



AID TO SOMALIA

J.W.J.

No quick fix for the health care system

By J.W. JOHNSON

The old doctor raised his finger and stabbed the air with it for emphasis.

"It would be the worst thing ever to happen to medicine here."

The "it" referred to is socialized medicine.

And the doctor who is so adamantly opposed to it knows whereof he speaks. He worked as a doctor in socialized medicine for more than 17 years.

The entire question of health care, its delivery and how we are going to pay for it, was a chief element in the presidential election, as it was in State elections throughout the United States. That included Pennsylvania, where Sen. Harris Wolford used the issue last year to defeat the then thought to be unbeatable former Governor Richard Thornburgh.

Each time the health care football is tossed around, someone always come in with the big third down play that the United States brought to adopt the health care system used by our neighbor Canada.

My doctor friend throws up his hands; "If that is done, then it will cost much, much more, and patients will suffer." (I saw some of what he was talking about when I lived on the Canadian border many years ago.)

And if you think that adoption of Canada's plan is so much campaign rhetoric, then please show that a bill doing just that has more than 70 sponsors in the House of Representatives, and Sen. Paul Wellstone from Minnesota has introduced a similar measure in the Senate.

But to be fair, let's outline how the Canadian system works:

When a Canadian visits his or

her doctor, the doctor bills the government. If the patient visits a hospital, the hospital pays for this care out of a lump sum the government gives it each year; the patient does not receive a bill.

The literal bottom line here is that the government pays, in full, for all health care for every citizen.

The other side of that coin finds the average Canadian paying 46 percent of his income in taxes, while the cost of health care there is growing faster than the country's gross national product.

Today the United States has the costliest health system in the world. But critics of adopting the Canadian system say that it would be enormously more expensive, while actually reducing the quality of care.

Critics cite overuse of the system in Canada, from visiting emergency rooms with common colds, to roaming around from doctor to doctor seeking prescriptions for drugs. Critics also say patients suffer under the Canadian system because hospitals and doctors have no incentive to provide good service; in fact, service often is mediocre at best. Patients must often wait months for the simplest of procedures, or for access to the most basic diagnostic equipment. The average wait now for a coronary by-pass operation is one year.

But what about those who argue that with the United States government already paying 41 percent of total health care costs, and heavily subsidizing private health insurance companies through tax breaks, we already have socialized medicine here?

Those who make this argument point out that it's us the consumer who is really at fault here. We want the best for ourselves and our loved

ones, while preserving what we regard as a right to choose the who, what and where of care, while wishing the payment for same to be someone else's responsibility.

That's why it's so difficult to cut costs. Patients demand more and the system tries to oblige. Likewise, there is no incentive to cut costs here as better than 90 percent of hospital costs are either paid by government or third party insurers; the figure is more than 80 percent for doctor's bills.

Where does that leave the 35 million persons in this country who have no health insurance at all, or the more than 20 million who face the very real danger of losing health care coverage, or those persons who have a catastrophic illness, and whom the U.S. Supreme Court now says can be removed from health insurance plans by employers?

President-elect Clinton's proposal to establish a National Health Board to set ceilings on health spending, doesn't address the question of how it will enforce those ceilings; would the board actually try to determine how many tests or procedures are necessary for each patient? The new president has also suggested that he might require all persons to join HMO's, followed by setting limits on what such organizations could charge.

This would mean, of course, that health care choices would be reduced, without a necessarily corresponding decrease in costs.

The bottom line here is that, like Pogo, we have met the enemy and he is us...wanting the best and the most without being willing to pay the real cost.

And with that as our illness, no amount of health care or tinkering with the system will cure it.

Krogulski honored by Boy Scout council

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Council, Boy Scouts of America, recently held its annual Scouters Recognition Dinner at Convention Hall in Pittston. The dinner serves as an opportunity to thank many volunteers of the local council who bring the Scouting program to the youth of Lackawanna, Wayne, Wyoming and Luzerne Counties.

The highlight of the Recognition Dinner is the presentation of the Silver Beaver Award to adults who have provided distinguished services to youth within a Scout Council. The Silver Beaver Award recognizes an individual's service through scouting as well as com-

munity and religious activities. This year's recipients were: John Krogulski, William Levis, Louis F. Milewski, Paul Strunk and Andrew Tierman.

Jack L. Krogulski, has been a volunteer in Scouting for over 22 years. Over the years he has served as Exploring Chairman, Vice President of Finance, Council Commissioner, Council SME Chairman, Chairman of the Council Golf Tournament and several other council committees. Presently Jack is the Vice President of Administration.

In addition he has demonstrated himself to be a real community leader. An active and participating member of several other organizations, namely the Dallas Kiwanis Club, the Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce, the Masons and St. Therese's Church.

Jack has worked for the Commonwealth Telephone Co. for 22 years. Today he is Executive Consultant for Guyette Communications, General Manager of Cablina Service Co. and owner/operator of Kay Associates.

He served his country well as a Marine in WWII and Korea and has been serving his community well ever since. Krogulski lives in Trucksville.

Recycled products directory now available

To help consumers of the 90's buy their way through the holidays and well into the year 2000, the Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC) is offering a new, easy to use, Guide to Recycled Products for Consumers and Small Business.

The 40-page booklet provides information on more than 300 products made from recycled materials, including the manufacturer's address and phone number, the amount of recycled material in the product and what

type, and where the product can be purchased.

Since recycling was mandated in Pennsylvania, the supply of recycled material has outweighed the demand. "For recycling to succeed, there needs to be a market for goods made with recycled material and the size and strength of that market is determined by the consumer," said Pat Imperato, PRC Executive Director.

PRC's Guide includes listings in five categories: building materials,

business and school products, clothing, household and outdoor. The publication was developed in response to calls on PRC's toll-free Environmental Shopping hotline 1-800-GO-TO-PRC by consumers nationwide asking for information about products.

Copies of the booklet are now available and make a great holiday gift. To receive yours, send a \$6 check or money order to PRC, 25 West 3rd Street, Media, PA19063 (Includes First class postage).

Library news

Porcelain collection depicts Biblical scenes

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The display case at the Back Mountain Memorial Library is featuring a collection of fine bisque porcelain figurines borrowed from Jean DeSocio of Dallas. These are Biblical figurines depicting the happenings from the Bible. Mrs. DeSocio noticed these figurines in a shop 10 years ago and bought one for herself because she thought they were just beautiful. The first one she purchased is called Entrance to Jerusalem. She has collected others as she comes across them and adds to her collection. Ten years ago, only the large ones were sold; however, in later years, they have made some smaller ones. These are Ceramica Excelsis (Ceramics of the Highest) and are manufactured in Mexico by the company Roman. This company makes 5,000 pieces of each item and then breaks the mold.

The series in the library depicts the life of Christ. The larger figures

depict, 'The way to Emmaus'; 'The Way of the Cross'; 'The Sermon on the Mount'; 'Journey to Bethlehem'; 'The Net of Fish'; 'Jesus and the Women of Samaria'; and the 'Holy Family'. The small figurines include, Walking on Water; Loaves and Fishes; Baptism of Jesus; Resurrection; Simon helping Jesus; Nicodemus; Jesus at the Temple; Jesus, Mary and Martha; Christ before Pilate; and Raising of Jarius daughter. This display makes a beautiful introduction to the coming Christmas Season; and it will be at the library until January 6. Helping with the set-up of this display was Mr. Ralph DeSocio, guardian and clerk of the collection.

The Book Club membership for 1992 totaled 227 members with a total of membership dues amounting to \$2,070. This money was used to purchase books for the Book Club shelf in the library. These books will be added to the library collection regular shelves after six months. The dues for 1993 is \$10 for a single and \$15 for a

double membership, payable January 1. These books are reserved for Book Club members while they are on their special shelf. Anyone wishing to join the Book Club may mail their dues to the library or pay at the information desk in the library. Book Club Christmas Party is December 21 at 1:30 in the reading room at the library. All are welcome to attend and enjoy the festivities.

New books at the library: "The American Way of Birth" by Jessica Mitford is a fresh, provocative, and fearless book showing us how and in what circumstances Americans give birth. At the start, she knew no more of the subject, and not less, than any mother does. Her experiences of giving birth, she observes later, shows a certain amnesia taking over and all memory of discomforts is wiped out and your determination never, ever to do that again fast fades. The author explores conventional and alternative methods of having a child.

Dallas Twp. ok's new road

The Dallas Township supervisors unanimously passed an ordinance accepting Mapleseed Drive, the road leading into "The Maples" subdivision, at their regular meeting Tuesday, December 1.

In other business, the supervisors announced that the annual leaf collection is finished and reminded residents that parking on all township streets between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. is prohibited, to facilitate the movement of snowplow trucks.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 15, at 7 p.m.

Parking on Boro streets illegal in snow storms

In order to facilitate the movement of traffic and to combat the hazards of snow and ice residents are reminded that parking vehicles on streets in Dallas Borough during snow or ice forming storms is prohibited.

Snow and ice must be removed from sidewalks and gutters within five hours after a storm, snow or ice forming after 6 p.m. may be removed at any time before 10 a.m. of the following day.

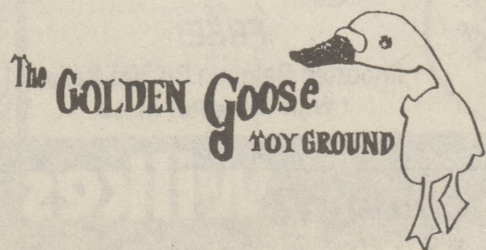
All residents are reminded that throwing snow or ice on roadways is a violation of the PA Motor Vehicle Code.

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