

UK

The prince who wanted to become a deadly virus

CREATION

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“In the event that I am reincarnated, I would like to return as a deadly virus, to contribute something to solving overpopulation.” This phrase by Prince Philip, whose funeral is celebrated today at Windsor Castle in the south of England, shines a spotlight on an important aspect of his life that has been largely overlooked by those **commemorating his long legacy after his death on 9 April, 2021.**

Unlike some of his gaffes, this wasn't one of those off-the-cuff comments that besieged his reputation. On the contrary, it expressed a profound conviction that determined his commitments during his active life. The quote taken from an interview in 1988 **confided to Deutsche Press-Agentur** is compounded in other numerous interviews and lectures he gave on the subject of conservation. Safeguarding the environment was a role he assumed with dedication and one which he called on all persons in positions of power to assume too, because by default, they directly impact the behaviour of those below them.

But in the hypothetical case of his reincarnation, the fact the Duke of Edinburgh wanted to return as a deadly virus to 'cure' the world of its presumed sickness, overpopulation, by killing off millions of people, left everybody dumbfounded. What's more, he failed to mention, whether the immense suffering that he would inflict on those he infected concerned him slightly.

Yet, population control, as his comment suggests, was not Prince Philip's principal target, it was the means to an end. Preserving a sustainable environment was his concern and in his opinion, uncontrolled population growth was the cancer which if left untreated would ultimately lead to its demise. He saw the issue of unchecked population growth in the same unsentimental way he saw the need to cull animals in order to maintain the delicate equilibrium of natural sustainability. Prince Philip explained his point very well by using the example of the success of a United Nations project in the 1940's which eradicated malaria in Sri Lanka. “What people didn't realise was that malaria was actually controlling the growth of the population. The consequence was that within about 20 years the population doubled. Now they've got to find something for all those people to do and some way to feed them.”

There was no facade about Prince Philip, he always said what he meant and once his mind was made up, he stuck to his story like glue. His position as the Queen of the United Kingdom's consort obviously multiplied the occasions available for him reach many audiences, and the conservationist message he told the world was set in stone. **Fred Hauptfuhrer interviewed him** for PEOPLE back in 1981, for an article titled *Vanishing Breeds Worry Prince Philip, but Not as Much as Overpopulation*

To the question, "What do you consider the leading threat to the environment?"

, prince Philip replied: "Human population growth is probably the single most serious long-term threat to survival. We're in for a major disaster if it isn't curbed—not just for the natural world, but for the human world. The more people there are, the more resources they'll consume, the more pollution they'll create, the more fighting they'll do. We have no option. If it isn't controlled voluntarily, it will be controlled involuntarily by an increase in disease, starvation and war".

To the question "Is birth control part of the solution?", the Duke replied: "Yes, but you can't legislate these problems away. You've got to get people to understand the need for it: the more important people, the ones who have responsibilities and can actually do something about the problem. Those who have no responsibilities have got to do it because they're at the receiving end. They've got to accept the measures".

Right from the start, Prince Philip was intent on leaving a mark. He founded the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) in 1961 and served as the UK president from 1961 to 1982, international president from 1981, and president emeritus from 1996. He helped found the Australian Conservation Foundation in 1963 was also president of the Zoological Society of London for two decades and was appointed an honorary fellow in 1977. Yet, animal welfare enthusiasts found him an unlikely ally and often struggled to deal with what they saw as his mixed-messaging if not hypocrisy.

They couldn't understand how he could justify both the **right to hunt** and the fight against extinction at the same time. Prince Philip in turn complained they had missed the point, "When I was president of the WWF, I got more letters from people about the way animals were treated in zoos than about any concern for the survival of a species. People can't get their heads around the idea of a species surviving, you know, they're more concerned about how you treat a donkey in Sicily or something." ..."I think that there's a difference between being concerned for the conservation of nature and being a bunny-hugger," he told *BBC's* Fiona Bruce in 2011.

In his mind, the conservation of nature and stable population growth was the responsible recognition that both needed each other if life was to survive on the earth. His speech in 1990 at the Rafael M.S. Salas Lecture 'People and Nature' at the United Nations in New York, served to make this point. "...Over 25 years ago, I began to realise that, while the human species reflects great credit on scientists and technologists, the resulting human population explosion had become the root cause of the degradation of the natural environment and responsible for the extinction of wild species of plants and

animals.It must be obvious by now that further population growth in any country is undesirable. ... What matters is the size of the population in proportion to the space available... our planet earth is a ball of fixed size. ... The fuse of the population bomb has already been ignited and the consequences of the explosion for the future world will be a great deal more devastating than any nuclear holocaust.”

Exactly who was to defuse this bomb and make the executive decisions to guarantee the survival of the species came next. This was his reply, “I have no doubt that the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) is concerned about the conservation of nature, and the WWF promotes family planning in its integrated conservation projects. ... I hope I have made it clear that both the control of human population numbers and the conservation of nature are concerned in their own ways with the future health and welfare of the planet earth and all its living inhabitants. ... The leaders in thought, in politics and in administration, [should] begin to face the facts and start to make serious efforts to find ways of solving the crisis.”

Prince Philip’s bizarre quote which resumed prominence after Buckingham Palace announced his death last week, provoked exclamations of amazement and his remarks were linked to the deaths provoked by the COVID-19 pandemic. But what many fail to notice is that the population control policies he advocated and that are practiced by United Nations agencies find their roots in **Britain’s Eugenics movement** which became a force at the time of Prince Philip’s birth in 1921. Hopefully, one day after the politically correct narrative of his legacy subsides, someone will reconstruct the **overlooked truths** it reveals. Until then, population control enthusiasts are probably crossing their fingers in the hope that Prince Philip will come back as a ghastly virus and help them finish the job!

But should he disappoint them, the Duke’s son Charles and grandson William, future heir to the throne, have taken up his baton and are already doing him proud.