

The Dangers of Socialized Medicine

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## Outline

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One of the hardest problems of our times is the proper medical care for all the people in the United States and our island possessions. Our problem is how to bring good medical care to the poor people of our country as well as the rich people, and to the people of the other races as well as to those of the white race.

Some people say that the answer to this question is socialized medicine, that the government of the United States should have full power to appoint doctors and dentists and oculists to care for the people of the different localities, free of charge to all the people. The doctors salaries would be paid by the government with the extra tax money, collected from everybody for this purpose. No medical man, either physician or research worker, would have any private work or any work that he selected to do. All would have to do the job that the government officials decided they should do.

While many people approve of this plan and several countries in the world have put it into practice, the people of the United States are still thinking it over and have not come to a decision as to whether to have socialized medicine or not to have it. Those people who are against the idea say that socialized medicine should not be tolerated. They say that it would destroy the freedom for advancement in the field of medicine that we now have in our medical profession and that nothing should destroy the freedom that is needed to advance in medical knowledge. Patrick Henry, one hundred and seventy-five years ago said, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." Many people say today that the medical profession has grown to its high place because of our system of



freedom and democracy. The long years of progress brought on by research workers specialists, surgeons and general practitioners working independently would come to an end.

There have been other countries that have tried and still are trying out the plan of "Socialized Medicine". Some articles on the subject say that in every government that has tried this politically controlled medicine there has been--

1. A lowering of standards of medical education, training and research
2. A lowering of medical standards and of medical care
3. A steady decline in the people's health

Most of the countries having socialized medicine are those countries interested in Socialism and Communism. Russia, of course, has this system of medical care, entirely managed by the Russian government, as everything else is in Russia. However, Great Britain, a country which has more of our ideals and our ways of living also adopted socialized medicine several years ago.

The reports that you read on the subject of socialized medicine in England are not very favorable. First of all, the cost to the government which was expected to be one hundred sixty-seven million pounds for each year has become four hundred eighty-four million pounds in English money each year, and it is said to be going up quickly all the time. All this, naturely, means higher taxes for every one because that is the only way that a government can get the money to pay for these services. The socialists say that money is no consequence in the matter of national health. Getting the poor the same kind of medical care as the rich can get is the real object of this "English National Health Program." That is true, of course, because nothing is more important to a country than the health of the people, but the question that many people are asking is, "Are the people getting



the best medical care?"

A report that I read said that a survey of the distribution of doctors in London shows that the wealthier districts of London have an average of one doctor for every one thousand two hundred and sixty-one patients, while on the poorer East End of London there are two thousand four hundred and seventy-two patients for each doctor. Also the doctors can give preferences as to where they want to practice. There are long lists of doctors wanting to practice in the better neighborhoods and few who want to practice in the slum areas. So maybe the poorer people are not getting the best doctors to take care of them. Many people living under this system are not satisfied with it because they say that they are getting inferior service. Many of them say that they are beginning to believe that the standards of the medical profession are falling very low. The physicians, in many cases, are incapable or are overworked. Many capable doctors say that they have as many as four thousand patients on their lists. Many doctors have to see as many as twenty patients each hour. Some patients have to wait weeks and months for dental appointments, hospital beds and surgery that they need.

We in America, would find it very hard to get accustomed to the treatment mentioned above. We would think it terrible to deny a person the right to choose the doctor he has confidence in and wishes to treat him when he is suffering. We would also think it is very wrong to refuse a person the right to name the doctor into whose hands the person wants to put the health and life of his loved ones. We know that it is necessary to keep the doctor-patient feeling that we have today. We want to have trust and confidence in our doctors. The United States today stands at the top of the world in the field of medicine. We have fine medical schools and fine laboratories. We have more physicians for our population than any other country in the world.



Most Americans ask, "Why, in the face of the above facts, should we destroy our American system of medical education, medical research, and medical practice? Why should we let a revolution start in our system of American medicine, when what we now have seems to be the best? Our American standards of medical care rank topmost in the world. Why not keep them there?"

*Footnote?*  
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