

Can Health Care be a Right?

by Rick McCorkle

Democrats claim that health care is a right. This would be a good time to stop and read the Bill of Rights, which are the first ten amendments to the Constitution. All of these fundamental rights are guarantees of protection from an overreaching, intrusive, and oppressive government. None of them guarantee the supply of any measurable or material benefit, and none of them guarantee a minimum quality of life. They only guarantee protection from the abuse of government power.

Why didn't the conventions of the states add one more right to the Bill of Rights? There could have been this one:

Amendment XI

All persons, when inside the borders of the United States, shall have all the health care they need or desire provided to them whether they have the means to pay for it or not. This right shall not be limited to Citizens of the United States.

Were the people at the conventions in the late 1780's too timid, or too unimaginative to add this right? Didn't they care enough about their fellow man to put this in? No, they weren't too timid, unimaginative or uncaring. They would never have added such an amendment because they knew that to do so would institute the very tyranny that the Bill of Rights was intended to protect us from. You can't have a right to certain goods without taking away another's right to those same goods, and you can't have a right to services being provided to you without taking away another's right to withhold those services or to provide them to someone else of his or her choosing. The only time you have a right to goods and services is when you freely agree to pay someone for those goods and services, and that person freely agrees to accept your payment and provide those goods and services to you in exchange.

If the government gives you the right to take the time and attention of medical professionals and to be given medications and bandages and various devices, then it denies the rights of others who must give the money or the time or the medicines to you. So far, in America, no one is forced to be a doctor or a nurse or a lab technician. No one is forced to start a business of discovering and selling beneficial drugs. No one must produce medical supplies and devices. If no one is forced to do these things, then how can the government guarantee that you can have these things? It can't, of course, unless it has complete control over us. In totalitarian, "utopian" societies like we are becoming, you are evaluated by the government and forced to perform certain types of work according to what the government thinks is needed. Your own aspirations are of no interest to such governments.

We have places to go to get help when we're not well because America has always been a place where people are free to work as hard as they want to pursue their dreams. This freedom and hard work has resulted in great prosperity, and consequently we have the best places to go in the entire world when we're sick. Free men and women have competed to provide the best medical products and to be the best health care professionals because they have a desire for excellence and a heartfelt compassion for their fellow man. When the government forces people to provide goods and services to others, or to pay for those goods and services, then it crushes the human spirit and transforms abundance into scarcity, excellence into mediocrity, and happiness into misery.

The government can't provide the wealth or the material or the knowledge or desire to care for all the sick people in America. It can only lay its heavy hand on certain unfortunate people and take what they have and give it to someone else. This ultimately results in everyone having nothing. We saw this happen in communist Russia and in communist China. We see it now in communist North Korea. Russia and China were brought back from the brink of total destruction only by allowing a little free enterprise to flourish. Reality forced them to do it.

The ten rights that make up the Bill of Rights aren't affected by times of abundance or times of want. They aren't strengthened by wealth and they aren't diminished by poverty. That is not true of the above proposed eleventh amendment. It requires that goods exist in abundance, and that vast numbers of people be ready, willing and able to provide services on demand. It's not possible for the government to guarantee that the goods and services needed will always be available. It logically follows, then, that health care is not a right and can never be a right. Furthermore, no legitimate right infringes on the rights of others. Democrats know this, but they perpetuate the lie because they seek to exploit the dark side of human nature, the side that wants to get something for nothing at the expense of someone else. It's their belief that appealing to this kind of person will secure their political power forever, but they're overlooking one very inconvenient truth. Sooner or later, socialism runs out of other people's money. It always has and it always will, and it's always failed miserably.

America is both an amazingly prosperous and generous country. Because of private enterprise and charitable organizations supported by it, medical care in some form is available to everyone in this country whether they can pay for it or not. If the free market was allowed to work without government interference, health care would be much more plentiful and accessible to all. You don't have a right to health care, but you do have a right to not have the government force its idea of health care on you and make you pay for other people's health care. Assert that right in the next election, and vote for a Republican who will champion that right. If you let the government control your health care, it won't be long before it will control you entirely, and you will have a lot of nothing.