From Phyllis Schlafly December 23, 1983

CHRISTMAS, CHILDREN, AND CABBAGE PATCH DOLLS

Some seek the meaning of Christmas in the Christ Child, some from their own children gathered around the hearth, and millions, apparently, from a Cabbage Patch Doll.

As dolls go, the Cabbage Patch Doll is not pretty. It has no silken hair, no winning smile, no beautiful clothes. Why, then are we witnessing such an irrational demand for this doll?

Part of the doll's commercial success may be the American passion for fads. Part of it also seems to be that each doll is unique (no other doll is exactly the same); and each doll has a "birth certificate" and "adoption papers" to give it identify in its adoptive "family."

Can it be that the cultural phenomenon of the Cabbage Patch Doll is a reaction to the anti-child currents that swept across our nation through the 1970s? Two decades ago, the child was the core-center that binds a family together, gives it commitment, perspective, and faith in the future, and gives a life mission to a mother and a father above and beyond their workaday drudgery.

But the winds of "sexual liberation" and "women's liberation" made the child irrelevant, then a nuisance, and finally a victim. The sexual liberation movement was a demand for sex without children.

It's no accident that there are no pictures of babies in Playboy and Penthouse. There is no room in the Playboy "inn" for a baby; there is room only for narcissistic pleasure in every kooky variety. If a child tries to enter the relationship or cramp the lifestyle of the sexually liberated, that child must be ruthlessly eliminated.

This glorification of sex without children has become what Midge

Decter calls "the worship of sterility." It manifests itself in abortion and sterilization. It exalts the deliberately-childless couple, as well as "gay sex," as "options" for "alternate lifestyles."

It's no accident that classroom sexuality courses and teen clinics teach teenagers how to experiment with sex without having a baby. Indeed, that is the way "responsible" sexuality is defined for unmarried teenagers.

The child is the unhappiest victim of the high divorce rate. The child's need for the emotional security of a home with two parents is sacrificed on the altar of the parents' pursuit of other partners, personal careers, or independent lifestyles.

The child is the principal victim of the women's liberation movement, whose ideology teaches wives and mothers that caring for babies is oppressive and imprisoning, and that the child's needs must be subordinated to the mother's career fulfillment. In the feminist era, the traditional role of motherhood is labelled an obsolete stereotype.

The child takes the brunt of the massive movement of wives and mothers into the labor force. When motherhood as a career goes out of style, the child is left with a series of hired caretakers and, after a few years, to become a latchkey child, coming home from school each day to a dark and empty home.

All about us, we can see young women with good jobs making excellent salaries, unwilling to fulfill the role of motherhood, and unable to find either a husband or a hired custodian who will adequately function as a surrogate mother. In the real world, not many men want to be a mother, and hired custodians depart from their job at the end of their work day.

The child is a pathetic victim of the welfare spending apparatus. This gigantic money machine, which provides financial incentives to illegitimacy and to chasing the father out of the home, has doomed millions of children to grow up with that double burden.

Millions of children are victimized by drug peddlers stalking grade

schools, by society's scum using children for prostitution or pornography, and even by parents (whose sensibilities have been dulled by alcohol and/or [redacted] TV violence) committing violent acts on [redacted] their own children.

This Christmas, some two million children seem to be yearning for a Cabbage Patch Doll. But more millions of children are yearning for a mother who will give "quantity time" in the sacrificial, traditional role of motherhood. Other millions yearn for a father whose manhood is expressed in the traditional role of provider and protector of his wife and [redacted] children.

Maybe the demand for a Cabbage Patch Doll is really a child's cry to have an identity as a loved member of an intact family. Maybe the Christ Child, who is love and life itself, can remind every young mother how much she is needed by her baby who is, as Mother Teresa said, "the greatest gift [redacted] of God to a nation and to a family."