

PATHFINDER

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Bambini, Kinder, Kodomos



Italy, Wanting More Young Squads Like the Above, Has Called Again for More Babies

Italy, Germany and Russia, leading exponents of Europe's Fascist and Communist camps, have each asked for more prolific mothers and decreed measures designed to fetch in the bambini, kinder and kodomos. Their dictators' desires for more babies and still more babies have developed into a population race.

Last week achievements in this three-cornered competition were shown to stand as follows:

ITALY: Dictator Mussolini has long called for more bambini to wear the blackshirt and be enrolled in the Sons of the She Wolf, thus insuring Italy man power for her future wars. He wants a population of 60,000,000 by 1950. In January, 1933, however, Italy had a population of only 41,806,000, and since then both births and deaths have declined, leaving the population at a near standstill in spite of Il Duce's bachelor taxes, subsidies for large families and high-pressure propaganda.

In fact, since 1922 Italy's marriage rate has fallen to 7.2 per 1,000 of population, her birth rate to 22.2 per 1,000 and her excess of births over deaths to 8.7 per 1,000. Before the World war these rates were 7.4, 31.7 and 12.2 respectively. The newspaper *Il Popolo d'Italia* of Milan has estimated that the steady decline in the birth rate has deprived Il Duce of 15 army divisions.

To combat this population tendency, the Fascist Grand Council last week approved a sweeping seven-point program to increase Italy's "military power" and provide "a secure future for the empire." All sorts of threats and cajoleries, including bigger marriage loans, state dowries for brides, big family loans and the like, were ordered. Most important of these were: (1) provisions that priority in employment and in promotion be given to fathers of big families; (2) fixing salaries for families rather than for individuals; and (3) placing further heavy economic burdens on bachelors and childless husbands.

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GERMANY: In the Third Reich, where a program has been tried to give married men more pay than single men, harsh decrees of Reichsfuehrer Hitler have failed to provide the Fatherland with enough new legions of baby Nordics. Despite "racial hygiene" measures, direct "marriage aid" loans, bachelor taxes, "honorary Godfatherships," and floods of propaganda for kinder, the birth rate is decreasing and the death rate increasing. Since 1922, Germany's birth rate has steadily declined from 23 to 18.9 per 1,000 of population.

In line with the Nazi policy of trying to stimulate the German birth rate, it was learned last week that a new criminal code soon will provide stringent penalties for violation of the sanctity of the family and throw new safeguards about the unmarried mother and her child. Jail sentences will be given those agitating for birth control. The man responsible for the unmarried mother's plight will render her "material and spiritual aid" or go to prison. Further, the current issue of "Race," organ of the Nordic movement, even goes so far as to encourage unmarried German women to bear illegitimate children.

RUSSIA: In the Soviet, it is an entirely different story. With a naturally fecund people, the population is increasing at a faster pace than that of any other great power. Growing at a rate of nearly 4,000,000 a year since 1929, Russia's 173,000,000 population would ordinarily be increased to 300,000,000 by the end of the 8th Five-Year Plan in 1967. But last summer the Kremlin issued the famous "big family decree," designed to double the population in 25 years.

Last week Russian authorities were worried by the birth rate jump. Their campaign for more kodomos had exceeded all expectations. So great has been the increase that facilities for caring for mothers and children are inadequate. Declared G. N. Kaminsky, Peoples Commissar of Health: "We must acknowledge that we are poorly prepared for the great increase in the birth rate with which we are already faced."

Notwithstanding, Soviet leaders point with pride to the fast population increase, officially estimated at between 35 and 50 per 1,000, and a decreasing death rate. Meanwhile, Russia's perennial enemy, Japan, is worried over a 10 per cent drop in her birth rate since 1922, and nearly all democratic countries (including the United States) show similar declines.

