

# How Many People in the Year 3000?

by HEINRICH RICHARD

IF THE current population increase continues at its present rate and proportion, by the year 3600 the weight of the population will match the weight of the earth itself—according to a prophecy by the National Geographic Society in Washington, D.C. At an equal rate of increase the population will have doubled by the year 2000, and by 2600, if the increase does not slow down, according to this prophecy each person will have less than one square meter to exist on.

Paper is patient and it absorbs wisdom and nonsense with equal equanimity. Up to now it has been understood that, excluding occasional meteors, the mass of the earth is constant and its weight is six quadrillion kilograms. Elephants, fleas and humans are included in this weight, because all creatures are children of the earth and owe their existence to that immortal substance, the secret of which nobody has yet discovered. If, therefore, within 1600 years these weights are to become equal, then the total weight of mankind will have to be three quadrillion kilograms.

The rigid substance of the earth would have to shrink into half, reducing its radius roughly from 6400 to 5000 kilometers. The number of people then alive might be computed by dividing an assumed average weight of 60 kilograms into the before mentioned combined weight of 3,000,000,000,000,000,000, resulting in 50,000,000,000,000,000 people. This would be about 16,000,000 times today's approximate number of 3,200,000,000 and they would hardly fit on the earth's surface. With the specific gravity of humans being only 0.2 that of the earth, the space required for the population will be about 5.5 times that hypothetically gained in the assumed earth shrinkage. This does not take into

consideration the weight of the air.

Furthermore, about 70.1 percent of the earth's surface is taken up by oceans, and nothing indicates that during the next 1600 years we will develop fins and gills. To aggravate the disaster, the surface will be shrunk to not much more than half its present size. Only somebody with too much time on his hands would try to compute how 50,000,000,000,000,000 people, not counting other creatures, could live and find food on such a reduced ground area.

Actually nature is being violated by a wrong concept of property which spreads unopposed over the world. It is wrong because it does not consider that the right of private disposition must remain confined to goods which have been produced, and that nature's gift—with its treasures and powers on the earth's surface as well as under and over it—must be common property. This condition can be reached most easily and efficiently by means of a tax reform as proposed by physiocracy; which applies solely to the value of the land and leaves all products and capital objects free. Until this condition prevails there will be no way of avoiding wage fights, class squabbles, monopolies, inflation and other shortcomings on the social level.

The simplest and silliest pretext however, is the implication of overpopulation. Consciously or unconsciously the chemical industry is drawing on this in its promotion of remedies for reduction of the birth rate. But birth control pills, whether poisonous or non-poisonous, organic or inorganic, are bad for the prevented-mothers, even though they bring dividends to the stockholders. This brings to mind an ancient saying, that today's knowledge is tomorrow's error.

—Translated by Eugen Hugo Michaels