the U.S. to hail him as “a key China watcher” (Buss and Herman 2003) and an “internationally recognized authority on China and population issues”.<sup>13</sup> Mosher has used his repute in conservative circles as a China expert to attack China on a variety of non-OCP issues (Mosher 1998, pp. 50–53; Mosher 2002, 2017).

Mosher’s early anecdotal descriptions of family planning activities in his village are compellingly written and accepted by scholars as accurate.<sup>14</sup> However, his political biases were already painfully apparent in *Broken Earth* (Greenhalgh 1983). Thereafter, Mosher rapidly became an extreme voice in the CR’s opposition to the OCP. The Population Research Institute (PRI), the organization Mosher founded in the late 1980s, described his conversion: “Witnessing these traumatic abortions” led Mosher “to reconsider his convictions”; he turned from “a pro-choice atheist” into “a practicing, pro-life Roman Catholic” (Population Research Institute n.d.a). Mosher’s advocacy would play a key role in revers-



ing long-standing American population policies. In 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson had signed legislation proposed by Representative (and future president) George H. W. Bush (R-Tex.) that allowed federal funding of domestic family planning programs and clinics.<sup>15</sup> That same year, Congress specifically authorized and earmarked funds for international population assistance programs, urging the United States to channel family planning resources through the United Nations and other international organizations. The U.S. subsequently played a major role in the 1967 establishment of the UNFPA to provide aid to voluntary family planning services in low-income countries ([Congressional Research Service 2004](#), pp. 1–2). In 1968 and 1969, the U.S. government provided 80% of the funding to get the UNFPA off the ground. In the 1970s, it remained the largest contributor to the UNFPA, and it successfully required that other donor nations collectively matched the American payments ([Congressional Research Service 2004](#), p. 7). The American government's contributions rose almost every year until 1986 ([Congressional Research Service 2004](#), pp. 7–8, Table 3).

After the 1980 election of Reagan, opponents of abortion increasingly targeted international family planning assistance. Initial attacks during 1980 and 1981 made no mention of China and were unsuccessful ([Crane and Finkle 1989](#), p. 29). In Reagan's first term, Congress and the executive maintained funding for the UNFPA, with key support from Vice-President George H. W. Bush and U.S. Ambassador to the UN Jeane Kirkpatrick. In 1984, the U.S. joined in approving a new five-year plan for the UNFPA in China ([Crane and Finkle 1989](#), p. 31).

By this time, however, news about China's new OCP had begun to circulate ([Aird 1982](#); [Crane and Finkle 1989](#), note 44). The Right was especially energized by Mosher's early reports of China's coercive practices. In May 1984, Representative Christopher Smith (R-N.J.) "offered the first amendment ever to a foreign aid bill to deny funding to any organization, including the U.N. Population Fund that is complicit with China's forced abortion policy or its involuntary sterilization policy" ([U.S. House 2012](#), p. 5). Responding to newly mobilized opposition to abortion and to China's OCP, the Reagan administration announced the so-called Mexico City Policy at the UN's International Conference on Population in August 1984 ([White House Office of Policy Development 1984](#)). This policy, which came to be known as the "Global Gag Rule", denied U.S. funding for foreign NGOs that "actively promote abortion as a method of family planning" ([White House Office of Policy Development 1984](#), p. 578). USAID issued rules specifying that "actively promote" included providing advice, counseling, or information regarding abortion ([Finkle and Crane 1985](#)).

The 1984 Mexico City policy followed the opinion of mainstream economists of the time, who had turned away from the consensus that population growth stunted per capita economic growth (for a leading statement, see [Coale and Hoover 1958](#)). By the 1980s, many economists had gradually come to believe that population growth is only marginally related to economic growth ([Hoff 2012](#), pp. 206–10). The National Research Council summarized the new consensus this way: "There is no statistical association between national rates of population growth and growth rates of income per capita" ([National Research Council 1986](#); [World Bank 1984](#); [Kelley 2001](#); [Hoff 2012](#), pp. 216–18). For more extensive histories of U.S. population policy and thought, see [Critchlow \(1999\)](#); [Connelly \(2008\)](#), [Hoff \(2012\)](#); and [Robertson \(2012\)](#).

This consensus was explicitly included in the Reagan administration's Mexico City statement, which read: "First and most important, population growth is, of itself, a neutral phenomenon. It is not necessarily good or ill" ([White House Office of Policy Development 1984](#), p. 576). To many conservatives, the concomitant policy logic was that, if population growth was a "neutral phenomenon" for economic growth as opposed to a fundamental roadblock, then population programs had no place in U.S. foreign aid. In addition, the statement flipped the traditional causal direction between population and the economy, concluding, "Historically, as . . . the standard of living rise[s], the birthrate falls" ([White House Office of Policy Development 1984](#), p. 577). This line echoed Karan Singh, head

of the Indian Delegation at the UN's 1974 World Conference on Population in Bucharest, who quipped that "development is the best contraceptive" ([Visaria and Chari 1998](#), p. 69).

As the Reagan administration started to implement the Mexico City Policy, Congress gave the president unilateral authority to ignore congressional funding mandates. Representative Smith's proposed amendment from May 1984 was incorporated into the 1985 Kemp-Kasten Amendment to the Foreign Operations spending bill. The amendment prohibited U.S. funds for "any organization or program which, as determined by the President of the United States, supports or participates in the management of a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization" ([U.S. Senate 1985](#)). From then to the present, this amendment, without substantial change, has been added to the annual foreign appropriations bill.<sup>16</sup> The target was clear; the only organization ever denied funding through this amendment has been the UNFPA ([PAI 2017](#); [Kaiser Family Foundation 2019](#)). The House Appropriations Committee did not provide details on what was meant by the phrase "support or participate in the management" of a program ([Congressional Research Service 2004](#)). This ambiguity, plus the sole power of the president to make the determination, has been critical in allowing each subsequent president to make his own decision. For the remainder of the Reagan administration and throughout George H. W. Bush's administration (1989–1993), the U.S. government allocated no funds to the UNFPA ([Crane and Finkle 1989](#); [Buss and Herman 2003](#); [Goldberg 2009](#), chp. 6).

The Christian Right was thus already winning family planning funding battles before the Population Research Institute (PRI) was born. PRI was established in 1989, with Steven Mosher as its president ([Population Research Institute n.d.a](#)), as a branch of Human Life International (HLI). HLI is an extreme anti-abortion organization founded in 1981 by Paul Marx, a Catholic priest whom PRI describes as "a pioneer in the worldwide pro-life movement" ([Population Research Institute 2002](#)). PRI became an independent organization in 1996, with Mosher continuing as its president, but it still received the majority of its funding from its parent organization. By the year 2000, HLI had invested well over USD 1,000,000 in PRI ([Human Life International 2000](#)).

PRI buttressed its anti-family planning position with an unabashed celebration of population growth everywhere. PRI's website states that it is a "non-profit research organization whose core values hold that people are the world's greatest resource. PRI's goals are to educate on this premise, to expose the myth of overpopulation, and to expose human rights abuses committed in population control programs. Our growing, global network of pro-life groups spans over 30 countries" ([Population Research Institute n.d.b](#)).

At PRI, Mosher and colleagues intensified his early-career critiques of the OCP. Searching *PRI Review's* webpage with the keywords "China One Child Policy" yielded more than three hundred items, all of which, without exception, accused the OCP of forced abortions or sterilizations and other violations of women's rights. Tapping into a long-standing strategy of right-wing organizations not otherwise especially interested in racial equity, PRI summoned the ghost of eugenics to try and taint liberal support for population aid. Mosher contended that many groups in the West supported the OCP due to "another, darker Western perception of China's population" that sees Chinese as a "yellow peril", an "overwhelming mass" ... thought to be feverishly multiplying" and "irresistible once loosed" ([Mosher 2006](#), p. 82). As Mosher saw it, proponents of smaller populations view China as "a boiling pressure cooker of people, who at any time could explode beyond her borders in a human flood of illegal immigration—or \*conquest" ([Mosher 2006](#), p. 82). At the same time, Mosher and his colleagues described the UNFPA as "the chief international cheerleader for China's one-child policy" ([Population Research Institute 2004](#)). They believed that the UNFPA supported and participated in the management of a program of coercive abortion and involuntary sterilization in China. Mosher further argued that UNFPA is part of a "New World Order conspiracy" ([Mosher 2000](#)).

Although PRI and the CR had no chance of directly influencing or halting the OCP, they could attempt to block U.S. funding of the UNFPA. Indeed, even though UNFPA's China program is a very small part of its total activities, and a miniscule fraction of China's

total population activities, the PRI and other CR organizations used the OCP as a wedge in their lobbying to block government funding of any UNFPA activity. This anti-UN stance resonated with right-wing Republicans who fear any kind of “world government” control over the U.S. and therefore abhor the United Nations. This constituency also tends to hold deeply conservative attitudes toward sex and reproduction. This coincidence of interests led to a strong alliance between the PRI and the Republican Party.

#### 4. The UNFPA Engages China’s OCP

What was the UNFPA doing that drew such extreme ire? The UNFPA, supported entirely by voluntary contributions, primarily from governments and some foundations, provides services to countries that request its assistance (Cohen 1999). When defunded by the Bush administration in 2002 (see below), the UNFPA was active in 142 countries (UNFPA 2002a). It operates under strong international control, reporting to an Executive Board of 36 UN member states distributed across the various world regions, and it has enjoyed strong international financial support, e.g., from 180 countries in 2006 (Congressional Research Service 2004, p. 4 and Tables 1 and 2).

In China, the UNFPA initially focused on building the demographic expertise necessary to conduct a modern census (Greenhalgh 1990). In 1979, the UNFPA initiated a USD 50 million, three-year program, focusing first on providing Chinese demographers with the necessary training and equipment with which to conduct a census (Sun 1987, pp. 252, 254; Kaufman 2011, p. 19).<sup>17</sup> To jumpstart a new generation of demographers, the UNFPA also provided foreign journals and texts and sent China’s pioneering scholars to graduate programs across the globe. By 1982, China was able to carry out its most careful census ever, recording a population over 1 billion people (Spence 1999, p. 647).

The UNFPA next worked to improve Chinese contraceptives. In the 1980s and early 1990s, an estimated 70% of abortions were necessitated by contraceptive failure (Tien et al. 1992, p. 13). In a major achievement of 1991–1993, the UNFPA, in collaboration with the World Health Organization, showed that the steel-ring IUD, the only IUD available in China at the time, was unsafe and ineffective and that the Copper-T, then in use in the West, was far superior (Kaufman 1993, p. 195). The UNFPA financed the establishment of four plants to manufacture Copper-Ts (UNDP/UNFPA/WHO/World Bank Special Programme of Research 2008, p. 8). Subsequently, the Chinese government quickly banned production of the steel rings and changed to copper-Ts. This single modernization avoided an estimated 4 to 8 million abortions over the first 10 years, with the effect increasing annually as the copper-T came into widespread use (e.g., 1.4 million abortions averted in 2007) (UNDP/UNFPA/WHO/World Bank Special Programme of Research 2008, pp. 2, 8–10, esp. Table 3).

When China started implementing the OCP in the early 1980s, the UNFPA was initially laudatory (Greenhalgh and Winckler 2005, pp. 105–12). The 1983 UN Population Award was awarded to Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, and Qian Xinzong, Minister-In-Charge of the State Family Planning Commission of China; both headed programs that many observers considered coercive (Gandhi and Qian 1983; Nossiter 1983). The UN Population Award is conferred by vote of the UN General Assembly, so these choices reflected the widespread view that the global population explosion was sufficiently critical to condone some degree of governmental coercion.

In the 1990s, the UNFPA changed its stance. Under its Pakistani Director, Ms. Nafis Sadik, UNFPA organized the 1994 Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, which saw participation from 179 governments and numerous NGOs (UNFPA 1994). Prodded especially by feminists, the conference reoriented the focus of the global family planning movement away from reducing population growth as a mechanism to alleviate poverty and toward reproductive rights and the empowerment of women (Hoff 2012, p. 189).

With its new human rights mandate, in 1994 UNFPA suspended its previous China activities and negotiated a new agreement with China that aimed to reduce coercion (UNFPA

1998)<sup>18</sup>. In 1998, the agreement was signed. The UNFPA noted that it was “working with the Chinese Government in 32 counties (with a total population of 17.3 million ([University of Southampton 2004](#), p. 63)) to move their policies and practices away from coercion toward a voluntary approach that respects human rights and human dignity . . . The programme adheres strictly to the voluntary, human rights-based approach to reproductive health and family planning stipulated by the 1994 Cairo Conference . . . [and the] abolition of birth quotas and family planning acceptor targets in the 32 counties was a condition of UNFPA assistance” ([UNFPA 2002a](#)). One observer noted that the UNFPA was “the only group able to work inside China to try to push the Chinese away from the compulsions of the one-child policy” ([Goldberg 2009](#), pp. 158–59). The *British Medical Journal* hailed the agreement as “the first major break [to reduce coercion] in 20 years” of the OCP ([Payne 1998](#), p. 959). The UNFPA made significant progress in China despite several constraints. The UN has no power over member countries, and it works in any host country at the total discretion of that country. Officially, China had prohibited coercion in its family planning program since shortly after the UNFPA’s Cairo Conference ([Greenhalgh and Winckler 2005](#), pp. 140, 191).<sup>19</sup> However, in Chinese official usage, the term coercion includes only physical coercion. The prohibition was not well enforced; cadres (low-level officials) required to meet high contraceptive-acceptance quotas and low-birth quotas, often resorted to coercion ([U.S. Department of State 2004](#), p. 16). The significance of the UNFPA’s demand to abolish birth quotas and acceptor target (quota) numbers was to eliminate these underlying incentives for the cadres to coerce. The Chinese government, probably eager to see if it were possible to eliminate such coercions and incentives without causing an increase in births, agreed to eliminate both in the 32 counties ([UNFPA 1998](#)). An internationally supervised evaluation of the 1998–2002 program confirmed that both had indeed been eliminated ([University of Southampton 2004](#), p. 36).

The UNFPA had less success in convincing China to stop using economic penalties to ensure compliance with the OCP. The UNFPA wrote in 2002 that it “continues to press China to make progress by removing economic incentives and disincentives [fines and job losses] used to encourage small or discourage large family size ([UNFPA 2002a](#))”, but no agreement emerged. According to the report of an interfaith delegation to China, the Chinese considered these fines as “social compensation fees” for the public services (education, health, etc.) provided to the “extra” child. The report noted, “Officials describe [these economic measures] as an incentive to use contraceptives and as a fair reimbursement to society for the costs of an additional birth, such as state-provided perinatal services and primary education” ([Catholics for a Free Choice 2003](#), p. 6). However, the fines also introduced the opportunity for low-level corruption in the villages, leading officials sometimes to demand ruinous payments ([Luedi 2015](#)).

UNFPA’s total annual spending in China in its fourth program (1998–2002) was USD 3.2 million, less than 0.1% of the USD 3.6 billion annual cost of China’s national family planning program ([U.S. Senate 2002](#), p. 25). Despite this very small size, UNFPA achieved some of its ambitious goals ([University of Southampton 2004](#)). The 2001 U.S. *Human Rights Report* for China noted major progress in reducing coercion ([U.S. Department of State 2002a](#)). Most revealingly, the number of abortions in China dropped by more than half from 1991 to 2001 ([Greenhalgh and Winckler 2005](#), p. 260, Table 5).

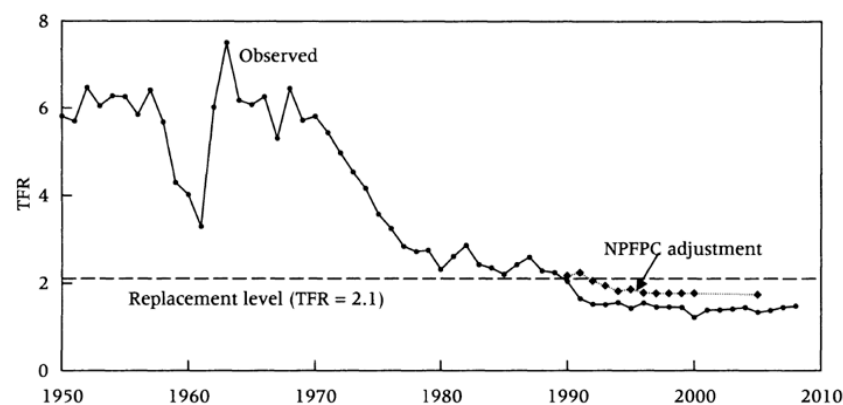
Amid the UNFPA project, China adopted new reproductive policies for the coming decade. Through a 2000 party decision and a 2001 national law, China instructed the birth control program to maintain low fertility while delivering better services ([Winckler 2005](#), p. 207; [Li and Li 2011](#), p. 198). By this time, PRC leaders had become convinced that China had largely achieved the low fertility they desired ([Winckler 2005](#), p. 207). The OCP could now be further relaxed, slowly, to conform more to international standards as established by the UNFPA, as well as by other international actors ([UNFPA 1994](#)).



## 5. New Economic Thinking on Population and Development

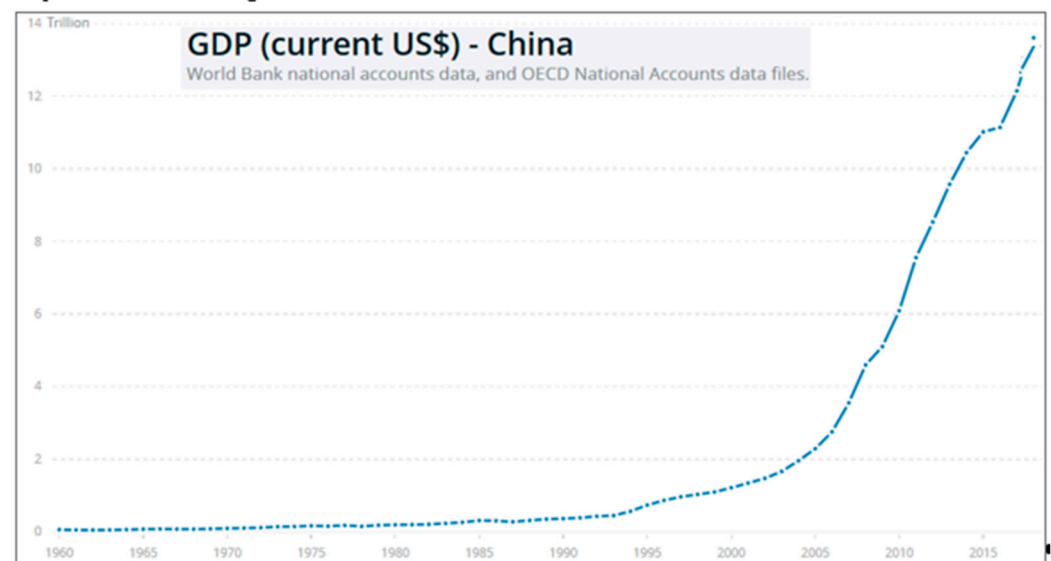
In the late 1990s, expert economic–demographic thinking would undergo a major change once more. Rapid drops in the birthrates of the Asian Tiger nations had occurred before their major economic booms, not after (Bloom and Williamson 1998; Bloom 2011; Lee and Mason 2006). Accordingly, many economists reversed course, now emphasizing that fertility drops spurred development by the following mechanism (termed the “Demographic Dividend”): when societies have many children, the dependency ratio (the number of dependents to the number of workers) is high. Most income is devoted to supporting children, and insufficient saving is available for the investment necessary for development. Immediately after a fertility drop, recently born children must still be supported for 15–20 years until they enter the workforce; however, when this cohort enters the workforce, the dependency ratio becomes low, and an economic take-off ensues. Evidence from the countries that had progressed from economic stagnation to rapid economic growth indicates that a fertility drop is often a prerequisite to economic development. Karan Singh himself reversed his position in 1987, proposing the new slogan “Contraception is the best development” (Visaria and Chari 1998).

China epitomized the Demographic Dividend sequence (Li and Zhang 2007): its precipitous fertility drop happened in the 1970s (Figure 1), and its economic takeoff began in the 1990s (Figure 2).



**Figure 1.** China: Total Fertility Rate (Y. Cai 2010, p. 423, Figure 2). Also see World Bank (2023c).

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=CN>:



**Figure 2.** China's Gross Domestic Product.

## 6. The Early Bush Years: Contested Support for the UNFPA

At just this juncture, when the UNFPA and China were improving the human rights aspects of the OCP, the U.S. electorate returned a Republican to the White House. On 22 January 2001, his third day in office, President George W. Bush issued a memorandum directing the USAID to “reinstate in full all of the requirements of the Mexico City Policy in effect on 19 January 1993” (Bush 2001a). Neither Bush’s initial 22 January memo nor his more detailed statement, issued 28 March, mentioned the UNFPA specifically (Bush 2001b). Reinstating the Mexico City policy would have no import for the UNFPA unless the president made the additional determination that the agency violated the Kemp-Kasten amendment. Presidents Reagan and George H. W. Bush had claimed that the UNFPA violated Kemp-Kasten; President Clinton had asserted that it did not. The future of UNFPA funding thus depended solely on President Bush.

Initially, Bush supported the status quo. The State Department’s FY 2001 Budget Justification had explicitly stated that “UNFPA does not fund abortions nor does it advocate abortion as a means of family planning” (U.S. Department of State 2000a). The FY 2001 budget, set by the previous Congress, appropriated “not more than \$25 million” for UNFPA and Bush released USD 21.5 million (Congressional Research Service 2004, Appendix A, p. 30). Furthermore, in October 2001, Bush announced an extra USD 600,000 for UNFPA to provide services in the Afghan refugee crisis (USAID Central Asia Region 2001, p. 4). Secretary of State Colin Powell was a key supporter of the UNFPA, asserting that it “provides critical population assistance to developing countries” (Powell 2001, p. 61). Powell also found the UNFPA in compliance with U.S. laws against funding coercive abortion (Cusey 2002). The Foreign Assistance Budget for FY 2002, which Powell presented to Congress, included USD 25 million for UNFPA, the same amount as in the last Clinton budget. Congress, in fact, then increased that figure, providing “not more than” USD 34 million for UNFPA in its FY2002 appropriation for foreign operations. (U.S. Congress 2002a, Sec.576). This measure passed with overwhelmingly bipartisan votes of 381–46 in the House and 96–2 in the Senate (U.S. Congress 2001).

## 7. PRI’s Investigation in China

Facing the possibility that a Republican administration would continue to fund UNFPA, the PRI sprang into action. In its global war against UNFPA, PRI had previously conducted a hasty investigation that attacked UNFPA’s emergency relief during the Kosovo war (Population Research Institute 1999). Now, PRI sent an “undercover fact-finding team” to investigate the UNFPA’s role in China’s family planning activity (Cusey 2002). Mosher chose Josephine Guy, a paralegal with no reported expertise on China, to head a group of several unnamed assistants. They selected southwestern China’s Sihui County, one of the 32 counties in which UNFPA programs operated. The team finished its investigation in four days in late September 2001 and returned with photos, audiotapes, and videotapes. These were shown at House and Senate hearings but were not otherwise available for public examination to check, for instance, whether the translations provided by PRI were accurate (U.S. House 2001; U.S. Senate 2002).

The only publicly available documentation of the trip is two short (under 1000-word) anecdotal reports that Guy wrote for PRI’s in-house organ, *PRI Review*.<sup>20</sup> Guy read them at both House and Senate hearings, and the PRI reprinted them repeatedly in a number of different publications and webpages (Guy 2001a, 2001b). In “Story of a Beautiful Baby Boy”, a woman tells Guy about another woman in a nearby village who was pregnant with her second child before the required four-year interval. Fearing that she might be required to abort the pregnancy, she hid in another county. Officials imprisoned family members and severely damaged their homes. “Women and Child Abuse in China” describes a non-voluntary abortion of a pregnant 19-year-old, the forcible sterilization of another woman, women hiding themselves and/or their children from the authorities, mandatory IUD insertion, and arrests and fines for out-of-plan children. Importantly, Guy charged that the UNFPA was complicit in these abuses. She concluded in the *PRI Review* that “in this county

[Sihui] where UNFPA operates—where UNFPA insists that only voluntarism exists—we were told by victims of coercion themselves that there is, in fact, no trace of voluntarism. There is only coercion, in abundant supply, in this county where UNFPA operates—from within the Office of Family Planning” (Guy 2001b).

The veracity of Guy’s accounts is difficult to evaluate. In “Story of a Beautiful Baby Boy”, for instance, we hear a woman’s story as told by others. It is only in the last three sentences that the woman herself appears; Guy writes only that “she told us the same story” (Guy 2001a). We do not hear what the woman herself said. In the same story, Guy encounters villagers whom, she had thought, would be “bothered by the subject matter” (Guy 2001a). Instead, “everyone was in a holiday mood”, “everyone was very eager to speak to us”, and even “when we began to ask pointed questions about family planning policies . . . they continued with the same enthusiasm” (Guy 2001a). The mood described does not correspond with the horrendous events supposedly taking place. Guy’s expectations may have colored her perceptions; she observes a woman “laughing and covering her face with her hands” and interprets it as an effort “to hide her tears” (Guy 2001a).

The forms of coercion described by Guy undoubtedly occurred in some places and times, but Guy’s account of what was happening in Sihui County in 2001 remains highly questionable. It may have been difficult for translators to distinguish recent events from the recall of older events. Neither Guy’s report, nor the other reports discussed below, pay attention to the difficulties of translation. Chinese villagers speak a large variety of mutually unintelligible dialects, and so using a non-local translator in a small village may have led to serious misunderstandings. In fact, in a later UNFPA inquiry (see below), the mayor of Sihui described an incident that took place in Sihui County in 1996 that bore some resemblance to the incident described by PRI. The mayor explained that this is the only incident of this kind known to him (UNFPA 2001, p. 8). Guy’s readers are left uncertain whether her report is a retelling and re-dating of the kind of coercions that previously occurred.

The only evidence that Guy presented regarding UNFPA involvement in the purported coercion was an unoccupied desk in the Sihui Office of Family Planning. “Through local officials”, Guy wrote, “we learned the UNFPA works in and through this Office . . . We photographed the UNFPA office desk, which faces—in fact touches—a desk of the Chinese Office of Family Planning” (Guy 2001b). This unoccupied desk—with no nameplate, label, or identifying contents—is the sum total of Guy’s evidence for UNFPA involvement. UN officials stated that every member of the UNFPA’s small staff was based in Beijing and that none had a desk in the county offices (U.S. Senate 2002, pp. 25, 61). For Guy and Mosher, however, this desk held pivotal importance. PRI’s “Full Report” devotes a whole section with the boldface heading “The UNFPA Office Desk”, and it mentions the desk nine more times in the report (Population Research Institute 2001). Mosher referred many times to the sharing of office space by the UNFPA and Chinese officials. For example, he testified to the House that “their desks touch. These [Chinese] officials authorize and participate in jack hammer campaigns, forced abortions, and forced sterilizations. How likely is it that UNFPA does not know about these abuses?” (U.S. House 2001, p. 41; also see U.S. Senate 2002, pp. 26–29).

In its many retellings, Guy’s story about the desk mutated. In her early report, the desk is unoccupied: Guy never mentions seeing any UNFPA representative (U.S. House 2001, p. 41; also see U.S. Senate 2002, pp. 26–29; Guy 2001b). At a 2002 Senate hearing, Guy provided an explanation: the UN worker “was unwell, she was in the hospital” (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 37). Only in a later retelling by Mosher does an occupant dramatically appear: “On her last day in Sihui, Ms. Guy and her team set out to locate the office from which the UNFPA directs its ‘model family planning program’. To her surprise, she was directed to the Sihui County family planning office, where she found the single UNFPA representative sitting in the midst of government family planners. The significance of this arrangement was immediately apparent: The Chinese government and the UNFPA were working hand-in-glove to enforce the one-child policy” (Mosher 2006, p. 30; repeated in

Mosher 2008, p. 91). Such discrepancies give one pause in trying to determine how much artistic license has been taken in the PRI anecdotes. The logic of seeing a desk and instantly concluding hand-in-glove enforcement is also breathtaking.

Guy did not consider it necessary to claim any abusive action by the UNFPA itself. No one in Guy's stories ever described seeing a UNFPA staff member. At the February 2002 Senate hearing, Guy testified, "None of the women, when I asked them about the UNFPA, even knew what UNFPA was . . . they had absolutely no knowledge about anything that UNFPA may or may not have been doing in their villages" (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 37).

For PRI, the essential charge was not that the UNFPA committed or condoned abuses, but simply whether any abuses occurred, and whether the UNFPA knew about them. Mosher and Guy emphasized the UNFPA's supposed desk because they could not find any other link to UNFPA to support their accusations—any contact was sufficient to condemn. Mosher's conclusion in the earlier House hearing (U.S. House 2001, p. 41) was mimicked by Guy, who stated, "I find that highly unlikely, that these things could be going on and UNFPA would not know about it" (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 37). To PRI, the UNFPA's continued engagement, while knowing of abuses, was sufficient proof of complicity and guilt; the fact that the UNFPA was attempting (and succeeding) to move China away from exactly these coercive and abusive practices was simply irrelevant.

## 8. PRI's Charges Evoke House and Senate Hearings

Leading Republican lawmakers rushed to provide a platform for airing PRI's charges. On 17 October 2001, just days after Josephine Guy returned from her China investigation, two long-standing anti-abortion Republican congressmen, Henry Hyde of Illinois and Christopher Smith of New Jersey, invited her to present at a hearing of the House International Relations Committee (U.S. House 2001, pp. 7, 9). This hearing was one in a long series. Smith recalled in 2012: "Over the years, I have chaired 37 congressional hearings focused in whole or in part on China's one-child policy" (U.S. House 2012, p. 4). The main issue at the 2001 hearing was whether the UNFPA was complicit in the coercive aspects of China's OCP. Representative Hyde said, "Some of us were skeptical about whether UNFPA was really the right organization to ensure against coercion in China. UNFPA officials had consistently defended the Chinese family planning program against accusations of forced abortion and forced sterilization, even long after other observers had concluded that these abuses did occur" (U.S. House 2001, p. 6).

Even by 2001, Hyde and Smith were two of the longest serving and most committed anti-abortion members of Congress. Hyde is better known as the author of the "Hyde Amendment", which, routinely attached to annual appropriations bills since 1976, bars the use of Department of Health and Human Services funds (primarily Medicaid) to pay for an abortion unless the pregnancy arises from incest or rape, or if the abortion is required to save the life of the mother (Congressional Research Service 2020). As a dedicated Catholic and prior executive director of the New Jersey Right to Life Committee, Smith has spared no efforts in the domestic anti-abortion campaign; throughout the years, he has authored numerous bills that would severely restrict, if not totally ban, abortion.

One commentator characterized Smith as "easily PRI's closest ally in Congress . . . [who has] made sure that the organization had a voice in government debates" (Goldberg 2009, p. 158). Smith often provided high praise for Mosher at congressional hearings (U.S. House 2001, p. 7). Smith's attitude toward the UNFPA may be characterized by the following statement at his committee's 1998 hearings: "UNFPA's renewed arrangement with the PRC population control bureaucrats puts them in partnerships with thugs, criminals, and women-abusers" (U.S. House 1998, p. 9). Smith was referring to the 1998 agreement intended to align the UNFPA's work in China with the Human Rights consensus established at Cairo by eliminating birth permits and quotas (UNFPA 1998). Later, the U.S. Department of State's 2003 *Human Rights Report* for China reported that birth permits and quotas had, indeed, been eliminated (U.S. Department of State 2004).



Josephine Guy was the “lead witness” at the October 2001 hearing. Representative Smith introduced her as “the Director of Government Affairs for America 21” (U.S. House 2001, p. 63). (We can find no information about this organization or even verify that it ever existed.) Neither Smith, Mosher, nor Guy herself mentioned that it was Mosher and the PRI who had sent Guy to China. The transcript reads as if Mosher’s and Guy’s information were completely independent. Guy’s three pages of testimony repeated, almost word for word, her *PRI Review* story “Woman and Child Abuse in China” (U.S. House 2001, pp. 27–30). Appended were 3 min, 45 s of video recorded statements by three women. The first, who already had three children, explicitly stated, “[The officials] don’t need to use force. They simply require you to go”. [She had her tubes tied] (U.S. House 2001, p. 34). The second interviewee, apparently the same woman featured in “A Beautiful Baby Boy”, was pregnant with her second child. She went into hiding in a nearby village (U.S. House 2001, pp. 29, 32). (This was in fact a frequently used strategy in China to avoid the penalties for having a second child) (Pomfret 2000). The authorities could not find her and then damaged the houses of a number of her relatives. Guy testified that this woman “heroically escaped forced abortion by hiding in a nearby village” (U.S. House 2001, p. 29). The third woman was a 19-year-old “receiving a non-voluntary abortion” (U.S. House 2001, p. 28). Teenagers were then below the legal age limit for both marriage and childbearing. Five of the seven abortions described by Guy involved unmarried women and/or teenagers. It is worth noting that the parents of unwed girls in China frequently demand abortions to avoid shame on the family; 89% of unmarried pregnant women have abortions (Xu et al. 2004, p. 3).

Steven Mosher then testified (U.S. House 2001, pp. 38–46). Like Guy, Mosher did not provide any evidence of how UNFPA was involved in coercive activities. Instead, they referred twelve times to the UNFPA’s supposedly false claim that the 32 counties were coercion-free. In no case did either specify where or when UNFPA made such claims. Nevertheless, Mosher concluded that UNFPA’s “claims are completely false” (U.S. House 2001, pp. 41, 45).

The UNFPA immediately and categorically denied Mosher and Guy’s charges. Its letter to the House read: “UNFPA has not, does not, and will not ever condone coercive activities in China or anywhere else . . . UNFPA does not support China’s one-child policy, and is unequivocally opposed to targets and quotas”.<sup>21</sup> With respect to the specific PRI assertions about the UNFPA agent and desk, UNFPA Executive Director Thoraya Obaid explained to the Senate that the UNFPA had, in China, only “four international professional staff and nine local recruits primarily for administrative functions”. Contrary to the PRI’s assertions, “all [UNFPA] staff are based in Beijing, and none of them has a desk in Sihui or any other county”. Obaid continued, “Finally, the central assertion of PRI is that UNFPA has certified or claimed that these counties are coercion free. In fact, UNFPA is not capable of making any such assertion” (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 61).

Mindful that Kemp-Kasten prohibited participating “in the management” of a coercive program (U.S. Senate 1985), Nicolaas Biegan, who headed the UNFPA’s own investigation in China (see below), added that, given its tiny size and the absence of staff at the local implementation locations, the UNFPA cannot claim to manage any program. Instead, the UNFPA’s China Program was a demonstration project to show “the efficacy of . . . voluntary family planning” (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 25).

Representative Hyde’s staff refused to cooperate in any checking of Guy’s claims (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 61). Neither Guy nor PRI would even name the alleged UN representative in Sihui, nor the location of the alleged UNFPA desk (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 61).

In refuting PRI’s charges, UNFPA reminded the committee that Congress itself had already investigated its activities in China. “As a member of the UNFPA Executive Board”, it noted, the U.S. “has the right to monitor and visit the UNFPA program in China. It regularly does through its Embassy in Beijing. A U.S. congressional staff delegation [12 staff accompanied by a State Department official] visited the UNFPA China program in August, 1999” (U.S. House 2001, p. 85). Assistant Secretary of State Arthur Dewey confirmed that

“the U.S. has worked closely with the Fund [UNFPA] on its China program” (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 65). In addition, UNFPA Executive Director Obaid cited the five international teams that had reviewed the program under UNFPA auspices since 1997, as well as the 60 independent reviews (not under UNFPA’s auspices) of UNFPA’s China program undertaken since 1999. Two teams inspected the program in May and June 2001, just prior to Guy’s September 2001 trip (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 61).

### 9. UNFPA Conducts Its Own Investigation

Immediately after Guy’s report was publicized at the 2001 House hearing, the UNFPA asked several members of its executive board to form an “international review team to investigate [PRI’s] allegations” (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 24). As mentioned, Nicolaas Biegman, formerly the Dutch ambassador to Egypt, the UN, and NATO, led the group; the other members were female diplomats from the UN missions of Honduras, the Czech Republic, and Botswana. The review team was aware of “the extensive array of human rights abuses” in China, which it called “horrendous” (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 25). However, its “single goal [was] to see if we could uncover any credible evidence that the UN Population Fund violated the human rights of Chinese citizens or was complicit in any way in helping the Chinese Government violate the human rights of its citizens” (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 22).

From 22 to 27 October 2001, the Biegman team met with Chinese, U.S., and UN officials and visited seven family planning clinics, service centers, and hospitals in Sihui and another county where the UNFPA was active. According to the group’s subsequent report, “members of the team took every opportunity to talk to people—on the street, in family planning and mother and child health clinics (MCH), in villages” (UNFPA 2001, p. 8). This happened, Biegman testified, “using two independent interpreters and without any Chinese government officials present” (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 25). Local residents said that “abuses had occurred in the past . . . but not in the present” (UNFPA 2001, p. 8). Biegman’s testimony to the Senate concluded, “Our investigation found absolutely no evidence that the UN Population Fund supports coercive family planning practices in China or violates the human rights of Chinese people in any way . . . We did find that the UNFPA is a positive force for change in China away from . . . abuses . . . and toward a client-based voluntary approach” (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 25).

Biegman’s Senate testimony then took more direct aim at the UNFPA’s critics. PRI and Guy would not provide information that would allow their specific allegations to be checked, “But in some cases it became quickly apparent that the allegations were simply wrong. For example, the desk that supposedly comprised the UNFPA office in Sihui County that was constantly referred to in the testimony before the House Committee simply does not exist. That purported UNFPA office, which formed a central part of the testimony of the Population Research Institute, is a complete and utter fabrication” (U.S. Senate 2002, p. 25). In conclusion, the Biegman team’s written report cited PRI for “its false and baseless allegations, its distortions and fabrications, and its disinformation campaign” (UNFPA 2001, p. 10).

Other government officials and scholars supported the UN’s position. At a 2002 meeting of the Congressional–Executive Commission on China, Bonnie Glick, a member of the State Department’s delegation, was asked at a congressional roundtable whether the UNFPA has directly funded a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization. She said firmly, “In those five counties, I saw no evidence that UNFPA directly funds a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization” (U.S. Congress 2002b, p. 23). Susan Greenhalgh, the foremost academic U.S. expert on China’s population activities, said at this congressional roundtable, “I certainly have no evidence that UNFPA directly supports such practices. But I do have evidence based on 20 years of going back and forth to China and working mostly in the scholarly domain, and observing what UNFPA does from the outside, of UNFPA’s working to support the reformers within China. Obviously, UNFPA cannot control everything that goes on within its bailiwick, but my impression is that their work overall has been moving things in the right direction” (U.S. Congress 2002b, p. 24).

## 10. PRI'S Claims Produce a Hold on UNFPA Funding, as Bush Team Investigates

The Guy/PRI report, and the October 2001 Hyde/Smith congressional hearing that publicized it, were unsuccessful in blocking congressional support for UNFPA funding. Recall that, earlier in 2001, on 24 July, the House had approved the administration's full funding proposal of USD 425 million for population aid plus USD 25 million for UNFPA. On 24 October, one week after the Hyde/Smith hearing, the Senate approved even more funding: USD 450 million in family planning aid, plus USD 40 million for UNFPA. In December, the House and Senate agreed to a conference report with final funding only slightly less than the Senate version: USD 446.5 million for bilateral family planning/reproductive health programs. Conferees even dropped the House restriction that would have reduced the contribution by whatever UNFPA spent in China. The final bill authorized a contribution to the UNFPA of "up to" USD 34 million ([Congressional Research Service 2002](#), p. 28).

However, PRI's efforts bore fruit at the presidential level. Although President Bush signed the final Foreign Operations Appropriations Act on 10 January 2002 ([U.S. Congress 2002a](#)), two days later he announced a hold on UNFPA funding until his administration could carry out a review ([Congressional Research Service 2002](#), p. 28, fn12; [McElroy 2002](#)). In Senate testimony, Assistant Secretary of State Dewey explained, "Why is there a review after these other actions would indicate that there was no problem in going ahead with the funding? . . . the new situation seems to be the finding of the Population Research Institute, which alleged complicity of the UNFPA in a coercive family planning program in China" ([U.S. Senate 2002](#), p. 9; [Congressional Research Service 2002](#), p. 9).

By the end of January 2002, competing congressional factions had organized, issuing "dueling letters" urging the president to opposite actions ([Cusey 2002](#)). On 30 January 2002, 125 pro-UNFPA House members, including 16 Republicans, referring to the overwhelming July 2001 vote, reminded Bush that "Congressional intent with regard to UNFPA funding is clear, and we urge you to provide the full amount set aside for this purpose" ([Cusey 2002](#)). The next day, 55 House members, with Christopher Smith as the first signatory, requested that Bush "provide zero funding" for the UNFPA ([Cusey 2002](#)).

A State Department team carried out President Bush's review in China, submitting its report on 29 May 2002. It concluded: "We have just completed an intensive 14-day visit (13–26 May) to the People's Republic of China . . . During our visits to five of the 32 counties [in which the UNFPA was active] we asked many . . . ordinary Chinese in spontaneous/no-notice encounters on the street, in a school, or in factories whether they were aware of any recent coercive abortions or involuntary sterilizations. All answered in the negative although some admitted that prior to the joint SFPC/UNFPA program there had been such cases" ([U.S. Department of State 2002a](#)). The report also noted that "ample evidence exists of heavy-handed abusive and coercive practices outside the 32 counties since 1995", and that the "UNFPA has registered its strong opposition to such practices" ([U.S. Department of State 2002a](#)).

Indeed, the State Department report unambiguously exonerated UNFPA. The report's "First Finding" was: "We find no evidence that UNFPA has knowingly supported or participated in the management of a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization in the PRC" ([U.S. Department of State 2002b](#)). Its "First Recommendation" was that the congressionally appropriated funds "be released to UNFPA" ([U.S. Department of State 2002b](#)).

## 11. Further Investigations Also Contradict PRI

Several additional investigations contradicted Guy. The findings of the State Department report were reinforced by a "China Mission" undertaken by one MP from each of Britain's three major political parties at the time. The group, concerned about UK funding of UNFPA, conducted its fact-finding mission in April 2002. On 2 July, it reported, "UNFPA works in 32 counties in China where demographic quotas and targets have been lifted. [They visited two of these.] The team found no evidence of coercive FP [family

planning], sterilisation or forced abortion practices in UNFPA supported counties. They concluded that the work of UNFPA is playing an important and catalytic role, in the reform of RP/RH services, in China. Changing the focus . . . to a client-oriented, quality-of-care approach, where women are given a choice over their own lives. The UK MP delegation was convinced that the UNFPA programme is a force for good, in moving China away from abuses such as forced-family planning, sterilization and abortions" ([United Kingdom 2002](#), pp. 1, 2, 9). The parliamentary group sent its report to President Bush. It is also worth noting that the chair of the group, Edward Leigh, was a Conservative Party MP, a Catholic, and an outspoken anti-abortion and anti-homosexuality advocate who later became a government minister and was knighted.<sup>22</sup> Accompanying the UK team on the trip were members of the Chinese State Family Planning Commission, the administrative body responsible for implementing the OCP. This unofficial British parliamentary report, therefore, combined official statements from Chinese governmental organizations and UNFPA.

PRI's sensational reporting of abuses in China also spurred the creation of an "Interfaith Delegation", which investigated UNFPA's program in China in September 2003 ([Catholics for a Free Choice 2003](#)). Led by nine distinguished religious leaders and ethicists, the delegation traveled in China 6–13 September 2003. Dividing into three groups, it visited two counties in each of three provinces; several villages or townships were visited in each of the counties.

The Interfaith Delegation's report noted that in the 32 UNFPA-supported counties, involuntary sterilization was eliminated and abortion rates declined by 30 percent. Rather than coercion, "The three major reasons they cited for the remaining abortions were: (1) contraceptive failure, (2) the women are students or unmarried, and (3) their pregnancies result from extramarital affairs" ([Catholics for a Free Choice 2003](#), p. 15). The delegation report concluded "that, contrary to the Bush administration's analysis, UNFPA in no way 'supports' nor 'participates' in managing China's family planning program, including the social compensation fee" ([Catholics for a Free Choice 2003](#), p. 22) and that "UNFPA has been and remains a major force and a vital catalyst in achieving China's transition to a fully voluntary and non-coercive family planning program" ([Catholics for a Free Choice 2003](#), p. 20).

As part of UNFPA's own evaluation, the Division of Social Statistics (DSS) of the University of Southampton, UK, and the China Population Information and Research Centre (CPIRC) carried out the only study to provide extensive quantitative data ([University of Southampton 2004](#)). The previously discussed investigations were short-term and geographically limited. In contrast, this last report covered all 32 program counties, the whole duration of the activity, and used modern social science statistical methods to reach conclusions. As part of the UNFPA's project design, baseline data was collected in 1988 and compared with an endline survey in 2002. The survey reported 28 demographic variables describing the population under discussion and measured change in 23 indicators that related to project outcome. Data presented was voluminous with 31 tables and 10 graphs. Data from this study provided detailed evidence of liberalization and progress in the 32 counties. Among the major findings were:

- (1) All 32 project counties abolished birth permits. In 1998, 60 percent of births were to families who had received a birth permit, but permits were abolished in 1998, and no permits were required for the birth cohorts of 1999 to 2002 ([University of Southampton 2004](#), p. 36).
- (2) The abortion rate and ratio dropped by almost 60 percent. The rate fell from 11.5 per thousand women in 1990 to 4.3 in 2001. The report presents reasons why both rates may be underestimates. Nationwide, the rate dropped from 23 to 18. Nevertheless, the rate in the 32 counties dropped from  $\frac{1}{2}$  the national rate to  $\frac{1}{4}$ . [cf: The U.S. rate at the time was 16/1000 women.] The abortion ratio came down from 24 abortions per 100 live births in 1998 to 10 per 100 in 2002. [cf: the global ratio for 2003 was 31 per 100; the U.S. ratio was 24.6. Thus, under the UNFPA program, the abortion ratio fell



- from the U.S. level to 60 percent below that level] ([University of Southampton 2004](#), p. 41).
- (3) Female sterilization dropped by 16 percent (42.2 percent to 35.5 percent) and male sterilization by percent (12.0 percent to 9.1 percent). These numbers were not very different from those of a 2001 national survey (38.1 percent and 7.9 percent). [cf: The endpoint female sterilization rate was the same as the 1998–1999 rate in India (34.2 percent), which had doubled since the end of the mid-1970s emergency period. However, the Chinese rate was double the U.S. rate, which was 16 percent in 1995 and 17 percent from 2006–2010. At the time, both China and India, as well as many other developing countries, relied almost exclusively on sterilization as the method of birth control] ([University of Southampton 2004](#), p. 25, Table 4.2).
  - (4) The loosening of state control required by UNFPA did NOT cause a rise in fertility. The total fertility rate was unchanged at a low level (baseline (1995–1998) TFR = 1.35; endline (1999–2002) TFR = 1.36). In short, the project results demonstrated that the coercive elements in China’s birth control policy were not necessary to maintain a low birthrate ([University of Southampton 2004](#), p. 40, Table 6.1).

## 12. Evaluation of the Different Reports

In evaluating the impartiality of the various reports, the present authors note that Guy’s 2001 anecdotal report confirmed the convictions of its sponsor, PRI, suggesting a possible lack of independence and adherence to a predetermined advocacy position. The Biegman team also supported the position of its sponsor, the UNFPA; in this case, however, the prominence of the team members suggested their ability to be as “independent” as they claimed. The prominence of the members of the interfaith team also suggests independence. Possibly indicating objectivity, the British report directly contradicted the position that might be expected from its anti-abortion leader. Similarly, the Bush team contradicted the expected position of its sponsor. The independence and professionalism of the University of Southampton’s Division of Social Statistics lends credence to that team’s results.

Also important in evaluation is China’s well-known ability to “stage manage” the experience of foreign visitors. All the delegations must have been aware of this. The State Department report describes the stratagems that the group took to avoid being manipulated. For example, it emphasized “spontaneous/no-notice encounters on the street, in a school, or in factories” ([U.S. Department of State 2002b](#)). Similarly, the Biegman group “interviewed Chinese citizens at random . . . using two independent interpreters and without any Chinese government officials present” ([U.S. Senate 2002](#), p. 25). The sophistication and status of the State Department and UN groups suggest that they would have been most capable of avoiding official management. The Interfaith Group reported, “The delegation hired its own interpreters and made all major and most minor decisions about meetings, sites to be visited, and the focus of the inquiry. No restrictions were placed on the group’s activities by the Chinese government” ([Catholics for a Free Choice 2003](#), p. 3). It also noted that “Delegates met with citizens without any officials present and made impromptu visits to communities not on the itinerary” ([Catholics for a Free Choice 2003](#), p. 12).

Two issues are relevant to evaluating the statistical data presented by the Southampton University social statisticians. In terms of research design, the study provided before and after comparisons, but there was no control group to compare changes in non-program counties. This left uncertain how much extra liberalization the UNFPA program achieved compared to non-Program counties. However, this question is not relevant to whether the UNFPA Program was improving the situation of women or colluding in maintaining an abusive status. More relevantly, the surveys underlying the data were a joint effort with the China Population Information Research Center. The involvement of Chinese personnel leaves open the possibility that the data was manipulated in some manner. However, the statistical information argued that the then current coercive practices of the OCP were unnecessary. It is unlikely that the OCP bureaucracy that had enforced the coercions was

happy to have foreigners prove the errors of their ways. If the bureaucrats had wanted to distort the information, they would have manipulated it in the direction of suggesting that the reforms failed.

The five non-PRI reports did not whitewash the overall Chinese program; all emphasized that deplorable abuses occurred in China. For instance, the interfaith group discussed how, often in China, “demographic targets led to crash campaigns of forced abortions” ([Catholics for a Free Choice 2003](#), p. 5) and to “fines for out of plan births” ([Catholics for a Free Choice 2003](#), p. 6). The group wrote, “There is no doubt that significant violations of human rights have occurred . . . in the past. Reports of such violations have decreased dramatically in recent years” ([Catholics for a Free Choice 2003](#), p. 19). However, on the central point in contention, all agreed that the UNFPA was not a party to abuses and, in fact, was working effectively to eliminate coercive practices. In the final analysis, it is quite doubtful that Guy was somehow able, within four days of entering China, to uncover several instances of severe coercion—and to do so whereas more prominent and experienced groups with more substantial efforts did not find such coercion.

The international governance of the UN and the frequent public scrutiny of its activities underscore the improbability of the PRI/Guy allegations. Each UNFPA activity must first be approved by the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, which represents 36 countries. Just as the coercion in China’s OCP was well known, documented, and widely abhorred, any UNFPA complicity in these abuses was extremely unlikely to go unnoticed, much less approved ([Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 1995](#); [Whyte et al. 2015](#)). And the UNFPA programs, including those in China, repeatedly gained international authorization and approval. The U.S. government was well satisfied with the openness of China, stating in its 2000 *Human Rights Report*: “The government has welcomed foreign delegations to inspect the UNFPA project counties. Although access to these areas has varied from province to province, foreign diplomats visited several counties during the year” ([U.S. Department of State 2000b](#)).

In addition, the Executive Board of the UNFPA later noted that the “Ten European countries that provide most of UNFPA’s funding said that the agency’s support to China has played ‘a crucial and catalytic role . . . It successfully demonstrates that a client-oriented quality of care approach to reproductive health and family planning is a viable alternative to a target-driven administrative system’. In a statement on their behalf by the UK, the countries declared: ‘unequivocally . . . UNFPA’s activities in China, as in the rest of the world, are in strict conformity with the unanimously adopted Programme of Action of the ICPD [the Cairo conference], and play a key role in supporting our common endeavour, the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms’” ([UNFPA 2006](#)).

Because financing for many UN activities comes primarily from the wealthier countries, European financial support for UNFPA might be interpreted, in accord with Mosher’s ideas, as evidence that international population programs are solely a Western initiative. However, the UN Caucus of 134 developing countries supports UNFPA unequivocally, stating that UNFPA “is helping China to achieve the goals set out in the ICPD . . . This rights based country program deserves our strong support” ([Group of 77 at the United Nations n.d.](#); [Group of 77 2006](#)).

### 13. Dénouement: Bush Eliminates UNFPA Funding

The various on-the-ground investigations, all contradicting the PRI report, plus the broad international support of the UNFPA program, leave PRI’s allegations against the UNFPA as extreme outliers. Nevertheless, these allegations continued to enjoy disproportionate levels of influence within the conservative movement in the 2000s. They were championed by an influential segment of the U.S. electorate and in Congress. On 20 June 2002, PRI gained the signatures of over 140 domestic and international groups, urging President Bush “not to fund the UNFPA because of its continuing support of China’s coercive abortion policy”.<sup>23</sup> The signatories included major organizations like the Southern Baptist

Convention, the Salvation Army, the Family Research Council, and Focus on the Family. Ultimately, these forces held sway in the final policy outcome.

Ignoring the conclusion of its own investigative team, as well as the other evidence discussed above, the Bush administration decided to defund the UNFPA. Secretary of State Powell was the messenger: his 21 July 2002 letter to the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations of the Senate Committee on Appropriations (available from authors)<sup>24</sup> concluded that “no funds may be provided to UNFPA at this time”. The Powell letter clearly reflected the deep reach of PRI’s claims. Powell argued, “The PRC has in place a regime of severe penalties on women who have unapproved births. This regime plainly operates to coerce pregnant women to have abortions in order to avoid the penalties and therefore amounts to a ‘program of coercive abortion’. Regardless of the modest size of UNFPA’s budget in China or any benefits its programs provide, UNFPA’s support of, and involvement in, China’s population-planning activities allows the Chinese government to implement more effectively its program of coercive abortion. Therefore, it is not permissible to continue funding UNFPA at this time”. Powell wrote that the funds denied to UNFPA would go to other family planning programs.

In a supporting ‘analysis’, Powell conceded that the State Department team found no evidence that the UNFPA had “knowingly supported or participated in the management of a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization in the PRC” ([U.S. Department of State 2002c](#)). However, through somewhat contorted logic, the analysis continued: “even if UNFPA did not ‘knowingly’ support or participate in such a program, that does not mean that the Kemp-Kasten restriction would not be triggered, since that restriction does not rest on a finding of legal intent to fund the coercive program. The restriction is triggered if the recipient ‘supports or participates in the management of a program of coercive abortion (or involuntary sterilization)’”.

Thus, by ignoring the separation between UNFPA’s actions in the 32 counties in which it was trying to reform the OCP and China’s activities in non-UNFPA counties, abuses anywhere in China, which surely existed, were laid at the feet of the UNFPA and used as the basis for claiming that UNFPA violated Kemp-Kasten.<sup>25</sup> The administration provided zero funding for any activity of the UNFPA, in China or elsewhere, for the remainder of George W. Bush’s term.

The withdrawal of funding was purely symbolic for China. No U.S. money had ever gone to China via UNFPA; Congress had stipulated, since 1994, here that no funds could be spent by UNFPA in China (Public Law 103–87; [Kaiser Family Foundation 2022](#)). However, for the PRI/CR/GOP coalition, the defunding was a signal political success. The coalition gained much support by appealing to people’s better instincts via human rights rhetoric. However, if the goal was truly to help the Chinese people, the coalition failed; it never offered a constructive suggestion as to how to ameliorate the situation in China. All of the fury of the PRI and CR, perhaps fueled in part by an over-grandiose notion of American power and ability to influence global events, seems to have had no discernable effect on the UNFPA’s China program. The UNFPA did not terminate its China program but instead initiated a fifth cycle of assistance for 2003 to 2005 ([UNFPA 2002b](#)).

Nonetheless, to the extent that the goal was to cripple the UNFPA, the PRI (and the broader coalition) succeeded. The USD 34 million that Congress had approved for FY 2002, but which President Bush blocked, would have been about 10 percent of UNFPA’s budget. These deleted funds would have provided services, not in China, but in the other 141 countries where the UNFPA was working. The UNFPA estimated that the lost funding would have prevented 2 million unwanted pregnancies, nearly 800,000 induced abortions, 4700 maternal deaths, nearly 60,000 cases of serious maternal illness, and over 77,000 infant and child deaths ([UNFPA 2002a](#)). After 2002, Congress continued to allocate USD 34 million to UNFPA (rising to USD 40 million in Bush’s last year). Bush blocked it all—USD 244 million in total.

PRI was the most successful of the CR groups, claiming that it helped cut USD 800 million from “anti-natalist” budgets.<sup>26</sup> This number is not implausible given that other do-

mestic and global organizations have also had their funding eliminated (e.g., Cong. Chris Smith's claim that he and PRI "stripped" USD 195 million from International Planned Parenthood Federation (Note 26)).

Writing in 2005, one scholar observed that "some right-wing American politicians want to use ... the PRC birth program ... as an excuse for denying UNFPA a role not only ... in China but also in delivering family planning and reproductive health services around the world" (Winckler 2005, p. 214).

The period when the U.S. withdrew funding was exactly the period when China was most open to reform. As China expert Susan Greenhalgh noted right after the defunding, "While some Americans have been turning over every stone looking for coercion, since 1993–1994 Chinese reformers have been quietly dismantling the old target-oriented system, replacing it piece by piece with one focused on reproductive health. These gigantic changes remained invisible when we are only looking for coercion" (U.S. Congress 2002b, p. 11). Greenhalgh concluded, "The coercion critique has encouraged punitive responses from the American government, rather than constructive engagements with Chinese reformers" (U.S. Congress 2002b, p. 53).

#### 14. Conclusions

During the period of the OCP, China emerged from overwhelming poverty to become one of the world's industrial leaders (Diop 2015). The slowing of its population growth was likely a key factor driving this progress. The Chinese government never admitted that coercion was inherent in the program. Instead, it blamed rogue cadres for any abuses, maintaining that it could lower fertility through education and persuasion alone and that the socialist model could produce progress without pain. This vision was a mirage. The Chinese people themselves offered intense resistance, and the international community, especially the CR, heaped opprobrium on the government.

UNFPA helped bring China's family planning efforts out of this coercive mode into the modern age of women's rights-oriented programs. One need not overestimate the role of UNFPA in the liberalization. Many factors converged to encourage liberalization of the OCP. Most importantly, at the time of UNFPA's 32 county program, China's TFR was already estimated to be below replacement level at about 1.8 children per woman, and childbearing preferences had changed to near that level (see graph of TFR, above). These changes made "high pressure tactics in the birth planning program increasingly unnecessary," as Susan Greenhalgh put it (U.S. Congress 2002b, p. 15). Many in China already wanted to see the birth control program reformed (U.S. Congress 2002b, pp. 9–12).

At the conclusion of the UNFPA's four-year pilot project program, in March 2002, the UNFPA's outline for its next cycle (fifth program) described "the success of the programme [as] beyond expectations ... the government intends to institute aspects of the client-oriented, quality reproductive health approach in 827 additional counties" (UNFPA 2002b). Indeed, building on this pilot work, China decided to scale up nationwide (Li and Li 2011, p. 198). The *U.S. Human Rights Report* for 2003 confirmed that "800 other counties also removed the target and quota system and tried to replicate the UNFPA project" (U.S. Department of State 2004, p. 20). Ironically, on 1 October 2001, in between Guy's 27–30 September investigation and that year's October House hearing, the Decree of the [Chinese] State Council on Services for Family Planning went into effect. The first article and principal goal of the legislation was stated to be ensuring and safeguarding the reproductive health rights of China's citizens (Li and Li 2011, p. 199). This was a large step in moving Chinese law, if not necessarily Chinese practice, in the direction of the Cairo Conference norms.

Chinese childbearing attitudes changed during the course of the OCP. Chinese families, traditionally, had been under tremendous cultural pressure to produce many children, especially boys. Starting in the 1980s, the OCP introduced overwhelming counterpressures. The Chinese people were trapped between a rock and a hard place. After conflict and suffering, the government-imposed limits morphed into new cultural norms.



China's pronatal culture slowly changed, and the desired number of children dropped drastically. By 2001, the year of the Guy investigation, Chinese women wanted only 1.7 children, on average. 35% wanted one child, 57% wanted two children, and only 5.8% wanted more (Zhou and Huang 2000). In 2003, younger people in Shanghai approved of the OCP (Nie and Wyman 2005). By 2007, China's birth planning policy—already much reformed and softened—was approved by 76% of adult Chinese in a Pew Global Attitudes Survey (Pew Research Center 2018, pp. 5, 18).

China achieved its goal of taming population growth; its total fertility rate fell from nearly six children per woman in the late 1960s to below replacement (2 surviving children) in the 1990s. This low level has persisted (World Bank 2023c). China's birthrate in 2022 (6.77 births per 1000 people) was lower than it ever was under the OCP (Mullen 2023). The One-Child Policy began in an era during which three times as many young women were coming into reproductive age as older women were maturing out of it. Now, after more than a generation under the OCP, the situation has reversed; fewer women are entering reproductive age than leaving it. Having achieved extraordinary success in its original goals of advancing the economy and improving the status of its people, China has moved on, leaving its One-Child Policy behind. Beginning in 2016, all families could have two children (People's Republic of China 2015), and, beginning in 2021, three were allowed.<sup>27</sup>

However, China's childbearing culture has changed. Now that Chinese people are freed from ancient pro-natal demands and from modern governmental restraints, they no longer want many children. Chinese women are having fewer births each successive year. Although China's population may begin to decline, the UN's 2022 projection indicates that China will still have 1.3 billion people in 2051 (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2022).

The primary demographic issues for China are now the age and sex balance of its still vast population.

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Statements made by Chairman Mao Zedong, Premier Zhou Enlai and others emphasizing the importance of birth control are available, as paraphrased in 孙沐寒 in 《中国计划生育史稿》，北京：北方妇女儿童出版社 (Sun Muhan, A Draft History of Chinese Birth Planning [Beijing: Women's and Children's Press, 1987], pp. 142–43). Even as late as 2002, when the One-Child Policy was finally codified, Article 2 of the Population and Family Planning Law described the policy as “a comprehensive measure to control the size and raise the general quality of the population”. Here, “quality” meant health, education, and welfare. See 《中华人民共和国人口与计划生育法》 (People's Republic of China 2005).
- <sup>2</sup> 2 Banister notes that early measures to reduce childbearing were intended “to liberate women from family bondage”.
- <sup>3</sup> Many Christian Right organizations were listed as signatories in “Steve Mosher and 140 other organizations to President George W. Bush”, 20 June 2002. Available from authors.
- <sup>4</sup> After early restrictions, China loosened birth control policies. The Cultural Revolution collapsed plans to introduce contraception, but, in the 1970s, the government began to distribute free contraception.
- <sup>5</sup> Peng 1987 explains that the OCP was introduced to limit population growth as this age group reached childbearing years.
- <sup>6</sup> Total Population and Crude Birth Rates from (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2023) China Statistical Yearbook 2022, Tables 2-1 and 2-2. <http://www.stats.gov.cn/sj/ndsj/2022/indexeh.htm> (accessed on 6 April 2023).

- Unapproved pregnancies included those occurring fewer than four years after the first child or any pregnancy after the second child.
- Steven Westley (pseudonym for Mosher), <<时报周刊>> (*Sunday Times Chinese Weekly*), Taiwan, May 1981. We cannot locate a copy of the original, but several articles refer to it, including Butterfield, 1983 and Van Ness 1984 pp. 160–72.
- Apparently, Chinese officials considered his first article—and its publication in Taiwan—as an attack. They charged Mosher with bribing and smuggling antique coins out of the country. Stanford reportedly found damning evidence of “illegal and seriously unethical conduct” and voted to expel him. Mosher claimed that his expulsion was due to pressure from American China scholars eager to please Peking” (Matthews 1983; Butterfield 1983; Van Ness 1984). *Science* magazine concluded, “The central question still remains publicly unanswered. On what grounds did the department expel Mosher? Neither Stanford or Mosher are willing to say” (Sun 1984, p. 701). Stanford then released further documentation that “read in part like a spy thriller complete with code names” (Butterfield 1985).
- In contrast, see (Wolf 1986), which describes extreme badgering rather than physical coercion.
- For instance, Wall Street Journal (Mosher 1983, 1997), Washington Post (Mosher 1987, 1988), and *American Enterprise* (Mosher 1998) In the *American Enterprise* piece, Mosher called the OCP “the most draconian population control program of modern times” (p. 50). He claimed that the vast majority of Chinese did not rebel against the OCP because “China’s government so crows most of its people that they attend closely to the state’s desires and behave accordingly” (p. 51).
- For Mosher’s early congressional testimony, see “Statement on China’s Population Control Program”, in “Foreign Assistance and Related Programs Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1988”, 100th Congress, U.S. Senate, Hearings before a Subcommittee on Foreign Operations of the Committee on Appropriations, 30 July 1987, pp. 416–22.
- PRI Newswire, “Steven Mosher to Testify at Congressional Hearing: ‘Ban Sex-selective Abortion’,” 1 December 2011, <https://www.pop.org/ban-sex-selective-abortions-in-the-u-s/> (accessed on 6 April 2023).
- The mainstream scholar Tyrene White calls Mosher’s description in *Broken Earth* “The single best account” of an “intense ‘persuasion’ meeting” (*China’s Longest Campaign*, p. 109, fn 96). Mosher’s account was also accepted by Scharping, *Birth Control*, p. 52.
- The Family Planning Services and Public Research Act of 1970, Public Law pp. 91–572. 24 December 1970.
- Kemp-Kasten Amendment Legislative History. Previously posted at the U.S. AID website [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/Pcaab709.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pcaab709.pdf), but now available at <https://www.humanlifeaction.org/downloads/sites/default/files/KempK8503.pdf> (accessed 25 February 2022).
- Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping welcomed UNFPA’s cooperation and assistance.
- This agreement specifies that “UNFPA and the Government will work together to help these counties adopt an integrated approach; one that will combine the promotion of family planning with economic development, universal education, improvement of women’s status and provision of quality family planning and reproductive health services, and will ensure that implementation of the FP programme is not in the form of imposing birth quotas and acceptor targets on FP providers”.
- Although decided on earlier, prohibitions on coercion were finalized in a formal “notice” (*tongzhi*) from 10 July 1995.
- Some videos were shown at the Oct 2001 House hearing (U.S. House 2001), but there was no reported independent verification of the translation, location, or date of the recordings. PRI did not respond to the authors request for these to be made available.
- Letter from Sterling Scruggs, Director of Information and External Relations, UNFPA, to Henry Hyde, chairperson, House Committee on Foreign Relations, 16 October 2001, reprinted in U.S. House (2001, p. 85).
- Edward Leigh biography available online: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward\\_Leigh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Leigh) (accessed 19 June 2020).
- Steve Mosher and 140 other organizations to President George W. Bush, 20 June 2002.
- All quotations in this paragraph from Secretary of State Colin Powell, letter to Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), chair, Subcommittee on Foreign Relations, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate, 21 July 2002, (available from authors).
- Rep. Christopher Smith (R-N.J.) to President George W. Bush, 31 January 2002, in (reprinted in Cusey 2002): “The simple fact that the UNFPA gives money to China’s population control program is enough to legally and morally disqualify them from receiving a subsidy from the United States”.
- Population Research Institute, “Our Achievements, PRI’s Work to Protect Families”, undated but occasionally updated. Current version available at <https://www.pop.org/our-achievements/> (accessed on 5 February 2023).
- Xinhua News Agency, 新华网. 中共中央国务院关于优化生育政策促进人口长期均衡发展的决定。 [http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2021-07/20/content\\_5626190.htm](http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2021-07/20/content_5626190.htm), 20 July 2021, (accessed on 19 November 2022) the English language description is “China unveils details of three-child policy, support measures”, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-07/21/c\\_1310073319.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-07/21/c_1310073319.htm) (accessed on 19 November 2022).

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