

nothing" for today's immigrants to attach themselves to "other than rampant consumerism" and a "vague concept of diversity."

Has a country ever grown stronger through disunity? Our differences may make us interesting; they do not unite us. What happens when a growing portion of the population feels no allegiance to our national ideals, disdains our heroes and clings to its separateness?

In the past, we could absorb and ultimately Americanize millions of immigrants because of

our shared identity. Today, that common ground is fast eroding.

Last week, the Pope was in India pleading with its inhabitants not to murder Christians. In the past two years, there have been more than 150 reported incidents of murder, rape, beatings and church desecration.

India is deliriously diverse. There are Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs and Christians, castes and sub-groups. For hundreds of years they've all been at each others' throats. For most of its existence,

India was held together only by the bloody swords of the rajahs or British lances. Is this the America under construction for our children and grandchildren?

You can bet the authors of the New York report don't live in diverse neighborhoods, send their children to diverse schools or experience the joys of immigrant culture by strolling the streets of Washington Heights, with its Jamaican gangs, 'round midnight.

The elite celebrates diversity; others have to live with it. **TSC**

Japan's Future Brightened by Demographic Decline

by B. Meredith Burke

Who faces the brightest quality-of-life prospects for the year 2100: Japan with a population projected to decline by nearly 60 percent, or the United States, whose present population will soar past three-quarters of a billion under current policies?

American news media almost gloatingly report the soft and restructuring Japanese labor

market even as our own sets employment records. Japan's recorded unemployment rate is approaching a post-World War II record of 5 percent. A million laid-off workers are still unemployed while millions more have entered the uncertain world of temporary or part-time employment. Only a third of last year's college graduates are full-time employed.

Its salvation lies in a reality rued by demographically unschooled journalists and male politicians: Japan's post-war roller-coaster in births. The small numbers born during 1930-45 yielded to two postwar birth peaks — 2.7 million in 1947 and 2.1 million in 1975 — and two birth valleys — 1.5 million in 1955 and

1.2-1.3 million in the 1990s. Those of traditional working age will soon shrink in numbers. Meanwhile, life expectancy gains for adults mean they can expect to live 20 years beyond age 60, the normal retirement age.

Years of high fertility followed by many years of low fertility will result in more than 20 percent of the population in 2100 being age 65 or above, compared with a projected 13 percent for the United States. Retirees will soon outnumber new labor entrants. Unless fertility or immigration shoot up, it may then drop to as few as 50-55 million by the year 2100. Regaining the country's 1920 level of population will ultimately deliver Japan from an ecological dilemma.

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Sustaining its peak population, let alone a growing one, would wreak havoc. Pension specialists overlook both the expenses a baby boom imposes and the gains of a baby bust in industrial society. Baby booms require heightened investments first in schools, then in job creation, and in housing and infrastructure expansion. A baby bust sharply and swiftly reduces the youth-dependency burden, enabling parents and society to invest in more per child while freeing up resources for other uses, including old-age supports.

University of British Columbia regional planner William Rees and his associate Mathis Wackernagel, now with the think tank "Redefining Progress," originated the concept of an "ecological footprint." This is the land-equivalent required to generate the renewable resources a country consumes and recycle its wastes. With one-quarter hectare of productive land per capita, Japan has an "ecological footprint" conservatively estimated as at least two hectares. Its consumption exceeds production eightfold. Despite intensive agriculture, Japan is the nation most dependent upon food imports. Since 1970, its dependency upon imported cereals has risen from 55 to 75 percent while its population has grown 20 percent.

With a population of 55 million, Japan could shrink its ecological footprint, aim for food self-sufficiency and reduce its food bill.

Huge post-1950 increases in Japan's urban population resulted in housing notoriously inferior to that of other industrial nations. The Japanese themselves applied the expression "rabbit warrens" to their expensive, tiny, high-rise apartments located hours out of town. This situation will flip-flop. Succeeding generations will enjoy rosier housing prospects in both quality and affordability.

Women, especially married women, currently confront employment discrimination and the full burden of household responsibilities. Young women in a society with a dearth of labor force entrants will gain bargaining chips vis-a-vis both potential employers and potential husbands. Young couples will gain the power to renegotiate the present work "day" that shortchanges home, spouse and family. Japan's fertility should then rebound to the replacement level.

In the U.S., births to immigrant women have offset the beneficial effects of the birth dearth to baby boomers. The former boosted 1990s' births by 25 percent, frightening for a country that ecologists say has exceeded its maximum carrying-capacity population of 150 million since 1950.

Scientists and large majorities of Americans surveyed want

population growth stopped. Yet, our growth-vested politicians confront with equanimity a year 2050 population of a half-billion! On this path, the U.S. will lose food self-sufficiency by the year 2040, according to Cornell University ecologists David and Marcia Pimentel. Global warming is only one of several looming ecological disasters.

With population reduction inevitable in the next century, Japan has a bright future. By the year 2100, Americans will apply the words "bright and shining" to their past, not their present — and certainly not their future. **TSC**

Don't Expect High School Graduates to Speak English

A high school diploma from an American public school should be proof that the graduate speaks English, right? Not if the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) gets its way. Attorneys for MALDEF are suing the state of Texas, arguing that the state graduation exam has a "disparate impact" on minority students and that they should not be required to take it.

If MALDEF is successful, this ruling could endanger all standardized tests in Texas and in other states as well. Rosalie Porter, a Center for Equal Opportunity (CEO) board member and national expert on bilingual education, is testifying as an expert witness for the state of Texas against MALDEF's position. Dr. Porter and Jorge Amselle also spoke last month at the National Press Club regarding bilingual education and recent legislation in Congress.

The Lethal Gene

Book Review by Michael W. Masters

Perhaps no trait so uniquely characterizes Western peoples as that of altruism. We are, among the genuinely “diverse” peoples of the world, the most prone to feel compassion for those less fortunate and to act on those feelings. We provide food, medicine, disaster relief, education and even peacekeeping to all who ask — often to the detriment of our own kind. So relentlessly altruistic are we that Charles Dickens, in his book, *Bleak House*, coined the term “telescopic philanthropy” in parody of our propensity to coddle those who inhabit distant shores. Dickens’ archetypical do-gooder, Mrs. Jellyby, impatiently dismissed her own injured son in her frenzy to cater to the imagined needs of “the natives of Borrioboola-Gha on the left bank of the Niger.”

From the pulpits of Christianity to the drawing rooms of secular humanism, the simultaneously piteous and self-righteous plea for accommodation of all humanity — and with it a suspiciously insistent demand for sacrifice on the part of the altruists so importuned — never ceases. This raises the question: can anything so widely accepted be wrong? Or, to borrow a concept from Garret Hardin — who has written more persuasively on the subject of altruism than any other scientist — are there “unintended consequences” that accompany an altruism that compels universal fealty? It turns out that there are, and those consequences are the subject of Professor Hardin’s most recent book, *Creative Altruism*, a rewrite of a 1977 work, *The Limits of Altruism*.

In addition to Mrs. Jellyby’s delicate condition, *Creative Altruism* examines many subjects of vital importance in a finite world — among them carrying

capacity, population control, resource depletion, the ethical foundations of political and social systems and many others. All merit careful study and reflection. But the subject of altruism, more than any other, motivates and illuminates not only these concerns but the ultimate question that dominates all others — that of survival.

Altruism, Survival and the Commons

Significantly, the subtitle of Professor Hardin’s earlier work was “An Ecologist’s View of Survival,” a phrase that spotlights the issue at stake with a remarkable economy of expression. In a world rendered increasingly inter-dependent by communication, transportation, natural resource use, environment degradation and carrying capacity concerns, survival has become a predominant issue — although less so for individuals than for historic peoples and cultures. The latter are under assault as never before, due in no small measure to efforts by political and economic elites to

eradicate borders and traditional cultures as barriers to political consolidation and economic exploitation — a goal often hidden behind a pious rhetorical veneer of compulsory altruism. Dr. Hardin writes,

The spectre of survival now haunts ethical thought. Attempts to settle the egoism versus altruism issue, to unsnarl population problems, and to lay out the grounds on which international relations can be rationalized all end up with the word survival —

In this climate, a healthy understanding of altruism is central to insuring the continued survival of peoples and nations — a subject that Hardin has written on for decades. He long ago secured his reputation within the scientific community with his 1968 essay, “The Tragedy of the Commons.” In this essay he introduced many of the ecological and ethical themes that have guided his work since. Among them:

Creative Altruism: An Ecologist Questions Motives

by Garrett Hardin

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