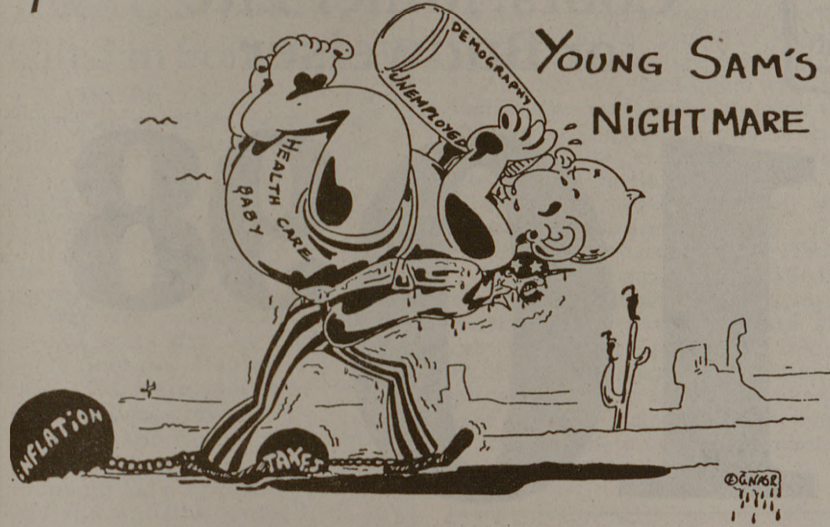


PRO CON

Will Clinton's health care plan cure America's ills?



JAY ROBBINS
Columnist



ELIOT WILLIAMS
Columnist

The health care plan proposed by the Clinton administration has one goal — to provide health security to everyone in the United States. If Congress approves this proposal, rather than ability to pay, will determine who obtains care.

Universal health coverage couldn't come at a better time. 37 million Americans don't have health insurance. That's one out of every seven people. Millions more don't have adequate coverage. Families without money for insurance plans surely can't afford the far greater costs of hospitalization.

Americans spend nearly a trillion dollars on health care each year. More treatment options, expensive malpractice insurance and non-competitive health-care prices contribute to the ever-increasing costs.

The uninsured have few choices. No mother would let her premature baby die because she wasn't insured for intensive care. The baby would get treatment, and the mother would spend years paying for his medical expenses. On the other hand, a man might ignore a constant cough or headache in order to save the money he would spend on doctors and medicine.

Under Clinton's plan, those people would have far fewer worries. All necessary medical treatment, from prenatal care to stroke therapy, is covered by standard insurance policies. Services are made available through a variety of processes ranging from traditional doctor's appointment to large health management clinics.

The availability of treatments is an undeniable blessing. Illnesses common in the past can now be cured or prevented by drugs, surgeries and sanitation. Only a tiny percentage of cases lie beyond the capabilities of modern medicine to help or heal. The tradeoff for these medical benefits is the enormous price tag.

The Clinton plan outlines a means of financing nationwide insurance. The first steps will bring price inflation under control. Regulations will limit legal malpractice fees and encourage price competition between health-care providers. Funding

President Clinton has gone too far. It was appalling to see his handlers taking advantage of Clinton's visit to the Children's National Medical Center last Friday to smooth over the burdens that his new health care plan will impose.

In one picture, Clinton is seen talking eye to eye with Tim Hale, a 13-year-old boy who was at the hospital for tests on a medical condition doctors have been unable to diagnose. Clinton, in the most vile, political manner, crouches down to the boy who sits in a wheel chair feeding off the intravenous machine that furnishes him his life nutrients and smiles — a perfect photo opportunity.

This is exactly what the White House needed to divert the public's attention from the horrific, destructive plan that Mr. Clinton hopes to pass off to the public as brilliant reform.

Clinton has promised to remove the "craziness" that burdens the current health care system while keeping the

quality the same. I wonder how President Clinton would have responded if Hale had asked how easily it would be for him to get the same quality treatment and advanced tests that he was getting at the Children's hospital under the new plan. The truth is that the tests Hale was undergoing would probably not have been offered at all if Clinton's plan had been passed a year ago.

With Clinton's new plan, every man woman and child in the United States would be forced to join a state run cooperative with collective bargaining powers that will attempt to lower your insurance costs. If it doesn't sound like unionized socialism yet, just wait; it gets better.

In addition, a national health care board will be established to put limits on how much can be spent on health care based on the Consumer Price Index. Still think the quality of care will be the same?

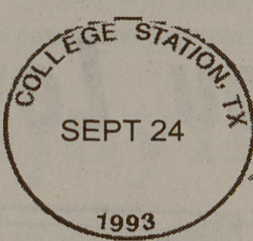
Clearly, health care quality will be diminished. Whether you call it sacrifices, triage or just plain rationing, the results will be the same — providers and patients will have to make harder decisions about who gets certain types of care.

As Alan Jenks, editor and publisher of the Jenks Healthcare Business Report said of Clinton's plan: "The umbrella [of health care] will cover more of the total population, but it may not be as high or secure as it once was."

Clinton's plan will do much more than just destroy the quality of health care. It will force hospitals to slow down research. The high quality of health care in America today is directly attributable to the tremendous amount of ground breaking research done in medicine. Clinton will destroy all incentives to continue this tradition.

Hopefully, my predictions will prove to be wrong, but it certainly is difficult to refute the facts. Clinton's plan will cost more, diminish quality and put government directly in the middle of yet another industry — never a winning combination.

Eliot Williams is a sophomore electrical engineering major



MAIL CALL

Frat members should share in traditions

This letter is in response to Jimmy Stathato's letter, which appeared in the Battalion on Friday, Sept. 17.

Jimmy, I appreciate the criticism, but I would like to clarify a few of my statements in my original letter.

First, I had tried to avoid stereotyping Greeks by writing, "This animosity originates from many (not all) Greek's choices to participate in Aggie traditions only when it serves their goals."

Mistake me if I am wrong, but there is a NOT ALL printed in that statement. Second, I do not hate frats; I disapprove of those members who choose to participate when it suits them.

You also mentioned that I had made an uniformed judgment, which I had preached against in my letter. One, I knew that kegs were not allowed at frat parties from speaking with my friends who are in fraternities.

Perhaps, I should have written large parties with large numbers of people and alcohol instead of the word "keg." However, the word "keg" is much shorter, and when you must limit your letter to 300 words, one uses a large number of analogies. I am sorry if this appeared stereotypical. In the future I will write large parties with large numbers of people and alcohol.

Two, I went to all but two cuts, all but three stack shifts and centerpole my freshman year. Further, last year I was a Crew Chief, which means I attended every cut, stack shift, load and unload, and centerpole activity.

Of all the work which goes into building Bonfire, one percent or less is made by frat members (this is a rough estimate). This estimate includes frats who come out as groups or with their dorms. So, I believe I was practicing what I preach and am more qualified to talk about Bonfire than yourself.

This letter is not intended to offend frats, because some of their members are very tradition oriented, and I respect these members. Instead, I hope that it encourages those frat members who are not involved to show their Aggie spirit by saying Howdy and to go to Bonfire and work together with C.T.s and non-regs.

Let's show that Aggie spirit and build the hell outta Bonfire, Ags (all Ags).

as, if not more, Aggie-spirited than many of my "non-Greek" friends.

I may not actually "build" the bonfire, but through my sorority, I have taken a Bonfire Buddy. My sorority, along with many others, supports individual Bonfire builders. This may not be much, but it does show support for the tradition of Bonfire.

A Greek is no different from any other Aggie involved in an organization. I decided to join a sorority to enhance my college years. I do not plan to party my college years away. I am here at Texas A&M, just like the rest of the Aggies, to receive an education. The Greek system will encourage me to do so by honoring high grades. In my sorority, I will make life-long friends. These friends are not "rented." I know that these friends will be there for me long after I graduate from Texas A&M. Greeks learn leadership skills and participate in all kinds of philanthropic activities.

I am sick and tired of seeing the Greek system cut down. If, for whatever reason, you don't care for the Greek system, then all I have to say is don't criticize it, and don't join.

Heather Scott
Class of '97

Hypocritical to judge anti-Clinton T-shirts

This letter is in response to the Sept. 10 Mail Call letter entitled "Shirts show lack of respect for President" written by Anand Patel (Class of '95).

For those of you fortunate enough to have missed this article, I will briefly summarize its contents. In this article, Ms. Patel refers to several shirts she has seen around campus which she claims, "...shows a lack of respect for the President." She continues on this letter by blaming campus organizations like The College Republicans and/or The Young Conservatives of Texas.

Ms. Patel also chose to quote the Bible saying that, "Whether one has committed adultery or lied to anyone, it is a sin and all sins are equal in the eyes of God." She continued on by saying that, "Jesus Christ himself said let that man who has committed no sin cast the first stone."

I ask you, Ms. Patel, don't you think that you are being a little hypocritical in your letter? On one hand your saying don't judge the President by what he has done, and on the other hand you are casting judgment on the College Republicans for a few shirts that you find offensive? Give me a break.

After reading the article, it was obvious who Ms. Patel voted for in '92. Instead of just stating her real opinion about the issue, Ms. Patel elected to make comparisons between the College Republicans and the K.K.K.

I think you would be extremely wise, Ms. Patel, to follow your own advice. You bleeding heart liberals are all the same. You cry for your rights and freedoms until it no longer suits you, then you cry for justice. What ever happened to the freedom of speech clause that conservatives like to point out about the President? If they do it in a

shirt, then so be it. I have only one final statement to make. How do I get a hold of one of these shirts?

Joel Dunn
Class of '95

Spirit, not football, makes A&M great

Mr. Yeates has taken it upon himself in his Sept. 16 letter to try and degrade the one thing that keeps Aggie's above all others: our spirit. Along with "shaming" the football team, he has made us seem like lepers. His statement that we have no friends other than ourselves is entirely untrue.

As a military brat and daughter of a former cadet (Class of '71), I decided to not go with all my friends and made my way back to "God's country." When I did, I received the acknowledgements of my choice by classmates, elders and even two generals from the Air Force Academy (for anybody curious, that is a major event).

Everyone of them commended me on my choice and wished me the best of luck. Aggies are not "hated" throughout the world; we are renowned and respected.

Mr. Yeates' opinions of the football team are something I wish he had left to himself. Aggies are not proud of our teams because they win; we are proud of them because they play with honor and have fun while on the field.

When Coach Slocum suspended the players before the Cotton Bowl, he showed the nation that we will not play unfairly. We play sports to show our spirit, to have fun, to go on road trips; not to "destroy, defeat" and "make them bleed."

Some people have become spoiled by our last few seasons and are grumbling because we have lost one game. Who cares? Above and beyond everything else, we are Aggies, true to each other and full of spirit. If we go to the Cotton Bowl, I will be ecstatic. I won't drop out of school or be embarrassed if we don't. I am proud of our team, not our team's accomplishments.

I am not going to end by asking the football team to win the National Championship. I just want them to play hard and never give up, no matter who is ready to come and tear down our spirits.

Amy Matthews
Class of '96

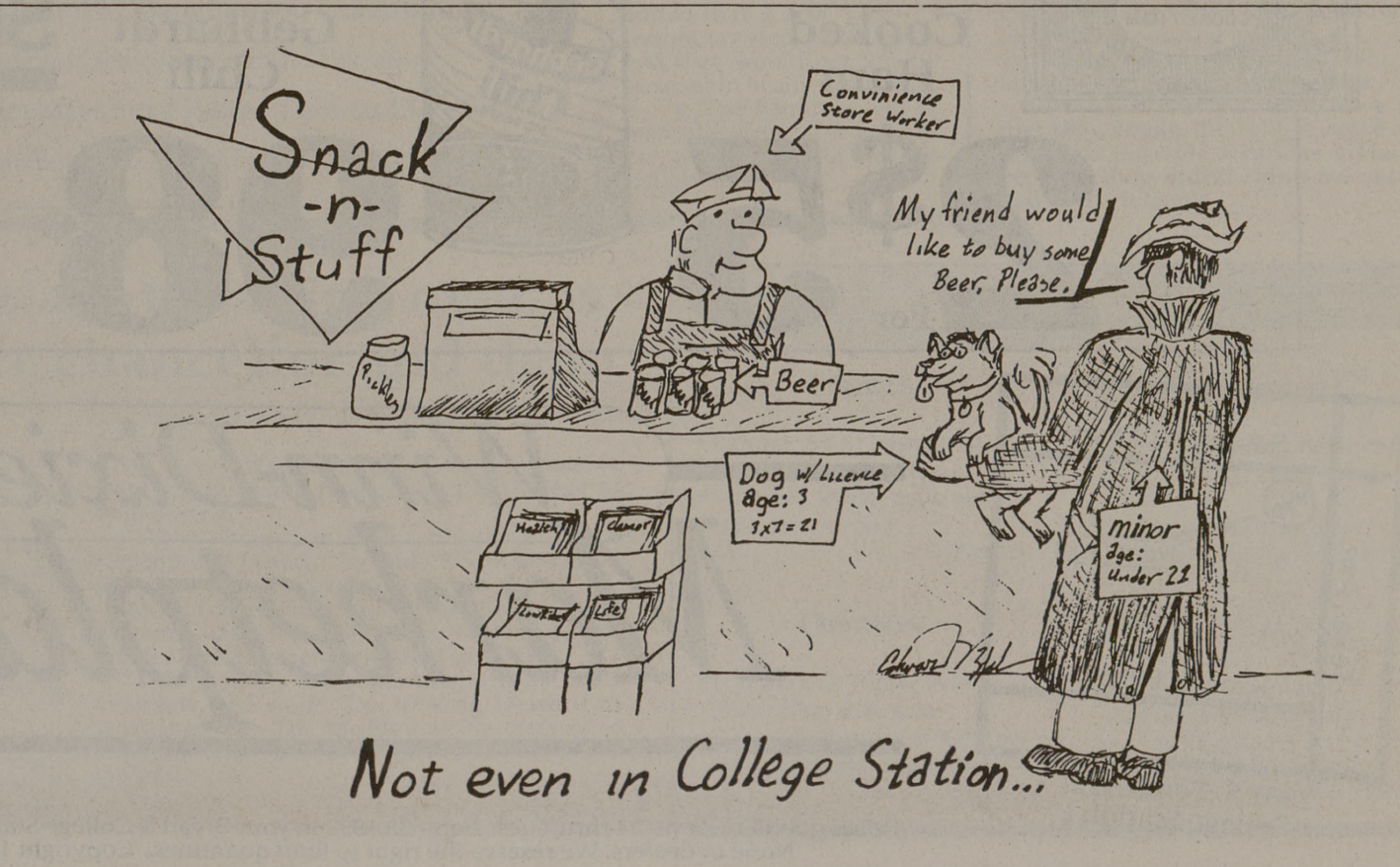
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