

China's depopulation policy: the true story

by Gregory F. Buhyoff

Some time back, I received a letter from a reader protesting *EIR*'s coverage of China's population reduction program.

Since early 1981, this journal has reported on the horrifying consequences of China's one-child-only policy.

EIR also pointed out that such neo-Malthusian institutions as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have enthusiastically endorsed Peking's methods, shrugging off the atrocities spawned by one of the most extreme population-control programs in human history.

Citing the official Chinese media as well as other reliable sources, among them the pro-Peking Hong Kong press, *EIR* revealed that Chinese women pregnant two or more times "without permission" were being rounded up and forced to undergo violently administered abortions, even into the third trimester of pregnancy. Mass sterilizations (over 100,000 in one county alone over a 50-day period) have occurred, while a program of "disincentives" has denied "excess" children educational rights, medical treatment, and even food rations. So strict is the one-child-only mandate that couples have resorted to murdering first-born female infants. Reports from Hong Kong have described hospital doctors injecting newborn babies with lethal injections.

Yet our reader, who had just returned from a guided tour of the People's Republic, insisted that we were wrong to characterize Peking's policy as coercive. Not having seen such reports in other publications and emphasizing the "educational" thrust of the campaign, she demanded documentation of our charges.

At the end of February, Steven W. Mosher, an American graduate student who had done anthropological research in China, was dismissed from Stanford University's doctoral program for publishing data on China's population program. Mosher, who was deported from China, said in a statement to the faculty, "I found that abortions were regularly carried out on women seven, eight, and even nine months pregnant, often against their will, and there were even occasional cases of officially instigated infanticide.

"It is happening all over China. I had a right and a personal obligation to tell about it."

Stanford, however, was concerned only about Mosher's "unprofessional conduct." Academics, whose chief reaction was fear that Mosher's revelations would curtail their own ability to carry out research in China, "complained that what I did was rocking the boat," said Mosher.

Only recently have any of the "newspapers of record" in the United States found the issue worthy of coverage. Several months ago, the *New York Times* and *Baltimore Sun*, both leading advocates of depopulation, admitted that some "abuses" have occurred. Since then, other "authoritative" sources have borne out *EIR*'s charges of two years ago.

At the end of February, the *London Times*, citing the official Chinese newspaper *Nanfang Ribao*, reported that between January and October of last year, at least 210 female infants were murdered in two counties of Guangdong Province alone. The south China daily quoted local officials as saying, "In some villages they keep a bucket of water by the mother's bed as she is giving birth, and if the screaming child turns out to be a girl, she is immediately drowned in it. . . . Some village officials sympathize with and even support such activities, saying that since we're supporting 'one couple, one child,' of course everyone wants a boy and not a girl."

China's official English-language weekly, *Beijing Review*, addressed this point in its Jan. 31 issue. It admitted, "in their keen desire to have sons, some men torment their wives after they give birth to daughters, and worse still, kill the baby girls through neglect or outright murder."

Yet the regime has done nothing to relax its policies. Peking has merely decried the feudal practice of treating males and females differently, while warning that the murder of girl infants will lead to a surplus of males in the next generation. In February, the government extended the law to minorities previously exempted from this law.

The *EIR* reader expressed her agreement with Peking's goals, putting forth the argument that it is better than "bringing children into the world, then allowing them to starve to death." Such a statement accepts the discredited "limits to growth" argument that the choice is between cutting the population or watching people die.

China is less densely populated than many European countries. The "crisis" stems from a commitment on the part of China's leaders to keep the population within the confines of an "optimum population level" defined by the productive capabilities of a predominantly backward, rural economy.

Official sources cited in *Beijing Review* have declared that the "optimum population level" for China is between 650 and 700 million, and that this goal should be reached by 2080. Given that Chinese authorities project a population of at least 1.2 billion by the end of the century, even under current population-control policies, Peking seems to have plans to somehow reduce its population by over 500 million over an 80-year period. A one-child-only policy, as repressive as it is, will not achieve such a goal by itself.

With such advisers as *Global 2000 Report* author Gerald Barney, Peking will not be at a loss for ideas. Barney was asked during a recent visit to China to write a report applicable to the "specific conditions" of China, and is reportedly working on a "China 2000" paper. If successful, one-quarter of the 2 billion human souls whose elimination *Global 2000* calls for could be Chinese.