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Rosen. Cameralism and the Concept of Medical Police, In Bull. of the History of Medicine, 1953 [photocopie]

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Références bibliographiques

- [\[anonyme ou collectif\] Bulletin of the history of medicine](#)
- [Rosen, Cameralism and the Concept of medical police, In Bull. history of medicine 1953](#)

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achieve as large a population as can be maintained.³ Similar views were strongly advocated in England and Scotland. An elaborate economic program prepared for Queen Anne around 1707 by Nehemiah Grew, physician and botanist, concludes with a chapter entitled "Of the Means of Multiplying Your Majesties People for the Speedier Progress of the Aforesaid Improvements."⁴ David Hume, the philosopher, urged that the state actively foster the growth of population by encouraging all institutions that favored this process and eliminating those that did not.⁵ French thinking on this problem expressed itself even more in deeds than in words. In terms of actual measures taken to stimulate an increase in population, France outstripped all other countries.⁶ As part of his economic program, Jean Baptiste Colbert, the minister of Louis XIV, sponsored laws to grant tax exemptions for early marriage. Indeed, in an act of 1669 applying to Canada, he went so far as to impose fines on fathers who did not marry off their daughters before the age of sixteen and their sons before twenty. A year earlier, Colbert had written to the Intendant in Canada that "An Intendant must not believe that he has done his duty unless he has made sure of a yearly increase of at least 200 families." In the same spirit a French official in 1711 proposed that a subsidy of 30 *livres* be given for every marriage, urging his proposal on the ground that "since this assistance will be given only to young people, it is not entirely useless to the state, for it will supply subjects at a cheap price."

This almost fanatical emphasis on a dense population was justified on political, economic, and military grounds. The commonly held view is neatly summed up by John Bellers, a Quaker cloth merchant of London. "Regularly laboring people are the Kingdom's greatest treasure and strength, for without laborers there can be no lords; and if the poor laborers did not raise much more food and manufacture than what did subsist themselves, every gentleman must be a laborer and every idle man must starve."⁷ A larger population meant greater production as well as greater consumption, two ideas aptly phrased by Daniel Defoe. "The

³ Philipp Wilhelm von Hörnigk: *Oesterreich über Alles, Wann es nur will . . .*, 1684. See Roscher, *op. cit.*, pp. 289-293.

⁴ E. A. Johnson: *Predecessors of Adam Smith*, New York, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1937, p. 136.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁶ Heckscher, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-161.

⁷ John Bellers: *An Essay towards the Improvement of Physick, in twelve proposals, by which the lives of many thousands of the rich, as well as the poor may be saved yearly. . . .* London, J. Sowle, 1714, p. 37.

