

Underproduction Biggest Problem In Many Nations

Chicago (Science Service)—Underproduction, not overpopulation, is perhaps the most pressing problem facing many nations.

How to solve the problem of expanding populations to feed the peoples, clothe them, house them, educate them—is also one of the major situations discussed by scientists participating in the Darwin Centennial.

Should populations be curbed and peoples instructed that survival depends on smaller families, for instance? Or can attempts be made to increase production?

Large Families Desirable

For many peoples, the scientists pointed out, overpopulation is not a problem in itself. Large families are desirable since the children contribute substantially to the family income in addition to taking care of the parents and older relations in their old age. Thus, although the children may be undernourished and ill-clothed because there are

simply too many, this is not considered "bad." In fact, the family with many such children is thought to be more fortunate than the one with only a few well-fed and well-cared-for children.

Where too many children is not the problem, methods such as birth control which have developed in nations with more advanced technologies and higher living standards cannot be simply imposed from the outside. As one of the scientists on the panel discussing social and cultural evolution suggested, it might be better to attack the fact of mushrooming populations by more efficient production.

Efficient Production Methods
For example, India could possibly feed twice as great a population as she now has with production methods as efficient as those of Italy, Dr. Robert M. Adams, professor of anthropology at the University of Chicago, said. Concerning the problem of efficient production, Dr. Adams also pointed out that it is important not to transfer western concepts of efficiency to other nations. It may appear inefficient or an underdeveloped country to have two or three steel mills, for instance. It probably could import finished steel products for less.

However, the steel mills may be a symbol of prestige and advancement, bringing the nation to an equivalent position with the West's technology. The mills in this case have a value out of proportion to their production records or costs.

Admitting that the problem of controlling population exists, Dr. Adams suggested that there is the more immediate problem of producing enough to provide for anticipated population growth in the next several decades. We have this means now, the anthropologist believes, and the emphasis should be placed on increased and more efficient production.

Man's Brain Size Not a Measure Of Intelligence

Chicago (Science Service)—Man's ancestor never had a tail, and the size of his brain was not a measure of his intelligence.

These are two statements, contrary to the popular conception, reported by a panel discussion at the University of Chicago during celebrations of Darwin's Centennial.

Dr. L.S.B. Leakey, British anthropologist who recently found the fossil skull of Kenya's Zinjanthropus, who he believes was the first true man, said that no evidence was ever found to show that any of man's ancestors ever had a tail.

"I doubt that they did," Dr. Leakey said. "We hope one day to find fossils that will satisfy us completely on this point."

Tail Not Developed

He said that the coccyx, sometimes referred to as "vestigial tail," shows that the vertebral column in man simply did not develop into a tail as it did in apes and monkeys.

Dr. Leakey also emphasized that not the size but the shape of the brain reflects intelligence.

"Size, except when taken in relation to the total body weight of the creature, is not important at all," he said. The Neanderthal man had a larger brain than any other man, and today, Eskimos have the largest brain and Japanese the smallest, which does not reflect their relative intelligence," he explained.

"There is no reason to believe at all that because, shall we say, Australopithecus of South Africa had a brain only about the same size as a gorilla, that his ability in the use of his brain was of the same order, because he could have had a brain of the same size but of a much greater complexity in its cortex."

Swinging from Branches
The panel also discussed whether man's ancestors ever traveled by overhead locomotion, that is, by swinging from branch to branch. This is called brachiation.

Dr. F. Clark Howell, Chicago university anthropologist, said that the first detailed study of brachiation was undertaken this year, that the idea of whether or not man went through a brachiating stage "has been terribly obscured" and that the term itself is complex and covers, so to speak, a multitude of sins.

The study of brachiation, he said, is crucial to the understanding of evolution. But brachiation, another scientist pointed out, is generally so poorly defined that some will include as brachiators New York City's subway strap-hanger.

Mutton Grading To Be Suspended

Washington (UPI)—Agriculture Secretary Ezra T. Benson Wednesday ordered federal grading of lamb and mutton suspended for one year, effective next Jan. 4. The move means consumers will not be able to use government grading labels as a guide to quality.

Benson said the action was taken because the department has been unable to develop revised grade standards which would be "objective and meaningful" and still acceptable to the entire lamb industry.

Engineering Grads Decrease in U.S.

New York (Science Service)—Next year's class of graduating engineers will run about 600 below the expected 1959 total. The Engineering and Scientific Manpower commissions estimate a 1960 graduating class of 37,400 engineers.

The commissions note that the number of drop-outs has increased. The 1959 class began in 1955 with 72,825 freshmen, but only an estimated 38,000 graduated.

Trends in conferred degrees show electrical engineering (now 27 per cent of the whole) gaining steadily, civil engineering (15 per cent) dropping, while mechanical (25 per cent), chemical (10 per cent), and industrial (5 per cent) are remaining constant.

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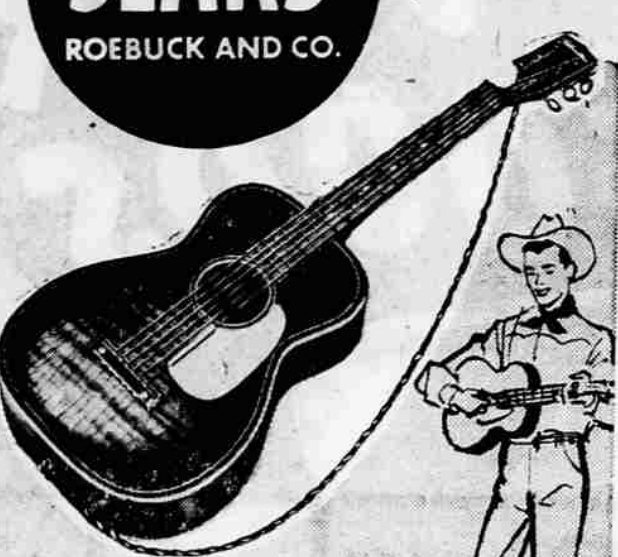
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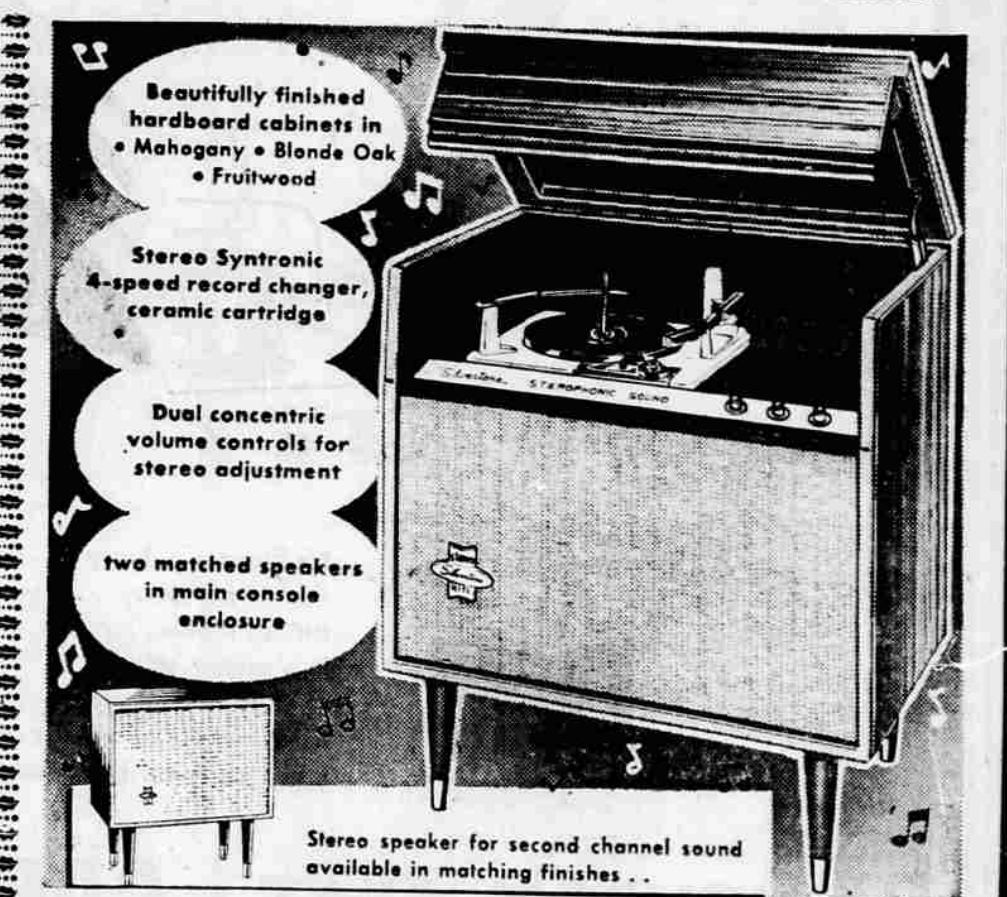


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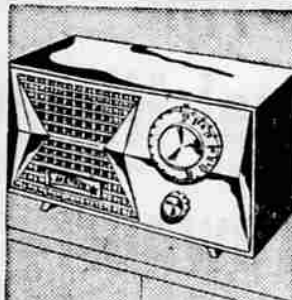
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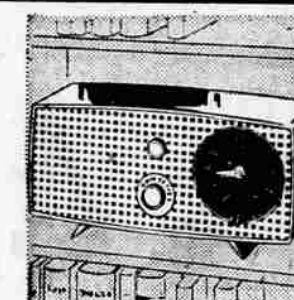
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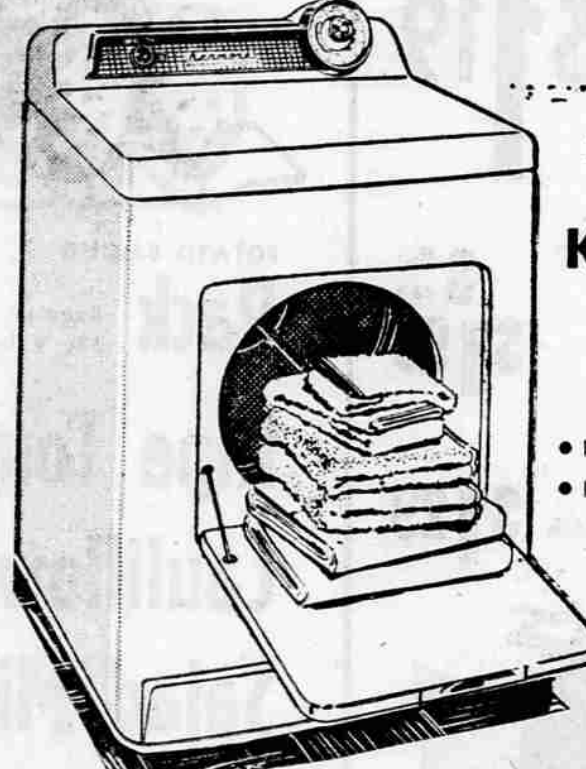


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