

At the Dinner of the Editorial Board in July 1988, which took place at St Paul's Girls School, London, the suggestion was made that the 'Great Challenges at the end of the Millennium' should be discussed in the Editorial Columns of ISR. It was a splendid dinner at the invitation of the High Mistress, Heather Brigstocke, later the Baroness Brigstocke. Members of the Editorial Board were to write about the Challenges, but none did.

I felt bound to open the Discussion with the Challenge which I had for many years considered the greatest, the 'Human Breeding Storm'. I had written about it as long ago as 1962 in the *Manchester Guardian* and was very proud when my big article was reprinted later in the *San Francisco Herald*. In my Editorials in ISR, I had often warned that two major challenges faced mankind at the end of the 20th century, the Population Explosion and the Atomic War, and if not solved, the one might solve the other. I repeated in 1988 the need for halting the human breeding storm, which in the last decades had risen to a hurricane. The only valid solution I could offer in my Editorial was global education by satellite, like the short-lived experiment carried out in 2400 Indian Villages in 1979 with great success [see SITE, Title 277].

At a dinner party in New Delhi, I had met Sri Madhava Ashish who analysed the Indian population explosion for me in interdisciplinary terms, and I asked him to contribute. Ashish was a British officer in the Royal Air Force, who after the end of World War II stayed on in India and became the head of an ashram in the Kumaon hills in Uttar Pradesh. He had made great contributions to Indian environmental education, at first on local, and since 1980, on national levels as a Member of the New Delhi Planning Commission.

With the forecast that the Indian Population would reach 1000 million by the year 2000, (which it did) Ashish blamed Indian politicians for not giving high enough priority to this question, as they feared a loss of votes. Neither vasectomy nor tubectomy were the answer, nor was economic growth available to reduce the number of children as it had done in Europe, because old-age security-conditions in India were too different.

A contrary contribution on Population followed from Dr Karan Singh, who considered 'Development the best Contraceptive'. Karan Singh whom I met at the same dinner party, was the Former Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir and was Minister of Health and Family Planning under Indira Gandhi 1967-1977. He had been responsible for the National Population Policy in 1967 but blamed its failure on overzealous implementation and, later on, a tepid revival. He was convinced that living standards were lowered by the growth of populations, but would bring about only greater economic development a lower birth-rate .