



On Children, China, America, and Abortion

Rob Schwarzwalder

The news that China has now decided to relax its “one-child” policy and “allow” women to have two children¹ should be greeted with mixed emotions. The costs of the past nearly four decades of forced abortion are too painful to consider, and the continued brutality against women who become pregnant with a second and, now, a third child is an all too present reality.

The number of unborn Chinese children – overwhelmingly girls – who have been aborted is staggering. The brutality of the means by which countless Chinese women are subject to forced abortion is sub-human. As reported by the Financial Times in 2013:

Chinese doctors have performed more than 330 million abortions since the government implemented a controversial family planning policy 40 years ago, according to official data from the (Chinese) health ministry ... The Chinese government has previously estimated that without restrictions, the country's 1.3 billion population would be 30 per cent larger ... They have also inserted 403 million intrauterine devices, a normal birth control procedure in the west but one that local officials often force on women in China.²

These statistics are grim but, perhaps, so enormous in scope as to be impersonal. But they are personal – they affect tens of millions of individual lives. Here is how the *Washington Post's* Simon Denyer describes but one incident of the policy of forced abortion under the “one-child” policy:

His wife was seven months pregnant with their second child when the group of people barged into his home and took her away. He followed them to the local hospital, where – against medical advice and despite his pleadings – they jammed a needle into her belly. “They grabbed my wife's body like they were grabbing a pig, four or five people holding her hands and legs and head, and injected a shot into her belly,” the man said, asking not to be named for fear of retribution. “Neither my wife nor I signed any consent form.” Ten hours later, she gave birth to a boy, wriggling and faintly crying. But the doctors in southern Hunan province would not even let her hold the dying infant, the husband said, putting the baby in a plastic bag and instructing him to pay a cleaner a small sum to bury it on a nearby hill.³

Data released by China's National Family Planning Commission, as reported by *China Daily*, show that “13 million abortions are performed each year, for an average rate of 35,000 abortions per day.”⁴ It is noteworthy that given these data come from China's Communist government, it is possible, if not likely, that the numbers cited are low. Additionally, many, if not a majority, of the abortions are forced.

The results of this hell-engendered policy are massive. Millions of Chinese women experience severe physical and mental health problems.⁵ The effects are profound; a study of nearly 7,000 Chinese women published in the *Bulletin of Clinical Psychopharmacology* found that “women who have experienced a previous induced abortion have omnipresent anxiety and depression symptoms during a subsequent pregnancy, especially during the first trimester.”⁶

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November 2015
Issue Brief IF15K03

Additionally, as Maya Wang writes in a Human Rights Watch's "Dispatches" column, "The policy change won't provide relief to countless families who suffered punitive penalties for past violations. Wang Guangrong, a 37-year-old father of four, killed himself in March 2014 after he was told his children could not enroll in the local public primary school unless he paid astronomical fines of RMB22,5000 (US\$3,600) for violating the policies. Nor will the change bring relief to the countless numbers of women who endured the pain and trauma of forced abortions."⁷

Roughly 200 million women have been sterilized.⁸ According to a 2013 U.S. State Department report, "The Chinese government's birth limitation policy and a cultural preference for sons, create a skewed sex ratio of 118 boys to 100 girls in China, which served as a key source of demand for the trafficking of foreign women as brides for Chinese men and for forced prostitution."⁹

This means that millions of Chinese men are having and will continue to have difficulty finding wives. Writing several years ago in *Foreign Affairs*, the distinguished political economist and demographer Nicholas Eberstadt wrote:

*By 2030, projections suggest that more than 25 percent of Chinese men in their late 30s will never have married. The coming marriage squeeze will likely be even more acute in the Chinese countryside, since the poor, uneducated, and rural population will be more likely to lose out in the competition for brides. Beijing will have to determine how it will cope with a growing demographic of unmarried, underprivileged, and, quite possibly, deeply discontented young men.*¹⁰

In 2012, the *New York Times* reported that the coercive abortion policy of China is beginning to have profound economic effects, as well:

*... economists and business executives have expressed anxiety about the impact of a slowing population growth rate on the economy. Liang Jianzhang, a well-known executive with a doctoral degree in economics from Stanford University, and Li Jianxin, a demographer at Peking University, have estimated that by 2040, the number of Chinese older than 60 would be 411 million, up from 171 million today. The working population people between the ages of 20 and 60 would drop to 696 million from 817 million today.*¹¹

America is involved in these crimes, even if modestly. As reported in 2013 by Steven W. Mosher and Anne Roback Morse of the Population Research Institute, "The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) spent \$4,861,000 in China last year for 'population dynamics programs,' 'family planning,' and other population control programs. The United States gave \$30,200,000 to the UNFPA" in 2012.¹²

This is wrong, as is government funding of the now rightly notorious Planned Parenthood Federation of America, our country's leading purveyor of abortion and the recipient of nearly \$530 million in taxpayer money annually.¹³

What makes the change to a "two-child" policy less than celebratory is something Florida Sen. Marco Rubio noted after the new policy was announced — China will still be rife with forced abortions:

*While the decision to allow Chinese couples to have two children is a modest improvement, the policy is still repressive. The fact remains that when couples conceive a third child, the Chinese government will force them to eliminate him or her, by any means necessary. A two-child policy is as indefensible and inhumane as a one-child policy, and it would be a mistake to assume this change in any way reflects a newfound respect for human rights by Beijing.*¹⁴

Ironically, even President Obama's spokesman Josh Earnest, according the Associated Press, says "the U.S. is looking forward to the day when birth limits in China are abandoned altogether. Earnest says the U.S. will keep working around the world to end coercive birth policies such as forced abortion and sterilization. He says eliminating birth limits falls into the category of universal human rights."¹⁵

Earnest is right, of course, yet how bittersweet coming from the chief spokesman for a President who has staunchly advanced unrestricted access to abortion-on-demand, federal subsidies to fund it, and rules requiring even an order of nuns to supply contraceptives.

Abortion, whether coercive or voluntary, is wrong morally. It is defiance against God's authorship of human life. It debases the dignity of the women who abort their children, and renders them prey to an abortion industry occupied with profit, not women's health. Forced abortion adds another layer to the evil of the act, certainly, by assailing women and rendering them subject to an aggressive, invasive, brutal state.

Yet all abortions have two results: Dead unborn babies and wounded women. Whether in China or the U.S., the policies of anti-humanism and anti-theism at abortion's base must change.

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¹ "Pathetic': Pro-life leaders react to China's new Two Child Policy," LifeSiteNews.com, accessed November 12, 2015, <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/pathetic-pro-life-leaders-react-to-chinas-new-two-child-policy>.

² "Data reveal scale of China abortions," *The Financial Times*, accessed November 12, 2015, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/6724580a-8d64-11e2-82d2-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2O675Qbmz>.

³ "Horrors of one-child policy leave deep scars in Chinese society," *The Washington Post*, accessed November 12, 2015, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/horrors-of-one-child-policy-leave-deep-scars-in-chinese-society/2015/10/30/6bd28e0c-7e7b-11e5-bfb6-65300a5ff562_story.html.

⁴ "Forced Abortion Statistics," All Girls Allowed, accessed November 12, 2015, http://www.allgirlsallowed.org/forced-abortion-statistics#_edn12.

⁵ "Why no one wants to talk about China's female suicide problem," *The Washington Times*, accessed November 12, 2015, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/may/24/why-no-one-wants-to-talk-about-chinas-female-suici/?page=all>.

⁶ Zhaohui Huang et al., "The Impact of Prior Abortion on Anxiety and Depression Symptoms During a Subsequent Pregnancy: Data From a Population-Based Cohort Study in China," *Bulletin of Clinical Psychopharmacology*, Vol: 22, N.: 1, 2012, p. 51, http://www.psikofarmakoloji.org/pdf/22_1_8.pdf.

⁷ "Dispatches: Ending the One-Child Policy Does Not Equal Reproductive Freedom in China," Human Rights Watch, accessed November 12, 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/10/29/dispatches-ending-one-child-policy-does-not-equal-reproductive-freedom-china>.

⁸ "Data reveal scale of China abortions," *The Financial Times*, accessed November 12, 2015, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/6724580a-8d64-11e2-82d2-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2O675Qbmz>.

⁹ "Country Narratives," U.S. State Department report, p. 129, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/210738.pdf>.

¹⁰ "The Demographic Future: What Population Growth - and Decline - Means for the Global Economy," *Foreign Affairs*, accessed November 12, 2015, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2010-11-01/demographic-future>.

¹¹ "Reports of Forced Abortions Fuel Push to End Chinese Law," *The New York Times*, accessed November 12, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/23/world/asia/pressure-to-repeal-chinas-one-child-law-is-growing.html?_r=0.

¹² “Your Contribution to China’s One-Child Policy,” The Population Research Institute, accessed November 12, 2015, <https://www.pop.org/content/your-contribution-china%E2%80%99s-one-child-policy>.

¹³ “Planned Parenthood 2013-2014 Annual Report,” accessed November 12, 2015, p. 21, https://www.plannedparenthood.org/files/6714/1996/2641/2013-2014_Annual_Report_FINAL_WEB_VERSION.pdf.

¹⁴ “Marco Rubio Slams China’s New Two-Child Policy: They Will Force Women to Abort The Third Baby,” LifeNews.com, accessed November 12, <http://www.lifenews.com/2015/10/29/marco-rubio-slams-chinas-new-two-child-policy-they-will-force-women-to-abort-the-third-baby/>.

¹⁵ “White House welcomes China's move to end 1-child policy, but calls for end to all birth limits,” *StarTribune*, accessed November 12, 2015, <http://www.startribune.com/white-house-says-china-should-remove-all-birth-limits/338394141/>.