

GENERAL SCIENCE

Civil Rights Not Science

► PINNING the name of science on moral judgments about civil rights was **strongly** criticized by a group of leading scientists in Washington.

When science is put to political purposes, a committee of the American Association for the Advancement of Science declared, it "debases both science and the human conscience."

In a report in *Science*, 142:558, 1963, the Committee on Science in the Promotion of Human Welfare spoke out against the "corrosive effects of social and political pressures on the integrity of science."

Recently, alleged "scientific evidence" has been advanced to show the inferiority of the Negro compared to the white. This "evidence" supposedly demonstrates that Negroes are not capable of benefiting from civil rights.

Looking into the modern scientific data on racial groups, the AAAS committee found no data to "challenge the principle of human equality which is assured by the Constitution of the United States."

The committee also refuted charges that a group of U.S. scientists is conspiring to hide evidence of Negro inferiorities from the public and government officials. This claim reflects "lack of understanding of the nature of the scientific process."

"Most coherent" of the scientists advancing reports of Negro inferiority are Prof. W. C. George and Carleton Putnam, the AAAS committee said. Both have attacked

the 1954 Supreme Court decision on school segregation on grounds that are "wholly irrelevant to the issue."

The Supreme Court decision, the committee explained, dealt with the effects of segregation on Negroes, rather than with the nature and origin of possible racial differences. Nowhere in the decision was the principle of equality as stated in the Constitution challenged.

The public should be informed, the committee believes, "that any effort to use purported 'scientific evidence' . . . to screen an attack on the principle of equal civil rights for all citizens finds no support in either the available evidence or the principles of science."

The Committee on Science in the Promotion of Human Welfare was established in 1958. Dr. Barry Commoner, biologist of Washington University, St. Louis, is chairman. Other members are: Drs. Robert B. Brode, physicist, University of California, Berkeley; T. C. Byerly, biologist, Washington, D. C.; Ansley J. Coale, demographer, Princeton University, Princeton, N. J.; John T. Edsall, biochemist, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.; Lawrence K. Frank, lecturer and consulting psychologist, Belmont, Mass.; Margaret Mead, anthropologist, American Museum of Natural History, New York; and Walter Orr Roberts, astrophysicist, National Center for Atmospheric Research, Boulder, Colo.

• Science News Letter, 84:381 Dec. 14, 1963

POPULATION

Priority for Population

► WHILE MAN CONJECTURES on the moon race, the world as we know it is facing the expectation of 114 million babies in the next year.

This explosion is on top of the gain of 185 million persons in only three years, the doubling in population size between 1900 and 1962, and the continually declining death rate.

Population Bulletin, 14:141, 1963, asks that "man-on-the-moon" priority be given to the population crisis.

There are just two ways to stop the dangerous growth of world population, the bulletin points out. One is the humane way of lowering birth rates. The other is by ruthless and impersonal forces that will increase death rates.

The resolution of Sen. Joseph S. Clark (D-Pa.) and Sen. Ernest Gruening (D-Alaska) requesting that a Presidential Commission on Population be created with the duty of informing the American people of the population problems is reprinted in this bulletin.

The situation is extremely grave, the bulletin says.

Nearly three-quarters of a billion dollars annually is allocated by the National Insti-

tutes of Health to research projects to keep people alive. High birth rates must be brought into balance with low death rates if any real progress is to be made.

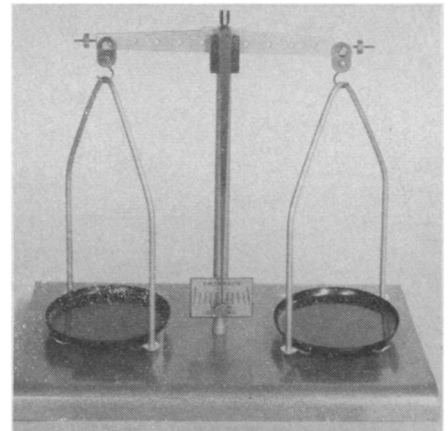
The population of the world was 3,180,000,000 in mid-1963. The gain of 185 million in only three years almost equals the total population of the U.S.

Five of the world's ten most populous nations are in Asia, with China the giant of them all. China's estimated 731 million people tops India's 461 million. Then comes the USSR with 225 million; the U.S. with 190 million; Indonesia with 100 million; Pakistan, 99 million; Japan, 96 million; Brazil, 78 million; West Germany, 55 million and the United Kingdom, 54 million.

In 1920, Latin America had 91 million people and the U.S. and Canada together had 117 million. By 1956, the Latin American countries had overtaken their two northern neighbors—187 million and 184 million respectively.

At today's level of mortality, three out of four of the 114 million babies expected to be born this year will live to maturity but many of them will be continually hungry, with disease and illiteracy part of their heritage.

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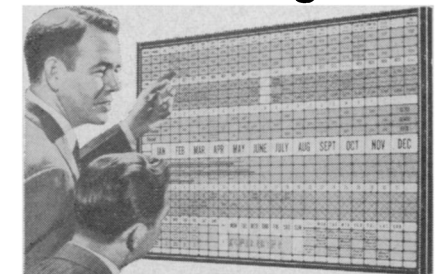
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