

Letters on the Obama administration and healthcare

15 September 2009

On “Obama seeks to reassure insurance companies, Republicans in speech to Congress on health care”

I’ve been reading your analysis of President Obama’s speech before Congress on healthcare “reform” and comparing it to what I heard this morning on NPR programs like *Talk of the Nation*, as well as locally produced talk shows and interviews on Minnesota Public Radio. Not once did any of the hosts, guests, or interviewers mention single-payer government-sponsored health insurance for all people in this country. Instead, we were fed a steady stream of talk about how this was just what everyone needed to hear and how it really explained the problem and the solution. Even interviews with everyday people said the same thing, and in fact I was surprised to hear at least three different everyday people say they no longer cared if the public option (as watered down as it is) was kept, since now they believe they would be protected from the greed and capriciousness of private health insurance companies under Obama’s plan. If only.

I’ve written again and again to my senators and congressional representative on healthcare reform. They seem willing to go forward with Obama’s sham reform and never answer my question: Why isn’t anyone in Washington considering single-payer?

Gary W

10 September 2009

On “The real agenda behind Obama’s health care ‘reform’”

I’ve always found it very curious that when the political elites refer to cuts in government spending, the military budget is never, ever a consideration.

Additionally, I’ve often wondered why the following are never a consideration for balancing the budget and keeping social security solvent:

1. Reducing the military budget to the pre-Reagan era
2. Removing the social security cap placed on income.

It seems ridiculous to me to have 100 percent of someone’s income taxed if they’re making below \$100,000 and not taxed above that amount.

3. Tax codes based on politics instead of solid accounting principles

4. Allowing domestic corporations to declare themselves as a foreign entity while still using domestic commons—i.e., highways, land, water, air etc.

Just a few thoughts.

Thanks

Michael S

11 September 2009

On “Obama’s health care speech and the lies of the Nation”

Great article. The *Nation* is a fraud. Vanden Heuvel’s on the Council of Foreign Relations, enough said.

Dave F

11 September 2009

On “Democrats pledge more cuts in Medicare to fund Obama’s health care overhaul”

Lies! To say as Obama does that “Our healthcare problem is our deficit problem” is a lie!

What about the trillions of “dollars” to the banks and elite? Paid for by a fiat, “faith-based” currency? What about trillions to the munitions makers and other war profiteers?

Democrats and Republicans are two sides of the same coin. Bought and owned by insurance, pharmaceutical, war profiteers, as well as the likelihood of all-out blackmail by Israel.

Trillions for them and nothing for us.

Bill K

13 September 2009

As a retired person, age 74, I am in need of the Medicare program because of a bad heart (I had a heart attack in 2007) and because of a need for psychotherapy for chronic depression. Already, cuts in Medicare have

reduced my psychotherapy to only about two sessions per year with my therapist. Basically, this means I see him only for discussion about my meds and a little discussion of my current situation and problems. As I am a complex individual, this is insufficient and any further cuts would be intolerable. My health plan provider, Harvard Vanguard, has for the last five years abolished its Mental Health department and collapsed it into a general office that handles psychology and other behavioral health problems denigrating psychotherapy drastically. Why is this? Because despite the tremendous advances in care for people who are nonadjusted and individualistic enough to resist social mores, the trend is to fascistically force people to conform to an increasingly oppressive system. Mental health care facilities have been abolished and cut back drastically all over Massachusetts, traditionally a leader in care for mentally “neurotic” and “psychotic” people. The need to put these people under increased pressure with reduction in their counseling and treatment is part and parcel of the push to place unadjusted folks under police observation and control. So cutbacks in mental health therapy are a means for consolidating the current Police State we’ve had in this country since 9/11.

And worse than this, Obama’s push to cut healthcare costs by forcing working class and elderly people to pay exorbitant health costs out of their own pocket is to force poor people to pay for the horrendous losses caused by the speculation of the super-rich on very bad securities and mortgages which have caused the economy to virtually collapse.

All of this is going to cause working people, students and the elderly to revolt and to push for a revolutionary solution to an increasingly intolerable system. I am surprised that there hasn’t been more massive protests, strikes and demonstrations in the US up until now. It’s very discouraging and demoralizing to someone like myself who has been active in Left politics since 1960. I was dismayed by your coverage of the rotten UAW concessions—the lack of real solidarity and fightback by the auto workers to the terrible cuts in employment, etc., is hard for me to understand. Where is the real working class of 1917-1923, a time that saw tremendous militancy and revolution in Europe and which resulted in the great Revolution of 1917 in Russia? The workers in this country have almost no solidarity and have only a minimal fightback (except for a few instances). To me this is a real tragedy and one very difficult to explain.

I sincerely hope that the coming year will bring a worldwide militant struggle by the working class and the

oppressed to overthrow the criminals who run this country and the world for their own enrichment and power. Workers of the world unite!

Steve H

Massachusetts, USA

14 September 2009

On Obama’s speech on retirement funds

I considered Obama’s speech on [retirement funding] September 5th to be quite chilling. Here is a sitting US president who in this coming Labor Day is overseeing a nation with a real unemployment rate of over 20 percent according to an August 27th article in *US News and World Report*. His speech seemed to spend more time in telling of woes of individual families (as if we needed to know) than proposing anything substantive to fix it. First, he predictably cited the declining job loses coming out of the Labor Department. Then, after telling how bad off everyone one is and how nice it would be if things were better, announced virtually insignificant remedies such as assistance in direct deposit or better illustrated tax forms. Farcical!

Then he mentions that 3 trillion have been wiped out in retirement savings by the financial crisis, and in practically the next breath tells Americans how they might be able to better save the retirement dollars, if any, they have left!! It would seem to me that these tepid solutions are something that some lower-level offices could have implemented in legislation. However, are they even worth mentioning in a national address?! I think not.

Over all, Obama seemed to appear tonight as nothing but a junior senator from Illinois being led along like a poodle on a string by the powerful financial interests that control him.

Perhaps your editorial staff could write an article that captures the sheer absurdity of these proposals in the face of the present economic catastrophe.

Best,

GT

Arizona, USA

6 September 2009



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