versed. Where the Church now stands, AID has concluded, is on a troubled in-between ground bordered by deeply felt, difficult-to-change doctrine on one side and a growing awareness of the doctrine's disagreeable consequences on the other.

In some countries, it was reported, this has led to an unspoken truce with population planning groups: The Church has not condemned their efforts, and the government has even gone so far as to offer what one governmental delegate described as "back-door cooperation." Generally, however, it appears that the attitude on the part of both Church and government has been that any programs involving methods other than the theologically acceptable rhythm method must be carried out in a fashion that will permit all parties to make a gracious retreat if the issue flares up.

On the basis of these evaluations of attitudes in Latin America, AID has concluded that, while the situation is changing and can be encouraged to change even more, nothing but great destruction could result from any effort to bring about abrupt shifts in religious or governmental policies. First of all, it is recognized that, even if the Church and Latin-American governments were suddenly to reverse their attitudes, no means are at hand to give impoverished, low-literacy populations the small-family goals that took generations to evolve in the western, industrialized nations. India and Pakistan, for example, have government-endorsed and -financed family-planning programs and are unaffected by religious opposition, but despite a decade of effort neither nation has yet produced any significant reduction in its birth rate. Perhaps even more important than the lack of a technology that can bring swift changes in birth rates amidst Latin America's conditions is the awareness that nothing can happen there until the ruling groups become acutely motivated to make something happen. And it is in this direction that AID is making efforts, with frequent harping on the theme that uncontrolled population growth imposes a crushing burden on efforts to accelerate economic development. Hand in hand with this economic argument goes the humane plea for looking upon birth control as a public health measure designed not only to balance population and resources but also to serve as a preventive for Latin America's booming abortion rate.

Ever since President Kennedy reversed President Eisenhower's stand and made population growth a legitimate subject of government concern, U.S. officials have been gingerly addressing themselves to the issue, with statements judiciously engineered to hit the subject, but without offending religious or national sensibilities. The statements add up to a progression of increasingly franker approaches to what these same officials readily say privately —that if the underdeveloped countries don't stop having so many babies, many of them are going to find it impossible to maintain even their now inadequate standards of living. It never comes out quite like that in public, but at the IPPF conference the official U.S. statement made a fairly close approach. Delivered by William D. Rogers, Deputy U.S. Coordinator for the Alliance for Progress, it stated:

> Let no one underestimate the importance of population to economic and social development under the Alliance. . . . Latin America has the highest rate of population in the world. . . . In the most practical, material way, population increase has become an indisputable element in the march of the Alliance for Progress. . . . There is in short a palpable and undeniable relationship between population and economic development. At best, quick increases in population are postponing and stretching out the entire development process; at worst, it may well be that Latin America simply cannot absorb its mushrooming population and meet the minimum goals set by [the Alliance]. . . . In Latin America, time is of the essence. Programs and efforts that in one decade might have enormous consequence for the future prospects of a nation may be too little and too late a decade hence. The time is now, not ten years from now.

As for what the United States is prepared to do, the answer offered by Rogers is that it is going to do almost anything short of giving away contraceptives—which, after all, are relatively inexpensive and within the means of any country that decides their purchase merits government support.

"Our efforts," Rogers stated, "will be concentrated in the fields of information, training and research. . . . We intend to cooperate closely with national governments, indigenous scientific institutions, and educational institutions while respecting their particular cultures and moral values."

Privately, however, AID is thinking about going beyond the policy of simply responding to requests for help. Birth control, in or out of Latin America, is such a sensitive, emotion-laden subject that no country can expect to impose its will upon another, but between passively waiting for cries for help and aggressively promoting birth control there is a politically and theologically safe middle ground of drumming up requests for help. And AID population officials, who, when cautioned to go slow, wave the Fulbright amendment like a police pass, are working on programs designed to convince Latin-American leaders that overpopulation is among the greatest threats to the

Science and Society: White House Tea for Academy Wives

News of science and news of society rarely cross paths, but Mrs. Johnson's afternoon tea for wives accompanying their husbands to the annual spring meeting of the National Academy of Sciences in Washington this week was something of an exception. The event may tell little of Johnson's attitude toward federal support for science —an invitation to the White House does not, as many have discovered, imply immunity from budget cuts or an identity of views on all subjects of interest to the visitors. Nonetheless, Mrs. Johnson's gesture to the wives of America's most distinguished scientists is worth notice, for not longer ago than the Eisenhower reign, scientists were not considered very good company, and the appearance of one at a party would have been as surprising as a photo of Ike embracing Mao. Kennedy, who took a friendly view of scientists and was interested in their work, ended their social banishment; scientists became frequent visitors. The new President and his wife have had a colossal number of tea parties, and neither too much nor too little should be read into this one. But it does suggest that Johnson wants the friendly relations established by Kennedy to be maintained, and that the scientists are not about to be sent back into exile.—E.L.