

Editorial

The reality of depression politics

The consequences of growing unemployment and escalating prices are being visited most cruelly on our children: those who are alive, and those unborn because of the destruction of the family structure. This is the reality behind bills before the U.S. Congress such as the controversial Child Care Bill which would allot \$30 billion over a five-year period to provide supervision for children who would otherwise be left almost to their own devices, such as the so-called "latch-key" children. These children's mothers have been forced onto the labor market in order to support them, not only because they may be single parents, but because most two-parent families cannot survive in today's United States, without both parents working.

It has become fashionable for Americans to vent their rage at the worsening conditions of their lives by what is crudely known as "Jap-bashing." The truth is that the Japanese have systematically invested in maintaining and extending their infrastructure and technological base. Thus the productivity of their workforce is far greater than that of comparable American workers, as *EIR* has shown in comparing two countries' auto industries.

Just as much to the point, the family structure in Japan is intact, compared not only with the United States, but with other Western nations as well. An even more devastating comparison has recently been compiled for the U.S. Congress. Called "A Report to the Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families, Which Was Assembled for the Second Session of the Hundred-First Congress," the study establishes that children in the United States are among the worst off in the advanced sector as a whole.

The report states: "When compared to children in other developed countries, children in the United States are frequently at greater risk for a host of social, economic, and health problems. In some cases our problems are more severe than, but not qualitatively different from, those in other industrialized countries. . . . The greatest disparities are in the number of children affected by divorce, youth homicide, and along with Australia, child poverty rates. The U.S. also has a

higher rates of infant mortality and teenage pregnancy." On the other hand, apparently many nations in the West, like the United States, are afflicted with the problem of youth suicide and high joblessness rates among young people.

Further, the "proportion of children living in single-parent families increased since 1960 in all countries studied, but the gap between the United States and the other developed countries widened."

Surely \$30 billion is too little, not too much to spend on our children. The White House threat to veto the bill for going over budget is disgraceful, but the issue is not being presented properly. That we should need such a bill is the problem. Only in the last 20 years have families become the norm, in which the mother is forced onto the job market by economic need; and our children are paying the price. It is not enough to provide pre-school and after-school care, for "latch-key" children: We must deal with the root causes of the problem. These lie in the destruction of families, a destruction fueled by economic collapse.

The so-called glitz and glitter of the privileged Yuppies is vanishing rapidly, while the conditions of life of the growing number of poor approach those of a Third World country in cities like Washington, capital of the once-great United States. We are in the midst of a depression which is rapidly becoming worse than the great depression of the 1930s.

A society which does not respond to the needs of its children, cannot have long to live. But it is not just a question of money, of standard of living. The present anti-technology climate, which is fueling the deindustrialization of America, and the ruin of its infrastructure is also robbing young people of a sense of purpose, a sure knowledge that it is important that they develop themselves in order to take their place alongside their parents as productive citizens. In such a climate, youth homicides, suicides, out-of-wedlock pregnancies flourish—along with hunger and disease. Let's stop talking about the Japanese and begin facing reality. Without the kind of investment policies spelled out by Lyndon LaRouche, our civilization will be doomed.