

OLD WORLD

CENSUS RETURNS

Malthus Fulfilled

PRELIMINARY returns now published suggest that the population of the United Kingdom is growing less quickly than was expected as recently as 1968 (*Census 1971 England and Wales. Preliminary Report*. HMSO, £0.60). The first figures show that in April this year, the population of the United Kingdom was 55.35 million, an increase of 2.64 million or 4.9 per cent since the previous census in 1961. If this preliminary figure is to be relied on, it suggests that there has been no net growth of the population of the United Kingdom since 1968 when, in evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on Science and Technology, the Government Actuary in the Registrar-General's Office quoted forward projections of the population with 1968 as base year with an actual population of 55.4 million. At that point, it was estimated that the population of the United Kingdom would grow more or less monotonically by about 350,000 a year until 1980. If the growth seems not to have materialized, it will invalidate either the forward projection of the British population or the method used for counting it. For what the figures are worth, the 1971 census suggests that the population of England has risen by 5.4 per cent, that of Wales by 3.0 per cent and that of Scotland by a mere 0.9 per cent. It is something of a surprise that over the decade, Northern Ireland should have the highest growth rate at 6.8 per cent.

There are few surprises in the report, although there are shifts of emphasis from 1961. The fastest growing region in the ten years was the belt from the North Midlands through Leicestershire and Peterborough to the Solent, which coincides with a slackening growth rate in the home counties. A number of local authorities have roughly doubled their population in the past ten years, several in the belt from the Midlands to the Solent.

Coinciding with the drop in the south, West Suffolk and Huntingdonshire become the fastest growing counties with increases from 128,918 to 164,201, and 159,175 to 202,337 respectively. Essex has the biggest single population leap—now 1,353,564, a gain of some 250,000—mostly overspill from London.

The figures also indicate a draining away of population from the centres of large cities—Liverpool shows a loss of 20.4 per cent over the ten years and Manchester 19.9 per cent. Although Greater London has the highest net loss of 613,429, as a percentage it is only 7.9 per cent. All seven of the largest

cities in England had population drops. In the conurbations, however, the drop is less marked—on Merseyside for instance it is only some 8.8 per cent—which suggests that people are moving into the suburbs and surrounding towns of large cities.

The population in the extreme North of Britain decreased, with Lancashire, Cumberland and Northumberland all returning figures lower than in 1961, and Durham showing the smallest percentage growth of any county.

Wales still claims the most thinly populated areas of either country, with Montgomeryshire, Merionethshire and Radnorshire not only the least populated counties but also those with the lowest density of population per hectare. The population in the ex-coal valley of the Rhondda fell while the population in the Welsh urban areas fluctuated—Cardiff and Merthyr Tydfil fell whereas Bangor and Swansea grew in numbers.

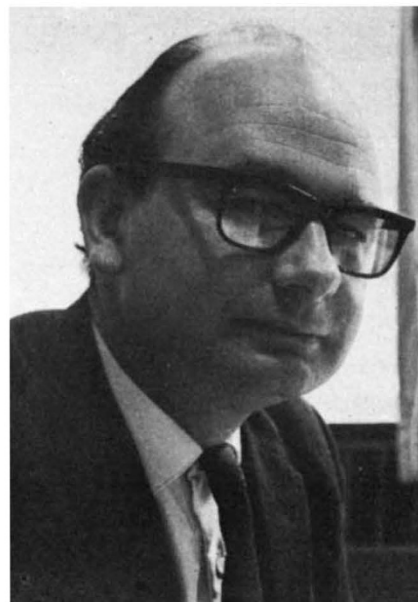
SCIENTISTS' PAY

Tribunal Tribulations

THE Institution of Professional Civil Servants and the Civil Service Department presented their respective cases to the Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal on Thursday August 12. This was the first time that the two sides had come together since negotiations were broken off on July 2.

The IPCS entered the tribunal riding high on the success of their protest meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster, two days earlier when more than 3,000 scientists from all corners of Britain came to support the institution's case. The Civil Service Department has remained unmoved by all the protest meetings that have been going on since early in July and its offer and the arguments that substantiate it have remained unchanged.

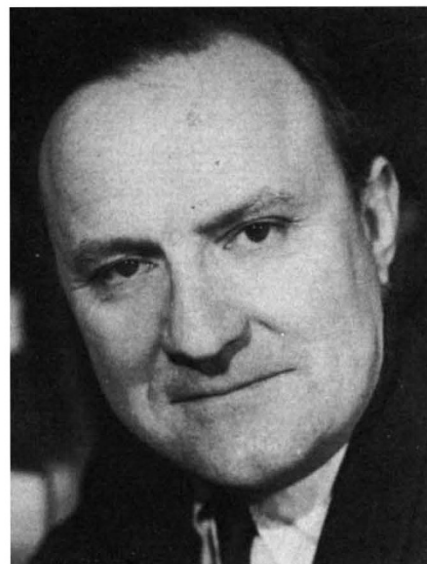
The substance of the government's offer to more than 17,000 scientists, was given in detail in *Nature*, 232, 434; 1971, together with the IPCS's counter claim. The government offered no increase to the higher grades—Principal Scientific Officers, Senior Scientific Officers, Chief Experimental Officers, Senior Experimental Officers and Experimental Officers—and only a small increase to the other scientific grades well below that demanded by the institution. The attitude of the IPCS to this offer was shown in their submittal to the tribunal which states, "members are bitterly resentful of an 'offer' which gives no increase to many, and little to others at a time when the cost of living has risen substantially,



Mr William McCall, General Secretary of the Institution of Professional Civil Servants.

and when other groups of employees in the public and private sectors have received substantial increases".

The Civil Service based its offer on the result of an independent pay research inquiry into the salaries of scientists both inside and outside the Scientific Civil Service, whereas the IPCS would have liked greater emphasis placed on internal relativities within the Civil Service. The government made its position clear in its submission. "The Official Side does not accept that it is necessary, or that it would be appropriate, to resort to horizontal relativities as a primary or even a major consideration in determining the pay of the scientific grades on this occasion



—Photograph by Mark Gerson, FIIP, ARPS.

Rt Hon. the Earl Jellicoe, Minister in charge of the Civil Service Department.