

Socialist Creep:

Do you remember the big tax break we got when the Bush Presidency began? Everyone got three hundred or six hundred dollars as the President went to work stimulating the economy back to health. What did you do with your six hundred bucks? Did you save it? Did you invest it? Did you buy new wheel covers for your El Camino? We donated our tax rebate to Planned Parenthood and sent a thank you note to the President. We did not get a response from the White House. And we thought the man had a sense of humor.

All these years later it occurs to me that it might be a better idea than ever to take what the Bush Administration offers us and put it to better use than the folks in DC have in mind.

For instance, the President just put some more money in our pockets by vetoing a health care bill that would have extended coverage to a few million more kids. He reasons that Government shouldn't be in the health care business (business is the key word here) and besides, "They have health care, they can go to an emergency room." Yes, the President said that, he really did.

So, what will you do with the twelve extra dollars the President has put in your pocket? You might get together with a couple of neighbors to sponsor a visit to a doctor's office for some kid who wouldn't otherwise get to go. Or you might just give the money to a deserving senior citizen to use towards his next prescription refill, since he can't afford it now. Houston County Women's Resource Center is doing good work; why not point your windfall their way?

Anything we can do as private citizens would help keep American health care right where the President wants it, in the hands of individuals and businesses. That way we are free to help our neighbors, or not, as we see fit. We can flat out ignore them if we want. It is a right that the President is trying to preserve for us. The right to practice myopic greed. He's sparing us from the evil of creeping socialism under which, one is more or less forced to help one's neighbor. Health care, the President's way, can rationalize an uninsured child's suffering because it's the free market's choice to let her suffer. Somehow I think the President is misreading the quotation that begins, "Suffer the little children...."

The President likes the idea of free market medicine because it keeps profits up for health care businesses, insurance companies and health professionals. He likes the idea of free market anything. He likes the idea of profits. The idea that *any* worthwhile endeavor must be profitable is pretty close to gospel for him. The President is worried that Government financed health insurance would erode the precious idea that zero government is good government. He is worried that a federal government, which would spend a large portion of its tax revenues on health insurance, would be distracted from its true mission. Unfortunately for us, his idea of the best use for our taxes is funding his long, pointless, stupid war.

I'm wondering why it's OK for the federal government to be in the war business but not in the health business. Why is waging war democratic and health insurance socialistic? How can a right thinking person possibly believe that spending tax revenues on land mines and mercenaries is more American than spending the money on pre-natal checkups and long term care for seniors?

Since the beginning of the Iraq war, a war completely cooked up by this administration for its own reasons, the cost to Minnesotans has been eleven billion dollars and sixty sons and daughters killed. That's about \$2,200 for every woman, man and child in the state. For a family of four it's a cool \$9,000 give or take. Instead of financing his war via uninsured citizens, flat broke seniors and underserved kids, what if the President offered each Minnesotan universal, excellent health care and a parade for the sixty soldiers, who would still be alive?

I don't know about you but I'd take the health insurance and the parade and stop worrying about creeping socialism.