

## Now

(In the bicentennial year of the American Constitution)

by Harold McCurdy

1.

Between the tornadoes and the blossoming pears,  
Hard rock, hospitals, daycare centers, bombs,  
We sometimes, under stress, give way to prayers  
Of gratitude or terror; but God numbs  
Us to old visions and allows no new,  
Except computers, and, of course, TV,  
Before which we have knelt, as formerly we  
With more affection knelt, Lord Christ, to you.

2.

Turing's invention threatens to stop us cold  
And flatten us to a shape we've never been,  
One-dimensional, binary, fixed in a mold  
Completely heartless, artless, and without sin,  
No further needing love or hands or faces  
But only one number each, which, though as long  
As Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, will be no song;  
No, but the small grist of the data bases.

3.

Is it too late to ask, once more, for more?  
Our West has closed its vast horizons down,  
Our vertical space has been preempted for war:  
This is that Progress that turned country to town,  
Town to a city, city to a slum  
More dismal than a bog. If we escape  
New Hiroshimas in the new Turing shape,  
Will this then be the Kingdom that was to come?

4.

Computers have no wishes, dreams, or fears  
Etched in their micro-circuits. We still do.  
And in this interim before the years  
Bring us to mega-crimes without a clue  
In any intent of ours, Lord Christ, we rest  
Our case with you. Pity us here on the peak  
Of our accomplishments, alienated, weak,  
Who have exhausted the inexhaustible West.

5.

Our duty was to remember—remember with love—  
Christopher, the Christ-bearer; how he came  
Attended by a great multitude, a cloud of  
Martyrs, witnesses, planting in God's name  
The Red Cross here. Not having done that, we  
Yield memory to the computer, and forget  
Our lineage and our mission, though stars yet  
As Cross or Swan burn in the galaxy.

6.

Stretched on the cross of secular affairs,  
Taking no comfort in the Pentagon,  
Or secret agents, or the stout-lunged players  
Strutting upon the stage in Washington,  
We sweat into the future. Denied escape  
Except by entrepreneurial makeshift hope,  
Or Ouija board, or space voyages, or dope,  
We talk like parrots, chatter like an ape.

7.

Meanwhile, Peacekeepers, multiple-headed, nest  
In desert burrows ready to be called  
By a red button imperatively pressed  
To spread their dove wings under the Eagle's sprawled  
Imperial rage, should the Great Bear resist  
Pure reason. Such the public rhetoric.  
Secretly, the computers whirl and click  
And weave inevitabilities as they list.

8.

Their empire, which begins by requiring us  
To copy account numbers on our checks, expands  
Toward unimaginable limits. Pelagius,  
Founder of this Republic, waves his hands  
In blessing over it. Who needs Mercy or Grace?  
Programmed, society will now fulfill  
All the hubris of the Pelagian will,  
And, unbaptized, confront the Black Holes of Space.

9.

In truth, no one can know what no one knows.  
But Fear and Desire still struggle against loss,  
And, should a nova flare, or a great rose  
Of ice-light blazing round a parhelion Cross  
Unfold above the Dew Line, hope might spring  
A second time in the all-too-human breast,  
And a cry, tearing the death-veil from the West,  
Ring out, "Sing, children! Enter the Kingdom, and sing!"

10.

Until such miracle, we of the West  
Focused on Me and Now, have little room  
For tag-ends of the Holy, rags of the quest  
That started in Jewry at an empty tomb  
And brought us, late, to a far cactus land  
Where deeper than the round-eyed burrowing owl  
MX's burrow, and the seismic growl  
Of underground nuclear testing shakes the sand.

# Why We Need A Smaller U.S. Population And How We Can Achieve It

We need a smaller population in order to halt the destruction of our environment, and to create an economy that will be **sustainable** over the very long term.

We are trying to address our steadily worsening environmental problems without coming to grips with their root cause – overpopulation.

**If present immigration and fertility rates continue, our population, now over 254 million, will pass 400 million by the year 2050 -- and still be growing rapidly!**

All efforts to save our environment will ultimately be futile unless we not only halt U.S. population growth, but reverse it, so that our population can eventually be stabilized at a **sustainable** level – far lower than it is today.

## The Optimum U.S. Population Size

The central issue is surely this: **At what size should we seek to stabilize U.S. population?** Unless we know in what direction we should be headed, how can we possibly devise sensible policies to get us there?

The size at which our population is eventually stabilized is supremely important because of the effect of sheer numbers on such vitally important national goals as a healthy environment, and a sustainable economy.

We believe these goals can best be achieved with a U.S. population in the range of 125 to 150 million, or about its size in the 1940s. This optimum size could be reached in about three to four generations if we do two things now that are well within our grasp.

## How To Get There

1. **Reduce annual immigration to about 200,000** so that it is in rough balance with emigration (out-migration). Then, immigration will no longer contribute significantly to our population growth, as it does now.

2. **Lower our fertility rate** (the average number of children per woman) from the present 2.1 to around 1.5 and maintain it at that level for several decades. We believe that non-coercive financial incentives will be necessary in order to reach that goal.

If almost all women had no more than two children, our fertility rate would drop to around 1.5, because many women remain childless by choice, or choose to have not more than one child. **We promote the ideal of the two-child maximum family as the social norm, because that is the key to lowering our fertility.**

## NPG Proposes These Incentives to Motivate Parents to Have Not More Than Two Children

- Eliminate the present Federal income tax exemption for dependent children born after a specified date.
- Give a Federal income tax credit **only** to those parents who have not more than two children. Those with three or more would lose the credit entirely.
- Give a refundable tax credit (cash payment) to low income parents who are eligible for the tax credit, to the extent that the credit exceeds their tax liability.
- Give a cash bonus for voluntary sterilization to both men and women under age 35, who have already had at least one child.

## Two Vastly Different Paths Lie Before Us

With the reductions in immigration and fertility we advocate, our nation could start **now** on the path toward a sustainable population of 125 to 150 million.

Without such a program, we are almost certain to continue our mindless, headlong rush toward catastrophic population levels.

If you agree that we need to work toward a smaller U.S. population, we need your support. **NPG is the only organization that calls for a smaller U.S. and world population, and for specific, realistic measures to achieve those goals.**

*We are a nonprofit, national membership organization established in 1972. Contributions to NPG are tax deductible to the extent the law allows. To become a member, and receive our newsletter, plus all our current and future publications, please send us your check today.*

Yes, I want to become a member of NPG, and help you work toward a smaller U.S. population. I am enclosing my check for annual membership dues.

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Mail to: Negative Population Growth, Inc.  
210 The Plaza, P.O. Box 1206, Teaneck, NJ 07666

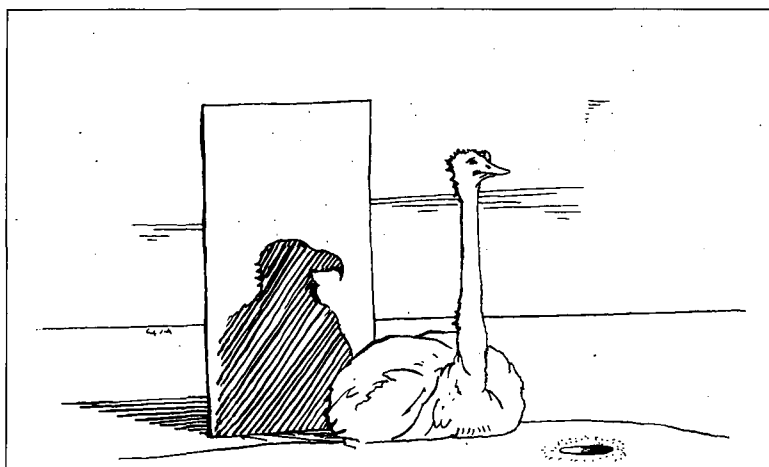
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# America: Ostrich or Eagle?

by Theodore Pappas

*"Republics exist only on tenure of being agitated."*

—Wendell Phillips



**Rising Sun**  
by Michael Crichton  
New York: Alfred A. Knopf;  
355 pp., \$22.00

**The Japan That Can Say No: Why Japan Will Be First Among Equals**  
by Shintaro Ishihara  
New York: Simon and Schuster;  
158 pp., \$10.00

**America Asleep: The Free Trade Syndrome and the Global Economic Challenge**  
Edited by John P. Cregan,  
Foreword by Patrick Buchanan  
Washington, D.C.: The United States Industrial Council Educational Foundation; 201 pp., \$8.95

As a gorgeous American call girl lies murdered on the 46th floor of Los Angeles' Nakamoto Tower—a Japanese conglomerate's newly erected American headquarters—a grand opening celebration with Washington and Hollywood notables is in full-swing on the floor below. Security cameras have recorded the murder, but the video tapes have been

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tampered with by Japanese officials who are hindering the police investigation with cries of racism and "Japan bashing." Young Peter Smith—the LAPD's Japanese liaison who knows nothing about Japanese behavior but who likes the exorbitant stipend Japan provides for "language training"—has been called to the scene. He is accompanied by semiretired policeman John Connor, who is steeped in Japanese culture from years of living abroad. While in Nakamoto's glass elevator—for which the Japanese company received a special city permit to exceed the legal limit of ninety floors and to "bypass [American] unions because of a so-called technical problem that only Japanese workers could handle"—they overhear a group discuss the rate at which the Japanese are buying California real estate. "In no other country in the world," laments Connor upon exiting the elevator, "would you hear people calmly discussing the fact that their cities and states were sold to foreigners." "Discussing?" Smith retorts, "They're the ones doing the selling."

And so begins the latest thriller from novelist and film director Michael Crichton. The narrative is riveting and captivates the reader with high-stakes intrigue and political and industrial espionage. It is also, admittedly, fiction as political polemic, with situations and characters

that exist exclusively as opportunities for cultural comment and political harangues. As Mr. Crichton states forthrightly in a postscript, "This novel questions the conventional premise that direct foreign investment in American high technology is by definition good, and therefore should not be allowed to continue without restraint or limitation." There follows a bibliography more akin to an academic book on Japanese culture, economics, and business psychology than a successful work of mass-market fiction. He encourages his readers to delve deeper into actual trade practices and by so doing to learn a lesson in realpolitik: "It is absurd to blame Japan for successful behavior, or to suggest that they slow down. The Japanese consider such American reactions childish whining, and they are right. It is more appropriate for the United States to wake up, to see Japan clearly, and to act realistically."

*Rising Sun* is replete with explanations of price fixing, product dumping, patent flooding, and influence peddling, and as such constitutes a virtual textbook on current Japanese trade practices. The author embellishes and enhances the credibility of his narrative with references to actual persons and recent events, such as the Toshiba controversy of 1987—when hordes of paid American lobbyists blan-