

THE Libertarian Forum

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The UN And The War

As we write, the UN has sat down to thrash over the new war between India and Pakistan, and anguished cries are being raised about the unfortunate "ineffectuality" of the United Nations. The anguish is sadly misplaced. For the real points about the UN is that it is only tolerable *so long as it remains ineffectual*.

For the whole concept of the United Nations is mischievous. First, because underneath the UN lurks the possible danger of a genuine world government, that world government that used to be the rallying cry for all manner of well-meaning liberals. Give us a world government, give us "One World", and there will be nowhere on the planet to escape its tyranny. At least nowadays, we can shop around from one government to the next, and escape from a site of greater tyranny to a lesser—and our retreatists can at least dream of setting up their own private and stateless islands. But come a world government, and these options will be rudely taken from us.

Happily, the dream of world government remains a misty and far-off ideal, smashed on the rock of Great Power hostility. But a grave danger remains, the highly dangerous principle that lies at the heart of the UN philosophy. This principle is the New Deal-Wilsonian concept of "collective security against aggression," the siren song under which two World Wars and a Cold War have been fought in our century. The "collective security" principle postulates that in every war there is a clear-cut, easily discernible, "aggressor." Usually the "aggressor" is simple-mindedly branded as the first State that crosses another State's borders with troops. The "collective security" principle holds that all the nations of the world are then duty-bound to get together to use *force majeure* against the "aggressor", and to defeat his evil designs. In practice, in our century, the United States has taken upon itself the "collective security" role, the White Knight in shining armor that sets out to defend the entire world against the Bad Dragon of aggression.

The fallacies and dangers in this doctrine abound at every hand. The first problem is the simplistic definition of "aggression." The analogy, usually implicit but sometimes expressly held, is always taken from aggression by one individual upon another. If Smith is seen to be jumping on and stealing a watch from Jones, then Smith can easily be labelled the "aggressor", and police may be called upon to defend Jones and apprehend the criminal for return of the loot. But while we might be able to say easily that Jones deserved to have the watch and that therefore Smith was an aggressor, the same can scarcely be said for State X which has been invaded by State Y. For to call State Y an "aggressor" *per se* must mean that the present territorial boundaries of State X are somehow morally and rightfully

its own, in the same way that Jones' watch is rightfully *his* own. But since national territories have invariably been acquired by *previous* aggression rather than by voluntary social contract, to leap automatically to the defense of the invaded State is an absurdity. On what moral grounds are we to cry "Halt" and thereby ratify every aggression *previous* to, say, December 1971 as legitimate and moral?

To turn the analogy around, suppose that on deeper investigation we find that Smith was *not* stealing Jones' watch, but simply catching Jones who had previously stolen Smith's watch, and that therefore Smith's seeming act of "aggression" was really an act of self-defense? This is certainly possible among individuals, and indeed often happens. But how then can we justify an automatic ganging up on State Y which might be retrieving territory previously grabbed by State X? Furthermore, since *all* States are aggressors anyway against their own population, even the most aggrieved State can never, for libertarians, aspire to the simple status of innocent victim, as say Jones may have been when set upon by Smith. No State, in fact, is worth the extra State aggression upon their subjects that will be involved in every State's ganging up on the "aggressor" in the collective-security *mystique*.

In the collective security myth, then, all States are supposed to join against the aggressor in the same spirit as a policeman against an individual criminal. Hence, the absurd American use of the term "police action" rather than "war" to characterize our imbroglio in Korea in the early 1950's.

Furthermore, there is no way to prevent the ganging up of collective security from being a league of States dedicated to defending the *status quo*, no matter how pernicious, by coercion. The League of Nations or United Nations then necessarily becomes a gang of States trying to preserve their territories and privileges by force against the newer nations that are trying to win their place in the sun, or against aggrieved States trying to recover some of their national territory. Moreover, the ganging up insures that any war, anywhere in the globe, no matter how trivial, will be maximized into a world-wide conflict. Collective security then becomes a method for the global aggrandizement of dispute and conflict, so that all peoples everywhere get drawn into the net of warfare and killing. In these days of brutal weapons of mass destruction, in our age when warfare rests on the mass murder of innocent civilians, the globalizing of conflict *via* collective security is a monstrous death trap for the peoples of the world. The sooner the United Nations, or any other scheme of collective security, disappears, the safer shall all of us be.

As for the United States government, ever since the be-knighted Woodrow Wilson (the self-righteous prig whom H. L.

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Mencken dubbed "The Archangel Woodrow"), we have been the world's number one champion of the *status quo*. Therefore, in the complex world of foreign affairs, there is a good rule of thumb for the libertarian: find out the stand of the United States, and it will be the wrong one. The American genius for taking the wrong side is unailing.

Such has been the case in the current war on the Indian subcontinent. To speak of the "territorial integrity" of Pakistan — or India, too, for that matter — is a grisly joke. Neither country is a "nation" in any sense; both are disparate congeries of clashing ethnic, cultural, racial, and linguistic groups. Both "nations" are creatures carved out by British imperialism, Britain's last bitter legacy to the conquered nations of the subcontinent. But of these injustices, the worst and most glaring is the situation in East Pakistan (East Bengal). As we pointed out in our May, 1971 issue ("For Bengal"), the Punjabis of West Pakistan have, since the inception of this absurdly divided State, been exploiting and ruling over the far more productive Bengalis of the East. Last Spring, the Bengali crisis came to a head when the ruling oligarchy of Punjab, defeated in an election, suspended Parliament and arrested the Bengali leadership. This was the final straw that provoked the Bengali drive for autonomy and home rule into a determined movement for independence, for "Bangla Desh" (Bengal Nation). The Punjabis of the West responded by wielding the Pakistani army (totally Western) as an instrument of repression, mass torture, and literal genocide against the Bengali population, especially against the hated Hindu minority. As in all forms of counter-revolution, and counter-guerrilla warfare, genocide against the mass of the population was made necessary by the fact that the *entire* population of Bengal are opposed to the Punjabi oppressors.

Here, in Bengal, there is no clique of generals, no Communist question, to cloud the issue, as there is in Indochina; here is simply a nation of Bengalis trying to throw off an imperial Punjabi yoke. And yet, once more, the United States takes the Pakistani side; the U. S.'s deep yearnings for stability and order — for the *status quo* — and its military alliances with Pakistan, clearly come before any considerations of justice for the Bengali people.

India could have continued to serve as a base for Bengali guerrilla war and as a haven for the mass of Bengali refugees — already the staggering total of over 9 million. But India was forced to move quickly — not only from overwhelming sympathy for its Bengali brethren (West Bengal is part of India), but also because the flood of refugees has created an enormous economic problem in West Bengal, a state already impoverished and over-populated. For the inflow of refugees has already greatly lowered the West Bengali wage rate and driven up the price of food and other necessities; to return the refugees to their homes without delay, India felt forced to strike quickly. Naturally, the United States, defending the *status quo* and true to the fetish of collective security and "aggression", leaped in to try to use the UN as a club for forcing India to suspend hostilities. (With China and Russia bitterly on opposing sides, our knee-jerk anti-Communists must feel puzzled about what side to take.) Fortunately, it looks as if the Russian veto will bar UN coercion; but if not for this happenstance, the nations of the world would have been mobilized to fasten the chains upon the people of Bengal. But this was a fortuitous accident. It is high time that we cease to rely on some Great Power veto, and that we ditch the collective security myth altogether; it is high time to revive the grand old "isolationist" slogan: that we withdraw from the United Nations.

"Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigue of supporting it."
--- Thomas Paine.

Mises Festschrift

The Institute for Humane Studies (1134 Crane St., Menlo Park, Calif. 94025) is to be commended for its noble work in organizing and publishing a handsome two-volume *festschrift* in honor of the 90th birthday of the beloved Grand Old Man of economics, social philosophy, and *laissez-faire*, Ludwig von Mises. The book, *Toward Liberty*, is beautifully bound, contains the imprint of Mises' signature, and includes contributions from 67 members of the Mont Pelerin Society, an international association of free-market oriented economists and intellectuals. The contributions are photographed from the typescripts. A recent photograph of our Nestor graces the front of the book.

The most important contribution of this volume is the fact that it exists, embodying as it does a small portion of the debt and the honor that all of us owe to Professor von Mises; the book will endure as a living testament to the esteem in which all of us hold our *lieber meister*.

The contents themselves are, as is inevitable in this kind of volume, a mixed bag. Some articles hastily rephrase the author's well-known themes; many others set forth in a kind of primer fashion the functions of the market economy. Other articles are unfortunately written as if Mises' great body of work never existed: their content is either non or even implicitly anti-Misesian. There are, however, when all this said, an unusually large number of articles that contribute important and original material, and within the Misesian framework.

Let us review the outstanding articles, taking them in order of their appearance in *Toward Liberty*. (Here I must note my lack of competence in assessing the twelve articles written in a foreign language.) Professor George A. Duncan of the University of Dublin contributes an excellent, hard-hitting critique of modern "growth economics", "Growth Delusions." In the course of the article, Professor Duncan provides a trenchant critique of modern mathematical economics. Professor Sven Rydenfelt of the University of Lund, in his "Rent Control in Sweden", outlines the unfortunate consequences of rent control in creating a shortage of housing; the article is particularly welcome because historical and illustrative studies of the effects of rent control are almost non-existent.

Professor William Hutt of the University of Dallas provides us with the latest chapter in the unique and continuing saga of his one-man crusade against Keynesian economics ("Reflections on the Keynesian Episode.") Professor Ludwig M. Lachmann of the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, one of the world's most subtle and high-powered members of the "Austrian School" of economics, provides a superb essay which one might wish were typical of all the contributions: an "Austrian" essay in subtle and sophisticated critique of currently orthodox "equilibrium theory." I myself think that Lachmann puts a little too much emphasis on the attack on equilibrium, which after all does provide a useful tool in explaining the *direction* in which the market economy is always moving. In going further to assert that the market does not even move in a consistent equilibrating *direction*, Professor Lachmann is following in the Hayekian rather than in the straight Misesian path. But Lachmann's "Ludwig von Mises and the Market Process" remains an outstanding contribution, and should send readers back to his totally-neglected book, *Capital and Its Structure*, an excellent contribution to the Austrian theory of capital and its intricate interrelations.

An article of comparable importance by another leading Austrian School economist is Professor Israel M. Kirzner's "Entrepreneurship and the Market Approach to Development." Professor Kirzner, of New York University, here develops his important battle on behalf of the Misesian, and

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in criticism of the dominant Schumpeterian, approach to the role of the entrepreneur. Kirzner points out that the entrepreneur is not the *disrupter* of equilibrium, the disturber of the peace as it were, but rather the person who leaps toward equilibrium by spotting maladjustments in the economy and taking steps to correct them. Kirzner also cogently points out the important political implications of this distinction for the underdeveloped countries.

In a rather hastily organized but fascinating article, Professor Simon Rottenberg of the University of Massa-

chusetts provides a pro-market critique of the fashionable new book by the British socialist R. M. Titmuss, attacking the idea of the sale and purchase, rather than the free gift, of human blood. ("The Production and Exchange of Used Body Parts.") And finally, Professor Hans F. Sennholz, of Grove City College, in one of his best articles in years, provides an excellent and devastating critique of the now-popular Friedmanite views on money. Sennholz's "Chicago Monetary Tradition in the Light of Austrian Theory" is the best extant Austrian critique of Chicagoite monetarism. ■

Recommended Reading

Jerome Tuccille, *Radical Libertarianism: A New Political Alternative* (Harper & Row, paper, \$1.25). Jerry Tuccille's first book, still the best introduction to libertarianism and the libertarian movement, had the misfortune of coming out (1970) just too early for the boom in libertarian publicity in the spring of this year. Now it is out in inexpensive paperback, and suitable for being spread throughout the land by every "missionary" for libertarianism. Buy It! Push it!

Branden Talks! The monthly magazine *Reason* (Box 6151, Santa Barbara, Calif. 93111) has an excellent special October issue (\$1.25), containing a reprint of the important Sennholz-Austrian critique of Friedmanite monetarism. It also features a lengthy, fascinating interview with Nathaniel Branden, in which Branden for the first time in print reveals much of the true inner nature of the upper strata of the Ayn Rand cult. Those of us who have been personally familiar with the Randian cult can endorse all of Branden's sharp criticisms, and welcome the putting into print of what has until now been only an oral tradition of exposure of the true nature of Randianism in action. The Rand-Branden split has had a happy effect on the development of the Objectivist movement, for it has meant that Objectivism has become "polycentric", and hence the breakup of the old Randian monolith has encouraged individual Objectivists to do something which they were never able to do under orthodox Randianism: to think for themselves. (It is typical that when a friend of ours showed a leading Orthodox Randian this issue of *Reason*, the latter expostulated: "Of course you're going to cancel your subscription!" Protect yourself from creeping heresy by never reading it!)

Paul Lepanto, *Return to Reason: An Introduction to Objectivism* (New York: Exposition Press, 154 pp. \$6.00). A comprehensive introduction to objectivist philosophy, undoubtedly the best available. It is written — *mirabile dictu* — without the traditional Randian rancor against all heretics and unbelievers, actual or potential. One suspects that a major reason for Mr. Lepanto's sane approach is his statement, "I am not personally acquainted with Miss Rand or her associates, past or present; I know them only through their works." Would that other Randians had taken the same course!

Libertarian Analysis. We have a libertarian quarterly (Box 210, Village Station, New York, N. Y. 10014, \$1.00 per issue, \$4.00 per year), of which two issues have appeared since the first, Winter 1970 issue. Its potential excellence has been marred by its dubious fundamental premise: a close working alliance between "right-wing" and left-wing anarchism. But the result is that each issue has at least one article to be recommended. In the first issue, Murray N. Rothbard, "Individualist Anarchism in the United States: the Origins", explores the unknown history of anarchist theorists and institutions in several colonies in 17th century America. Joseph R. Peden's "Courts Against the State" is a welcome exploration of three cases in the twentieth century when private commissions of inquiry into criminal actions of States played

an important role. The first such commission, the 1920-21 American Commission of Inquiry on Conditions in Ireland has been the most neglected, and is now the most timely.

In the second, Spring 1971 issue, Professor Justus Doenecke's "Lawrence Dennis: the Continuity of American Isolationism" is an excellent article by America's foremost scholar of isolationism on one of its foremost — and most consistent — leaders and theorists. And in the current, September, 1971 issue, the brilliant young libertarian historian R. Dale Grinder, in "H. L. Mencken: Notes on a Libertarian", provides a fine introduction to the work of one of the great, and certainly the wittiest, libertarians of this century.

Sacco-Vanzetti Revisionism. Francis Russell's definitive history of the Sacco-Vanzetti case, *Tragedy in Dedham* (New York: McGraw-Hill, paper, 503 pp., \$3.95), is now out in paper, with a new introduction on the latest aspects of the case. Russell shows that, contrary to left-wing mythology, Sacco was guilty of murder while Vanzetti was probably an accessory. Other revisionist works are the books by Busch (1952), Montgomery (1960), and Felix (1965).

Ludwig von Mises. In celebration of Mises' 90th birthday, Murray N. Rothbard, "Ludwig von Mises and the Paradigm for Our Age," *Modern Age*, Fall 1971 (743 North Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611), not only sets forth Mises' notable accomplishments, but provides a philosophic-sociological explanation of the general contemporary neglect of Mises and the Austrian School. Based on the seminal sociological work in the history of science by Thomas S. Kuhn.

Genetics and the IQ. There is nothing better calculated to send egalitarian leftists up the wall than any acknowledgment of the genetic, hereditary basis of intelligence. And yet, it is true — *eppur si muove*. In a critically important article, Professor Richard Herrnstein of Harvard, in "I. Q.," *Atlantic Monthly*, September, 1971, summarizes the best evidence on this controversial subject. Must reading. Herrnstein also points out that economic egalitarian measures will only leave more room for inequalities based on intelligence.

The Myth of the Welfare State. Several recent articles have done much to destroy the myth that the current welfare state really aids the poor and redistributes income and wealth on their behalf. Leonard Ross, "The Myth that Things are Getting Better," *New York Review of Books* (August 12), summarizes recent studies, in taxes and in higher education particularly, showing that the welfare state, in the U. S. and in England, does not, on net, take from the richer and give to the poor. Irving Kristol, "Welfare", *Atlantic Monthly*, August 1971, indicts left-wing social workers as being largely responsible for the disgraceful acceleration of the welfare rolls in recent years. Roger A. Freeman, "The Wayward Welfare State", *Modern Age* (Fall, 1971), focusses on the federal budget, the level of welfare payments as the cause of increasing welfare, and education, urban renewal and crime in the welfare state. ■

THE POPULATION HYSTERIA

By Jerome Tucille

(an excerpt from a forthcoming book)

The problem of overpopulation is usually the first objection raised against the prospect of extended life.

If the human race keeps procreating at its present rate, there will be only one square yard for every person by the year 2500. How can we think about permitting people to stay alive another twenty or thirty years when there are so many of us going hungry today? When we are increasing our numbers by one million a week? When there will be six or seven billion humans on this planet by the year 2000?

With the possible exception of environmental pollution, no subject has incited the ire of the Doomsday Prophets as much as the population problem. One can remember the day, back in the early 1960's, when the Machine Age Scare was the cause of apoplexy and near-hysteria in Think Tanks around the country. Apparently, we were entering an age of Creeping Mechanization which was destined to drive battalions of American blue-collar workers to the welfare rolls. By 1966, it seemed, the unemployment rate would be pushing 40 or 50 percent, and computerized robots would be prancing about the countryside doing everything from repairing faulty carburetors to boiling three-minute eggs in roadside diners. When 1966 passed into history, human automobile mechanics were still fleecing the public as though they had been tutored by John Dillinger; flesh-and-blood plumbers and electricians were moving into neighborhoods inhabited primarily by doctors, politicians and other racketeers; hash slingers across the nation had been unionized and commanded wages that turned insurance executives green with envy. The machines, far from putting the American workforce on relief, had created entire new industries and thousands of jobs that never existed before.

A few years later the American public was treated to the next in a never-ending series of globe-shattering crises: the Famine Scare of 1967. In this year the brothers

Paddock, Paul and William, warned us in their highly-acclaimed book, *Famine - 1975*, that India was doomed to be ravaged by large-scale famines. The famines would occur possibly as early as 1970 or 1971, definitely by 1972 or 1973, and most of its population would be decimated by 1975. The Paddocks promoted a "triage" system to save the world, a system used in military hospitals during wartime in which only those patients with some chance of survival are given medical treatment. They advocated that the United States, as the most productive country on earth, initiate massive foreign aid programs to those starving nations with a small chance of survival, and cut out foreign aid altogether to undeveloped nations, like India, for whom starvation was inevitable. Fortunately for India several private foundations ignored the advice of the Paddocks, and as a result India was able to develop a hardier wheat strain leading to a bumper crop in 1970. Now we anticipate that - barring some unforeseen cataclysm such as earthquakes or major war - India will be self-sufficient in food production early in this decade. The Paddocks made some other ominous predictions - among them: experimentation with rice and wheat strains would end in failure, and Pakistan would be wasted by famine before 1972. Statistics show that the development of hybrid rice and wheat strains enabled Pakistan to talk about exporting wheat in 1971, prior to the resurgence of its political disputes with East Pakistan and India. 1971 United Nations figures indicate that food production in the Far East - another area condemned to annihilation by the Paddocks - was "rising at a rate comfortably ahead of the population growth" because of the development of high-yield rice and wheat strains.

Another Doomsday Prophet, Dr. Paul R. Ehrlich, Professor of Biology at Stanford University, informed us in

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Libertarian Conference

The libertarian conference held in New York City on the weekend of November 13-14 was by far the most successful libertarian conference ever held, at least on the East Coast. It was a striking success not simply because it drew the largest audience yet for East Coast libertarians - over 400 persons. And not just because it was capably and smoothly organized by the New York Libertarian Association and the Society for Individual Liberty. For here was a deeper success story that struck everyone attending the conference. This was the harmony of views and attitudes that pervaded all factions gathered there. For in striking and dramatic contrast to the fiasco at the Hotel Diplomat on Columbus Day 1969, and even in visible contrast to the successful conference held last March, there was no brawling and clashing of factions, no marked hostility or mutual excommunications. While of course there are still marked differences between the various groups and tendencies in the movement, the various extremes have clearly drawn closer together. This drawing together enables all the factions to work harmoniously, not in an artificial "unity" that tries to paper over severe disagreement, but in a genuine harmony of common interest and enthusiasm. To borrow the Marxian phrasing, what were previously "antagonistic contradictions" within the libertarian movement have happily given way to "non-antagonistic contradictions." The libertarian movement is now united as never before.

What has happened is that a new maturity, a new sense of

responsibility, has now permeated all factions of the movement, at least on the East Coast. The wild-eyed extremes, both on the left and on the right, have both moved sharply toward the sober and responsible Center. Specifically, the febrile *militantes* of the ultra-left have abandoned their shrill cries to "rip off Amerika", their yen for street warfare, and their enthusiasm for anarcho-communism and anarcho-syndicalism. The left-wing has come to a new and sober appreciation of the virtues of Middle America and the middle class, and seems to have found once more at least some of its old devotion to private property and the free market. For their part, the right-wing "deviationists" have learned a great deal about the Establishment and about foreign policy; they seem to have lost most of their old enthusiasm for the Cold War, for red-baiting, and for the Founding Fathers. At the November conference, when Professors Leonard Liggio and Walter Grinder set forth their pro-isolationist, anti-imperialist, and anti-ruling elite analysis, the former hostility of the right-wing was replaced by a kind of resigned acceptance. The Sober Center, firmly pro-private property and anti-imperialist, which for a long time seemed to its despairing members to consist of twelve people trying to cope with ten thousand "deviationists" on their far left and right, has apparently triumphed at last.

And so there is reason to be more optimistic about the future of the movement than ever before. Our growing pains seem to be over. The quantitative leap forward in the last two years has at last been matched by a new accession of maturity and responsibility. We advance into the future with high hope.

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1969 that it was utopian to expect underwater agriculture to lead to increased food production in the near future. Farming of the sea is "another myth promoted by the ignorant or the irresponsible," according to Dr. Ehrlich. Yet, the facts show that advances in marine agriculture have played a decisive role in the increase in food production throughout Asia in 1970 — a year after Ehrlich's dire prediction.

Next we arrived at a point in time when we might normally expect a new crisis of monumental proportions to erupt on the American scene, and the experts have not disappointed us; not many take global famine seriously any longer, but overpopulation and environmental pollution are the twin juggernauts destined to destroy life on earth forevermore. Dr. Ehrlich is back again with *The Population Bomb*, predictably predicting that, not only are "hundreds of millions of people going to starve to death in spite of any crash foreign aid programs," but also that nothing now can "prevent a substantial increase in the world deathrate . . ." From this he goes on to tell us that seven billion people will inhabit our little ball by 2000 AD, and by 2800 AD the population of earth will be housed in a *two-thousand storey apartment house that covers the entire planet* no less. The author, having already determined that the battle against famine was lost and that world-wide famines would grip the earth by the early 1970's does not tell us how we will manage to survive until 2800 AD in sufficient numbers to fill a high-rise dwelling of such mammoth dimensions.

In the late 1960's, when Madan G. Kaul, Minister of the Indian Embassy, predicted that his country would be self-sufficient in food production by 1971, Dr. Ehrlich dismissed him as a utopian dreamer, claiming that he had yet to meet anyone as optimistic as Kaul. But, as mentioned earlier, India is on the brink of self-sufficiency. When India launched a vasectomy program in 1964 to control population growth, Ehrlich stated that this was also doomed to failure due to the reluctance of the citizenry and the technical problems involved in performing so many. Yet, a New York Times article in October, 1971, informs us that the turnout for voluntary vasectomies has far exceeded expectations, and new vasectomy camps are planned for all of India's 320 districts. The Indian government had originally distributed condoms to the male population, but later discovered that they weren't being used properly. Accordingly, vasectomies are now regarded as a safer alternative.

Dr. Ehrlich presents us with several scenarios for the years ahead guaranteed to titillate the fancies of necrophile the world over. They range in scope from the destruction of the entire population of earth, with cockroaches as the planet's only survivors, to his most "optimistic" outlook in which only 500 million people will have starved to death by 1980. Even the United States, the world's only remaining hope, is doing next to nothing to reduce its own birthrate — merely "bailing out a sinking ship with a small and leaky thimble" is the way he puts it. This last is somewhat at variance with most recent statistics on the subject, showing that U.S. fertility rate in summer of 1971 had dropped to its lowest level since the late 1930's, and the trend is ever-downward. The present figure is just slightly above the "optimum" level set by the advocates of Z. P. G. (Zero Population Growth). Moreover, the results of a study released in October, 1971, reveal that half the American population now favors liberalized abortion laws, an incredible jump from the 15 percent of 1968. Ehrlich concludes by criticizing our growing concern for *organ transplants and life extension* techniques at a time when the human race is tottering over the abyss, and he recommends governmental remedies that border on totalitarianism: prohibitive taxes on cribs, diapers, toys and other baby items; reverse progressive taxation rising for each

birth; government-authorized vasectomies; nationalized adoption agencies; and, *piece de resistance*, a powerful federal agency authorized to take *whatever steps are necessary* to establish a "reasonable population level" in the United States. The only thing he leaves out is Jonathan Swift's Modest Proposal that we eat unwanted children. He suggests that we lower the population of earth to one or two billion from the current level of 3.5 or 3.6 billions of human beings.

Compared with Dr. Ehrlich, Philip Appleman, another population alarmist who authorized *The Silent Explosion*, is a veritable Pollyanna. While he claims that his projected world population of six billion for the year 2000 is more than we can properly feed, he at least refrains from predicting the certain demise of civilization by that time. He makes some incisive attacks on both the Catholic Church and the Communist Party for shaping the attitudes of their respective constituencies against the entire concept of planned parenthood. Marxist ideology, says Appleman, defines socialism as an economic system capable of providing abundance for everyone on earth. By *definition* there is no such thing as overpopulation in a communist society. Numbers are irrelevant.

The Catholic Church, of course, has not only opposed birth control for its own adherents, but it has traditionally fought to impose its own morality on the general population through the legislative process. It has taken the attitude that it is the duty of every Catholic mother to bear as many children as nature will allow, and the moral obligation of the "have" nations of the world to feed them all. "The Roman Catholic Church," according to Appleman, "is the only Western institution of any importance that is consciously and actively obstructing population limitation."

In both cases, however, Appleman concedes that there is ground for optimism. Despite ideology, there is good evidence that Communist China is concerned about burgeoning population and is taking measures to control it behind the scenes. Author Edgar Snow reports that Party functionaries receive no extra compensation for more than two children; contraceptives are widely available and extremely inexpensive; practice, both in Red China and in the Soviet Union, is in *dialectical opposition* to Marxist propaganda. As far as the Catholic Church is concerned, the clergy as well as the "faithful" are in open revolt. Progressive Catholic journals such as *Commonweal* have been leading much of the fight, exhorting their readers to re-evaluate traditional Church teachings on papal infallibility, celibacy for the priesthood, and the birth control issue. *America*, another Catholic publication which used to editorialize against "unilateral depopulation in the West" lest we all "find ourselves eating with chopsticks," has grown less belligerent of late. Ironically enough, Roman Catholics are declining in proportion to the overall population, partly because of defections from their own ranks, partly because of their opposition to birth control for non-Catholics as well as themselves. The Catholic Church at various times throughout its history has violently opposed surgery, inoculation, lending money on interest, eating meat on Fridays, belief in a heliocentric solar system, reading certain books and watching certain films, and, of course, family planning. This last prohibition, one can safely predict, is destined to go the way of the others.

Another cause for carefully guarded optimism, according to Appleman, is the decline of militarism among the young. For centuries our generals have been yelling for larger and larger populations, presumably to supply them with fodder for their armies. Presently, the "More People, More Power" mentality has been all but discredited in the more advanced countries at least. Latin American machismo which measures a man's masculinity by the size of his progeny is

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also in a state of rising disrepute. Religious traditions at work in other parts of the world (India, for example, has approximately one-fourth of the world's cattle supply, but refuses to slaughter it for meat because most of the population holds the cow to be a sacred animal) will be challenged with increasing literacy and education of the masses.

On the other end of the spectrum we have the Utopian Futurists who dismiss all concern over rising population with the same casual optimism they exhibit on the Clonal Hitler Scare. "Don't worry about it. We'll work it out somehow." Arthur McCormack, a Catholic priest who takes a "middle-of-the-road" position on the population issue, has little patience with extreme optimists who claim that "as long as man possesses the capacity for thought, he has no reason to fear the future."

R. Buckminster Fuller, one of the great visionaries of the twentieth century, has earned the everlasting enmity of Z. P. G. enthusiasts by claiming that he could take the entire population of earth today and provide everyone with decent housing and adequate privacy on the islands of Japan. His plan calls for the erection of a gigantic, mile-high apartment complex, with each unit self-contained for power and sewage and a recycled water supply, and capable of being separated from the complex and used as a vehicle for transportation. In one fell swoop he solves the housing shortage and the parking problem, as well as pollution of the environment. Those who are inclined to shrug off this proposal with a laugh might do well to recall that Fuller's dymaxion houses and geodesic domes were once roundly denounced as "impractical" and hopelessly "utopian," and his theories on the tetrahedronal structure of matter have made a profound impact in the field of sub-atomic physics. Fuller started to talk about building homes with self-contained electricity and recycled water supplies in 1928, thirty years before this concept became a reality in American and Russian space capsules. According to Fuller, there is virtually no limit to the amount of people that can be comfortably supported on earth with proper architectural and recycling techniques. Whether or not one looks forward to sharing the planet with a trillion human beings tiered on top of one another, however privately, in cities reaching to the stars, we cannot help but admire a man with the courage to propose such daring schemes at a time when technology and procreation have become synonymous with racistsexistfascistcapitalistexploitation.

Another unbridled Utopian is Iranian-born novelist and essayist, F. M. Esfandiary, who teaches a course on futurism at the New School for Social Research in New York City. The highlights of Esfandiary's course are his lectures on physical immortality and the New Technology. He has been called a "radical optimist" by *Publisher's Weekly*, and his theories have been simultaneously endorsed by Dr. Glenn Seaborg, former Chairman of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, and a reviewer for the *Village Voice*. Esfandiary casually discusses such concepts as universal solar and nuclear power and colonization of the planets as though they have virtually been accomplished, and Domsday predictions are rejected impatiently. He maintains that the human race advanced a half step through-out history until the beginning of the twentieth century, and fifty miles during the past seventy years or so. He charts our present rate of development on a hyperbolic curve quickly accelerating upward toward infinity, and says that no one can fully anticipate the changes that will occur in the next twenty years let alone the next one hundred. Esfandiary considers pessimism to be a result of a lack of historical perspective, an inability to comprehend the fact that forty years ago people spent

most of their waking hours scrubbing out a bare existence while, today, technology has freed a large portion of western civilization from the drudgery of menial labor. Having spent his earliest years growing up in Iran, Esfandiary makes the statement - "I have seen the past, and it doesn't work" - as he awaits the future with optimism.

Other visionaries have taken the position that there is

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THE POPULATION HYSTERIA — (Continued from page 6)

no need to worry about overpopulation because, with proper technology, the state of Kansas can produce enough food to feed the entire world; there are more open spaces on earth today than a hundred years ago (latest census figures in the U.S. show that both the countryside and the central cities have lost population to the suburbs, resulting in a pattern of more abundant natural land and more even distribution of people around our urban areas); the earth can easily support upwards of 500 billion people; if we gave every family alive today a decent housing plot, they would all fit inside Texas with room to spare; ground fish and other marine products offer a revolutionary breakthrough in the struggle to create a high-protein, low-cost food supply; there is more than enough timber in the Amazon jungle to build a house for every family on earth; when India decides to slaughter its cattle, it will become a major exporter of beef to the developing nations; arid and frozen lands can now be brought under cultivation for the first time. These statements are denounced in the most excoriating language by Messers. Paddock, Appleman, Ehrlich and other Doomsday Prophets, and they are given a fair hearing by middle-of-the-road population alarmists like the priest and author, Arthur McCormack.

Behind most of the hysteria surrounding the rising population of earth is the spectre of the Rev. Thomas Robert Malthus who, back in 1798, presented the world with his now-famous dictum. The Malthusian Absolute holds that population growth increases geometrically, while growth in food production increases arithmetically. If this is true, it follows that any increase in population anywhere on earth is bound to result in dwindling food supplies, hunger and starvation.

It is somewhat incredible that this formula is still taken seriously when it was at least partially discredited in Malthus' own lifetime. Neo-Malthusians invariably fail to tell us that the good reverend qualified his own "Absolute" in 1817 when he admitted that some population growth can be beneficial until the time when a "proper or natural limit" is reached. While Malthus lived out his final years, England, his native land, increased its own population fivefold through immigration, rising birthrate and declining infant mortality while *at the same time* enjoying a period of economic growth and prosperity during the Industrial Revolution. The United States, again experiencing rising affluence and economic prosperity, increased its population tenfold during the nineteenth century. Both England and the United States became major exporters of food while simultaneously importing labor and assimilating more and more people. In modern times, the island-city of Hong Kong had the fastest population growth on earth during the 1960's — primarily due to mass emigration from mainland China — and it has become a bustling focal point of market activities in the Orient. Conversely, Ireland and Sicily have been losing people steadily from the beginning of the century until the present, and they are among the poorest countries in the West.

Doomsday Prophets usually cite China as an example of what can happen economically to a nation with too many mouths to feed. What they leave out is the fact that China, with its 800 millions or so, has a population density of only 200 per square mile — roughly a *third* that of England and a *fifth* that of Holland which is importing labor from southern Europe to keep pace with a constantly rising living standard. Breakthroughs in marine agriculture and harder wheat and rice strains have enabled much of the Far East to keep food production roughly 3 percent ahead of population growth in recent years. In addition, freer trade policies with countries like China are bound to result in an expansion of their sluggish

economies, and a concomitant liberalization of domestic political rule as they open their borders to other countries of the world.

Another favorite bogeyman theory of the population alarmists is the Spreading Desert Scare. Poor cultivation methods of the past have turned much of the earth into desert, with 17 percent of it now arid and another sizable chunk too frost-covered to farm. The theory holds that poor farming techniques still being used will increase the amount of land unusable by man in the future. But here again we learn from U. N. statistics that most increases in food production during the past thirty years have been accomplished on land already under cultivation; in the United States, for instance, 75 percent *more* corn is being grown on 27 percent *less* land than was used in 1938. A new variety of rice developed in Taiwan has six or seven times the yield of the old kind, and is more resistant to adverse weather conditions. Arthur McCormack tells us that the arable land of the world can be doubled easily with present methods, and with heavy expenditures of capital and new techniques it can be increased eightfold if it should ever become necessary.

As new machinery is brought onto the farms, children are less in demand as extra hands and, instead, become a drain on parents whose rising affluence is independent of manual labor. As we study the history of the industrialized nations, we learn that a general pattern has developed: rising industrialization and affluence results in a leveling off and then a decline in the birthrate. It makes far better sense, then, for proponents of Z. P. G. and other population alarmists to support industrialization rather than oppose it, as many of them have done with their call for a "return to nature."

A case in point is the hullabaloo over the use of insecticides that gripped the nation in the middle 1960's, and is still with us today. While concern that pesticides eventually find their way into human bodies is justified, pesticide abolitionists have overlooked the fact that some 33 million tons of food a year — enough to feed more than 500 million people — are destroyed by rats and insects. It is a bit irresponsible for people who are worried about food production to take such an extremist position before they investigate alternatives to the indiscriminate use of DDT. Many of these same individuals have also opposed the development of processed marine products, a low-cost protein source, with the argument that ground fish heads and organs are "unpalatable". Yet they rail against the fact that the starch content in the American diet is only 25 percent while it climbs over 50 percent in Africa, Asia and South America.

Turning again to the United Nations — an organization which no one has ever accused of trying to whitewash the existing poverty in the world — we learn that the problem is largely one of "undernourishment" rather than mass starvation. 14 percent of earth's population is said to be undernourished — that is, subsisting on unbalanced diets usually heavy with starch — a different thing entirely from "starvation in the streets." Yet, when an enterprising American firm tried to export a low-cost protein supplement made from marine products, the federal government banned it from the market on the grounds that it was "unsuitable for human consumption." Presumably, the authorities with their boundless humanitarianism preferred that everyone on earth should have a pound of steak each week instead, but, unfortunately for the "Third World" people, there is precious little protein content in the good intentions of "humane" politicians.

In 1950 Julian Huxley warned the world that there would be three billion people on earth by 2000 AD, more than this tiny globe could possibly support. His crystal ball must have been slightly cracked the day he wrote that article, for

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THE POPULATION HYSTERIA — (Continued from page 7)

the figure was reached in the 1960's — almost forty years ahead of schedule — and the general living standard of man on earth has continued to rise with each passing year. U.N. estimates for the year 2000 are for somewhere between 5.4 and 7.5 billion people to be romping about the earth. Dr. Ehrlich states that, unless we reduce our numbers to one or two billion, we will all be starving in the streets; R. Buckminster Fuller maintains there is no limit to what man, with his incredible ingenuity, can achieve.

Who is right?

Arthur McCormack, taking his stand with the moderates, says that 50 billion people seems to be the limit considering the habitable land now available, and the possibility that some desert and frost regions will be cultivated in the future. This figure, at the current rate of population growth, will be reached in 2110 AD. Others, a bit less optimistic, put the limit at 30 billion which would be attained in a hundred years at our present rate of growth.

The key questions it seems to me are, first of all, is there any such thing as a "natural limit" to human population on earth and, second, is it realistic to base projections on the current rate of growth? If it is true, as precedent has shown it to be, that industrialization leads to declining birthrate, and that virtually the entire planet will be industrialized within the next twenty-five years, then we can expect a sharply reduced birthrate for the whole world before the year 2000. Z.P.G. advocates have been quick to inform us that the rate of growth is a relative factor — that is, it is based on the ratio between the birthrate and the deathrate — and that, if man should finally succeed in conquering death, it will mean that the human race would have to stop reproducing altogether merely to maintain a steady level. But if the day arrives when the human race does attain mastery over natural death, we will still be exposed to the dangers of the unforeseen: the speeding vehicle; a falling rock; environmental disasters. Some of us will elect, for religious, philosophical or psychological reasons, to pass away normally rather than prolong physical life. People will continue to die even if we have the means of preserving life indefinitely, so it does not follow that any procreation at all will necessarily mean a rise in population.

Another item the Doomsday Prophets never consider is the fact that two-thirds of this planet is covered by water, and the "square yard for every human" projections are invariably based on figures for land mass. We are now talking about building jetports at sea, and once this is done the construction of hotels, shops and permanent communities around the jetports will follow inevitably. Donald H El-

liott, director of the New York City Planning Commission, talks about the development of a gigantic offshore complex that will include a jetport, nuclear power plant, waste-disposal center and deep-water seaport. He maintains that the technical problems have already been solved. In Holland a variation of this concept has been realized in the form of "Polders" — area reclaimed from the sea housing more than seven million Hollanders. Cleveland and Chicago are studying proposals for floating jetports and facilities supported on caissons in Lake Erie and Lake Michigan. Cost studies indicate that the sale of land-based airports to private developers could raise much of the money required for the projects. Eventually, the notion of floating cities further out to sea will become a reality. Environmentalists like to howl about the "desecration of the oceans" when these alternatives are suggested, yet they are the first ones to decry the lack of beachfront areas for the masses. Seaborne cities will solve the problem of *lebensraum* for future populations, and they will also create thousands of miles of man-made "coastline" for surfers and sunbathers throughout the world. International communities for those tired of life in belligerent nation-states should be a more-than-welcome change.

Surely by the time we have the technology to eliminate natural death as a threat to man, the problems of interplanetary travel and the "homesteading" of space will be small in comparison. No one today can seriously doubt that there will be some form of human settlements on the moon before the end of this century; villages on other planets will be established shortly afterward. Until that day arrives, the human birthrate will continue to decline through education further industrialization and technological advances.

The prospect of overpopulation should not be taken seriously as an argument against our efforts to make man immortal. Chances are good that the timber of the Amazon is not going to be merchandised to house the entire world, and Kansas is not going to be called upon to feed it. Even if Buckminster Fuller's schemes for supporting a limitless population should turn out to be practicable, most likely it will never be necessary for the human race to cluster together in mile-high file cabinets. We all have a vested interest in keeping the place we live from becoming as crowded as an anthill. Present trends continuing, the birthrate will continue to decline in the advanced nations, and this decline will spread to other areas as they become industrialized. Through cloning and modernized farming techniques we will be able to lay the Malthusian Absolute forever to rest. And the technology that enables us to minimize the risks of death will also provide us with the means to live our lives in comfort and prosperity. □

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