



The Crowning Heights The Marxist Drive Toward Socialized Medicine

As America continues its quadrennial exercise in presidential politics, universal health care stands as one of the important issues in the campaign. Communist dictator Vladimir Lenin echoed Karl Marx's thought when he said it was not necessary to capture every sector of a nation's economy, *only its crowning heights*. In our service economy, health care rests on America's crowning heights.

A HIDDEN ENGINE

Universal health care or single-payer health insurance could result in a government take-over of arguably the most important sector of the American economy. It will be universal by virtue of the fact that government will not relax until it has *universal* control of the system. Through supporting legislation, regulations, taxation, price controls and serious penalties for non-compliance, big government advocates are intent on mandating all the vital elements of American health care.

As America approaches the coming election, the nation still rests in the relative comfort of being the only wealthy, industrialized nation that does not have a complete universal health care system. However this comfort level has been gradually changing as medical benefits are being incrementally extended to the remaining segments of the population. Currently the government directly covers a little over one-quarter of the population through health care programs for the elderly, disabled, military service families and veterans, children, and the poor.

Current estimates put U.S. health care spending at approximately 15% of GNP, the highest in the world. An estimated 84.2% of citizens have some form of health insurance coverage, either through their employer, individual plans, or government programs. One study estimates that about 25% of the country's uninsured, or about 11 million people, are eligible for government health care programs but have not enrolled. America is much farther along the road to socialized medicine than even that would suggest. The fact remains that it doesn't matter whether the dollars and the hospitals are owned publicly or privately. Government already finances about half of Americans' medical care, so one might say the system is already half-socialized.

Extending coverage to all who are eligible remains a fiscal challenge. This challenge could eventually break the

health care system, leaving only government to pick up the pieces and construct its own system. Perhaps that has been the hidden engine driving the debate all along. The question appears, not to be *if* but *how soon* the American health care system follow the lead of Canada, England or even Cuba, where long lines, inefficiency and mediocre care seem to be the rule and not the exception.

THE GERMAN MODEL

Hillsdale Economics Professor Richard M. Ebeling finds it difficult to understand the American public's attraction to socialized medicine, given the country's experiences with totalitarian states in the 20th century. Logic suggested to him that the world would have learned the lesson that every extension of government control in social and economic affairs threatened the liberty of its people. The nature of the Leviathan state is to coerce compliance among its constituents. Whether its coercive dictates originate in the commands of a tyrant or through the democratic process, the end result is invariably the same. Universal health care has a long kinship with the welfare state. Both of these controlling sisters emerged from late 19th century Germany, under the tutelage of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck. Fearing a parliamentary take-over by the Social Democratic Party, Bismarck vowed to beat the socialists at their own game. The German monarchy joined with Bismarck and his conservatives in developing a series of welfare programs that offered hope and security to the German population in its time of economic crisis. What they offered was not pure Marxism but a modified form of state socialism. Bismarckian state socialism aimed to save the established order from revolutionary upheaval and societal disintegration through social programs while leaving the political order intact. This strategy was similar to the one that Franklin Roosevelt employed against Dr. Francis Townsend and Louisiana Senator Huey Long in 1934.

This long drive for socialized medicine is not occurring in an ideological vacuum. It is another step in the trend of ideas that have dominated the world for more than a century. This trend emerged from the belief that the individual is neither strong enough nor intelligent enough to bear the primary responsibility for his or her own circumstances. The paternalistic state always knows what is best for its citizens.

PAPER CUTS

In the U. S., the movement for universal health care goes back to the Great Depression. After years of starvation, unemployment and psychological torment Americans had developed the habit of looking to Washington to provide them with the rudiments of human security. Social Security was one of the first nails in the coffin of American freedom and since then politicians and the so-called experts have conditioned the American people to look to D. C. for its material salvation.

Since the government got involved in medicine, health care has become entangled in a swamp of bureaucratic red tape, gargantuan budgets and the extension of federal authority over a wide range of health services. The private health insurance industry is bursting at the seams. People forego their own health insurance because rising medical costs have sent their premiums soaring or because they expect government will have to pay for their health care. Every election year politicians promise more health care services with the American taxpayer left to foot the bill.

The future of an America with socialized medicine is not rosy. Cost overruns and budget-busting medical care will eventually force the government to establish medical-evaluation boards to ration health care and determine politically who was eligible for treatment. In effect government will eventually be the sole judge of who gets treated and who doesn't receive treatment. Corruption will surface, as people desperate enough and well off enough will buy the drugs or medical care they need for themselves or their loved one on the black-market. The bureaucratic nature of socialized medicine and big government will inevitably drift into a paper and regulation glut that will slowly bleed the system dry in a death of a thousand paper cuts.

MINISTER MOORE

Hillsdale's Professor Ebeling left it to future historians to determine how Americans could willingly surrender their sovereignty over something so important as health care. In truth Americans are very susceptible to battles between unmatched adversaries, such as David and Goliath. To favor the underdog is a basic American principle that dates back to the American Revolution when the behemoth British Empire was abusing its tiny colonies in the Americas. The propaganda machine for universal health care has effectively played on this American sentiment.

The unofficial propaganda minister for socialized medicine is filmmaker Michael Moore. Born in Flint, Michigan, Moore entered a diocesan seminary at age 14. Since dropping out, Moore has spent his life supporting liberal causes. Even though he openly disagrees with the Catholic Church on issues, such as abortion, gay marriage and stem cell research, he considers himself a *practicing Catholic*.

His condemnation of American medical and business organizations began while writing for the student newspaper at the University of Michigan-Flint. At the age of 22 he founded the alternative weekly magazine The Flint Voice, later known as The Michigan Voice. In 1986 he became the

editor of Mother Jones, a liberal political magazine. After being fired for his failure to run an article critical of the Sandinista's human rights record in Nicaragua, Moore settled his suit for wrongful dismissal out of court for \$58,000. The suit provided the seed money for his first film in 1989, *Roger & Me*, a documentary about what happened to his hometown after General Motors closed its factories. In the ensuing years he produced muckraking hits, such as *Bowling for Columbine*, *Fahrenheit 9/11* and in 2007, *Sicko*, his diatribe on American health care. *Sicko* is currently ranked the third highest grossing documentary of all time.

MOORE'S SICKO WORLD

In *Sicko* Moore paints a nauseating picture of the American health care system. He cites statistics from the World Health Organization, which ranks U. S. health care 37th in the world. *Sicko* follows the travails of Americans' squabbles with their insurance and health care providers, denials of treatment by insurance companies, as well as their dissatisfaction with the unwillingness of insurance companies to cover certain procedures.

Jeff Poor of the Business and Media Institute, contends that in Moore's *sicko world*, some Americans live with little or no health care, all politicians are on the pharmaceutical industry's dole, and the insurance companies are the root of all evil. Relying on a medley of emotional anecdotal evidence and misleading information, Moore makes the flawed case that the people in Canada, Western Europe and Cuba are more civilized than Americans because they have government-run health care. Moore's solution for all America's failings is socialized medicine, masquerading as universal health care. According to an ABC News-Kaiser Family Foundation-USA Today survey, 89% of Americans with health-care insurance say they are, in fact, satisfied with the quality of care they receive. Moore wants to drastically rock their boat of complacency.

Moore also contends that the U. S. has nearly 50 million people without health insurance. Of these almost half are between the ages of 18-34. Many young people believe that they do not need health insurance because they are *immortal*. Many others are illegal immigrants who have managed to live under the radar of local law enforcement. To prove his point Moore confuses health care with insurance. A lack of insurance does not mean a lack of health care. By law most emergency rooms must provide medical care to anyone who walks in, no matter what his or her status.

Perhaps his most disingenuous attack is on the pharmaceutical industry. While it is true that drugs are more expensive in the United States than in other nations and profits are involved. Moore never mentions that much of the profits go back into research and development, nor does he mention the enormous taxes that pay for drugs in other nations.

Moore narrates his documentary with a delivery that is akin to a five-year old reading a *Dick & Jane* book during story hour at the public library. *See Dick get sick! See Jane cry because there was no universal health care system in the United States that would have paid for Dick's cancer*

treatment or heart transplant. A documentary would have included a trip to a VA Hospital, such as Walter Reed. This would have served as a fitting antidote to Moore's sophomoric *Sicko* rambling. Government hospitals, such as Reed, have come under fire for their failure to properly treat many of the veterans enlisted to its care. Had Moore not been driven by a socialist agenda he might have provided a service by showcasing the future of a socialized American medical world.

A SEAT AT THE TABLE

The Catholic Church's preferential option for the poor warrants it a seat at the health care debate table. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has long advocated health care reform. In their pastoral letter, Health and Health Care, the Bishops called for a *comprehensive health care system that will ensure a basic level of health care for all Americans*. In his encyclical Peace on Earth, Pope John XXIII listed health care among those basic rights, which flow from the sanctity and dignity of human life. In the same tradition, Pope John Paul II addressed the need for health care in *On Human Work*, where he focused on the availability and affordability of health care for workers.

Christian charity dictates that every person, especially the poor and vulnerable, has a right to adequate health care. This *right* flows from the intrinsic dignity of each and every human being. The Bishops urge national leaders to look beyond special interests and partisanship and to unite our nation in a *new commitment to meeting the health care needs of our people, especially the poor and vulnerable*.

However the Church stresses that this right is not without its concomitant duty of personal responsibility for one's welfare. A health care system must strive to serve the common good by benefiting each person as well as society at large. If individuals neglect or shirk the responsibility for their health care, they militate against the common good.

The Church's teaching on health care for the poor should not be misconstrued as an endorsement of the Leviathan State or socialized medicine. Distributive justice requires that government programs and assistance should be administered at the lowest available level of government or even better by private charities. In their publication Health and Health Care, the Bishops explain how the Catholic community and its healing ministry take on particular significance because of the Church's involvement as provider of health care services through its various ministries and as a major purchaser of health care insurance for its employees.

Another stumbling block for the Church is the inclusion of reproductive rights, including contraception and abortion in most government-sponsored health care plans. The Church's consistent respect for all human life puts it in a Catch-22 position. It wants to help the poor but the Church cannot support anything that includes procedures that violate the sanctity of human life.

THE TROJAN HORSE EFFECT

Frank Morriss recognized the Trojan Horse effect of universal health years ago. Also, in the September 27, 2007 Wanderer, he issued a stern warning that universal health care will accelerate the United States down *the road to serfdom*. Morriss emphasized that universal health care's possible benefits were fraught with hidden dangers for the consciences of the American people, especially its Catholics. Under the shibboleth of women's reproductive health, Planned Parenthood and its allies have been writing their agenda into any health care plan. To them pregnancy is a disease and abortion is its cure.

William Ritter, Colorado's Catholic governor, has restored the state's financial relationship with Planned Parenthood and is considering mandatory health coverage for everyone with a penalty for those who fail to comply. His legislation will undoubtedly use the health of the mother to attach abortion and contraceptive coverage for Coloradoans. Washington State has pressured its pharmacological board to abrogate any *conscience clause* that previously allowed state pharmacists to avoid filling prescriptions for abortifacients, such as the *morning after pill*.

It has become obvious that the movement for universal health care springs from the same 20th century European well which columnist Jonah Goldberg calls *Liberal Fascism*. It is the enlightened belief that the state always knows what's best for its citizens. In the United States, it is the same mindset that produced the 18th Amendment prohibiting alcoholic liquid, and now has tobacco, fatty foods, fur, eggs, firearms and SUVs in its collectivist gun sights. With absolute control as their ultimate goal, these same people are offering universal health care, as a predator might offer candy to a child.



William A. Borst, Ph.D., is the author of *Liberalism: Fatal Consequences* and *The Scorpion and the Frog: A Natural Conspiracy* which are available from the author at P.O. Box 16271, St. Louis, MO 63105 or write BBPROF@sbcglobal.net.

The Mindszenty Report is published monthly by the
Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation,
7800 Bonhomme Ave.
P. O. Box 11321
St. Louis, MO 63105
314-727-6279
Fax 314-727-5897

Subscription rate: \$20.00/year, \$36.00/two years.
Outside the U.S.A. \$28.00

The Mindszenty Report is not copyrighted, and
subscribers are invited to have it printed in
their local newspapers.

Contributions to the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation
are tax deductible as allowed by law.

Eleanor Schlafly, *Publisher*
William A. Borst, Ph.D., *Feature Editor*
e-mail: info@mindszenty.org
web site: www.mindszenty.org

Conference in 2008

THE CHURCH TEACHES FORUM

LOUISVILLE, KY – July 18 & 19, 2008

The Galt House – East Tower

Fourth Street at the River, Louisville, KY

Theme: *Faith-based Hope:*

The Church Evangelizing the World

Friday Evening Mass, Banquet & Keynote Address:

Mass: 5:00 p.m. His Em. Francis Cardinal Arinze

Banquet: 7:00 p.m.

Keynote Address: Cardinal Arinze

Obligation, Readiness & Freedom to Evangelize

Saturday Speakers:

**Welcome/Introduction by Rev. Edmund McCaffrey,
President of Eternal Life**

**Archbishop Joseph Kurtz, Archdiocese of Louisville,
Celebrant at 11:30 a.m. Mass**

**Reverend Roger Arnsparger-Diocese of Charlotte, NC
Reverend Wade Menezes- Fathers of Mercy, Auburn, KY**

Eternal Life – Rev. Edmund McCaffrey, President

902 West Stephen Foster

Bardstown, KY 40004

tel. 1-800-842-2871

fax 502-348-2224

Mindszenty Report Reprints

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT CHRISTIANITY?—In a question-and-answer format, author Dinesh D'Souza makes the case for Christianity's ideas, institutions and values. He explains why the "new" atheists are so militant and how Christians must strengthen their moral and intellectual defenses. Ask for 2/08

A CUBE OF CONFLICT: IRAN, RUSSIA & THE MIDDLE EAST PUZZLE—Recaps the turbulent history of Iran, its present leadership, and the blend of Marxism & Islam among militant groups. Russia supplies weapons and nuclear missiles, and plans to turn the Muslim world against Israel and the U.S. Ask for 01/08

THE INTERIOR CROSS: MOTHER TERESA AND HER DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL—takes a realistic, theological view of what it means to be saintly, or a saint. Mother Teresa's much discussed book, *Come Be My Light* puts into perspective her life, suffering and torments of the soul and shows that her spiritual darkness was the supreme test of faith. Ask for 12/07

1 copy	\$.50	100 copies	\$20.00
20 copies	\$5.00	500 copies	\$85.00
50 copies	\$11.00	1000 copies	\$160.00

DID YOU KNOW...

That during George Washington's presidency, an anti-Catholic, anti-Pope "holiday" was observed every Nov. 5th in Boston. A rowdy mob would parade through the streets with a crude effigy of the Pope, usually accompanied by an effigy of the devil. At every house the leader of the parade demanded money "to buy the Pope a drink." If the homeowner refused, the mob broke his windows. At the end, the effigies were burned.

This was in 1775 when only one of the 13 colonies permitted Catholics to practice their faith freely (see Mindszenty Report 4/05) But President Washington had no tolerance for bigotry. He wrote an order forbidding "Pope Day" deriding "the ridiculous and childish custom... at a time when we have obtained the friendship and alliance of the people of Canada, is insulting to their religion, is so monstrous." His mockery was fatal to "Pope Day" and the observance ceased.

*Excerpted from Our Sunday Visitor
January 13, 2008*

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS RUNNING AMOK

Children in a Montville, Connecticut public school have found that their traditional recess is no more. Games of tag, dodge ball, soccer, kickball and even unstructured play have been virtually banned by the principal, Mark Johnson. Instead, they are encouraged to jump rope, use hula hoops, or gently fling a Frisbee.

After many parents complained, a few changes were made. Now, twice a week, when an adult volunteer is present, 4th and 5th graders are allowed to play a modified version of kickball as long as no score is kept; they are free to walk the grounds with the school nurse, play chess or pick up litter. From Cheyenne, Wyoming to Wyckoff, New Jersey, recess is being re-thought and pared down.

*Excerpted from the St Louis Post-Dispatch
(reprinted from the New York Times)
December 16, 2007*

ST. PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS 2:16-17

"May Our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God Our Father who has loved us and has given us through grace everlasting consolation and good hope, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word." Amen