

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

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TO : USAID Agriculture Staffs

FROM : *Madison Broadway*
Office of Agriculture, Bureau for Technical Assistance

DATE: October 26, 1972

SUBJECT: Enclosed Book - "The Limits of Growth" — *on shelves*

TA/AGR is enclosing a copy of subject book for the perusal of the Agricultural Staffs in the USAIDs. Copies already have been forwarded to the Population Officers.

The book has been the object of praise and blame. It is certainly controversial, and for that very reason we believe that you will find it provocative and stimulating. Its message may be stated simply "Unless current world trends in population growth and industrial output are checked, and unless pollution is severely curbed, civilization faces a catastrophic collapse within 100 years and perhaps within 50". In the words of the Science review, the book is a "hard sell for a computer view of doomsday".

The Chief of TA/AGR's Economic Division has the following comments on the book:

"This report is a representative example of a beginning effort leading to better understanding of the complex interrelationships between five basic factors: population, agricultural production, natural resources, industrial production, and pollution. The global modeling effort provides for ordering a set of assumptions and corrective hypotheses for complex systems. As the authors frankly state, the model is as yet imperfect and much further study is needed and planned.

"Your attention is drawn to this imaginative, and considerably innovative approach to sector analysis, to conceptual and quantitative issues making such a first approximation of dynamic modeling possible and to the initial findings of the range of first approximation conditions required for achieving a state of global equilibrium.

"Serious efforts are underway in some missions with the Technical Assistance Bureau, assisted by the U. S. University Community to refine, extend, and elaborate on the sector approach, outlined in preliminary form in the enclosed text."

