

John W. Johnson

## More serious questions about health care reform

And while the health care system is operated and financed by the various provinces, it was conceptually a national system when conceived in 1959, and remains that except for management differences to be found in the different provinces.

The major problem with the Canadian system (and I knew one man who visited his doctor and hospital emergency room an average of 12-15 days per month, every month) is that Canadians have no incentive to save money. The Canadian system, in essence, relieves all Canadians from financial worries over the cost of hospital and doctor bills and most drug costs.

And that, of course, is the system's major flaw...someone has to pay for all this inattention to the bottom line. That someone is the Canadian taxpayer who pays extraordinarily high taxes vis a vis what is received.

As well, and because the Canadian system oddly does not provide universal and essentially free long-term nursing and home care, older Canadians find themselves staying in much more expensive hospital beds...because it's free, right?

So now we look north and says: "Isn't that great. They have a compassionate and caring government."

That means health care is being seen as yet another in that list of seemingly immeasurable length of special benefits wanted by virtually everyone from the 'government.'

Perhaps more importantly as we address the question of health

are is asking ourselves the right question, to wit:

—Do we want to permanently remove Americans from worrying about the cost of health care from the need to remain healthy, and have care when ill?

—Or do we want to permanently remove Americans from worrying about the cost of health care from the need to remain healthy, and have care when ill?

—Or do we want to provide dollars for those citizens in need?

It's a conceptual issue, and one which has not been part of the national debate. Do we, in fact, want to change the way we look at ourselves as a nation?

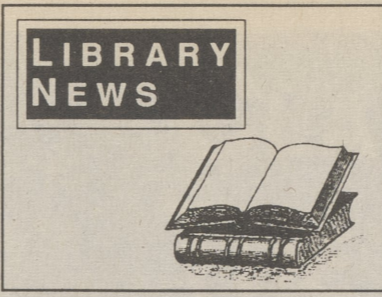
We are, essentially, now a self-reliant nation, expecting the best and brightest among us to rise up and seek the rewards found in the free enterprise system.

What we would become with universal health care is a nation which has abandoned the notion of self-reliance, instead choosing to depend upon a bureaucracy and deep-pocket taxpayers to fund the idea that mediocrity in everything is preferable to excellence for most.

Behind the calls for health care reform are those basic questions, the answers to which will determine far more than the future cost of aspirin, whether a doctor makes obscene amounts of money, or hospitals are money-grubbing capitalistic institutions.

In the larger sense, answers to these questions will decide whether we lose our freedom to fail.

And to succeed.  
NEXT WEEK: PART THREE.



By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library will be celebrating the month of March with the annual 'Pennies for Periodicals' campaign. The library currently subscribes to 101 magazines each year. The total cost of these subscriptions for 1996 was \$3,550.00. The pennies that are collected in the green jar during the month of March will be used to offset the cost of these magazines.

Many of our patrons do collect their pennies through the months and bring jugs of them in to the library. Most recently, a kind patron brought in a plastic four-gallon container filled with pennies. We will hold a contest in conjunction with the campaign, asking for an estimate of how many pennies you think are in the jug. The jug will be on display at the information desk in the li-

## Guess how many pennies in the jar and win a prize

brary. There will be prizes awarded for the closest estimates to the actual amount of pennies in the jug. The contest will run through March 30. Forms for estimates are available at the library front desk.

New books at the library: "Romeo" by Elise Title is a nerve-shattering major psycho-sexual thriller that will leave you breathless. Rome: His is the courtship every woman dreams of. His is the seduction no woman survives. His victims were San Francisco's most invulnerable women—professionals, beautiful, smart. They eagerly embraced his darkest fantasies. They just didn't expect to die. Dr. Melanie Rosen, leading psychiatric expert of serial killers, was his fifth victim—a victim of her own uncontrollable desires.

"Equation For Evil" by Philip Caputo is a razor-sharp novel, penetrating exploration of racism and violence in a contemporary America gone haywire. The story examines the anatomy of a hor-

rific crime: a lone gunman has opened fire on a busload of Asian-American children in rural California, then turned the gun on himself after the attack. Special agent, Gabriel Chin, and forensic psychiatrist, Leander Heartwood are ordered to conduct a "psychiatric autopsy" of the killer to determine his motive and state of mind.

"Absolute Power" by David Baldacci combines the highest levels of political intrigue with big-money law, cutting-edge forensics, and the riveting search for a truth hidden within the power of the Oval Office. Luther is a rare combination of thief and honorable man. Now he's the invisible eyewitness to an event that, if ever revealed, would shake America to its very roots. The story masterfully plumbs the depths of human greed, power, and corruption. That is the reading experience of the year: thrilling, shattering, and as provocative as it is relentlessly suspenseful.

## Jackson

(continued from page 1)

lot or record. "It's a lot of record with a valid deed," he said, "so I can't deny it."

Solicitor Blythe Evans questioned Krupa's reasoning saying "If that's true, then you can build on a 25-foot lot if it's a lot of record." Krupa agreed, saying, "as long as the house fits in the required setbacks."

However, both Evans and board president Walter Glogowski concurred that the matter should be taken up with the planning commission.

After the meeting, Vickie Humenansky said that prior to the subdivision, the matter had gone before the planning commission which recommended that a building permit not be issued for the lot in question. She said a member of the planning commission later told her "just because a lot is a lot or record, doesn't necessarily mean it can be built on even if it does meet the setbacks."

Evans announced he received a letter from the township engineer, Jack Defazio, indicating findings that mining operations conducted by American Asphalt in the Hillside Rd. area are occurring beyond township mining lines by 800 feet. The findings were based on a study by Pasonick Engineering from which measurements were determined by a topographical map.

A motion was passed authorizing the solicitor to send a letter to American Asphalt informing them of the violation.

Evans said if the issue is not resolved, the township can "file with a district justice concerning the matter."

Township resident John Filip suggested getting an immediate injunction to stop the mining. However, Evans remarked that this is more a "matter of upholding the integrity of the law," not so much as creating any damage.

Evans said that an injunction would only be granted if they could show "irreparable damage to the public," which would be extremely expensive to the taxpayers and the township and therefore not an option the board would consider.

Evans also mentioned that a poll was taken of 20 families in the township with 779 telephone exchanges who are paying toll charges to call nearby 675 or 696 numbers. However, he said, they don't want to switch from Bell to Commonwealth and have their numbers changed to 696. They just want the toll charges removed, which Evans indicated may be difficult to achieve.

President Glogowski announced he received a copy of a letter from Senator Lemmond regarding the re-examination of well water use at the State Correctional Institute, Dallas (SCID). SCID officials sent Lemmond correspondence indicting they will use well water only one day of the week, from May 1st through October 30th, purchasing the balance of the water through Pennsylvania-American Water Co., the public water utility. For the remaining winter months, the Department would draw only half of its water needs from the wells.

The letter from Lemmond states: "This action, and subsequent monitoring by the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, may well be the answer to the concerns raised over the past years."

Representatives from the Back Mountain Youth Soccer Association attended to present a letter to the board requesting permission to use the township's recreation field for their fall soccer program from August 1st to the end of November, providing the necessary equipment at their expense.

Glogowski said they'll pass the letter on to the recreation board,

which he explained, is a "separate entity vested with the power of authority to make decisions," even though the township owns the property.

Soccer association president Pete Hoffman voiced concern saying that he talked with the head of the rec board several times and got conflicting answers. Hoffman said, "First he said if the field was ready we could use it, then he said the committee may try to get basketball courts and a baseball field instead."

Charlotte Matza, secretary of the soccer association added that they need an answer soon in order to qualify for insurance coverage.

Glogowski suggested that they attend the next recreation board meeting, scheduled for Mar. 19 in the township building.

Police chief Donald Jones reported that he sent a letter to PennDOT requesting them to inspect guard rails at the intersection of Follies and Huntsville Roads that are now in need of being repaired or replaced.

He also said that efforts are being increased to control speeding on Huntsville and Chase Roads.

## As I was saying



Jack Hilsher

Awfully back when I wrote for the late lamented *Sunday Independent*, my editor was discussing possible subjects for my column. (Not the dike expert editor, the one before that.) I remember him saying, "Jack, this is not the place of 'think pieces'!"

So I never wrote any. I think I knew what he meant. And that carried over to my post at the Post...no think pieces, no politics, no school board fights. (When I proclaimed this I am certain my present editor looked relieved.)

But there comes a time. And the time is now. I will take a swing at a subject so massive, so complex, so tough to explain that a truck full of columns would only scratch the surface.

Unions. What brought this subject to the fore was a recent full page ad

## Union leader is real fat cat

in *The New York Times* from striking members of the Big Apple's Janitors' Union. Under the headline "An Appeal to the Members of All Unions," its highlights were as follows:

"35,000 of us have been striking office buildings since January 4. We need your help. This is your strike too. It is critical to the survival of organized labor. The outcome will affect you and your family."

"If the multi-millionaire barons of real estate can crush our union it is simply a matter of time before your employer decides to crush your union. Real estate is the richest industry in America. If it can cut wages and destroy our union, no union and no union member is safe. If you cross a picket line, you hurt members of our local and you hurt members of your union. You hurt yourself too."

"An injury to one is an injury to all" was born in times of turmoil and every union is facing times of turmoil again. Please don't cross our picket lines."

Well, they went back to work and there are no more picket lines. But there is an everlasting contrast to these workers who make \$30,000 per year and wanted a

\$15 per week raise. Their leader, one Gus Bevana, hauled down \$422,727 in 1994. I have no figures for last year, but it would not be less.

Bevana lives on Long Island where he pays as much in property taxes as his average union member earns in a year. He has a penthouse on Sixth Avenue containing a large suite of rooms, two bathrooms, and a library. There is also a 700-square ft. terrace overlooking lower Manhattan.

His home on Long Island was appraised at \$860,000. The estate features a cobblestone drive, an outdoor fountain, a 30x60 ft. pool, a raised hot tub and a cabana. On 165' of waterway leading to the bay is an air conditioned boathouse with two powerboats.

Commenting on all this, a union member said, "Paraphrasing Bill Clinton, I don't think this guy feels our pain." A labor lawyer believes this labor leader to be out of touch with his members. He added, "Given what the average person in his union makes, for him to make over \$400,000 is obscene - no matter how hard he works."

Now, if I were to write a think piece, I think I have found a suitable subject.

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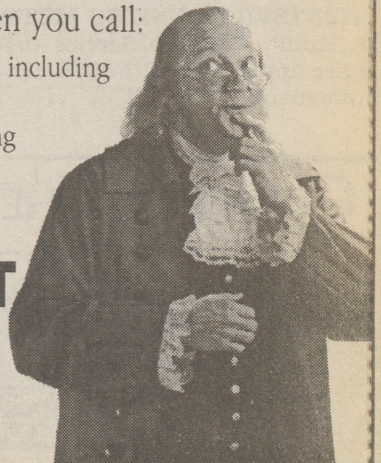
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