

Is That So?

By EUGENE BURNS
Ranger-Naturalist

During the brief time that you read this piece, the number of people on earth will have increased by 200. By tomorrow at this same time, the earth's population will have risen by almost 100,000—roughly the population of Lexington, Ky. To produce the food required to feed the new arrivals of a single month, new arable land has to be found equal to the combined areas of Rhode Island and Delaware; and for a year this new land must be about the size of Maine.

Now, only 2 per cent of the earth's surface can be used as arable land. The rest is sea, mountains, deserts and the eternal ice. Admittedly, during the last 150 years points out Bernard Grzimek, author of No Room For Wild Animals (Norton, N. Y.) and director of the Frankfurt Zoo, wide

new tracts of land have been brought under the plow. But in spite of this, the total area of cultivable land on our planet has decreased during the same period.

From the time humans have started to practice agriculture, we have always created new wastes, which later turn into irrecoverable deserts. We burn or cut down the forests, drain all the goodness out of the earth, and expose it to the sun and the winds.

The Sahara, for a long time the granary of Rome and Greece, due to our handiwork is now a desolate waste. The Promised Land has been turned into a tragic desert. What was once the Garden of Eden in Mesopotamia (Iraq) is now a sandy waste. The bare and rocky mountains of Italy, Spain and Greece were

once clothed in shady forests. Earth Washed Into Sea

After less than one century of breaking the sod of the savannahs in America, dust storms today whirl over the impoverished soil of the U.S. and each hour the streams



wash the good earth irretrievably into the sea.

Mexico's forested mountainlands have been denuded to supply timber and today Mexico City's 2,000,000 frequently find that their water sup-

ply is rationed to night hours only.

And yet, the population of the earth increases.

Humans, in the currently accepted definition of the term, have existed on earth for 500,000 years. By 6,000 B.C. there were some 10,000,000. By 3,000 B.C., perhaps a mere 20,000,000. By 1650 A.D. there were only about 450,000,000 on earth, half of whom were in Asia.

Increased During War

Since then the yellow races have increased fourfold; the European races ninefold. By 1920 there were 1,527,000,000. And even while the greatest war of human history was raging during the years 1939-1945, the world's population increased by 10 per cent.

Today we have reached a total of 2.4 billion and well before the end of this century, if things continue as they are now—even without modern hygiene and medical science helping in China and India—we shall reach the 5 billion mark.

This is the reason, basically, why all the wild animals of this earth are compelled to yield to the "human locust" and eventually die states Director Grzimek.

But surely thinking man can find an answer. It may be limitation of populations; the saving of soil; water; natural resources; and the proper "harvesting" of game; and finally the establishment and rigid control of sanctuaries where an animal forever will be safe from man, the destroyer.

It takes infinitely more "know-how" to "get" an animal with a camera than with a gun.

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Elephant Seals

Now Number 6,000

La Jolla, Calif.—The elephant seals, once hunted to near extinction now are increasing on Guadalupe island, 120 miles off the west coast of Baja California. Scripps Institution of Oceanography reports.

Prof. Carl L. Hubbs said the elephant seal population on the island has reached a record high of almost 6,000.

The species now is protected by Mexican law. In 1900 less than 100 of the animals were noted on the island.

Greyhound Service Reduction Denied

Salem — Public Utility Commissioner Howard Morgan Thursday denied an application of Greyhound Lines for a service reduction. He ordered that the two daily roundtrips be maintained between Portland and Astoria via the Lower Columbia River highway.

The action was in response to the company's application last October to reduce passenger service to one roundtrip daily.

Public hearings were held on the reduction in Astoria and Portland.

Morgan said the hearings indicated that overall operations on the route were not profitable. But he said: "The buses nevertheless are the sole means of public transportation available to the patrons and it cannot be denied that the schedules are essential to the public interest."

Pakistan Asked To Reconsider Choice

Lahore, Pakistan—The influential Pakistan Times urged the government today to reconsider its appointment of Prince Aly Khan as permanent ambassador to the United Nations.

"Aly is one of the best-

known international playboys" and "is not even a Pakistan citizen," the newspaper said.

The Times said Pakistan's diplomatic representatives never have been very satisfactory "but it will not be easy to think of anything more fantastic than the government's latest decision."

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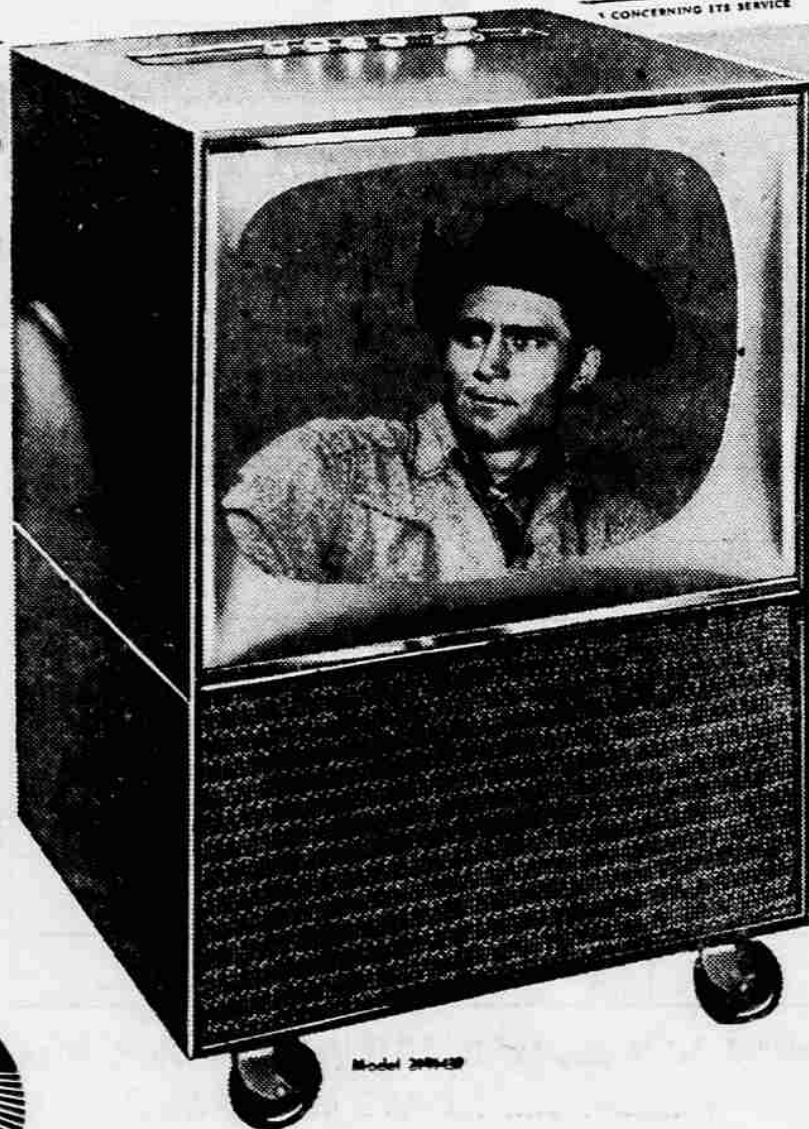
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