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Monroe Bush Addresses Ohio Academy of Science Members

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DAYTON, Ohio, April 28, 1967 --- Monroe Bush, Executive Director of the Population Reference Bureau, Inc., Washington, D.C., addressed members of the Ohio Academy of Science at their annual meeting at the University of Dayton on April 21, 1967.

The following is an Abstract of his address, "The Tidal Wave of People."...

Thesis: "...the unprecedented growth in human population holds out the warning that in the final quarter of this chaotic century the accumulated effect of this increase will create a devastating upheaval in the social order of the entire human family..."

"The rate of world's population growth has increased spectacularly in recent centuries. 300 million people living at 1 A.D.; in 1700 years this figure doubled to 600 million; more than doubled again in 200 years to 1,600,000,000 in 1900; within only 60 years doubled again to 3 billion-plus.

"Present prospect is that world population will double again to 6 billion-plus by the year 2000. Rapid growth is not a result of increased birth rate but of the decline in the death rate due to agricultural and industrial revolutions, and particularly the impact of scientific technology.

"1966 world growth rate of 2%, in face of food production increase of only 1%, aggravates starvation threat. Anticipated rapid decline in death rate of developing countries will bring increased rate of growth unless widespread starvation intervenes. Little prospect for early decline in high birth rates.

"U.S. situation much less ominous. U.S. birth rate fell from 55 per 1000 persons in 1820 to 18.4 births per 1000 persons in 1934--without a significant use of modern contraceptive techniques. Despite this drop in the birth rate, U.S. population increased 40 times from 4 million to 160 million in 180 years. The growth was the consequence of a death rate that fell from an estimated 25 per 1000 in 1800 to 17.2 in 1900, to a low of 9.5 today.

"U.S. population may hopefully stabilize at year 2000-2025 at 300-350 million. These are the most favorable estimates. Meanwhile, world population will climb to 6-7.5 billion by 2000. U.S. problem to be quality of life in the face of increased congestion. World problem to be physical survival. Effect of world problem on domestic U.S. is difficult to forecast."