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EDITORIAL

Myths vs. Realities About Health Care Reform, Part 6

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Many Americans believe that the debate over health care reform legislation is over. It is not. Now it moves to the state legislatures and the courts. One of the key issues will concern the 10th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which states: *"The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."* Legislation is already being drafted in over half of the states to "nullify" the federal legislation, a phenomenon that we haven't seen this widely since before the Civil War. (There is some similar movement to lesser degrees both in reaction to Real ID and the Kelo Supreme Court decision.) At issue here is the question of whether the Federal government really has the constitutional authority to compel citizens to purchase goods and services from the private sector. A broader question concerns Federal control over the economy in general.

Not long before his death, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt unveiled what he termed a "New Bill Of Rights", which included rights to things like a the right to good job, a good education etc. He died before he had the opportunity to push this concept very far, and it lay dormant for years afterwards. Dormant, but not dead. Had he lived, history would probably have viewed him rather differently than it does, as the only way to guarantee the "rights" he proposed is systematic Federal control of virtually every aspect of our lives.

Should the Federal government have this much control over our lives? Those who say "yea" forget that governments are administered by people, many of whom have very human flaws, the most prominent of which is a natural tendency to be corrupted by too much power. 250 years ago, my ancestors understood this and took up arms to shake off a government that had become as capricious as it had attempted to become all-powerful. I am pretty sure that Roosevelt's vision is not what they were fighting for.

Wrong-head legislation sometimes passes and even gets implemented with tragic consequences. But it can also be repealed. Prohibition is the poster child for all of the above. Get involved. Write your congressman, your senator and your state representatives and voice your disapproval of the national health care legislation. Urge repeal at the national level and nullification or resistance at the state level.

Next month, we'll talk a little about how systems like the one that the President just approved are frequently "gamed".

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