

Hi Mark— it was great seeing you guys, albeit at a sad event.

I was very interested in in hearing about your involvement in Medicare for all, and I have thoughts that I would like to share, since no one else will listen to me.

Obviously you know that the U.S. spends more than twice the next advanced economy and gets half the outcomes.

Most people I have talked to don't know that the existing health care system in America came about due to wage/price controls imposed by Roosevelt during WWII. Since companies couldn't offer more income to attract workers, they began offering health insurance instead: it was cheap enough for them then and got around Roosevelt's restrictions.

European hospitals were bombed and cash-strapped after the war, so government, by necessity, stepped in to fill the void. Britain, for example built government hospitals during the war to tend to the blitz victims. These turned out to be very popular and continued after the war.

Thus the U.S. system is as accidental as any other.

Back in the 90's my studio offered complete health care coverage to our employees. As costs rose we scaled back to 50-50, finally just offering coverage but no company input and then no coverage at all.

The U.S. system works better during time of low unemployment, but companies, profit driven as they should be, reduce or eliminate health care coverage during high unemployment periods.

The health- care system in the US is run by corporations (and insurance companies) who actually have, by definition, no interest in the health of people.

Here is the heart of my argument.

Universal health-care is actually very capitalistic. American corporations compete at a disadvantage to other countries' corporations who are not burdened with the cost of employee health-care.

Furthermore, the current system inhibits the ability of people to change jobs or start their own companies or work for themselves. Retirees go back to work and people are stuck at dead-end jobs because of our failing system. This costs the economy and restricts the ability of young people to enter the market place, depresses wages, and reduces companies' need to incentivize or innovate.

People worried about socialized medicine should realize that the US already has it in the form of the V.A. system— which is extremely popular with vets, despite the (solvable) problems it has recently had.

I would love to see an alternative to either Obamacare or Medicare for all that has a chance of working with the aim of providing for pre-existing conditions or universal coverage.

Anyway, that's my vent. Hope to see you soon, Bill

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