

# THE TWIG

MEREDITH



COLLEGE

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## Editorial

### Is Census valid?

This year, Meredith students took part in the Decennial Census, which has been taken in the United States every ten years since 1790. This year, criticism has been voiced concerning both the accuracy and the worth of the Census. Certainly, the foundation of the census in determining congressional apportionment, federal revenue spending, eligibility for grants, funding for public works, education, and other types of revenue sharing is an important one. But the census is only as valuable as it is accurate. Each decade, the Census Bureau faces an increasingly difficult task in locating the growing U.S. population. The Census Bureau has even organized "M-Night" and "T-Night," when they counted people in such places as recreational campgrounds, motels, flophouses, jail, bus depots, and all-night movies. There were "casual count places" like pool halls, food stamp centers, and welfare offices. Despite the detailed work of the Census Bureau, there are still significant faults in the system.

According to the Special Places Enumerator's Manual CT-D published by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "The primary reason the census is taken now is the same as it was in 1790, to determine the number of representatives each State shall have in Congress." It is further stated that "Reapportionment at the State and local level is also based on census statistics." This year, for the first time, any college and university students who do not live at home while attending school are counted where they attend school. As a result, representatives for national, state, and local government will increase in the next decade in cities in which there is a large number of college students. The problem lies in the fact that most students do not vote in the city in which they attend college unless they are permanent residents of that city. In some cities, Chapel Hill, N.C., for example, local residents are strongly opposed to allowing the university students who do not pay city taxes to vote there. If, then, students do not register to vote in the city where they attend college, should they be counted in that city? If so, they are increasing the government representation for an area in which their opinions are not considered. When they vote at home, where representation may have been reduced since the official college population was changed, their voices do not have the strength which they might with a more accurate number of representatives.

Additional problems have been caused since this is the first decade in which college students have been counted at school. Inevitably, some parents do not realize the change or were confused about what to do if students were home for Easter, when the census forms were due, and listed students on their forms. Thus, there may have been a double count. Since the computers used in the census are not programmed to read names (in order to assure privacy), there is no way to detect such errors.

Is the present system used in the Decennial Census accurate enough to serve the purposes originally outlined in the U.S. Constitution? Regardless of the answer to that question, it seems that a more careful evaluation of the census is needed before Census '90. It is probable that the evident lack of foresight in deciding to count students at school will significantly effect government representation in the next decade and should be a major concern to students.

S.A.

READY FOR A BREAK?  
Come join the Playday  
Activities in the Courtyard from  
3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on  
APRIL 17

## African youth sent to Cuba for Communist education

by Regine Nickel  
Cuba, a paradise for eager African students? Fidel Castro's party paper GRANMA would have its readers think so. Under the headline "Scholarship Students in Cuba - African Smiles" the paper praised the Cuban boarding schools for prospect African Communist leaders; praise lavished on an undertaking which is in truth a frightful experiment in Communist indoctrination. Western sources vary as to the amount of children presently being educated in Castro's boarding schools. A safe estimate seems to amount to 10,000 children from Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Benin, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome, Principe, Namibia, and the People's Republic of Congo. Their age is said to range from seven to 15 years. The governments of these countries fully agree with the Cuban suggestions and educational methods. As the Congolese attache for cultural affairs said in Havana, "In a

revolutionary atmosphere the children are given the education to battle imperialism."

The smooth operation of this "happy" educational experience (GRANMA) was disturbed when two pilots of "Air Afrique" refused to take 601 children from Brazzaville to Havana. According to the German weekly DER SPIEGEL (the mirror) they had demanded written letters of consent from the children's parents, especially since no relative was at the airport to see the children off, which is contrary to African custom. Apparently the parents had thought their children were going to a holiday camp inside Congo, a holiday their children had won in a party organized competition.

In Angola the Catholic Bishop's Conference issued a stern warning directed at the government in Luanda. Desperate parents, whose children had been sent to Cuba without their consent, had

appealed to the church to do something. Portuguese missionaries report that the bishops' intervention proved successful. Today Angola seems to have stopped sending children against the expressed will of their parents.

As far as Ethiopia is concerned the Cuban "help" seems to have been the children's only chance to receive some sort of education at all. According to international press reports Cuban soldiers gathered thousands of war orphans and sent them home. At least they were spared death of starvation in a country devastated by war.

According to TIME the children are being fed and cared for well. They live in simple buildings and divide their days between learning and working in the fields. This should be a valuable aspect of the situation. After all, Cuba has 35,000 men stationed in Africa; men it urgently needs in the fields. The children present a welcome boost of the national workforce. This prompted several Cuban refugees to state that the children were kept under subhuman conditions and were forced to work in the fields day and night. The truth of the situation is almost impossible to establish.

As in East Germany after the war, the young African Communist countries realize the special importance due to the education of the young. Education is the key to the mind of the future generation and complete Communist education, without disturbing family influence, can best be provided in a place inaccessible from home and family. And Cuba gladly volunteered to provide the location.

Since this is my last column I would like to thank my editors Kristy Beattie and Mary Katherine Pittman for their confidence and the complete freedom they gave me, my roommate for her patience, and Dr. Jack Huber for his encouragement and criticism.

## NUCLEAR POWER FACT AND FICTION

Each year between 1/4 and one-third of the uranium (fuel) in the nuclear reactor is removed and replaced. The uranium that is removed is then referred to as "waste" or more often "spent fuel." The spent fuel is not all the waste from the fuel cycle, but within it lies more than 99 percent of all radioactively produced by nuclear wastes of the fuel cycle.

The storage of the radioactive spent fuel consists of placing the fuel in water filled basins, a practice that has been around since nuclear reactors began operating. These water basins are presently located on the plant sites. However, the Department of Energy plans to see water basins built away from reactors and managed by either private industry or, if necessary, the government. Going by guidelines proposed by the DOE, the spent fuel transfer to away-from-reactor sites would not be before 1983. This might not be much help since, by 1980, four U.S. reactors will lack space for the spent fuel removed annually. With nowhere to store the spent fuel, refueling cannot take place; this, in turn, would call for a shut-down of plants.

Reprocessing the spent fuel might be one answer to the upcoming dilemma. This involves sending the fuel to a special reprocessing plant where uranium 235 and plutonium 239 are extracted to be used as fuel. Reprocessing would eliminate much of the need for storage space, but there are no commercial reprocessing plants operating in the U.S. today. High cost, delays and shut downs of reprocessing plants that have been built, and environmental restrictions are all factors which lead to the absence of reprocessing plants in the U.S. even though spent fuel basins will reach full capacity soon.

Thirteen reprocessing plants are in operation in the world today, most of them in Europe.

How much longer before nuclear plants are shut down from lack of spent fuel storage space? If the shut downs occur, we will be back to day one in the nuclear power business except for one thing - Money, time, and ENERGY used to put the plants in operation will be down the drain.

Questions about reprocessing and ultimate disposal have yet to be resolved....

#### References:

General Electric's Nuclear Power Quick Reference II.

## Campus Paperback Bestsellers

1. **The Americans**, by John Jakes. (Jove, \$2.95.) Kent family chronicles, Vol. VIII: fiction.
2. **Lauren Bacall, by Myself**, by Lauren Bacall (Ballantine, \$2.75.) Life with "Bogie" and on her own.
3. **The Complete Scarsdale Medical Diet**, by Dr. Herman Tarnower & Samm S. Baker. (Bantam, \$2.75.)
4. **The Stand**, by Stephen King. (NAL/Signet, \$2.95.) Widespread disease followed by unknown terror: fiction.
5. **How to Prosper During the Coming Bad Years**, by Howard J. Ruff. (Warner, \$2.75.) Investment techniques.
6. **Dragondrums**, by Anne McCaffrey. (Bantam, \$2.25.) Third volume of science fiction trilogy.
7. **Good as Gold**, by Joseph Heller. (Pocket, \$2.95.) Aspirations and struggles of Jewish-American professor: fiction.
8. **The Matarese Circle**, by Robert Ludlum. (Bantam, \$3.50.) American-Soviet spy thriller: fiction.
9. **Kramer Versus Kramer**, by Avery Corman. (NAL/Signet, \$2.50.) Father rearing son on his own: fiction.
10. **The Mr. Bill Show**, by Walter Williams. (Running Press, \$4.95.) Story of TV puppet from "Saturday Night Live."

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