

The Infrastructure Road to Recovery— Let's Build Our Way Out of the Depression!

Populate or Perish: Australia Needs 50 Million People!

by Craig Isherwood

Our nation today is in the throes of a great debate over population. The decisions we make now and in the coming few years will shape Australia for decades, and even centuries to come.

Therefore, one must examine this issue from the highest scientific standpoint, that of "potential relative population density", as specified by the greatest economic forecaster of the past several decades, the American physical economist Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. In the science of physical economy, *potential relative population density* is the fundamental measure of the economic health of any nation. In

first approximation, to be elaborated below, it means the number of individuals who can be supported per square kilometre of any nation, solely by the efforts of the inhabitants of that nation.

LaRouche's concept is a radical shift from the prevailing measures of economic health, in that it puts *people* first, instead of the things they produce. The idiocy of "thing-based" measures, such as Gross Domestic Product, is self-evident: For Australia, look at the overwhelming evidence of the collapse of education and health care, of the collapse of the basic hard infrastructure of transport, water, etc.,

and of the growing poverty and unemployment of the general population, as documented in this special report and in the article, "Australia's economy: A nation in denial" on page 4. Compare that reality, to the crowing of our political and financial establishment (and of the OECD) about how "Australia's economy is leading the world."

More fundamentally, one can not speak about the population issue, without addressing the essential axiom which underlies that issue, regarding the nature of man. Are human beings merely another form of animal, as Prince Philip and his World Wide Fund for Nature

gang contend? Or, are they fundamentally different, as the great religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam teach, in which man is created *imago viva Dei*—in the living image of God the Creator. The reality is, that mankind (male and female) are different from animals because they possess God-like creative powers of mind, which enable them to change and develop the physical universe itself. Thus God's injunction to man in Genesis 1:28; "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it." This is not merely a religious statement, but a rigorous scientific one: it is by virtue of

man's unique creative powers, that he has expanded his *potential relative population density* over the centuries and millennia, in a way that animals have never done by themselves, nor could ever do, because they lack the power which man has—creative cognition. The contentions of the greenies and economic rationalists, therefore, that "man is just another animal" operating according to "pleasure and pain" is unscientific quackery, or, perhaps, just plain paganism.

With those underlying axioms in mind, we can now begin to look at what sort of population Australia should have.

62 Million Australians by 2050?

In an article in *Rydge's Magazine* in October 1941, Dr. J.J.C. Bradfield, the architect of Sydney's underground railway and Sydney Harbour Bridge, and of the Bradfield Scheme, called for a population of 40 million by 1991, and an "eventual" population of 90 million:

"To populate and develop Australia we must spend money to make money. The money spent would all be for labour and materials of Australian origin. An expenditure of 5 shillings per day or 500 million pounds, in well thought out schemes throughout Australia during the next 40 years would greatly increase the value of our heritage, and add the population we need to hold what we have. To do this we should endeavour to have a population of 40 million say fifty years from hence. Australia eventually should easily accommodate 90 million people, 30 per square mile [12 per square kilometre]."

In 1941, Australia's population was seven million. To hit 40 million, as Bradfield called for, the population would have had to grow by 471%, a growth rate of 3.5% per year or 41% every decade. By 1991 however, even after the baby-boom of the 1950s and 1960s, Australia had a population of around 17 million people, and a population density of 2.2 people per square kilometre. Yet, Bradfield's dream is entirely feasible.

Today, another great infrastructure advocate, Prof. Lance Endersbee, has put the argument as follows: "We need an immediate increase of population of 25%.... Australia could quite reasonably embark on a planned increase of 25% within the decade. I would point out that, 50 years ago, in the fifties, there was a 25% increase in the Australian population with full-employment and a number of major works on hand around the nation. The top end of Australia could carry 50 million people alone."

A 25% increase would be nearly five million people, lifting Australia's population from 19.5 million to 24.4 million people. In 1949 Australia had 7,908,070 people. By 1959, we had grown

by 2,148,410 people to 10,056,480, 27.1% within one decade! The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) for Australian women in that decade was close to 3.6 babies per woman, which peaked in 1961. This was well above the population replacement rate of 2.1, and far above the 1.7 rate we have sunk to in the year 2002. (The Total Fertility Rate is the average number of babies per woman according to the age-specific fertility rates each year. See Graph 1.)

Whilst the TFR was initially high due to a catch up factor from the Depression and War, it was sustained by near-universal marriage, reduction in the ages at marriage, low unemployment, availability of housing, and reduced fertility problems, and increased cultural optimism. The population was further boosted by immigration, by the advent of immunisation against common disease, and by modern medical practices in general. The latter decreased the Infant Mortality Rate from a horrendous ratio of 103.6 per thousand live births in 1901, to just 5.3 in 1999. (See Graph 2.)

If we had continued the economic and population policies of the post-war period, from 1959, that 27.1% rate of increase would have meant an Australian population of over 28 million people today, and in the year 2049, over 89 million people, close to Bradfield's vision of 90 million! (See Graph 3.)

If we began in 2002 with a re-

newed population growth rate of 27.1%, then ten years from now we would have over 24 million people, and by 2050 be at 62 million people. How would we achieve this? We would need to enthusiastically promote and fund—once again—policies that support a rate of increase of *potential relative population density*.

These are the policies and projects which are featured in this special report, which will inspire optimism and hope for the future.

Although for both moral as well as nation-building reasons, we should dump Australia's present racist anti-immigration policy, generous immigration quotas alone are not sufficient to deci-

sively expand our population. An intake of 100,000 immigrants, for instance, only represents 0.5% of Australia's current population. Of those 100,000, at least 50% are men, and of the women, a significant proportion are non-child bearing, so the proportion of women who would raise the Total Fertility Rate would be minimal.

The Nation-State and Population Growth

The kind of rapid population growth which we are proposing is in fact normal by historical standards, particularly those of the last 500 years of extended European civilisation since the Fifteenth Century Golden Renaissance. At that time, Cardinal Ni-

cholas of Cusa founded the concept of sovereign nation-states in his great work, *Concordantia Catholica*. He also founded modern science in his work *De Docta Ignorantia*, and counted among his disciples such universal geniuses as Leonardo DaVinci and Jo-

hannes Kepler, the founder of modern mathematical physics. These two innovations, the nation-state and experimental physical science, which were both dedicated to fostering the common good, caused the population explosion seen in Graph 4. And there

were not only more people, but they had a much better quality of life, and lived much longer.

Periods of renaissance always result in rapid rates of population growth, as in the population growth spurred by the joint impact of the Islamic Renaissance and the

neo-Confucian renaissance in China, which caused world population to double between 800 and 1300. Along with the rising numbers of population, come rising population-densities, as well as dramatically increased life-spans.

