

By W.H. WATERS

The Republican Party in the U.S. House of Representatives is striving to repeal the health care bill. Why are they pursuing such a path?

Question number two is why did President Obama make this one of the highest aims of his administration? Let's deal with the second question first. There were between 45 and 50 million people who could not purchase health insurance. Many have pre-existing conditions and cannot get it at any price, or if they can, they cannot afford it.

Then there are those who simply cannot afford insurance at today's costs. This group is growing year by year at a rate far above inflation. This being true, businesses are dropping their insurance programs and this of course makes the two groups mentioned above grow. As insurance premiums increase and businesses drop coverage and the uninsured group increases, what happens to the cost of those of us who are insured? Our costs go up and up not only because our premiums rise drastically but because we pay for the costs of the millions that are uninsured for whatever reason.

President Obama looked at what was happening to the business coverage area and saw they were in distress. Costs were at a point where coverage was going to be available to fewer and fewer. Simply, the middle class has suffered enough.

Now let us answer the first question. Who has put up the vast sums of money in the effort to skew public opinion? It is the insurance companies and the HMOs that control our health care system today.

Neither of these groups has suffered one iota during recent years. HMOs have seen more and more multimillionaires come through their system and of course insurance companies also want to control the money flow. This fight is about who controls the money flow as far as they are concerned. Meeting the needs of Americans does not cross their minds. We want to increase cost to policyholders and increase the profit on that bottom line. If this was not true, why would they spend so much to protect their "cash cow?"

I do not object to a profit, but when it becomes beyond and people suffer, it is time to change the flow.

Now, how do the insurance companies and the HMOs control Congress and particularly the Republican Party? First, they contribute to their election kitty in ever larger donations. Then many of them have stock in the institutions. They profit from the present cash flow. The argument is that this is the way jobs are created. Yes, some are, but small businesses that are cutting their insurance programs create more jobs and the health care bill will enable them to get advantages that will help them to grow.

What has been heard on this issue against this bill is noise to distort the truth. I sold hospitalization insurance in years past. You could seldom get one group qualified for people with health problems. Young people would not pay for coverage often. Do they never get sick or hurt? Who pays when they do? Those of us with coverage pay. They too will get old and costs will go up. Also, many will become uninsurable because of pre-existing conditions. Then the shoe will surely be on the other foot.

To do what is right for the whole of America and not what is right for special interests is what our government should do!

When the welfare of the whole cannot be met by the present program, it becomes clear the course that our nation should take.

Editor's Note: Mr. W.H. Waters is a resident of Lebanon and a contributor to *The Wilson Post*'s Opinions page.