

child is starving?" The answer is that I have to be concerned, or else I'm going to continue to help support that child as well as my own.

When "welfare reform" is undertaken for the wrong reasons, the reforms inevitably go in the wrong direction. The most appalling revelation about the plan submitted by Bill Clinton to "end welfare as we know it" is that its cost *exceeds* that of the welfare we know! The Clintonites make no bones of their enthusiasm for job training, childcare, and other new entitlements to encourage "independence." In practice, this means that instead of merely having to support the illegitimate child of a stranger, the taxpayer will have to support daycare and the stranger's vocational training as well.

### We Are Individuals

Welfare rests on a fallacy and a myth. The fallacy is what logicians call Composition,

reasoning from properties of the parts of a whole to properties of the whole. I am responsible for my children, you for yours; in this sense we are all responsible for our children. But then this "we" is surreptitiously interpreted to mean all of us collectively, so that "our" children become all children taken together. Suddenly "America" must take care of "its" children, and then, only a little less suddenly, everyone who can pay is paying for everybody's children.

Reinforcing this fallacy is the myth that We Are All In This Together, that we all share each other's fate. We don't. We are separate persons, families, clans, and groups, pursuing our various ends. We can and should cooperate, and—sometimes, not always—offer help in adversity. But we are all individually responsible for our fates, a responsibility that cannot be undone by forcing some people to pay for the heedlessness of others. □

# The Population Bomb: Exploding the Myth

by Felix Livingston

**D**oomsday projections made two centuries ago by Thomas Malthus were revived by grim-faced delegates at the U.N. Population Conference in Cairo last year. The consensus of those present was that a population bomb is about to explode unless there is governmental intervention on a global scale. If nothing is done, we are warned, world population will double by the year 2055.

*Dr. Livingston is Director of Freeman Services for The Foundation for Economic Education.*

The new doomsayers predict that population will grow geometrically without bound and food production will be slowed because of fixed technology and dwindling resources. But statistics reveal that economic status dramatically affects the decision to have children. As a nation's per capita income increases, its birth rate declines. In addition, the world food supply is growing at a faster rate than population. This trend will likely continue because of technology changes in agriculture and con-

tinuing improvements in the ability to supply energy.

Malthusians say that governments must control reproductive habits of the poor because changes in childbearing practices have resulted in rapid population growth in developing nations. Not true: the average family size in Third World countries is virtually unchanged. World population is increasing because of lower death rates due to better nutrition and disease control. Another popular but misguided argument is that high population density adversely affects the ability of a nation to develop. But the data shows that densely populated nations, such as Taiwan and Japan, can be very prosperous. Conversely, some sparsely populated countries are among the world's poorest.

The evidence is clear. The surest way for a nation to defuse its population bomb is to create a fertile environment for economic growth. Why, then, does the official Cairo plan ignore development issues while advocating government spending of \$17 billion annually on programs such as healthcare, family planning, and gender equality? First, many bureaucrats who attended the meeting do not believe that free choices made by millions of free people can possibly have beneficial social results. Only the prescriptions of an informed few—paid for and sometimes brutally applied by a central authority—can cope with the “population juggernaut.” Second, many intellectuals who were in Cairo make a comfortable living

from government subsidies that fund their policy proposals. Third, free economic development poses a threat to the raw political power exercised by the world's petty tyrants. An effective way to spread the suffocating blanket of control over a nation's citizens is to declare an emergency, which can be relieved only by enacting legislation to regiment and control people. The so-called crisis ends, but the new laws and institutions remain. Government expands; freedom contracts. The only antidote to arbitrary political power is the freedom which is built into the private property order.

“We cannot pry into the hearts of men,” said Dr. Johnson, “but their actions are open to observation.” While moral posturing and lofty rhetoric characterized the Cairo meeting, nothing advocated in its 113-page plan will banish the famine and material suffering that characterize the world's developing nations. The real population problem affecting many Third World countries is their refusal to adopt the habits and institutions that foster private enterprise and entrepreneurship. Nations that do not enforce private property rights and that view the accomplishments of producers as antisocial suffocate the spirit of enterprise and eliminate the very conditions necessary for political liberty and economic prosperity. When people are free to pursue their economic interests in free markets, the so-called “population problem” will resolve itself. □

## *Attention Teachers and Professors!*

### Recent Issues of **THE FREEMAN** for Classroom Use

Here's a chance to introduce students to *The Freeman* at little cost to you or your school. We are offering cartons of back issues of *The Freeman* for the modest charge of \$10.00 per carton (within the United States) to help defray our shipping and handling charges. Each carton contains between 175 and 200 copies. Payment must accompany order.

# Pro Sports on the Dole

by Raymond J. Keating

**B**aseball is no longer just a game; it's big business. Such is the conventional wisdom today. And with salaries skyrocketing to the point where now the average major league baseball player earns \$1.2 million a year, who could disagree?

However, ever since the first professional team, the Cincinnati Red Stockings, was fielded in 1869, baseball has been a business. Indeed, this is not something to be ashamed of; it should be celebrated. The fact that baseball is a business allows the professionals who play the sport to hone their skills to a point and for a period of time largely unknown to those participating in amateur sports.

The business status of baseball has enabled it to become America's "national pastime." Just as the great feats of Johnny Bench, Tom Seaver, Mike Schmidt, and Reggie Jackson captured the imagination of my generation, the achievements of Ken Griffey, Jr., Matt Williams, Barry Larkin, and Cal Ripken, Jr., inspire today's youth—and the rest of us as well. This excellence largely emerges out of baseball's status as a business or profession.

Unfortunately, the dark side of big business is a major part of the game as well. Corporate welfare deeply infiltrates baseball, along with most other professional sports. That is, a distasteful and costly alliance between government and business.

*Mr. Keating is the director of New York Citizens for a Sound Economy Foundation, and partner with Northeast Economics and Consulting.*

Fans no longer support their favorite teams and players merely through ticket prices, concessions, team apparel and souvenirs, and cable TV subscriptions, but through their taxes as well. Taxpayers across America—whether they are fans or not—are subsidizing the portion of the entertainment industry known as professional sports. While such subsidies are completely unjustified, they become even more egregious considering, for example, that the average employee in major league baseball earns more than a million dollars a year.

Examples abound. New York—long accepted as the capital of traditional welfare spending—has managed to turn practically all levels of sport into welfare clients. Most prominently, both the state and New York City have been scrambling since 1993 to come up with plans for either a new Yankee Stadium in a new locale, or upgrades to the current facility in order to stop team owner George Steinbrenner from moving the Bronx Bombers out of New York. The cost to New York taxpayers vary from a whopping \$1 billion proposal for an entirely new stadium to almost \$400 million for a seemingly modest plan for a stadium upgrade that includes a new bridge leading into an 11,000-car parking garage, as well as a shopping mall.

However, New York state's officials are not content to extend corporate welfare to only the New York Yankees. In the state's 1994–95 budget, well over \$100 million was slated for other stadiums and sports facili-