

Student:

“War is enviable in this day and age... War would control population. Population is the cause for hunger problems, global warming, depleting fresh water reserves among other things. Why are we feeding the hungry? Helping the sick in undeveloped countries? Isn't that just adding to the problem. New medicines are making people live longer, which means they can produce more waste, consume more non-renewable resources. Generally these peoples live in the non-developed areas of the world, the places that are most precious and pristine. Increasing the mortality will lead to over population of these area and more degradation of the earth and its limited virgin resources that need to be protected... The world's population is out of control, and polluting is also out of control, and leading to global warming. So, stop helping the less fortunate.”

Kestas:

The position you have taken in your paper goes along the lines of Social Darwinism (strong should live and exploit others and the weak should die), which historically had led to fascism, totalitarianism, and genocide. The principle flaw of this type of thinking, in my opinion, is in the lack of understanding of the fundamental concept of the demographic transition, which we discussed in the class. Keeping certain populations in their developing stages will not stop them from exhausting their own resources and spreading the misery around. Quite opposite, when the societies go through the development, their birth rates decrease, population stabilizes, resources are not overused, and the order and stability emerges. Think about it, and you'll see that by only helping other countries get educated and evolve quickly, we will be able to stabilize world's population, prevent starvation, disease, and, yes, the global climate change. Your pessimism about this issue is probably inspired Malthus. However, technological optimists have proven Malthus wrong many times. I believe that the common sense will prevail and the exploitation of all non-renewable resources such as coal will eventually slow down, as renewable technologies become more and more competitive. After all, being pessimistic is so sad. Also, the humanity has evolved so strong not because we are superior to other animals physically but because we help each other, work well in groups, and save and spread the knowledge.

War and genocide are the most horrible things that humanity engages in, unfortunately quite often. Some of my classmates were badly hurt in the war in Afghanistan. I hope you will not lose your friends in the senseless killing that takes place right now in the world. I hope that you will think about the demographic transition and see the point I'm trying to make.

Education is not only to give you knowledge but also to help you realize how much you do not know. Truly educated people are humble.

Kestas