

**Documentation**

## *Family Planning in China* *A Chronology*

- 1953            Census reveals China's population exceeds 583 million people.
- 1972            The State Office of Planned Births, inoperative since the mid fifties, is reactivated.<sup>1</sup>
- 1973--         Government advocates late marriages; Slogan: *Wan, Xi, Shao* (late marriage, longer intervals between births, fewer births). Permission to marry must be obtained from the heads of the respective work units before completing marriage registrations.<sup>2</sup>
- 1978            Post-Mao government begins to encourage demographic studies and to set up population research centres around the country. (*Hua Guofeng's target: reduce population growth to 1% or less by 1980.*)<sup>3</sup>
- Between summer and autumn the government decides to promote the **One-Child Policy**.
- 1979            January: Policy formally announced. (*Government expectation fairly moderate: 20% of urban couples and 5% of rural couples expected to be persuaded and to comply to have only one child.*)<sup>4</sup>
- Government position, however, escalates: Couples everywhere mandated to have no more than one child.<sup>5</sup>
- 1980            June: New goal: population growth rate of 0.5% in 1985 and 0 growth in year 2000.<sup>6</sup>
- Computer projections of China's population:
- |                          |            |         |
|--------------------------|------------|---------|
| Two-child family in year | 2000: 1.22 | billion |
|                          | 2052: 1.54 | billion |
| One-child family in year | 2000: 1.05 | billion |
- (peak and then decrease thereafter).<sup>7</sup>

- 1980 February: Goal: 95% of married couples in the cities and 90% in countryside to have only one child.<sup>8</sup>
- 1982 Of the 170 million women of reproductive age, 70% now practicing birth control (All known methods used) Abortion used extensively since 1979 in all three trimesters of pregnancy.<sup>9</sup>
- 1983 Forced IUD insertions and retention, sterilizations and abortions.  
January: 3.58 million sterilizations nationwide  
January-December: 20 million sterilizations--mostly of women.  
Family Planning Propaganda Month yields more than 3.25 million IUD insertions and more than 1.7 million abortions.<sup>10</sup>
- Mid 1980s Policy relaxed for the countryside.<sup>11</sup>
- Late 1980s China now has developed most skewed sex ratio in the world. Approximately 113 baby boys for every 100 baby girls.<sup>12</sup>
- 1987 Undeclared births in Shanxi Province reach 150,000.<sup>13</sup>
- 1989 Family Planning authorities in Shaanxi Province require fines of 120 million yuan from 500,000 families who failed to comply with the regulation.<sup>14</sup>
- 1990 Infanticide on the increase.<sup>15</sup>
- "Since 1988-89, The Chinese press has carried reports of infants, usually handicapped or female, being abandoned in railway station or other public places, with an estimated 150,000 infants abandoned in major cities every year. The practice of child betrothals has also reappeared; families in some rural areas were reported to be arranging marriage partners for children as young as seven or eight years old, and a survey in one city revealed that 86 percent of children under the age of 14 were already engaged."<sup>16</sup>
- July 1 census reveals population of 1.133 billion and skewed sex ratio of more boys than girls continues to rise.
- 1991 Pressure to control birth rate renewed. Campaign to sterilize all women who have had two children.

- Orphanages receive up to 10 children a day, mostly abandoned girls.<sup>17</sup>
- 1991 April: New adoption law passed dropping requirement that a couple be childless to adopt a handicapped child.<sup>18</sup>
- 1993 The number of *Dink* families (double income, no kids) passes the million mark.<sup>19</sup>
- 1993 China's population reaches 1.185 billion people.<sup>20</sup>
- 1994 June: Information Office of the State Council of the PRC condemns abandonment and infanticide of baby girls.<sup>21</sup>

### References and Sources

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5. *ibid.*, *Renmin ribao*, Aug. 11, 1979, 1.
6. Xinhua (Beijing), Feb. 2, 1980.
7. *ibid.*
8. *ibid.*
9. Bannister, *op. cit.*, 727.
10. *ibid.* 728.
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12. "Chinese Orphanages: Saving China's Abandoned Girls," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, #30, (July 1993), 64.
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21. *Beijing Review*, Vol. 37, #23 (June 6-12, 1994), 9-23.