

The great population spike and after: reflections on the 21st century / W.W. Rostow

Rostow, W. W. (Walt Whitman), 1916-2003

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Abstrak

Midway through the eighteenth century, the rate of growth for the world's population was roughly at zero. Immediately after World War II, it was just above 2 percent. Ever since, it has fallen steadily. This new book, the latest offering from a distinguished expert on international economics, tells readers what this stagnation or fall in population will mean--economically, politically, and historically--for the nations of the world.

W. W. Rostow not only traces the whole global arc of this "great population spike"--he looks far beyond it. What he sees will interest anyone curious about what is in store for the world's financial and governmental systems. The Great Population Spike and After: Reflections on the 21st Century contends that, as the decline in population now occurring in the industrialized world spreads to all of the presently developing countries, the global rate of population will fall to the "zero" level circa 2100. (Indeed, with the exception of Africa south of the Sahara, it could reach "zero" long before then.) This being so, how will it be possible to maintain full employment and social services with a decelerating population? What will societies do when the proportion of the working force (as now defined) diminishes radically in relation to the population of poor or elderly dependents? How will the countries of the world confront subsequent decreases in population-related investment?

In answering these queries, this bold study asserts that the United States is not the "last remaining superpower" but the "critical margin" without whose support no constructive action on the world scene can succeed. Rostow takes the view that world peace will depend on our government's ability to assume responsibly this "critical margin" role. Further, he argues that, over a period of time, the execution of this strategy on the international scene will require a bipartisan, relentless effort to solve the combustible social problems that weaken not only our cities but our whole society.