

A private system would allow individuals to freely choose the types of health care plans that meet their particular needs.

Individual funding would remove federal budgetary considerations and the accompanying extraneous budgetary issues from government policy toward the system.

Much of the funding of a private system would be invested in economic activity in the private sector, rather than in unfunded federal debt that must be repaid by subsequent tax revenue.

A higher rate of return is possible with investment of funds in private sector economic activity than in government debt instruments.

And, above all else, provider as well as Medicare+Choice HMO reimbursement would be appropriately set at free market competitive levels, as established by the consumer. (Rethinking Medicare: A Proposal from the American Medical Association—"Solutions for Medicare's Short-term and Long-term Problems", February, 1998).

CONCLUSION

It is somewhat paradoxical to think that providers of healthcare and their long-time adversary, the HMO (or in this case, the Medicare+Choice HMO), actually may have something in common. Providers of healthcare and managed care organizations agree that the Health Care Financing Administration, and its reimbursement methodologies, have eliminated some of the incentive for providing quality, cost effective access to care for beneficiaries. Nevertheless, because there is only a finite amount of dollars that HCFA can provide to the delivery of healthcare for beneficiaries, any short-lived alliance between providers and HMOs breaks down. Both parties will continue to fight over available healthcare dollars. Worse yet, as the population ages and the number of Medicare beneficiaries grows—leading to a subsequent decline in Medicare tax revenues per beneficiary—the battle for government healthcare funding will increase.

Most health care groups and analysts believe Congress will allocate some additional money to Medicare fixes this year. The large budget surpluses, the greater-than-expected savings from 1997 Medicare cuts, and the data supporting providers' and managed cares' claims of financial pain make it difficult for lawmakers to ignore the problems. "I think the surplus makes it easier to make corrections and to make a larger amount of corrections," said Rick Pollack, executive vice president for the American Hospital Association. Bob Blendon, a health policy and political analysis professor at Harvard University, however, states that members of Congress "... may be concerned about paying for tax cuts and a Medicare prescription drug benefit, as well as ensuring that Medicare cuts won't have to be reinstated if the surplus disappears." Despite the cautious optimism among providers, in a highly charged political environment like a presidential election year, the issue remains undecided and unresolved, and the deterioration in service continues apace.

Aetna U.S. Healthcare: 23 counties in 14 states, 355,000 lives.

Humana: 45 counties in 6 states, 84,000 lives.

Foundation Health Systems: 18 markets in 6 states, 19,000.

Oxford Health Plan: 6 Louisiana parishes, 5,900.

Gulf South Health Plans: 5 Louisiana parishes, 4,000.

United Healthcare: Bristol County, R.I., 1,700.

Additional Pullouts pending:

Cigna Corporation, Philadelphia Pennsylvania, announced last month that it is leav-

ing 13 of its 15 Medicare HMO markets, affecting about 104,000 members, effective January 1, 2001. Cigna cites Medicare payment reductions mandated by the BBA have made it difficult for MCOs generally to offer benefits cost effectively. (Healthcare Financial Management, July 2000, "Cigna Drops Most Medicare HMOs").

Carefirst Blue Cross and Blue Shield reports its intent to close Maryland's largest Medicare HMO by year-end, displacing 32,000 members. Carefirst blames the government's skimpy reimbursement rates, which it says aren't keeping pace with medical cost increases.

Pacificare's Secure Horizon plan will uproot 20,300 lives when it exits 15 markets in Arizona, Colorado, Texas and Washington. The company has been changing its benefit offerings and boosting members' premiums and copayments in an effort to offset reduced government payments. "For us to remain viable in the long term, congressional action is needed. We've been urging Congress for over two years to increase funding for the Medicare+Choice program," says Robert O'Leary, CEO Pacificare. (Modern Healthcare, July 10, 2000, "More Plans dropping Medicare HMOs").

IN HONOR OF COMMANDER CHRISTOPHER JENKINS OF THE NEW YORK COUNTY AMERICAN LEGION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 31, 2000

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Christopher Jenkins, the former American Legion New York County Commander, who passed away this past summer. Mr. Jenkins, the first African-American ever to become the Commander of the New York County American Legion, was an outstanding veterans' activist and leader in the Harlem community.

A member of "the Greatest Generation," Mr. Jenkins served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Originally from Savannah, GA, Mr. Jenkins moved to Harlem after his military discharge and began a career with the New York City Department of Sanitation. He became a Legionnaire at Harlem's Colonel Charles Young Post No. 398 in the late 1940's. He was elected the Post Commander in 1958 and was later reelected to this office more than 15 times. He was then elected New York County Commander in 1975 and served until 1976. From 1992 to 1993 he served as the First District Commander, Department of the New York American Legion. In 1995, he was elected Vice Commander of the Department of the New York American Legion, remaining in this office until his retirement from the Legion in 1996.

Aside from his work with the local American Legion post, Mr. Jenkins was an extremely well-liked leader in his Harlem neighborhood. He was the founder of the Jackie Robinson Senior Citizen Center's Chorale Group and active in numerous community and religious organizations.

Mr. Speaker, I salute the laudable accomplishments and community activities of Christopher Jenkins. A proud, loyal, and dedicated leader, Mr. Jenkins' gracious and friendly personality, his involvement in the American Le-

gion, and his leadership in the Harlem community, will be sorely missed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 31, 2000

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, October 29, 2000, I was unavoidably detained and I was unable to vote on three rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: Rollcall 574—Approval of the Journal—"yes"; rollcall 575—One Day Continuing Resolution—"yes"; and rollcall 576—Pallone Motion to Instruct Labor-HHS Appropriations Conferees—"yes."

On Monday, October 30, I was unavoidably detained and I was unable to vote on the seven rollcall votes taken. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: Rollcall 583—Technical Corrections to Minimum Wage Legislation/St. Croix Island—"yes"; rollcall 582—Previous Question—"no"; rollcall 581—Rule to Allow Additional Continuing Resolutions—"yes"; rollcall 580—Previous Question—"no"; rollcall 579—Hour of Meeting October 31 at 6:00 p.m.—"no"; rollcall 578—Passage One Day Continuing Resolution—"yes"; and rollcall 577—Approval of the Journal—"yes."

IN HONOR OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CUBAN-AMERICAN WOMEN

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 31, 2000

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the National Association of Cuban-American Women (NACAW) for promoting excellence and achievement for minority women.

NACAW's philosophy and focus has helped create the support that is essential for building a strong community. With an understanding that the individual is the building block for the success of every community, NACAW has provided excellent support and guidance for Cuban-American women, and for the community as a whole.

In pursuit of its goals, NACAW has developed a comprehensive agenda:

to work with other women's organizations to develop a strong national platform in response to common concerns;

to serve as a forum for Cuban-American women and other minority women to ensure their participation and representation in national organizations;

to increase awareness of education and career opportunities for Cuban-American women and other minority women;

to promote participation of Cuban-American women in Hispanic community service activities;

and to accurately portray the characteristics, values, and concerns of Cuban-American women.

Since its founding, NACAW has sponsored a variety of important programs:

NACAW's Educational opportunities Center disseminates information about post-secondary programs, scholarships, and financial aid sources.

NACAW sponsors an annual awards ceremony that honors outstanding Cuban-American leaders, as well as leaders outside of the community, who have contributed to the advancement of Hispanics.

In order to maintain the tradition of "Dia de los Reyes Magos" ("Feast of the Epiphany"), NACAW has sponsored a number of toy-collection campaigns for disadvantaged children.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the National Association of Cuban-American Women for their contributions to the Cuban-American community and to the lives of minority women.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

HON. FRANK MASCARA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 31, 2000

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, on October 30, 2000 I was unavoidably absent and missed rollcall votes Nos. 580–583. For the record, I would have voted "aye" on the rollcall Nos. 580, 581, and 583.

For the record, I would have voted "no" on rollcall vote No. 582, the Rule on S. 2485.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE MCINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 31, 2000

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, on October 28 through October 30, 2000, I was in North Carolina and was unavoidably absent for rollcall votes 570 through 581. Had I been present I would have voted "yes" on rollcall votes 570 through 578, "no" on rollcall vote 579, and "yes" on rollcall votes 580 and 581.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 31, 2000

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this chamber on Tuesday, October 24, 2000 when rollcall vote No. 543 was cast and on Wednesday, October 25, 2000 when rollcall vote No. 551 was cast. I want the record to show that had I been present in this chamber at the time these votes were cast, I would have voted "no" on each of these rollcall votes.

REAL CULPRIT IN AIR INDIA BOMBING IS INDIAN GOVERNMENT

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 31, 2000

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, we are all pleased that the Canadian government has maintained an active investigation of the Air India bombing in 1985 that killed 329 people.

Terrorism is always unacceptable, and all decent people condemn it.

Thus, I read with interest this past weekend that Canada had arrested two Sikhs, Ripudaman Singh Malik and Ajaib Singh Bagri, for this bombing. Unfortunately, I believe that these two individuals are being scapegoated. The book *Soft Target*, written by journalists Brian McAndrew of the Toronto Star and Zuhair Kashmeri of the Toronto Globe and Mail, shows that the Indian government itself carried out this atrocity.

According to McAndrew and Kashmeri, the Indian Consul General in Toronto, Mr. Surinder Malik, pulled his wife and daughter off the flight shortly before it took off. A friend of the Consul General who was a car dealer in Toronto also cancelled his reservation. An Indian government official named Siddhartha Singh was also scheduled on the doomed flight and cancelled. Surinder Malik called the Canadian authorities about the crime before it was reported publicly that it had occurred to try to point them to a Sikh he claimed was on the passenger list. The pilot of the flight was a Sikh.

It looks like the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who made the two arrests this weekend, were not open to the evidence that the Indian government was responsible, even though Canada's other investigate agency, the Canadian State Investigative Service, tried to warn them. *Soft Target* quotes a CSIS agent as saying, "If you really want to clear the incident quickly, take vans down to the Indian High Commission and the consulates in Toronto and Vancouver, load up everybody and take them down for questioning. We know it and they knew it that they are involved."

Clearly, the objective was to damage the Sikh freedom movement and raise the spectre of "Sikh terrorism" to justify another of India's campaigns of violence against the Sikhs.

Mr. Speaker, this is unfortunately not the only case of Indian state terrorism. The repression of Christians, which has taken the form of burning churches, murdering priests, raping nuns, burning a missionary and his two young sons to death, and other atrocities, is well known. In November 1994, the Indian newspaper *The Hitavada* reported that the late Governor of Punjab, Surendra Nath, was paid over \$1.5 billion by the Indian government to foment state terrorism in Punjab and Kashmir. In March, during President Clinton's visit to India, the government murdered 35 Sikhs in the village of Chithi Singhpora, Kashmir. Two independent investigations and an Amnesty International report have confirmed the government's responsibility.

Between 1993 and 1994, 50,000 Sikhs were made to disappear by Indian forces. More than 250,000 Sikhs have been murdered since 1984. Over 200,000 Christians have been killed since 1947 and over 70,000 Kashmiri Muslims have been killed since 1988, as well as tens of thousands of Dalit "untouchables," Assamese, Manipuris, Tamils, and others. As you know, Mr. Speaker, 21 of us wrote a letter in June calling for India to be declared a terrorist state. These are some reasons why we said that.

Mr. Speaker, India should be declared a terrorist nation and subjected to the penalties that status brings. We should cut off our aid to India until it respects human rights. And Mr. Speaker, the only way that Sikhs, Christians, Muslims, and other minorities will ever escape

Indian tyranny is through the democratic right of self-determination. We should go on record in support of an internationally-supervised plebiscite in Punjab, Khalistan, in Nagalim, in Kashmir, and wherever people in South Asia are seeking their freedom from this terrorist government, to resolve their status the democratic way, by the vote. Democratic states don't practice repression and genocide, they decide issues by voting. Is India a democracy or not?

The Council of Khalistan has issued a press release on these arrests. I would like to insert it into the RECORD for the information of the American people.

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT ARRESTS INNOCENT SIKHS
EVIDENCE SHOWS INDIAN GOVERNMENT PLANNED, EXECUTED BOMBING OF AIR INDIA FLIGHT 182—PUNISH THE REAL CULPRITS, NOT THE SCAPEGOATS

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 31, 2000—Despite strong evidence that the Indian government carried out the bombing of Air India Flight 182 in 1985, killing 329 people, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) arrested two Sikhs, Ripudaman Singh Malik and Ajaib Singh Bhagri, in the bombing. Flight 182 was piloted by a Sikh.

"The RCMP has never even considered the evidence that this bombing was an Indian government operation," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, the government pro tempore of Khalistan, the Sikh homeland that declared its independence from India on October 7, 1987. He noted that the book *Soft Target*, written by two Canadian journalists, proves that the Indian government carried out the bombing. This finding is confirmed by Canadian Member of Parliament David Kilgour in his book *Betrayed: The Spy That Canada Forgot*. According to Kilgour, a Canadian-Polish double agent was recruited by terrorists working with the Indian government to help carry out a second bombing. The agent declined and reported what had happened.

According to *Soft Target*, the Canadian State Investigative Service (CSIS) was so convinced of the Indian government's involvement that at a meeting of the task force on the Air India bombing, one CSIS agent said, "If you really want to clear the incident quickly, take vans down to the Indian High Commission and the consulates in Toronto and Vancouver, load up everybody and take them down for questioning. We know it and they know it that they are involved."

According to *Soft Target*, Surinder Malik, the Indian Consul General in Toronto, pulled his wife and daughter off the flight suddenly, claiming that his daughter had to do some examinations for school. A Toronto car dealer who was a friend of the Consul General also canceled his reservation on Flight 182. Siddhartha Singh, head of North American affairs for external relations in New Delhi, who was visiting Indian officials in Canada, also suddenly cancelled his reservation. The book reports that Consul General Malik called the police about the bombing to alert them to an "L. Singh" who was allegedly on the passenger manifest even before the incident became public knowledge. Malik was one of several Indian diplomats Canada later asked to have removed from the country after CSIS unearthed evidence of an Indian spy network. CSIS agents believe that Vice Consul Davinder Singh Ahluwalia laid the groundwork for the bombing. He was transferred in 1985.