Some Pay, and Some Receive

by Phyllis Schlafly April 23, 2010

The news that the United States has become a two-class society, i.e., half of Americans pay federal income taxes and half don't, has bounced around the media and shocked Americans. Most people had no knowledge of this appalling economic fact.

Even worse is the reality that 40 percent of Americans receive federal government handouts of cash and valuable benefits. Those handouts are financed by the people who do pay federal income taxes.

Those handouts create a tremendous bloc of people who depend on the government for their living expenses. The Tax Foundation reports that 20 percent of Americans now get 75 percent of their income from the federal government, and another 20 percent get 45 percent of their income from the government.

Obama's Stimulus law will add nearly $800 billion in new means-tested welfare spending over the next decade. That means about $22,500 for every poor person in the United States, which will cost over $10,000 for each family that pays federal income taxes.

According to the Tax Foundation, married taxpayers pay three-fourths of all federal income taxes, whereas two-thirds of single parents who file as head-of-household pay no income tax at all. According to a Heritage Foundation report, taxpayers (mostly those who are married) will spend more than $300 billion providing welfare aid to single parents (mostly women).

The pundits like to divide Republicans into two classes, the fiscal conservatives and the so-called social conservatives, and pretend that their interests are different and mutually exclusive. In fact, the overwhelming reason for big government's extravagant spending, which is properly railed against by limited-government conservatives, is the breakdown in our culture, which social conservatives have been battling for years.

If limited-government conservatives are dreaming of taking back America for fiscal sanity in the November elections, they should study how the unprecedented decline in marriage and the increase in illegitimacy are the major causes of our bloated government and its gigantic welfare spending.

In 2008, 40.6 percent of children born in the United States were born outside of marriage; that's 1,720,000 children. This is not, as the media try to tell us, a teenage problem.

Only 7 percent of those illegitimate babies were born to girls under age 18, and over three-fourths were born to women over age 20. The problem is the collapse of marriage as the social institution responsible for the costs of the care of children.

The fiscal conservative faction of the Republican Party should also study why Republicans won their big Congressional majority in 1994, and what has happened since. The Democratic Party's welfare boondoggle was a major reason for the Republican victory.

The wrong-headed welfare system started in the 1960s with Lyndon Johnson's Great Society and his proclaimed war against poverty. The system should have been called the war against marriage.

LBJ's Great Society set up a grossly immoral system whereby millions of people were taught that they had an "entitlement" to pick the pockets of law-abiding,

taxpaying families if they met two conditions: they didn't work, and they were not married to someone who did work. This destroyed the work ethic and subsidized illegitimacy by giving single moms money and scores of benefits such as welfare, food stamps, Medicaid, housing, utilities, WIC, and commodities.

LBJ's welfare system undermined marriage and greatly increased all the social problems that flow from fatherless homes, such as drugs, sex, suicide, runaways, and school dropouts. The feminists rejoiced because all the cash went to women, thereby deconstructing what they called the oppressive patriarchy, and the liberals rejoiced because these handouts required more bureaucrats and higher taxes.

True to their Contract with America, the Republican Congress passed welfare reform in 1996. It was even signed by President Clinton, who admitted that it was time to "end welfare as we know it."

The goal of Republican welfare reform was to help families move to employment and self-sufficiency and end long-term dependence on government assistance. This policy was repealed by Obama's Stimulus, which will add more families to welfare dependency by paying bonuses to states that increase their welfare caseloads.

Obama's real goal is a permanent expansion of the welfare system. Nothing promotes that goal as much as discouraging marriage and providing financial incentives to increase the number of single moms.

Single moms have become a fast-growing demographic group that demands a growing welfare industry. They look to Big Brother government (a.k.a. the Obama Administration) as a provider and the solution to their problems.

Even Obama's Health Control Law contains a subsidy of thousands of dollars a year to unmarried couples and a penalty if they get married. That's the goal of the Obama liberals: a society dependent on the government.