



J.W.J.

## Greed helped create the health care crisis

By J.W. JOHNSON

Senator Harris Wofford sounded one very loud note in his trumpeted during a successful upset victory for that senate seat over former Governor Richard Thornburgh.

Health care. Millions and millions of Americans are without any sort of health care coverage whatsoever. And only a few states (Minnesota being the most recent) have made any comprehensive attempt to deal with this issue.

Most vulnerable, of course, in the health care squeeze are young families with children and senior citizens. And seniors daily face the twin ogres of escalating health care costs, and constantly decreasing Medicare coverage.

And it's clear that some sort of national health care program will be necessary; Wofford benefited from Pennsylvania citizens who believe the same thing.

As for senior citizens in the current scheme of things, for many there is a daily fear of getting sick, of going broke, of going into a nursing home or both and all compounded by the fear that they will eventually become a burden to loved ones.

Thus motivated by fear, many become susceptible to buying hope in the form of duplicate health insurance policies to supplement Medicare.

Many of these so-called policies are virtually worthless. Some of these companies employ sales agent and pay them a cut of up to 60 percent of the premium of any policy they sell to the elderly. It is then only logical to realize that if a company pays its salespeople 50-60 percent and keeps out any sums at all for profit and administrative expense, then the amount which can be returned in claims to the elderly is very low.

At the same time this corporate greed is not that difficult to understand as it is little more than a reflection of debased individual values.

How about, for example, those individuals whom, day after day, purchase lottery tickets in hopes of getting rich from someone else's misfortune?

And isn't a large portion of inflation when it occurs really the result of individual greed? Of individuals not satisfied with what they have, always seeking (and going into monumental debt, encouraged by credit card companies) to obtain items once called luxuries but now regarded as necessities?

Is it really surprising, then, to find insurance companies spoon feeding hope and then financially draining senior citizens, when at the individual level we hear, for example, a person boasting of how he or she "made money" on an auto accident claim by patronizing a shop willing to jack up the bill

with a resultant split of the so-called profit?

It's clear that both parties in this case are thieves; nothing more, nothing less.

And nothing has yet been said here about the millions in Medicaid and Medicare fraud by physicians whose professional training, social position and oath of office requires them to help the needy, not help themselves illegally to public largess.

No, none of this behavior, either corporately or individually is strange anymore. It's run-of-the-mill; and more's the pity.

This kind of behavior cries out for a renewal of ethical and moral values once thought by many to be inherent in Americans. It's also clear that when a society forgets that its corporate actions reflect little more than its individual desires, any large scale efforts to them ideal with the society's so-called undesirable elements, ends up begging the question. Former Boston mobster Vincent Teresa put it this way:

"The only reason the Mafia exists is because the people want it to exist. The goods and services it offers are bought by someone. And that someone, in one form or another, is the public seeking to get rich quick, or acquire some other forms of immediate gratification. Who's kidding whom?"

Indeed, Mr. Mobster. Indeed.

## Lehman Junior High students send a message to the future

### Time capsule will be opened in 2092

By GRACE R. DOVE  
Post Staff

If everything goes as planned, Lake-Lehman students in the year 2092 will unearth a time capsule prepared and buried by this year's eighth grade English students.

Ninety eighth-graders in Mrs. Sandy Weyman's and Mrs. Carol Oliver's classes have collected mementos of issues important to today's youth, to be preserved in plastic and sealed inside a plastic Coleman cooler for their descendants.

Beth Turner is assembling a collage of pictures of popular figures, including Vanilla Ice, Amy Grant, Jody Foster and Arnold Schwarzenegger, and writing a short description of each person.

Amanda Zdonczyk contributed memorabilia from Berlin, collected by her sister, Lori Stafford, while Lori was stationed in Berlin with the Army.

Postcards, newspaper articles, a piece of barbed wire and photographs - including a shot of a greeting to the family in Sweet Valley spray-painted on the Berlin Wall - round out the collection.

Kim Steinhauer and her trusty camera visited popular hangouts to illustrate what a 14-year-old

living in the Back Mountain in 1992 does for fun, including skating at Rollaway and excursions to Wyoming Valley Mall, Gateway Cinema and Grotto Pizza.

Francis Gurnari photographed popular school activities.

Other students are compiling booklets of fashions, popular sports, a medley of popular music, photos of technology and transportation and a video of a typical day at Lake-Lehman junior high school.

A pressed daffodil, an explanation of the Cancer Society's "Daffodil Days" and a poignant story of a student's experience with cancer in the family will remind kids of the future that it wasn't all fun and games back in the good old days of 1992.

"The kids got the idea of a time capsule after reading Ray Bradbury's short story 'The Drummer Boy of Shiloh,' which will be included in the time capsule," explained Mrs. Oliver.

"They wanted to leave a part of themselves for the future," Mrs. Weyman added.

Originally the students couldn't decide whether to bury the time capsule for 50 years, so that they would still be alive when it would

be unearthed, or to bury it for a century, trusting their descendants to remember its location.

After considerable debate, the students voted to go for a century.

The location, which must remain secret for the time capsule's protection, will be registered at the Lehman United Methodist Church and possibly the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society.

The students plan to leave plaques at the church, the junior high school and the high school to remind future generations to mark their May, 2092 calendars for unearthing the time capsule.

And what will the kids of the future find?

Unopened cans of Pepsi and Coke. A pair of Gap designer jeans. A copy of *Fifty Ways to Save the Earth*. Baseball cards. Kids' personal memoirs. Favorite short stories. Instructions: how to make a hamburger, a pizza and a milk shake. A key to the junior high school (if it's still standing.) A map of the Back Mountain. Maybe even a copy of *The Dallas Post*.

The students hope that, after examining these treasures from the past, their descendants will better understand what issues faced the eighth-graders of 1992.

## Discount for early women's conference signup

The Luzerne County Women's Conference has received a mini-grant of \$1,000 from the Pennsylvania Humanities Council to use for programming for the 1992 Conference, according to Phyllis Belk, director of University Relations for Penn State Wilkes-Barre. The conference will be held Saturday, June 6, all day on the Penn State campus in Lehman.

The Women's Conference committee, with the Penn State coordinator, Melissa Noderer, specifically asked PHC to help to bring in the keynote speaker Susan Shown Harjo, whose talk will be at 8:45 a.m. the day of the conference.

The program of the 1992 Women's Conference will feature 71 workshops and 115 persons as presenters, in addition to Ms. Harjo. The cost of the all-day conference has been kept low because of the support of the PHC and many local sponsors. The cost of \$16 for the total conference will go up to \$21 after May 23 so interested persons are urged to meet the deadline. Senior citizens, over 65 may attend for \$10 if they register now; \$15 after May 23.

The Pennsylvania Humanities Council, in addition to the mini-grant, is sponsoring one of the workshops entitled "Feminism and

the 1950s Family" which will be given by Pat McPherson.

Other workshop topics range from "Making Tomorrow's Artists Out of Today's Children" given by Madeline Volpetti and Susan Davis, to "The Community Involvement of Women" led by Susan Shoval, to "Incorporating Fitness into a Demanding Lifestyle," given by Jan Elston, Michelle Steele and Penn State Fitness leaders.

For a list of the 71 workshops, and a registration form, call Penn State, 675-9114. Most public libraries also have brochures available.

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