

WE THE PEOPLE

A CALL TO TAKE BACK AMERICA

BY THOM HARTMANN

ILLUSTRATED BY NEIL COHN



“THE LOSS OF THE COMMONS”

The Bush Administration plan to privatize parts of Medicare represents just one thread in the larger fabric of an insidious New World Order.

They're hoping that Americans won't notice.



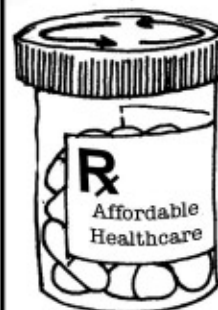
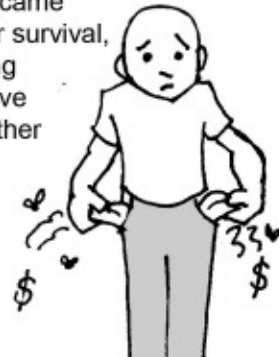
The transformation of healthcare into a for-profit industry has led to spiraling costs (and huge profits for Bill Brist and his peers) –



– ballooning to \$1.4 trillion annually, far and away the largest single “industry” in the American economy.



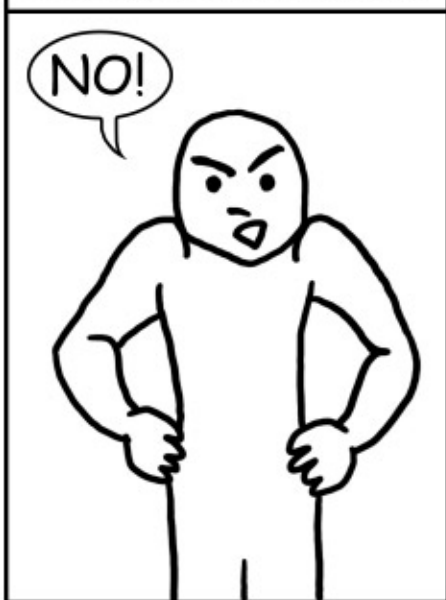
Insurance became necessary for survival, and escalating premiums have left people either uninsured or struggling to pay.



The Clinton administration was prepared to answer the concern of the majority of Americans who supported national health care.



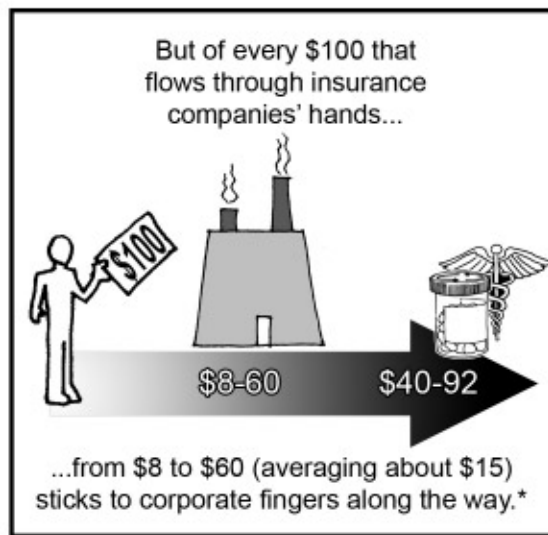
As a yes/no question, the answer is pretty simple for most Americans:



But, as is so often the case when conservatives try to influence public opinion, the true issue isn't honestly stated.



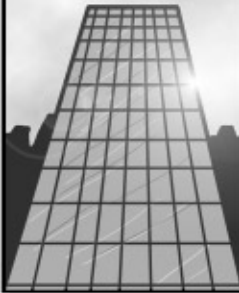
The real question is:
Do you want government bureaucrats (who are answerable to elected officials and thus subject to the will of We the People) making decisions about your healthcare, or would you rather have corporate bureaucrats (who are answerable only to their boards and CEOs and work in a profit-driven environment) making decisions about your healthcare?



*New England Journal of Medicine, August 2003.

After all, Medicare doesn't have...

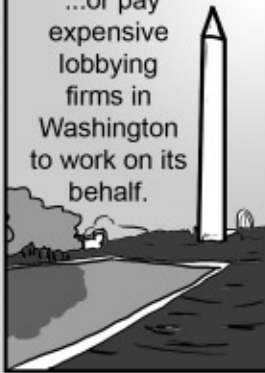
lavish corporate headquarters



or corporate jets



...or pay expensive lobbying firms in Washington to work on its behalf.



It doesn't "donate" millions to politicians and their parties.



It doesn't have to spend huge sums on advertising.

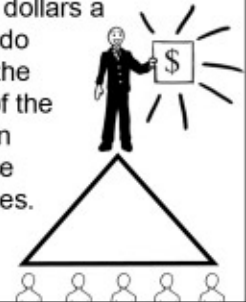
ULTRA Semoplaxidin

Government Warning: Side effects may include impotence, stroke, constipation, drowsiness, tubercular pleurisy, nervous heart failure, tarantula bite, and mad cow disease

It doesn't pay profits in the form of dividends to its shareholders.



And it doesn't compensate its top executive with over a million dollars a year, as do each of the largest of the American insurance companies.



Medicare has one primary mandate:

• **Serve the Public** •

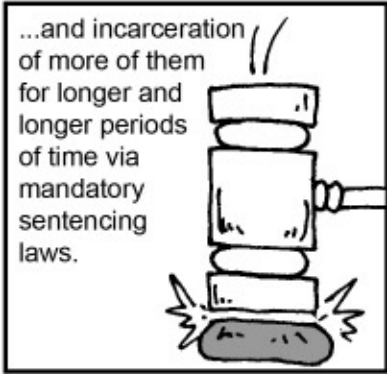
Private corporations also have one primary mandate:

• **Generate Profit** •

In another "industry," when politicians argue for harsher sentencing guidelines while also advocating more corporate-owned prisons...

...they're enhancing the power and profits of one of America's fastest-growing and most profitable remaining domestic industries:

incarceration.



Warehousing people becomes no different than growing chickens or cows in cages or stalls.



The bottom line rules.