

INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF OVERPOPULATION

Edited by John Barratt and Michael Louw

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- for the S.A. Institute of International Affairs

A conference on "The Impact on International Relations of the Population Explosion" was held at Jan Smuts House in Johannesburg in 1970. It brought together distinguished authorities on population questions from different regions of the world to consider the vital and urgent problem of current rapid population growth in its various dimensions, and in particular its effect on international relations.

The programme was planned so as to allow the participants to consider the question first on a national level and then to proceed to the international aspects. During the first part of the conference, therefore, after a survey of the world demographic situation, of food supplies and of other resources, the social, economic and political dimensions were considered. The conference then turned to the international economic and financial implications; the question of international migration; and the extent and possibilities of international action on population problems. The conference also considered population factors in the political and economic development of the four main regions: Asia, Latin America, Africa and Europe, including the U.S.S.R.

This report on the conference includes the texts of the main papers presented on these various topics. The authors of the papers were drawn from a number of academic disciplines - demography, sociology, economics, political science and international relations - and from eight different countries.

The report also includes summaries of the discussions which followed each paper, and the text of the conclusions reached at the end of the conference.

The South African Institute of International Affairs, which sponsored the conference, is a private organisation whose aim is to promote a wider understanding of international questions by means of research, dissemination of information, lectures and conferences. Its headquarters are at Jan Smuts House in Johannesburg, which was designed as a living memorial to a former South African Prime Minister, Jan Christiaan Smuts. The year 1970 - in which the "Population Explosion" conference was held - was the centenary of the birth of Smuts.

The editors. John Barratt is Director of the Institute. Professor Michael Louw is Head of the Department of International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand.

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