

**July 10, 2006**

## **Billionaires Beyond Scrutiny**

By Douglas A. Sylva

On Sunday, July 2, the *New York Times* broke the story of a vast, left-wing conspiracy to impose abortion rights on the entire world. The item ran on page A1, above the fold, long the most influential location in all of journalism. Surprised you missed it?

The *New York Times* did not quite see the news as a conspiracy, and therefore did not report it as a conspiracy. So there it was — hiding in plain sight — the pro-abortion Buffett billions joining the pro-abortion Gates billions, in order to dominate the international development agenda. According to the *Times*, Buffett's foundation will now “be able to greatly increase spending on birth control and on making abortions available, a cause supported by both Warren Buffett and his late wife, Susan Thompson Buffett. He has spoken relatively little about the issue in public, and neither did she.”

Buffett has not felt it necessary to explain his embrace of abortion rights, nor, with his donation to the Gates Foundation, of assembling history's greatest international charitable foundation to pursue such rights, and the *New York Times* certainly did not think it was necessary to question him. Is abortion the agenda that needs no justification?

The *Christian Science Monitor*, in one of its columns, attempted to fill in the gaps, speculating that, “Warren Buffett, one of the world's wealthiest men, undoubtedly recognized population-related problems in announcing last week plans to donate \$37.4 billion of Berkshire Hathaway Inc. stock to several foundations. These include some he's created that emphasize family planning, abortion rights...”

So are we to believe that discredited Malthusian, population-bomb beliefs are driving Buffett? But where are the investigations of such motivations? Indeed, the *Christian Science Monitor* seems to agree with Buffett, citing a litany of chicken-little scenarios. Population growth, we are told, is resulting in “environmental changes, resource restraints, and a decline in the quality of life. World oil output is predicted to peak within 15 years. Fresh water in some areas is already in short supply. Farmland is being chewed up by swelling suburbia. Global warming, with its rising sea levels, will force hundreds of millions of people out of coastal regions in the next century or so.”

It is left to us, therefore, to rise above the culturally-approved hysterics and ask the questions ourselves, such as: Will the Gates Foundation, now the most powerful private foundation in the world, demand that nations liberalize abortion laws in order to qualify for other development funds? Indeed, with this amount of money, Gates could figuratively (perhaps even literally) buy and sell many small countries. Will the Gates foundation support the myriad non-governmental organizations, such as Planned Parenthood and Catholics for a Free Choice (Buffett has financed both) that have learned that legal manipulation — at both the national and international levels — may be the fastest way to overcome pesky things like constitutions and democratic decision-making? Finally, will the Gates foundation submit to any public oversight, now that two men, with all of their eccentricities and personal habits and inclinations, will possess as much influence as entire continents? How can we know that their personal predispositions will correspond to authentic development priorities?

Buffett and Gates now join Ted Turner and George Soros, with their own international foundations, as billionaires who believe they know better than the rest of the world, and will use their resources to impose their vision upon recalcitrant nations, especially the Catholic nations of Latin America and the Philippines. Of course, how many foundations does the Pope have to stop them?

And don't expect scrutiny of Gates and Buffett from the likes of the *New York Times*. Scrutiny is reserved for people like Thomas Monaghan, the entrepreneur who made a fortune selling pizza, and who sought to establish a single village in Florida where contraceptives and abortifacients would not be available (rather than to transform the entire world in his image). For the *New York Times* crowd, however, such an endeavor signaled the beginning of a new dark ages, not something to be celebrated on page A1, above the fold.