

WOMEN OF THE MOUNTAINS

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Forced Abortions in China
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Introduction

In a country where the population has reached an estimated 1.3 billion residents, China has had to create new ways in which to keep its dense population under control. In 1979, a new policy was introduced by the leader of China, Deng Xiaoping, to strictly maintain China's population growth. This One Child Policy strictly limits couples to having only one child. Couples who choose to have a second child may be fined or may be forced to have the baby aborted (Rosenberg, M., 2011). In a 2007 broadcast of Morning Edition from NPR News, a story was told in which the baby of a seven months pregnant Chinese woman was aborted as a result of going against the One Child Policy. Wei Linrong, the mother, talked about how she and her husband do not believe in abortion and when they got pregnant with their second child they expected to pay a fine, like most cases were solved in which couples had a second child. It wasn't until seven months into Wei's pregnancy that government officials came to her home and forcefully took her to the hospital to have the baby aborted (Lim, L., Morning Edition (NPR), 2007). But Wei's story isn't the exception since other women in China have experienced the same tragedy. When Wei arrived at the hospital she noticed many other women who were forced into abortions against their will (Lim, L., Morning Edition (NPR), 2007). While China is using the One Child Policy as a way to maintain its large population, many women are suffering not only physically, but emotionally as a result of heavy governmental restrictions. Forced abortion in China is pushing the country into a deeper crisis through female genocide as it further results in an imbalance among the men to women ratio. Forced abortions must be stopped because it has exceeded its economical purposes and has turned into an act of cold blooded murder.

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Female Genocide

In China traditional values hold that male infants are preferred more frequently than females. Reasons include that males are heirs that traditionally pass on the family name and “they have a higher wage earning capacity especially in agrarian economies” (Hesketh & Wei Xing, *The Problem of Son Preference*, 2006). For this reason, many times in Chinese families baby girls are aborted (Canadian Press, *The*, 2010). This results in a greater amount of female infanticides throughout China. In addition, many females who survive past birth usually end up being killed in the early stages of their life through abandonment or being killed shortly after birth (Lubman, S., 2005). In order to prevent disappointment with the baby’s gender, it is common for couples to secretly visit clinics to determine the fetus’ sex before hand. That way the baby can be aborted earlier, and couples can continue to try and produce a male offspring (Canadian Press, *The*, 2010). As female genocides continue to be a problem in China, the world can expect to see a great decrease in the number of women who live there.

Imbalance

Today in China the ratio between men and women is greatly imbalanced. In a January 2010 report it stated, “the male-female ratio at birth was 119 males to 100 females, with the gap as high as 130 males for every 100 females in some provinces,” (Canadian Press, *The*, 2010). Because there are more men in China than there are women, men will face challenges in finding a spouse. Crime will increase in many areas as abductions occur more frequently. Female trafficking will also grow to become a great problem. There have been many cases reported in which women have been trafficked for prostitution and labor for men who have trouble finding a wife in a country where there isn’t enough women to go around (*Thirteen*, 2003). Because there

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aren't enough women in China, cases of homosexuality have increased. In China today the number of homosexuals "is estimated to be about 5 million to 12.5 million, accounting for 2 to 4 per cent of the adult male population," (Feng, Z., 2004). These numbers are still rising and as they do, the numbers of cases of HIV are found to be increasingly more prevalent within these relationships. As the One Child Policy has been put in place for about 32 years now, and continues to maintain its place, its main concern will not be population control any longer. With growing crime rates, women trafficking, and an increase in HIV cases due to homosexuality, the Chinese government will have to focus their attention on implementing new laws and regulations to help maintain these newly developed problems.

Moral Argument

When you look at China and the problems it faces today with its massive population it is easy to understand why they have chosen to take such strict measures like aborting many millions of children each year to maintain a population level the country can manage. Even though China has a huge population, the One Child Policy is a cruel and drastic measure used to maintain control. Many women in China face the tragic reality of having their babies taken from them against their own will each year. Many of these women do not just suffer physically from the pain that comes from having an abortion, but they also suffer from the psychological effects of losing a child. Having an abortion can cause a woman to go into severe depression. Every person on this earth has the ability to reach their full potential and when an unborn child is killed for the purpose of satisfying a demand created by the government, what it all narrows down to is cold-blooded murder. Cold-blooded murder can be defined as the act of purposefully committing murder for reasons that selfishly justify a person's wants. In the case of China it is selfish for individuals who choose to have an abortion because of the baby's gender or in the

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case of China's government, for officials to force its citizens to have abortions against their will, in order to satisfy a higher authority – the Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping. As previously discussed in the story of Wei Linrong, she noticed the measures taken to cover up incidents of forced abortion. Likewise, a man referred to as Xiao Lu was also a witness that day at the hospital. Through a translator he gave an account of what he saw taking place. He reported, “Workers were clearing up all the beds. Many, many stained mattresses were stacked on top of each other, and they were bringing in clean beds. They were putting healthy normal babies and mothers sleeping together so it looked peaceful and nice. Downstairs, I saw all the women who'd been pregnant, and they were being told to get onto a bus,” (Lim, L., Morning Edition (NPR), 2007). If the Chinese government is making sure situations like this one are covered up from the public, this proves that the government knows this practice is morally wrong. Anytime someone purposefully takes another individual's life away for reasons other than to save another's life, it should be considered the same as murder. That is what the Chinese government is doing. They are taking away the lives of many unborn infants that don't have a say in the decision of their own lives.

Solutions

Because China has a large population, it may be necessary to enact laws that help keep its large population under control, as long as those laws do not hurt its citizens. In a research paper done by Yonghong Wang, he suggests that by changing the One Child Policy from “number oriented to people oriented” this would “replace coercion with voluntary participation,” (Wang, Y., 2003). By following Wang's suggestion Chinese citizens wouldn't feel as pressured by the

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government and would actively want to participate in a law that provided them a choice. Other proposed solutions include strict laws supporting the prohibition of female trafficking as well as using methods to determine the sex of a fetus for the sole purpose of conducting an abortion (Wang, Y., 2003). By creating alternative solutions and enforcing laws that have already been put in place to protect female genocide, China will eventually be able to maintain a healthy population level and correct gender imbalance in later generations.

Conclusion

Forced abortions in China need to be stopped. These result in female genocide, an imbalanced ratio of men and women, and increases in crime and women trafficking. However, the main reason why forced abortions should be stopped is because they are a form of murder. Women suffer from the physical and emotional pains that come from having an abortion and it is unjust and unfair for a woman to forcibly have an abortion against her will. Women must not be limited to the number of children they can have. China must change its policy or greater consequences could result.

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