

Coercion Here, Coercion There, Coercion Everywhere

Craig J. Cantoni

In 1998 *The Wall Street Journal* published an op-ed of mine on the need to reform medical insurance/care, and how to do it without resorting to coercion; that is, without federal law forcing citizens to do something against their will.¹

Of course, all laws are ultimately backed up by agents with guns. If that weren't the case, people would ignore the laws.

The op-ed was part of my decade-long crusade to not only reform medical insurance/care, but to also awaken Republican leaders out of their stupor and warn them of the looming threat of incremental socialism, which, like its sibling ideology of fascism, depends on armies of armed agents for its existence.

I failed miserably.

One reason for the failure is that Republicans like coercion as much as Democrats do, albeit for different reasons. Neither party wants to restrict the use of government force to its rightful purpose of enforcing contracts, regulating such negative externalities as pollution, and protecting life, liberty, property, and other individual rights.

Paradoxically, the people on the Left who hate guns are the people most in favor of medical care/insurance enforced with guns, as well as other social welfare programs enforced with guns. Tellingly, the word "coercion" has never been used by the American media and intelligentsia to describe the Affordable Care Act (ACA or "ObamaCare")—or for that matter, any other form of collectivism and redistribution. After all, as with the Soviet and Nazi socialists, they believe that coercion is moral and just if done for the "common good," as defined by them and not by the unwilling victims of their coercion. Why mention the means if the ends are good?

Now under ObamaCare, Americans are facing thousands of pages of coercive rules, 159 new coercive agencies and commissions, and thousands of coercive new IRS agents. As I detailed in my 1993 book on bureaucracy,² propagation is the primary skill-set of bureaucrats. Using that skill-set, thousands of ObamaCare apparatchiks will quickly reproduce into tens of thousands.

As a result, Americans won't be able to purchase medical care by simply walking into a doctor's office and writing a check to the doctor in exchange for the doctor's medical expertise, without first obeying the diktats of thousands of bureaucrats, who will be busily propagating behind their

cubicle walls into tens of thousands of bureaucrats. Nor will Americans be allowed to purchase catastrophic medical insurance to cover what insurance is supposed to cover: catastrophes. They will have more freedom to get their car serviced without coercion than to get their bodies serviced without coercion.

The uninformed and misinformed who rely on the mainstream media for their misinformation and disinformation might say that most Americans don't have the freedom now to pay for medical services without obeying the diktats of insurance companies and employers. What they don't realize is that the Rube Goldberg contraption of the current system was created by decades of government distortions, diktats, and coercion. Like mold growing in your shower, distortions, diktats, and coercion always beget more distortions, diktats, and coercion.

It's only a matter of time before the nation's economic foundation collapses from the weight of the bureaucratic superstructure, as it has throughout history, including in Greece recently. In fact, the foundations are cracking throughout Europe.

But don't mention in polite society that the cause of the economic crack-up is coercion. You'll be mischaracterized and demonized as a nutcase who wants to overthrow the government. Then someday Janet Napolitano or her successor or designees will be at your door, and she won't be carrying a fruit basket.

I'm certainly not going to mention it.

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