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BACKGROUND PAPER

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF POPULATION DYNAMICS:
A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

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INTRODUCTION

1. While it is generally recognized that excessive population growth places severe strains upon the environment, there is also some reason to believe that population levels and rates of increase may be important elements affecting national power, war and peace, and the nature of social and political organization. This paper will attempt to evaluate existing evidence concerning the political implications of population dynamics, note areas of ambiguity and suggest possible avenues for further research.

I. THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF POPULATION AND POLITICS

2. Many uncertainties remain concerning the precise nature of the population problem in the world today. However, it is clear that the world's population is continuing to grow at an alarming pace, imposing increasing burdens upon available resources. From the historical record, it may be inferred that, at each stage of man's population growth, the resulting reverberations on government have necessitated readjustments and reassessments of governmental procedures. 1/ Although the precise political implications of population dynamics are as yet far from clear, to the extent that the world population continues to grow as projected, further strains on political, social and economic institutions at all levels may be expected. 2/

3. Concern for the political implications of population variables has been expressed by many classical political theorists, but the seeming ability of technology to invalidate the Malthusian dynamic accentuated a general inclination

1/ Specific illustrations can be found in Toynbee, A. J., A Study of History (London: Oxford University Press, 1934) especially vol. III with respect to the case of Athens (p. 122); see also Wittfogel, K. H., Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957); Service, E. R., Primitive Social Organization (New York: Random House, 1965); and Carneiro, R. L., "On the Relationship Between Size of Population and Complexity of Social Organization", Southwestern Journal of Anthropology (vol. 23, August 1967), pp. 234-243.

2/ General references for these issues are found in North, R. C., and Choucri, N., "Population and the International System: Some Implications for United States Policy and Planning", Governance and Population: The Governmental Implications of Population Change, volume IV of the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future: Research Reports, 1972, pp. 251-278. See also Drummond, D. E., "Population Growth and Cultural Change", Southwestern Journal of Anthropology (vol. 21, No. 4, Winter 1965), pp. 302-324 and Harner, M. J., "Population Pressure and the Social Evolution of Agriculturists", Southwestern Journal of Anthropology (Spring 1970), pp. 67-86.

to overlook the political implications of demographic problems. 3/ Only recently have political analysts turned their attention once more to the effects of added numbers. But the general tendency to date has been either to over-react to the seemingly overwhelming problems associated with population growth, attributing to it many of today's social, economic and political ills, or to under-react, by continuing to view politics as an autonomous phenomenon, divorced from its demographic and ecological context. 4/ As a result, few studies exist which are addressed specifically to the relationship between population and politics. 5/

4. Much of the evidence regarding the political implications of population dynamics is still insufficient to provide any conclusive answers. The diversity of views 6/ on the population question (including the Malthusian, Marxist, radical and more recent social science perspectives upon the causes and consequences of rapid population growth) render it all the more imperative that the evidence relating population to politics be assessed critically. In the course of such assessments, the conventional bounds of demographic analysis should be broadened

3/ Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, Montesquieu and the mercantilists all derived political implications from the number and distribution of population, as did scholars of the classical Arabic tradition like Ibn Khaldon. See also Hutchinson, E. P., The Population Debate (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1967) for a survey of population theories until 1900; Davidson, R. H., "Population Change and Representative Government", in volume IV of the Commission on Population Growth and The American Future, 1972, especially pp. 61-67, and The Determinants and Consequences of Population Trends (United Nations publication, Sales No.: 71.XIII.5).

4/ See, for example, Anderson, W., ed., Politics and Environment: A Reader in Ecological Crisis (Pacific Palisades, California: Goodyear Publishing Co., 1970) for a series of essays bearing on such issues.

5/ Macura, M., and El-Badry, M. A., "Diversity or Uniformity of Demographic Problems? A Medium-Range Outlook", in Szabady, E., ed., World Views of Population Problems (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1968), pp. 197-208. Harkavy, O., "Population Growth: Some Economic Problems", in Moran, Jr., W. E., ed., Population Growth: Threat to Peace? (New York: P. J. Kenedy and Sons, 1965), pp. 105-118.

6/ Illustrative works include Chamberlain, N. W., Beyond Malthus: population and power (New York, Basic Books, 1970); Stycos, J. M., "Population and Population Control in Latin America", World Politics (vol. 20, No. 1, October 1967), pp. 66-82; Wang Ya-Nan, "The Marxist Population Theory and China's Population Problem", Chinese Economic Studies (vol. II, No. 3-4, 1969), pp. 3-91; Barclay, W., Enright, J. and Reynolds, R. T., "Population Control in the Third World", NACLA Newsletter, (vol. IV, No. 8, December 1970) (for a radical perspective); Saunders, T. G., "Opposition to Family Planning in Latin America: The Non-Marxist Left", West Coast South America Studies (vol. XVII, No. 5, 1970); Cullinan, C., "Punta del Este, 1961-1967: Early Dawn of a Demographic Awakening", Population Bulletin (vol. XXIII, No. 3, June 1967), pp. 45-83.

to take explicit cognizance of the resources and technology of a society, which place population in a societal perspective, and to highlight important differences between the implications of population variables in less developed States and those in advanced industrial societies. In both cases, however, the effects of population are mediated through a complex network of intervening processes, the nature of which is not yet well understood. Indeed, population factors often generate reverberating effects throughout the social system, which are generally very complex. Furthermore, these effects are often characterized by long time lags, rarely becoming apparent in the short range. Any analysis must therefore acknowledge the importance of the time factor by seeking to identify the short and long-range effects of population and the policies most appropriate to different time frames.

5. The lack of reliable statistical data concerning demographic structure in many parts of the world makes assessment of the implications of population dynamics more difficult. There are also marked ambiguities and inconsistencies concerning the definition of "optimum" population. The basic question is "optimum" with respect to what? Since the economic optimum is not necessarily congruent with the military or political optimum, and since at the level beyond mere subsistence the optimum is culturally and sociologically defined, it is especially difficult to employ this notion with any degree of precision for analysis or for policy planning. 7/

6. The distinction between actual demographic conditions and their political implications on the one hand, and the perception of these conditions by national political leaders on the other, is always important. 8/ Identifying the connexion between the subjective and the objective is a major challenge, but it would be a mistake to assume a necessary congruence between the two, or that one invariably leads to the other. 9/ Any relationship between population and politics will almost surely be complex.

7/ See, for example, Sauvy, A., General Theory of Population (New York: Basic Books, 1969), pp. 16-65; Elazar, D. J., "Population Growth and the Federal System", in volume IV of the Report of the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future, 1972, pp. 25-58; Petersen, W., Population, second edition (London: MacMillan 1970), pp. 159-162; Singer, S. F., ed., Is There an Optimum Level of Population? (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971); David, A. S. and Ching-Ju Huang, "Population Theory and the Concept of Optimum Population", Socio-Economic Planning Sciences, (vol. 3, 1969), pp. 191-217.

8/ See Clinton, R. L. and Godwin, R. K., Research in the Politics of Population (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath and Co., 1972) and Clinton, R. L., Population and Politics: New Directions for Political Science Research (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath and Co., 1973). See Davis, K., "The Political Impact of New Population Trends", Foreign Affairs (vol. 36, No. 2, January 1956), pp. 293-301 for an early statement on the political implications of population dynamics.

9/ For an example, see Daly, H. E., "The Population Question in Northeast Brazil: Its Economic and Ideological Dimensions", Economic Development and Cultural Change (vol. 18, No. 4, part I, July 1970), pp. 536-574.

II. POPULATION AND GOVERNANCE: SOME INSTITUTIONAL IMPLICATIONS

7. A recent survey 10/ of prevailing arguments and assumptions regarding the political implications of population dynamics concluded that:

(a) added population generates demands for increases in housing, education, health services, and so forth;

(b) resource constraints in less developed countries are such that those of the lowest socio-economic status will not be incorporated in governmental attempts to meet rising demands;

(c) governmental institutions may be influenced by population change;

(d) population policy will become an increasingly sensitive issue, particularly in multiethnic communities;

(e) effects upon the labour force of added population could provide a mass base upon which political organizers might draw;

(f) numbers affect a country's political culture and modes of political conduct;

(g) Governments might consciously exploit population as a political issue;

(h) the discourse concerning the development of population policies will invariably become more political than it has to date.

8. The burden of existing evidence suggests that the larger the population, the greater the number and nature of government services needed, but the precise relationship between size and government services is difficult to determine. 11/ All other factors being equal, however, public services are strained once population exceeds a certain threshold in terms of level and rate of changes, although again, the precise nature of this threshold has never been demonstrated persuasively. The most dislocating effects appear to be in cases where rapid changes in population (either through natural increase or migration) place added demands upon governmental services, particularly when the resources available to the polity are not commensurate with the demands generated.

10/ Weiner, M., "Political Demography: An Inquiry into the Political Consequences of Population Change", in Rapid Population Growth: Consequences and Policy Implications (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), vol. II, see especially pp. 607-613.

11/ See also the essays in volume IV of the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future, Governance and Population: The Governmental Implications of Population Change, 1972.

9. Such demands often influence legislative institutions. As increased numbers place added loads on government, performance may be affected, potentially generating citizen alienation. Shifts in the distribution of population also affect the kinds of problems governments face. 12/ Inability to satisfy rising expectations is likely to lead to changes in governmental institutions. How this change comes about or what the new structures will be like, however, is a matter for speculation. A recent study argues that representative institutions may be bypassed altogether. 13/

10. The effects of population change on costs of governance are equally hard to discern. Although rapid and consistently high changes invariably place strains on governmental capabilities - both financial and administrative - it is not plausible to assume a direct proportionate relationship between population increase and increase in governmental costs. 14/ Often, the rate of increase in governmental cost, particularly at the local level, appears to be greater than the corresponding rate of increase in population. This relationship differs according to the types and extent of services provided to the community, the financial resources available to government and prevailing levels of knowledge and skills in the society.

11. Some efforts have been made to evaluate the financial costs of added population, 15/ the effects of population upon education, 16/ and the effects of added population upon economic performance and political development. 17/ Yet similar calculations do not yet exist for the implications of rapid increases in numbers - or changes in their composition or distribution - upon governmental services or upon economic sectors.

12/ Lehne, R., "Population Change and Congressional Representation", Volume IV of the Report of the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future, op. cit., 1972, pp. 83-98.

13/ Ibid. Also the essays in part II of volume IV of the Report of the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future, 1972, pp. 109-228.

14/ Davidson, R. H., "Population Change and Representative Government", volume IV of the Report of the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future, 1972, pp. 59-82, see especially p. 79.

15/ Espenshade, T. J., "The Price of Children and Socio-Economic Theories of Fertility", Population Reprint Series, Demography (Berkeley, California: International Population and Urban Research, No. 410, 1972) and Leasure, W. J., "Some Economic Benefits of Birth Prevention", Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly (October 1967, vol. XLV, No. 4).

16/ Arriaga, E. E., "Impact of Population Changes on Education Cost", Population Reprint Series, Demography (Berkeley, California: International Population and Urban Research, No. 402, 1972). See also Heer, D. M., "Economic Development and Fertility", Demography (vol. 3, No. 2, 1966) pp. 423-444.

17/ Weiner, M., op. cit.

III. POPULATION SIZE AND NATIONAL POWER 18/

12. Political analysts generally argue that population size is a relevant factor in a nation's over-all power calculus, but there is, again, little empirical evidence indicating precisely how the size of the population adds to or detracts from its over-all capabilities, economic or military. Those who argue for the simple number-power proposition do so on four grounds. The larger a society's human resources, the greater is the possibility of increasing its effective labour force, the larger the size of the military force, the greater are the probabilities that numbers will generate sentiments of nationalism and national cohesion, and the greater are development possibilities, particularly if economies of scale prevail. On face value all four arguments appear plausible, but they are fraught with logical and empirical inconsistencies. The fact that an increase in numbers may be channelled into the labour force, or the military, or result in economies of scale, or generate sentiments of national cohesion does not assure that this will occur. Other conditions must be present before such outcomes materialize. That international recognition is often accorded on a size principle simply adds to the complexities involved. There are also some obvious trade-offs between size as an asset and size as a liability, and between size as a constraint to economic development and size as a determinant of military capability. Since nations often increase their territory primarily through conquest, it may even be difficult to distinguish between size as a cause of power and size as its consequence.

13. In addition, the importance of such variables as national cohesion, technological capability, military effectiveness, the capacity to absorb military casualties and the development of human resources all condition the extent to which sheer size is critical. Trade-off calculations are invariably complex, leading to alternative solutions; it is not possible to assign a simple numerical value to population size so as to quantify power in social, economic and political terms. No one has yet devised a way of measuring power or power relations empirically. From a purely statistical point of view, however, population size does feature prominently as an indicator of national power in two ways: first, the size variable loads strongly on the power dimension in factor analysis; secondly, size tends to correlate positively and significantly with other measures of capability. 19/

18/ A synthesis of the literature on population and international power is found in Choucri, N., Population Dynamics and International Violence: Propositions, Insights, and Evidence (M.I.T.: Center for International Studies, 1973). This section draws upon the analysis on pp. 51-85. See especially Wright, A., A Study of War, second edition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), and Morgenthau, H. J., Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace, fourth edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), among others. See also Kahl, J. A. and Stycos, J. M., "The Philosophy of Demographic Policy in Latin America", Studies in Comparative International Development (vol. I, No. 2, 1965), p. 1.

19/ Sawyer, J., "Dimensions of Nations: Size, Wealth, and Politics", The American Journal of Sociology (vol. 73, No. 2, September 1967), pp. 145-172.

14. Once technology is entered in the power calculus, any simple relation between population and power disappears. Technological advances have revolutionized the conduct of warfare and the expectations of the parties during the course of violence. The fact that technology can be imported and substantial changes in capability brought about in short order makes technology more critical than size in any power assessment, but also makes such calculations far more volatile. However, the advent of nuclear weapons has added a new dimension to the size factor; placing at risk population centres has become perhaps as valuable as placing at risk the opponent's men under arms. In these terms, population size again assumes military importance.

15. Differentials in population size and rate of change, in conjunction with differences in levels and growth rates of technology and resources, impose a particularly volatile element on international relations. 20/ In the margin, size is important, but it is primarily in cases where States have approximately equal resources and technological capabilities that absolute numbers make a critical difference.

IV. POPULATION DYNAMICS, POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND INTERNAL VIOLENCE

16. The sources of internal instability and violence are numerous and varied. Several attempts have been made to identify empirically the factors that increase propensities for internal conflict. 21/ Political scientists generally view a government's inability to meet demands as an important source of political unrest. However, there is as yet no empirical evidence of a direct, statistically significant relationship between population variables and internal political instability. The weight of the systematic and cross-national evidence is, in fact, contrary to any inference that population pressures, or density, or the rate of population growth have any direct bearing upon internal instability or domestic violence. Many areas of the world that have a high population density, and many areas that are conventionally thought of as high pressure regions, do not exhibit marked tendencies for political instability, 22/ while many areas with roughly

20/ See Choucri, N., and North, R. C., "Dynamics of International Conflict: Some Policy Implications of Population, Resources, and Technology", World Politics Supplement (vol. XXIV, 1972), pp. 80-121 for an extension of these arguments and specific examples.

21/ See, for example, Graham, H. D. and Gurr, T. R., Violence in America (New York: Macmillan Co., 1969); Gurr, T. R., The Conditions of Civil Violence (Princeton, N.J.: Center for International Studies, Princeton University, 1967, monograph 28); and Davis, J. C., ed., When Men Revolt and Why (New York: The Free Press, 1971). For empirical studies of political instability and conflict behaviour see Tanter, R., "Dimensions of Conflict Behaviour Within and Between Nations, 1958-60", The Journal of Conflict Resolution (vol. 10, No. 1, March 1966), pp. 41-64. Many similar studies have been undertaken employing factor analysis as the basic methodology. None focus upon population variables per se. The one exception is noted below.

22/ See Weiner, M., op. cit., pp. 586-589.

stable populations are quite unstable. Individual case studies where the relationship holds are not enough to prove a general law. However, population variables do tend to be part of the conflict-generating dynamics in societies which already exhibit high stress and strain ^{23/} and where population changes aggravate existing tendencies for internal conflict. Since much of this evidence is based on a cross-national study of 84 contemporary nations for 1950-1960 and 1961-1965, the modest role of population variables in contributing to internal violence might be attributed to the time frame in question, to the aggregation of nations at such a high level, or to a focus upon cross-national analysis. ^{24/} Closer, more detailed, regional or national analyses might shed further light on these findings, particularly in cases where prima facie evidence suggests possible linkages from population to internal violence. The intervening linkages, however, are still to be determined.

17. On balance, therefore, the implications of population change for domestic instability and violence appear to be highly dependent upon the resources of a society and its ability to accommodate to new demands. It is also contingent upon the levels of knowledge and skills, the prevailing levels of technology and the nature of the political system. A politicized population makes greater demands upon its government than one that is less so, with possibly destabilizing consequences.

V. POPULATION DISTRIBUTION: SOME CONSEQUENCES OF DENSITY AND PRESSURE

18. Aside from simplistic inferences regarding the connexion between concentration (internal density or pressure) on the one hand and violence on the other, the existing evidence, again, points more to inconsistencies of inference than to many sound conclusions. Studies of animal behaviour suggest that drastic shifts within the social hierarchy in social habits and in patterns of interaction may result from increased density and/or pressure, and that conflict, aggression and overt violence are more prevalent under conditions of increased crowding. Further, these show that the greater the density the more likely it is that outward expansion will take place. ^{25/} However, evidence from the study of human societies

^{23/} Gurr, T. R. and Weil, H., "Population Growth and Political Conflict: A Correlational Study of 84 Nations" (unpublished ms.: Northwestern University, April 1973).

^{24/} Ibid. For supporting evidence concerning the social pre-conditions for violence see Wedge, B., "The Case Study of Student Political Violence: Brazil, 1964, and Dominican Republic, 1965", World Politics (vol. XXI, No. 2, January 1969), pp. 183-206.

^{25/} For a review of recent studies see Driver, P. M., "Toward an Ethology of Human Conflict: A Review", Journal of Conflict Resolution (vol. XI, No. 3, September 1967), pp. 361-374.

is, although suggestive, as yet inconclusive. A recent analysis of Chicago neighbourhoods indicates that rates of social pathologies (such as mental illness, mortality and delinquency) appear to be associated with population density, 26/ but severe problems in measurement require that any inferences be made with caution. There are some arguments that high density with low resources and low technology is invariably destabilizing, but this has been challenged. Similar doubts exist concerning any direct link between population density and international violence. 27/ None the less, in areas where populations place demands on their environments and where resources and technology are relatively unavailable, the propensities for conflict are certainly enhanced.

19. The elusive consideration of "felt" pressure has been raised by some scholars to explain the link between density (in spatial terms) or pressure (in terms of resources) and conflict behaviour. The arguments run as follows. In situations where the leadership or the politicized public perceives that pressures may be reduced through political action, this perception becomes critical in its own right, and empirical realities pale. Indeed, the social science literature abounds with debates regarding the importance of absolute deprivations, relative deprivations, rising expectations, lowered expectations and so forth, in terms of political implications and propensities for conflict and violence. 28/ The relation of perceptions to realities is particularly elusive and there is no clear indication of the conditions under which felt pressures propel States toward conflictual behaviour in contrast to those situations in which actual pressures of numbers in relation to resources constitute the major determinants.

20. There is, however, some cross-national evidence which indicates that actual pressures are consistently related to both internal turmoil and measures of domestic rebellion and that pressure upon resources is positively related to internal conflict. Societies with high dependency ratios - large numbers of unproductive youth - are also the most unstable, but this may in large part be a spurious relationship, both factors being positively correlated with economic development. 29/

26/ Galle, O. R., Gove, W. R. and McPherson, J. M., "Population Density and Pathology: What are the Relations for Man?" Science (vol. 176, 7 April 1972), pp. 23-30, and Freedman, J. L., Klevansky, S. and Ehrlich, P. R., "The Effect of Crowding on Human Task Performance", Journal of Applied Social Psychology (vol. 1, No. 1, 1971), pp. 7-25.

27/ Bremer, S., Singer, J. D. and Luterbacher, U., "Crowding and Combat in Animal and Human Societies: The European Nations, 1816-1965" (The University of Michigan, unpublished ms., November 1971).

28/ See, for example, Gurr, T. R., "Urban Disorder: Perspectives from the Comparative Study of Civil Strife", American Behavioural Scientist (vol. II, No. 4, March-April 1968).

29/ Gurr, T. R. and Weil, H., op. cit., pp. 17-20.

21. In sum, although population density and population pressure do not appear to be direct contributors to violence at the international level, population pressure does emerge as one important determinant of internal violence. The evidence is still too general to allow for inferences with respect to any specific nation, but broad patterns are discernible. 30/

VI. POPULATION MOVEMENT: SOME CONSEQUENCES OF MIGRATION

22. The political implications of population movement have been given comparatively little attention to date. Historically, conflict between populations has generally been over land resources and the redistribution of territorial rights. Hence, when the movement of population across national boundaries violates established views on rights and territoriality, migration becomes a variable of significant political importance. There are also political implications of movements from rural to urban areas, interurban migration and nomadic movements or migrations to the proverbial frontier, 31/ but these have not been systematically examined.

23. The search for universally valid generalizations concerning the conditions and consequences of population movements has to date produced only marginal returns, as much of the data is situation specific and time bound, and there has been no effort systematically to compare the findings of diverse migration studies. However, this partial evidence does suggest that it is by changing the demographic profile of both host and source community that migration assumes political importance. 32/ A lack of systematic data on who migrates, why, and with what effect further hinders the clarification of these issues. The absence of a comprehensive theory of migration which takes into account the conditions of both the host community and the community of origin, the characteristics of the migrants and the alternative potential consequences, makes it difficult to evaluate the disparate evidence in more than general terms. In addition, the consequences of migration for the receiving community have been given greater attention than the consequences for the community of origin.

30/ There are many studies examining the economic implications of population pressures, but rarely are the political consequences rendered explicit. One study in Africa is particularly worthy of note: Dow, Jr., T. E., "Population Pressure in Tropical Africa", Current History (vol. 60, March 1971) pp. 136-141. The author indicates the ways in which an area that has not commonly been viewed as having a population problem appears to have a very serious one indeed.

31/ For an excellent survey of internal migration see Bogue, D. J., "Internal Migration" in Hauser, P. M. and Duncan, O. D., eds., The Study of Population: An Inventory and Appraisal (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1959), pp. 486-509; also Petersen, op. cit., 1969; Fleming, D. and Bailyn, B., eds., The Intellectual Migration, Europe and America, 1930-1960 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969).

32/ See Weiner, M., op. cit., pp. 601-605. For problems of integrating migrants, see Hanson, R. C. and Simmons, O. G., "Differential Experience Paths of Rural Migrants to the City", American Behavioral Scientist (vol. 13, No. 2, September/October 1969), pp. 14-35.

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24. As the general tendency is for population movements to occur from less developed to more developed regions, an influx of less skilled, less affluent migrants into a community clearly can act to intensify demands for governmental services. This migration may occur both within a country and across national boundaries, and may be either temporary or permanent.

25. Rapid urban growth is a characteristic which distinguishes among nations experiencing turmoil and, specifically, between nations experiencing rebellion in Latin America, and between nations with turmoil in Afro-Asia. A quantitative cross-national study indicates that it appears to have a moderately positive, although not statistically significant correlation with measures of internal turmoil and rebellion. ^{33/} These relationships are consistent, but they are not strong; nor is a causal relation established. The sheer number of newly-urbanized individuals does not in itself contribute to the propensity for domestic violence. It is therefore important to look more closely at the evidence concerning the processes by which the movement of population to cities (as the major form of increased urbanization) results in political conflict.

26. Political scientists who are concerned with urbanization have long believed that rapid movement to the cities results in economic frustration among the migrant population, that difficulties in adjusting to urban conditions lead to an increased awareness of the role of government and to radical politicization among the migrants, and that in the case of the urban poor this politicization results in an opposition to the political system. Urbanization theorists argue that such non-supportive attitudes tend to be translated into behaviour that results in political instability, but the validity of these theories is being increasingly questioned. ^{34/}

27. Recent studies of population movement among the urban poor in Latin America suggest that the city is not necessarily a radicalizing influence, that there appear to be no differences among migrants and non-migrants on indices of social conditions, political attitudes or behaviour patterns and that there is no evidence that migrants in Latin America provide an invariable radical base from which political instability results. ^{35/}

^{33/} Gurr, T. R., op. cit., 1973, pp. 18-19.

^{34/} See, for example, Kornhauser, W., The Politics of Mass Society (New York: The Free Press, 1959) and a review of relevant literature as presented in Cornelius, W. A., "Urbanization as an Agent in Latin American Political Instability: The Case of Mexico", The American Political Science Review (vol. LXIII, No. 3, September 1969), pp. 833-857.

^{35/} See, for example, Cornelius, op. cit., 1969; Gurr, op. cit., 1973; and Nelson, J. N., Migrants, Urban Poverty and Instability in Developing Nations (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, Occasional Papers, No. 22, 1969); Nelson, J. N., "The Urban Poor: Disruption or Political Integration in Third World Cities?" World Politics (vol. XXII, No. 3, April 1970), pp. 393-414.

28. It also appears that the demands made upon governments by the migrants tend to be for primary services and that these are not translated into broader social and economic demands for such things as education or employment opportunities. 36/ Political support for the régime by the migrants is thus best predicted by their access to these basic services. Delivering such services amounts to an important pre-condition for their absorption into the urban community. In addition, when migrants succeed economically relative to the local population, an indigenous reaction may set in and the local population may employ political methods for opposing the migrants. 37/

29. Urbanization as such tends to reinforce ethnic divisions and such divisions hinder the development of political participation and orderly political process. These divisions also result in the "fragmentation" of the social order by strengthening the differences between migrant and native. 38/ It has also been suggested, however, that in the short run the growth of cities dampens propensities for violence rather than increasing them. But this evidence is sketchy and time bound.

30. The political implications of international migration are more readily discernible, in that great cultural and political clashes have resulted from the large-scale movement of populations across national boundaries. Often, however, international migration results in violent conflict. Countless examples of this phenomenon - most notably in the Middle East, South-East Asia, and the South Asian subcontinent - point to the inherently destabilizing consequences of large-scale population movements. 39/ This situation is accentuated when political boundaries do not coincide with ethnic boundaries - as is often the case in many areas of the world.

36/ Cornelius, W. A., "The Local Urban Community as an Arena of Political Learning: The Impact of Residential Context upon Political Attitudes and Behavior Among the Migrant Poor in Latin American Cities". Prepared for the 1972 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 1972.

37/ Weiner, M., "When Migrants Succeed and Natives Fail". Paper prepared for the General Congress of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population, 27 August-1 September 1973, Liège, Belgium.

38/ Goodman, A. E., "The Political Implications of Urban Development in Southeast Asia: The 'Fragment' Hypothesis", Economic Development and Cultural Change (vol. 20, No. 1, October 1971), pp. 117-130.

39/ For a general statement see Kindleberger, C. P., "Mass Migration, Then and Now", Foreign Affairs (vol. 43, No. 4, July 1965), pp. 644-658. One of many more detailed national analyses is found in Burki, S. J., "Social and Economic Determinants of Political Violence: A Case Study of the Punjab", The Middle East Journal (vol. 25, No. 4, Autumn 1971), pp. 465-480. See also Weiner, op. cit., 1971.

31. So, too, many local conflicts can be attributed to gradual (but sometimes also drastic) changes in the composition and size of the population due to movements. One study indicates a positive correlation exists between political violence and the percentage of refugees. ^{40/} Although there are no statistical analyses of these relationships, a series of case studies of small conflict indicates that migration (forced or otherwise) appears to be an important determinant of overt violence. ^{41/}

VII. POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF POPULATION COMPOSITION

32. Population composition (age structure, socio-economic status, racial, ethnic and religious differences) often generates consequences with highly political implications but, again, few attempts have been made to identify their separate effects. Although some scholars maintain that a youthful population provides some advantages in military terms which are not accorded to an older population, the composition of population by itself, as is the case for size, bears little upon over-all national power.

33. Age structure is also conventionally regarded as a factor in generating internal conflict. With due qualifications, the direct link is indeed substantiated. The higher the proportion of youthful population, and the greater its unemployment, the greater are the probabilities of dissatisfaction, instability and violence. A youthful population also places added strains upon the social services, while not contributing substantially to national production. There is circumstantial evidence which indicates that a youthful population amounts to a contributing factor in many political and revolutionary movements.

34. A high proportion of youths in a population may tend to strain the mechanisms for socialization in societies, particularly when resources are inadequate to cope with large numbers being inducted into the social order, resulting in alienation which may become transformed into active opposition to the political system. There are some long time delays involved, but strains may accumulate in society which contribute to eventual systemic change or over-all institutional transformations (again, the intervening sequence is difficult to establish).

35. It is commonly asserted that the more homogeneous a society is, the more stable it is likely to be, and the greater its capacities are for collective action. Political analysts tend to agree that political instability and violence are more likely to occur in situations where the cleavages in a society are reinforcing rather than cross-cutting: for example, where religious differences coincide with ethnic divisions, the propensities for political instability and violence are greater than when these characteristics are more randomly distributed. ^{42/} The studies on migration noted above tend to reinforce these

^{40/} Burki, S. J., *op. cit.*, 1971.

^{41/} Choucri, N., "Population Dynamics and Local Conflict: A Cross-National Analysis of Population and War", (Center for International Studies, M.I.T.: 1973).

^{42/} See Gurr and Weil, *op. cit.*, 1973, pp. 18-21.

inferences and there are numerous illustrations of such situations. For example, students of Indian politics have long argued that one of the reasons for the seeming stability of the democratic process in India is that the lines of cleavage in society are cross-cutting. In Pakistan, by contrast, socio-economic and political cleavages were mutually reinforcing, thus contributing to the intensification of hostilities and eventually to violence.

36. Population composition may also provide important constraints upon which the political order is shaped. ^{43/} The act of census-taking assumes political proportions where the political order is based upon recognized cleavages in the society and where any significant changes in relative populations might result in demands for similar adjustment in the political process. The case of Lebanon, where the census amounts to a major political issue, is illustrative of such considerations.

37. A recent study of the political implications of population composition in South Asia notes that the complex and asymmetrical character of the area's ethnic map holds important consequences for war and peace. Each State in South Asia contains a number of ethnic groups which generally have a high cultural and political consciousness. Often, these ethnic divisions do not coincide with the political boundaries and the resulting strategic considerations become important parameters for conflict in the area. ^{44/} The manipulation of ethnic groups for political purposes is not uncommon in this area - or in other parts of the world - but there exists as yet no comprehensive study of the alternative political implications of ethnic divisions in conflict situations. Beyond these generalizations, however, there is little evidence concerning the precise political implications of population composition. To date the overwhelming focus has been on the implications of numbers - their composition or their distribution still remains relatively unexamined.

VIII. FROM POPULATION TO WAR: TOWARD SOME CAUSAL LINKAGES ^{45/}

38. Although it is frequently argued that rapid population growth is a major cause of international instability and violence, the simple proposition that increased population results in international violence cannot be seriously entertained. From the available evidence it must be inferred that population dynamics do not appear to be direct causes of violent conflict either within or

^{43/} For one illustration of the political implications of a heterogeneous population in terms of "in group-out group" propositions, see Gutkind, P. C. W., "Accommodation and Conflict in an African Pre-Urban Area", Anthropologica (vol. IV, No. 1, 1962), pp. 164-173. There are many such studies.

^{44/} Conor, W., "Ethnology and the Peace of South Asia", World Politics (vol. 22, Spring 1969), pp. 51-86.

^{45/} This section is adapted from the author's previous research.

between nations. ^{46/} The critical elements in any population/violence calculus might involve less population variables per se than the ways in which population combines with other factors to produce conflict. What those factors are, and how they interrelate, is an area of inquiry which remains to be clarified.

39. In this context, the population variable must be viewed in three ways: as a parameter of a conflict situation, in the sense that it amounts to one of the characteristics which defines the antagonists; as a variable, in that changes in population produce commensurate (or disproportionate - as the case may be) changes in the situation at hand; or as a multiplier, in the sense that population characteristics may intensify existing cleavages and problems and render a situation less tolerable than might otherwise be the case. For purposes of analytical clarity, it is important to distinguish among these roles which population variables may assume.

40. A dynamic process linking population to war can be abstracted from the classical works on war and from recent empirical analyses. ^{47/} First, there are internal consequences of added population: pressures on resources, dissatisfactions, unrest, lowered standards of living, relative deprivations and so forth. Secondly, there are the factors which allow internal dissatisfactions to be translated into behavioural terms. These can be thought of as facilitators in terms of technological capability, military effectiveness, manpower, labour and so forth. Thirdly, there are those processes that relate States to each other and initiate dynamics that assume international characteristics. Such processes would be commercial rivalries, expansions, conquests and the like. Fourthly, there are factors which involve a comparative calculus on the part of at least one of the parties: i.e., differentials in capabilities, differentials in standards of living, differentials in population size and so forth. Fifthly, there are those international structural effects which are occasioned by international dynamics in conjunction with external relations: changes in power relations, redistributions of capabilities, changes in international alignments, and the like. Sixthly, there are the explicit implications for conflict of these factors, in terms of provocation of one party by another, overt conflict and then armed violence.

41. In sum, population effects are mediated through a series of intervening linkages and the initial conditions embedding population in the internal demographic, economic and political profile of a nation become an important set of variables in this complex process. ^{48/}

^{46/} See Wright, op. cit., 1942; Bremer, Singer and Luterbacher, op. cit., 1972; the essays in Russett, B., ed., Peace, War, and Numbers (Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1972); Renouvin, P., and Duroselle, J. B., Introduction to the History of International Relations (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967); for a central review, see Choucri, N., op. cit., 1973.

^{47/} These observations are based on Choucri, N., op. cit., (1973), pp. 135-140.

^{48/} A quantitative study of the origins of the First World War provides some support and illustration for these observations. See Choucri, N. and North, R. C., Nations in Conflict, Population, Lateral Pressure and War.

42. To these empirical realities must be added the perceptual factors which place a great element of uncertainty in this calculus. Perceptions of pressures, of differentials, of competitions, of change in the balance of power and so forth might not be congruent with actual situations. Feelings may assume a reality of their own. Unfortunately, little evidence exists concerning the ways in which population variables are perceived in different conflict situations, or how demographic considerations enter the military and strategic calculus of nations.

43. Reversing the causal sequence, some studies have been concerned with the effects of population upon the termination of war. An analysis of several wars indicated no evidence to support the general hypothesis of a fixed relationship between average casualties lost in battle and total population losses in wars; however, nations tend to try to surrender before they suffer population losses from about 3 to 6 per cent. 49/ Population thus amounts to an ultimate constraint upon national behaviour and the conduct of war. 50/ Population variables are therefore important in defining the parameters of permissible behaviour - what can and cannot be done under different circumstances - and these parameters are shaped as much by demographic conditions as by resource and technological ones. 51/ The greatest instabilities and propensities for war are to be found in situations where population pressures (or density, or overpopulation in relation to some particular referent) upon resource needs converge with the availability of military and other technologies to transform needs, demands and dissatisfactions into overt conflict and violence.

IX. CONCLUSION: SOME POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF POPULATION DYNAMICS

44. The foregoing observations have pointed to some evidence - sometimes contradictory and always partial - concerning the relationship between population and politics. Several conclusions emerge:

49/ Klingberg, F. L., "Predicting the Termination of War: Battle Casualties and Population Losses", The Journal of Conflict Resolution (vol. X, No. 2, June 1966), pp. 130-171.

50/ See also Three Studies on War in Peace Reviews; and Rosen, S., "War Power and Willingness to Suffer", in Russett, op. cit., pp. 167-184.

51/ See Choucri, N., "In Search of Peace Systems: Scandinavia and the Netherlands: 1870-1970", in Russett, op. cit., pp. 239-274 and, for related evidence, Rummel, R. J., "U.S. Foreign Relations: Conflict, Cooperation, and Attribute Distances", in Russett, B., op. cit., pp. 71-114; Choucri, N., Laird, M. and Meadows, D., Resource Scarcity and Foreign Policy: A Simulation Model of International Conflict (M.I.T.: Center for International Studies, March 1972), pp. 19-22.

(a) The political implications of population variables in any situation depend upon the resources of a society and its level of technology, knowledge and skills. Different populations made different demands upon their environment with differing consequences. 52/

(b) Rapid population growth invariably places added loads on governmental capabilities and upon services performed and increases the cost of governance.

(c) Population pressures tend to intensify existing strains and stresses in society. Although there appears to be some direct relationship between population change and political instability, neither urbanization alone, nor crowding in cities, necessarily increases propensities for violence.

(d) Population composition often shapes the nature of the political process if the distribution of political privileges, rights and obligations is done according to attributable criteria, such as religion, race, or ethnic group.

(e) A youthful population tends to strain the socialization mechanisms in society, particularly when resources are inadequate to cope with large numbers being inducted into the social order, often resulting in domestic conflict.

(f) Despite changing technology (and the importance of knowledge and skills), population size remains an important element in military calculations and therefore an ultimate factor in the ability to wage war.

(g) Internal migration does not necessarily lead to overt violence. By contrast, many international conflicts can be attributed to population movements across national boundaries.

(h) In some cases, population variables provide the roots of conflict, in others they provide the context within which ongoing conflicts become routinized or take on new dimensions. Without explicit recognition of the demographic basis of a political conflict, imposed solutions may be of short duration.

X. POLICY QUESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCH

45. In view of the inadequacies of the work undertaken to date, future research on population, politics and public policy should try to meet the following criteria: first, such research should be cross national; secondly, it ought to be conducted

52/ The role of technology in this calculus has never been examined systematically. For some related observations see Ehrlich, P. R. and Holdren, J. P., "Population and Panaceas: A Technological Perspective", Bioscience (vol. 19, No. 1065, December 1965), pp. 1065-1072; Austin, A. L. and Brewer, J. W., "World Population Growth and Related Technical Problems", Institute for Electrical Engineering, SPECTRUM, December 1970, pp. 43-54. See also Yhi-Min Ho, "Development with Surplus Population: The Case of Taiwan: A Critique of the Classical Two-Sector Model, a la Lewis", Program of Development Studies, Paper No. 9, Reprint Series, Rice University, 1972.

over time, adopting a longitudinal perspective; thirdly, it must be scientific, that is, capable of falsification, replication and meeting acknowledged tenets of social science inquiry; fourthly, such research must be policy relevant, by identifying the manipulables in the social order, the costs of manipulation and the tools for implementing public policies; fifthly, it must be data based, drawing upon existing files and developing novel observations when the required data are not available; and sixthly, the results must be communicable and amenable to evaluation and critical assessment.

46. Among the substantive issues to be examined in concerted and systematic fashion are the following:

- (a) an assessment of cost of added population in terms of actual loads upon governmental capabilities and social services;
- (b) an identification of the intervening factors, processes or sequences between population variables and negative social and political consequences, such as crime, conflict, violence and social disruption;
- (c) a systematic monitoring of migratory trends in terms of who migrates, why, where, and with what consequences upon the place of origin and the place of destination;
- (d) a clarification of the process by which population movement takes place, in terms of opportunities, pressures or restrictions;
- (e) an evaluation in cross-national context of how societies at different levels of socio-economic development are affected by added population;
- (f) an identification of the different social policies which (implicitly or explicitly) affect population characteristics in different societies and an evaluation of potential inconsistencies among such policies;
- (g) an assessment of the political and administrative requirements for the development of effective means of influencing the population characteristics in different societies: 53/

53/ See Elliott, R., Landman, L. C., Lincoln, R. and Tsuruoka, T., "U.S. Population Growth and Family Planning: A Review of the Literature", in Callahan, D., ed., The American Population Debate (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1971), pp. 186-226 for a general survey. Stamper, M., "Population Policy in Development Planning: A Study of Seventy Less Developed Countries", Reports on Population/Family Planning No. 13 (New York: The Population Council, May 1973); Lapham, R. J. and Mauldin, W. P., "National Family Planning Programs: Review and Evaluation", Studies in Family Planning (New York: The Population Council, vol. 3, No. 3, March 1972).

(h) an evaluation of the effects of population variables upon political development;

(i) an identification of the effects of alternative population policies upon different sectors of society;

(j) a clarification of the types of systematic data and information needed to determine the extent to which different societies would be receptive to governmental policies designed explicitly to effect population characteristics.

47. Some critical imperatives for research purposes include long- and short-range studies and studies that reveal the long run implications of decisions made in the short run. ^{54/} Simple projective techniques are no longer adequate for the analysis of complex social systems.

48. Some of these questions can best be undertaken by the United Nations, and others by governmental or private institutions. In terms of the criteria cited above, the United Nations is best suited to engage in investigations which assume a global perspective, draw upon United Nations data files, and are policy relevant by having direct bearing upon international policies toward population. Co-operation among national and international institutions is essential in the area of data collection and compilation and in the assessment of the results of research.

49. Another set of important data, which international organizations may provide, pertains to the ways in which governments and national leaders perceive the demographic situation in their countries, their assessment of their own problems and their perspectives upon alternative approaches. A similarly critical consideration involves determining the degree of congruence between perceptions of the situation and the actual situation - as reflected in population trends and population structure. A third imperative involves an assessment of the extent to which existing national institutions and international agencies are appropriate for responding to problems generated by population trends.

50. The most important role for international organizations in this regard pertains to their clearing-house function. Translating scientific research results into an operational context amounts to a major challenge, a task that research groups in international organizations can serve better than any national or trans-national institution.

^{54/} There are, to date, almost no systematic attempts to evaluate the adaptive and problem-solving capabilities of political systems. This is an area in which research is needed over and above the orthodox literature in Comparative Politics as exemplified by Almond and Powell, Comparative Politics: a developmental approach (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966).

