



Taxes Won't Support More Govt Benefits

By Michael Reagan

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The left never tires of lecturing the rest of America on how they are the party of science. Consequently, all the left's policies and programs are based on scientific fact and any opposition is therefore ignorant and illegitimate.

But somehow the big social policy thinkers on the left have failed to grasp elementary geometry and the result is burdening the rest of us.

Any child working with building blocks knows that a pyramid only stands if the base is much larger than the peak. That way the burden of supporting the top of the pyramid is distributed over the largest possible base and that decreases pressure on any one area.

One might call it spreading the weight. But that's not how the Obama administration designs pyramids. An Obama pyramid has a rapidly spreading peak poised precariously over a shrinking base that's being crushed under the weight.

According to a recent analysis of U.S. Census Bureau statistics by CNS News, on an average Monday in the United States 86,429,000 men and women roll out of bed and go to work in the private sector. These are the Americans who pay the taxes that keep the country running.

The figures can be additionally broken into 77,392,000 who either earn an hourly wage or are salaried workers. And these are joined by an additional 9,037,000 who are classified as self-employed. (At the time the report was done, it was too early to know how many workers had been released from job lock by Obamacare and were now sitting in coffee houses working on their poetry.)

This is an impressive number in the abstract, but in reality it's small and getting smaller. That's because this base is supporting 147,802,000 Americans who are receiving benefits from the government in the form of welfare, unemployment insurance, Medicare, and Social Security. That's a ratio of 1.7 benefit takers to 1 working benefit payer. And that staggering number does not include benefits paid to veterans or their families.

Some may say CNS News is cooking the books because they leave out some 16,606,000 that work for either state, local, or federal government. But that's like saying green energy subsidies create jobs. These government workers are paid from your tax dollars, so when in turn they pay their taxes it is essentially robbing Peter to pay Paul.

When the Social Security program began, 16 workers were supporting one retiree. The CATO Institute calculates that by the time the baby boomers retire that ratio will be down to two workers for every retiree and that does not include the other cornucopia of welfare benefits that make the ratio much worse right now.

The numbers don't work today and the situation will only get worse in the future. What props up this ungainly, unscientific pyramid now is borrowing from China and other creditors. But eventually the bill will come due and this leftist pyramid will collapse.

The question we face is can we elect a government that will work to remove the imbalance between workers and receivers in an orderly fashion; or should those of us who are still working start preparing for gravity's crash?