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Introduction to the New Zealand Section

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Introduction to the New Zealand Section

Colleagues who live in major countries may not realize that it is sometimes embarrassing to be a citizen of a small country. If we are in Europe the inevitable question is "Ou est la Nouvelle Zélande?" We used to explain lamely that it is "près de l'Australie," but as often as not this led to "Ou est l'Australie?" (Abject apologies to Australian cousins.)

To orientate the many readers who may be asking the same questions, we shall explain our location in simple terms. Take a plane from Los Angeles to Honolulu, turn 80 degrees to the left, jump one day ahead when you cross the International Date Line, fly more or less due south, and when the pilot calls out "Next stop, the South Pole!" disembark as quickly as you can.

You are now in New Zealand, a rich, beautiful country, uniquely blessed by God and nature, 1,000 miles long and 300 miles wide (about the size of England and Scotland together). It is occupied by 2.9 million people and, to show how silly half-educated scientists can be, they are already obsessed by over-population fears and are shouting for Zero Population Growth — a sententious and contradictory term. It should more accurately be called No Growth, or simply Static Population.

As no biological graph ever runs in a straight horizontal line, it soon becomes obvious that a population is either living and growing or it is dying. The Zero Population philosophy is therefore a death wish in scientific terms. As a result of four generations of secular education, its advocates lack any existential sense of God and suffer a feeling of despair (the Doomsday Movement). Their psychological background is one of xenophobia, misanthropy and endogenous depression. The disease afflicts many physicians too.

Catholics make up about 15 per cent of New Zealand's population, but the percentage is lower in the professions. Here the Church is in a healthy condition; there have been some defections but not as much post-Vatican II hysteria as older countries have suffered.

New Zealand is honored by this special section of *The Linacre Quarterly* which reviews some of the major issues troubling the medical profession in recent years. The writers represented are competent and come from within and outside the Catholic community. We hope their articles will be of value to readers in many countries.

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New Zealand Editor