

The good news of China's census

by Mary McCourt Burdman

The results of Communist China's just-completed Fourth National Census are a big factor in the current leadership crisis in Beijing, which could well become a life-or-death crisis for the regime. The census results, announced Oct. 30, showed that as of June 30, China's population was 1,133,682,501, and had grown by 16.5 million in the previous 12 months.

Population control, with eugenics or "improving population quality" as its theoretical underpinning, has been one of the fundamental commitments of the insane Communist regime since it took power in 1949. The Chinese communists are committed malthusians, but with a twist: The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) can only hang on to power if China's peasants, 80% of the population, are kept backward. Agriculture must be kept primitive, and the food supply—and the population—therefore limited. The State Council had to admit that despite the good harvest of 1989, the amount of grain harvested *fell* 20 kilograms per person when compared to the record production year of 1984. Grain production per person in 1989 was less than 400 kilos, and the bumper harvest this year, although 6% bigger than last, will barely suffice for a population 16 million larger.

Failure of the malthusian program

The Communists' population control effort is not working. In 1980, the CCP introduced its one-child-per-couple law to limit population to 1.2 billion by 2000. It will now be "arduous" to keep below 1.25 billion by then, the official newspaper *People's Daily* stated Oct. 30. At his press conference on the census results Oct. 31, Zhang Sai, deputy director of the State Council Census Committee, had to admit that the population count of 1.133 billion exceeded the projection of the Seventh Five-Year Plan, which ends this year, by 15 million. Even this figure is most likely too low. A random recount in sample areas showed those areas were undercounted by 0.6%, according to data released Nov. 1.

The census was not done only to get a head count, but also to track down the 100-150 million itinerant workers and their families who move from city to city looking for work—and do not register their children, known as China's "black babies." Their number was estimated at 60 million by the

Shanghai Youth News 18 months ago. Zhang was confident that most "black babies" have now been counted, but journalists for China's state media are reportedly skeptical, due to rumors that the census actually found the population to be 1.38 billion or higher.

Zhang claimed that the discovery of 15 million extra people was "not unexpected," due to "overestimation of China's ability to implement birth control measures and the slackening of implementation of family planning in rural areas for a while." He claimed that China faces a "baby boom" of 15-17 million births a year until 1996, concluding, "Therefore it will be necessary to carry out the family planning policy strictly."

Strictness is already in force. In May, Beijing announced it would enforce stricter limits on births in minority populations, including Xinjiang and Tibet, where there has been rebellion. As of Aug. 1, new regulations in Shanghai, China's largest city, will fine any couple with more than one child *three times* their yearly income. By mid-October, the Population Policy Research Group issued new laws: For each forbidden child, rural families will be fined their yearly income for 14 years.

There are reports that forced abortions and sterilizations, rampant in the early 1980s, are again being carried out on Tibetans and inside China proper. Abortion is the most common method of "birth control" in China, and a doctor running a birth control clinic in Sichuan province, interviewed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* this past summer, would say only that abortions were "very seldom" forced on women who did not want them.

Such horrible measures are consistent with Chinese CP "theory." Party head Jiang Zemin and Prime Minister Li Peng wrote to the Chinese Family Planning Society on its 10th anniversary May 28: "Family planning is our country's long-term, fundamental policy. It proceeds from China's conditions and is based on the Marxist theory that a nation's population must be adapted to its material production. Family planning in our country must be geared to controlling population growth and, at the same time, raising the quality of the population through the promotion of eugenics to push forward socialist modernization. What you are engaged in is a glorious and great cause of far-reaching significance."

Population collapse

The report of the 15 million extra children is actually the best news to come out of the census. The additional children may help offset the disaster the CCP is causing—the collapse of the population. Already, China's over-60 population has increased much faster than the general population, and is now 8.2%. Beijing predicts that it will increase at a rate of 3% each year for the next 40 years, creating an unsupportable burden on the work force. Unmarried men now outnumber women by 10 million between ages 29-49, due to selective abortion of female fetuses and even female infanticide.