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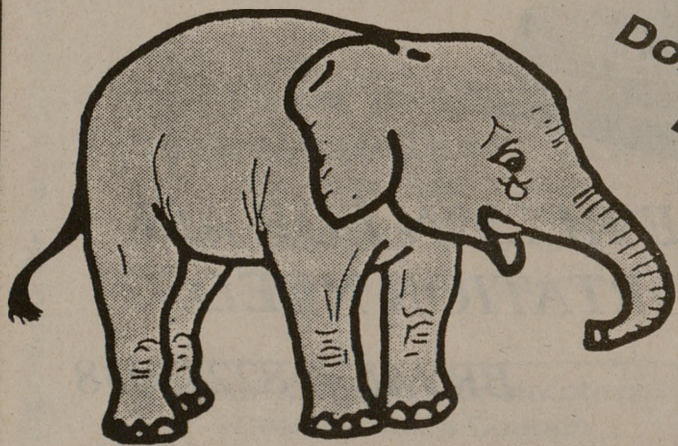
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White population in U.S. may drop below 50%

WASHINGTON (AP) — If changes in U.S. immigration laws fail to stem the current flow of aliens, Hispanics, Asians and blacks could account for more than half of all Americans a century from now, a population group said Wednesday.

"If illegal immigration remains high and annual immigration averages 1 million, the non-Hispanic white population would drop to just under 50 percent in 2080," said the new study by the private, non-profit Population Reference Bureau.

The report, "Immigration to the U.S.: The Unfinished Story," was written by Leon F. Bouvier, a population researcher who is a former vice president of the bureau, and Robert W. Gardner, a research associate at the East-West Population Institute in Honolulu.

"The nation must once again re-define itself," Bouvier and Gardner said.

The 1980 Census counted 226.5 million Americans, of which 79.9 percent were whites other than Hispanics.

The Census said 11.7 percent of Americans were black, 6.4 percent were Hispanic and 2.0 percent were Asians and others.

At current high immigration rates, totaling 1 million annually, counting both legal and illegal aliens, the non-Hispanic whites could shrink to 49.8 percent of the population by the year 2080 — becoming "the largest minority in a nation without any ethnic majority population."

At that time Hispanics would

make up 23.4 percent of the nation, having surpassed blacks as the second largest group in 2010. Blacks would be 14.7 percent of the population and Asians and others, 12.1 percent.

At the same time that both legal and illegal immigration continue at high levels, the nation's birth rate will fall, the authors said.

Since 1982 the fertility rate of American women has been below the 2.1 children per woman needed to keep the population constant over the long term.

If immigration were to stop, the current fertility rate of the population of the nation would begin to decline. But the effect of the new immigration law remains to be seen.

British leave much-noted class behind Social barriers still fascinate England

LONDON (AP) — An interviewer for the British Broadcasting Corp. asked novelist Barbara Cartland a few years ago if Britain's class barriers were coming down.

"Of course they have," retorted the high-society author of hundreds of best-selling romantic tales, "or I wouldn't be sitting here talking to someone like you."

The barriers may be coming down, but they are still a source of endless fascination, as a glance at this week's newspapers and TV listings quickly proves.

The *Daily Telegraph* just ran a two-part survey on what it calls "The Great British Obsession," and the *Times* had a column asking whether class-mindedness equals elitism.

Over on the Independent Television network, viewers are into the ninth part of "Paradise Postponed," John Mortimer's panoramic drama about the changes Britain has undergone as its class system has crumbled.

Once reviled as the bane of British society, class consciousness was supposed to have suffered a savage blow on the battlefields of World War I and the coup de grace in World War II.

But the remnants continue to provide rich pickings, as shown by the *Telegraph* series, which included everything from interviews with lords, ladies and hotel doormen to a quiz for readers to test their class awareness.

Reporter Martyn Harris wrote, "It is all very puzzling to Americans. To most foreigners, we are still what George Orwell called 'the most class-ridden nation under the sun.'"

However, interesting twists to the story emerge. In the interviews, it was the aristocrats who were most eager to distance themselves from the class system. Blue-collar interviewees sounded quite comfortable with it.

The quiz asked readers to associate shops, garments, celebrities and professions with a particular class. But the main goal was to get as many answers wrong as possible, to prove oneself qualified for the egalitarian world.

This eagerness to appear "classless" falls in with a general awareness today that the true upheaval in Britain's class system is being generated not by working-class revolutionaries, but from the very force once thought to be the bastion of class-consciousness — the Conservative Party.

For those who still judge a person's character by whether he wears four buttons or two on his jacket cuff, the problem is that today's Tories are led not by a country squire but by Margaret Thatcher, a self-made grocer's daughter professing nothing but contempt for inherited privilege.

This is the essence of the storyline of "Paradise Postponed" and the basis of Harris' main conclusion: "An obsession with the class system is a sign of how uncertain people are becoming of their place within it."

World Briefs

Official: Army's inaction doomed case

WASHINGTON (AP) — Inaction by the U.S. Army doomed a case against a reservist accused of possessing 9½ tons of exotic military hardware seized just before the 1984 Republican National Convention, a Dallas police official testified Wednesday.

The army failed to help despite repeated requests by police investigators to trace serial numbers on the equipment and provide a listing of ordnance that legally

cannot be possessed outside the military, Deputy Chief G.F. Holladay told a congressional panel.

His testimony before a Senate Armed Services task force on military inventory was part of a continuing investigation by the panel, headed by Sen. Pete Wilson, R-Calif. The panel has spotlighted problems associated with military management of a huge stockpile of munitions and other equipment.

Study: Disabled finally finding jobs

NEWTON, Mass. (AP) — More than 87,000 of America's most severely disabled adults were placed in jobs in 1984 and 1985, earning about \$400 million and saving taxpayers that amount in aid, according to a national study released Wednesday.

The study, based on a survey of agencies nationwide that try to find jobs for the disabled, said about 25,000 mentally and physically handicapped adults gained their first jobs in 1984 and that number jumped to 62,409 in 1985.

"I truly feel attitudes are changing," said Jean K. Elder, acting assistant secretary of the Office of Human Development Services of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"We look at people now and see abilities rather than disabilities."

The study was conducted with a \$40,000 grant from HHS. It was done to evaluate President Reagan's 1983 Employment Initiative, which was designed to promote the disabled to the work force.

Disney loses suit over sex in cartoon

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Two children who watched explicit sex scenes added to a rented videotape of a Walt Disney cartoon, "Silly Symphonies," will receive \$9,500 in an out-of-court settlement, a lawyer said.

The settlement was approved last week by San Fernando Superior Court Judge Fred Rimerman after lawyer Jerry L. Webb threatened to sue Wherehouse Records, which rented the video,

and Walt Disney Productions which made it.

Webb, who represents the children's mother, Susan B. Sanden, said that Wherehouse and Disney agreed to share the cost of the settlement.

Robert Block, a lawyer for Wherehouse Records, speculated that someone who previously had rented the video might have recorded the scenes on the videotape after the Disney movie's end.

Swiss admit toxic spill alert was delayed

ZURICH, Switzerland (AP) — Switzerland conceded Wednesday to top officials from countries along the Rhine that a misunderstanding delayed an international alert for 24 hours after a disastrous toxic spill from a chemical plant fire.

Swiss President Alphonse Egli told the meeting that Switzerland was ready to discuss damage claims by countries affected and

that he hoped they could be settled without legal action, a West German delegation spokesman said.

The spokesman spoke on condition of anonymity.

About 30 European environmental ministers also issued a statement pledging to cooperate in cleaning up one of Europe's worst environmental disasters in recent years. No figure for the estimated cost was given.

Record-breaking cold front heads south

(AP) — Freeze warnings were posted in the heart of Dixie on Wednesday as record-breaking cold air raced to the South and East, chasing homeless people into packed shelters and snarling traffic with icy roads.

At least 18 deaths had been blamed on the weather since the season's first big snowstorm hit the northern Plains last week, and crews in North Dakota searched amid 6-foot snowdrifts for a missing 13-year-old.

Wyoming reopened long sections of major highways that were closed overnight by blowing, drifting snow, but roads elsewhere turned slippery as the

leading edge of the cold air triggered snow flurries across the Plains and the Midwest.

Low temperatures combined with wind as high as 20 to 40 mph to send the wind-chill factor to 30 to 50 degrees below zero across Montana, Wyoming, the Dakotas and northern Nebraska into Iowa and Minnesota, the National Weather Service said.

"This is very unusual for November," said Jim Richardson of the weather service office in Minneapolis. "It's more typical of late December or January."

Lewistown, Mont., was the official coldest spot in the 48 states at 24 below zero Wednesday.

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