

Editorial

Making sense of the health-care crisis

It's no accident that health care is among the number-one issues at this stage of the U.S. Presidential election contest. Who does not know that the quality and availability of medical care for Americans has plummeted ever more rapidly over recent years, except perhaps for a tiny minority of the super-rich? Over the same period, virtually every American has experienced a total reversal in the orientation of medicine. During American medicine's period of world leadership, from the twenties and thirties until recent years, health care was imbued by the sacred personal calling to save lives and to heal, identified with the Hippocratic Oath, despite many deviations from that standard. But today, American medicine is controlled by Wall Street sharks, not by physicians. It dangles the bare possibility that you might, perhaps, be cared for when you are ill, and it only dangles that possibility in order to milk the maximum out of your income now, while you are working. When you do become seriously ill, you will likely be denied timely and appropriate treatment anyway, under the excuse that you are either too old, or too poor, or too expensive to treat, or just too sick.

Every Presidential candidate has been forced to address this crisis. But what do the "front-runners" have to say about it? As Lyndon LaRouche said last week, "Bush says, well, I can't get the money for health care, because I need it for the stockbrokers on Wall Street, or something, and Al [Gore] says, well, I'm trying to cut down the world's population, and therefore I'm not for increasing health care, but I rather want to *cut* some of these costs of health care, which means cutting health care. . . . On the other hand, you have the problem of Bradley. Bradley says he would like to increase health care, increase the funding of it, but he doesn't know how he's going to get the means to do so adequately. And that's the other side of the problem."

On Jan. 6, Democratic Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche conducted an 80-minute live web-cast seminar on this question with about 20 health-care professionals from different parts of the country. LaRouche had come to approach the problems of health care primarily as a physical economist and a humanist

philosopher-statesman. What was most striking, was that this was the first time that any politician had actually addressed the real concerns of these dedicated doctors, nurses, and others. In fact, much of what he said to them, was what they themselves had been saying for years — but no one listened.

It was also remarkable how LaRouche raised the level of discussion of what seems at first a personal problem, or at most a domestic policy concern. At one point, for instance, he said:

"So, therefore, we must realize that, when using pharmaceuticals, we have to think about using weapons in war. It's a weapon against disease, particularly against epidemic diseases, and particularly in areas where there's hunger, where there's pollution, where there's filth. And we have to treat these as weapons of war against the epidemic, and pandemic, diseases, which might tend to kill us all. And if we take that point of view, then we will deliver the medication to the place that it's needed, medically, and [then] worry about covering the price of producing it. . . ."

LaRouche's opening five-point summary of his approach, is included elsewhere in this issue. The most fundamental question he addresses, is that of the very purpose of government. On the one side, is the outlook now called "shareholder value." Under a new name, this is the age-old theory that the state and its members are the personal property of the ruling stratum. The subjects, the ruled, may be men and women in appearance, but they were created only to be sheared like sheep, or milked like cows for the benefit of their owners, or even slaughtered like the 111 men and one woman, who have been put to death by the state of Texas since George W. Bush became governor there.

The opposing side is that which led, over centuries, to the American Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, especially its "general welfare" clause. It is the content of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, and it was reaffirmed for our century by Franklin Roosevelt, and, as a tendency, by John Kennedy. It holds that the purpose of government is the general welfare of the present generation and its posterity.