



Census Bureau Reports 62 Million More Takers Than Payers

The latest [Current Population Survey](#), a joint venture between the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Census Bureau, showed 148 million “benefit takers” compared to the benefit providers — workers in the private sector — who number 86 million. That’s a ratio of more than 3:2, and an astonishing gap of 62 million, between the takers and the providers.



And according to Terence Jeffrey, the senior editor at CNSNews, it’s only going to get worse: “As more Baby Boomers retire and as ObamaCare comes fully online ... the number of takers will inevitably expand. Eventually there will be too few carrying too many, and America will break.”

Others have surveyed this demo-economic shift for years. In late 2009, the Tax Foundation analyzed the distribution of all taxes: who paid them and who received them. The study was completed before any of Obama’s various income redistribution schemes had been implemented and even then, it was unnerving:

The bottom 60 percent of American families will, as a group, receive more in government spending than they pay in taxes.

The lowest-income families will [receive] \$10.44 in [benefits] for every dollar they pay in taxes. Families in the middle-come group ... already receive \$1.15 for every dollar they pay in taxes.

This must be paid for by the so-called “wealthy” — those in the remaining 40 percent — who will, according the foundation, see an increase in their tax load by an astonishing \$127,000 a year: “Obama’s policies will, as promised, increase the load on the wealthiest families by an average of more than \$127,000 ... while increasing the number of American families who are, on average, net receivers of [those dollars].”

According to the Heritage Foundation, its 2013 Index of Dependence on Government has increased by 17 percent just since 2009, and continues its seemingly inevitable upward — or downward — march. Since 1962, the first year the index was published, dependence upon government has increased 20 times. This, according to Heritage, threatens the American tradition of self-reliance:

The greatest danger is that the swelling over time of the ranks of Americans who enjoy government services and benefits for which they pay few or no taxes will lead to a spreading sense of entitlement that is simply incompatible with self-government....

Instead of encouraging more virtue, such as self-reliance, personal responsibility and mutual cooperation, dependence on government encourages citizens who pay little taxes to view



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 17, 2014

government as a source of ever-expanding benefits ... without any mutual obligations.

Patrick Tyrell, one of the editors of Heritage's index, said that freeloading is harmful:

Being paid not to work is harmful to the spirit. There is a certain dignity that comes with work. No one likes to be a freeloader.... A self-reliant person isn't poor, but one dependent on the government is.

Linda Taylor, were she still alive, would strongly disagree with Tyrell. She was among a distinct class of freeloaders who have figured out how to game the system. During his 1976 presidential campaign, Ronald Reagan would often tell the story of the woman from Chicago's South Side:

She has 80 names, 30 addresses, 12 Social Security cards and is collecting veteran's benefits on four deceased husbands.

And she is collecting Social Security on her cards. She's got Medicaid, getting food stamps and she is collecting welfare under each of her names.

Her tax-free cash income is over \$150,000.

Critics complained that Reagan made all of this up, or at the very least was exaggerating from a rare single example. But when the *Washington Post* looked into this, they were astonished to find Linda Taylor:

Known as the Welfare Queen, she is credited with taking in more than \$150,000 a year in welfare benefits.... [Police detectives allege that she] had at least 26 aliases, with identifications to match; was listed at more than a score of telephone numbers; could show her address at more than 30 locations in and around Chicago; owned a portfolio of stocks and bonds under various names and a garage full of autos, including a Cadillac, Lincoln and a Chevy wagon; had three Social Security cards; was wed to several husbands who had died; had recently wed a 21-year-old sailor at a nearby naval training center; and was about to leave on a Hawaiian vacation.

It was the *Washington Post* that coined the term "welfare queen," not Reagan, but it continues to be applied as a pejorative to those leeches who are not at all upset about being professional freeloaders. When there's free money, moral objections to where it came from are easily ignored.

Josh Levin explored Linda's life of freeloading extensively at *Slate* last December, writing on her life of theft, extortion, kidnapping, and even potentially first-degree murders. Levin noted: "Linda Taylor, the haughty thief who drove her Cadillac to the public aid office, was the embodiment of a pernicious stereotype.... She was a lazy black con artist, unashamed of cadging the money that honest folks worked so hard to earn."

There's more to the story than the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Tax Foundation, or Heritage Foundation can measure: the degree of moral decline as a result of the implementation of the welfare state, which replaced traditional sources of help in a private economy — churches, charities, and families. With that decline comes the increased willingness of many to milk the cow for all she's worth. And politicians are voted into office to make sure that the cow continues to give the milk.

All of which was foreseen by Thomas Jefferson, who explained the dangers of government dependency perfectly: "Dependence begets subservience and venality, suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tools for the designs of ambition."



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