

Toastmasters CTM-09 Persuade with Power

Overbreeding is the first act of war

Bill Howell, Dow's Lake Toastmasters, 22Aug06

Message:

I will define "Overbreeding" as the excessive growth in human populations over mid-to-long term periods. By "war", I mean both actual warfare, but also less dramatic cultural and religious tensions, and problems with poverty within sections of a society.

My message is that we must pay much more attention to over-breeding, and how to work with other countries and cultures to better address this issue before it becomes a major source of conflict and other societal problems like poverty and crime.

Argumentation:

1. Biology and evolution – Overbreeding and its effects are natural!

It is my opinion that overbreeding is a "natural process".

Thomas Malthus's economic concept of scarcity of, and competition for, resources was the key final concept used by both Alfred Wallace and Charles Darwin in "inventing" (if you will) the theory of biological evolution.

On the short term, complex population dynamics result from predator-prey relationships, and this can lead to near-catastrophic peaks and valleys in populations of both the predators and the prey. But a recurring theme is that the populations are seldom in equilibrium, and that severe over-populations frequently occur that lead to periodic, intense competition for survival between species and within species. There are papers in Evolutionary Computation (computer science) that quantitatively take advantage of this special "accelerated" culling of populations.

It is, of course, dangerous to extrapolate concepts from biology directly into psychology, sociology and anthropology, and in any case the dynamics differ considerably. But I think that it's important to keep in mind that "natural" population variability may set up situations that are difficult to resolve in ANY NICE way.

2. Past history

My second point is to highlight historians' observations that many times throughout history severe over-population has created pressure points and led to poverty, war and other troubles.

- Obvious migrations/ invasions – steppes of Asia

- Military expansions – Greece, Accadians,
- Deforestation and water problems
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Note: tremendously creative solutions/ advances have arisen from these situations!!

- Athens and island-states – major part of economy was trade
- Communist China. Nobody gives them credit for what they might have avoided, they simply get criticism from what they did. I am not aware of any similar mass-controls in the past, other than Sparta –?Helots?

3. Current context

“Problematic” regions of the world – many pressure points from continued waves of rapid population increases, sometimes in areas of “partial industrialization”:

- Yugoslavia, Indonesia
- Africa
- Muslim countries

Overbreeding is an issue in many of those areas, although it is never the only issue causing problems.

Conclusion:

Our current “politically correct” prescriptions of appropriate responses to national and regional challenges tend to de-emphasize or ignore the role of over-breeding. As a result, mindsets and policies can be counter-productive or ineffective.

We need to better profile and recognize the role of over-breeding, and to have mechanisms to either help the fast-growing countries involved before this becomes a serious problem, and to help defend the countries and populations that will bear the brunt of the effects.

However, even the simple, widespread recognition of the problem would help all parties better understand

Can you have your cake and eat it too? Maybe...

Chopped Material:

This has always been an important pressure point between cultures and nations, and I want to convince you that our current beliefs and approaches to foreign affairs and international relations prevent us from fully recognizing and addressing such an important issue.

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Population growth spurts have occurred at various stages of advance of civilization. This tends to be “camouflaged” by our tendency to use a linear scale of world population over historical times, which is inappropriate!

That means that many of the issues that we face are different only in scale compared to past challenges and responses, and we can still learn a lot from the rich variety of approaches that have been used in the past. Furthermore, there is less emotional baggage” associated with the review of historical situations as compared to trying to analyse current situations.

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, but it is one of several important contributors to the failure of international peace and conflict resolution efforts, and ultimately this contributes to the loss of faith in organisations like the UN. It can also a major impediment to development of countries.

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Blame the wrong group
Cannot “solve” the problem
Maybe the problem can’t be solved

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Question: medicine to simply reduce the infant mortality, while cultural behaviours etc don’t change

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