

I heartily agree with James J. Kilpatrick's suggestion (Daily News, Jan. 23) that we should seriously consider enacting population-control laws. However, unless such laws are properly designed, they could have disastrous consequences for human freedom.

Let us suppose, for example, that population control is to be achieved by putting a legal limit on the number of children each couple can have. In order to maintain a stable population, the number of children allowed per couple would probably have to be somewhere between 2 and 3. Thus some couples would be permitted to have 2 children while others would be permitted to have 3. But who decides which couples may have 3 children? I feel ~~very~~ strongly that the decision should be made on the basis of a ~~lottery~~ lottery allowing every couple an equal chance to have 3 children. If the government, or any other agency, were to select the 3-child couples, they presumably would choose those couples likely to raise children having what the selecting agency regards as "desirable" characteristics. But different people have different ideas of what is "desirable." For instance, is the

government were to do the choosing, it would probably tend to select docile conformists who don't buck the system. A consistent policy of selecting these characteristics would eventually result in a society in which there is no dissent or questioning of official policies.

Whatever agency were to decide which ~~couples~~ couples are "desirable," the choice could not be made on an objective basis, because such a choice is a value-judgement and not a question of objective fact. Thus the choosing agency would be to some extent imposing its own system of values on the rest of the population. I regard this as undemocratic and wrong, and therefore I advocate a lottery.