QUESTIONS ABOUT CLINTON'S HEALTH CARE PLAN

For January 6, 1994 *by Phyllis Schlafly*

Ask your Congressman these 20 questions about Clinton's Health Care proposal.

1. If I am dissatisfied with the care or diagnosis given by my health care plan, will I be able to go to a doctor outside of my plan and pay for his services out of my own pocket? Or is this what the plan calls "bribery in connection with health care" that will be subject to criminal penalties, such as up to 10 years imprisonment?

2. If the Gatekeeper of my plan puts me on a waiting list for surgery I need, and I feel that the wait is life-threatening (a situation that happens repeatedly in Canada), will it still be criminal for me to hire my own doctor and pay him myself?

3. If I want extra tests (X-rays, mammograms, pap smears, CT or MRI scans, etc.) that the Gatekeeper of my alliance decides are not necessary, will I be able to buy them with my own money? Or will this be criminal "bribery," too?

4. If my doctor in my plan prescribes treatment that does not meet federally approved practice guidelines, can I tell my doctor to go ahead and do it anyway and let me make the decision to accept the risks? Or will that make us both criminals subject to conviction and imprisonment if the treatment fails?

5. If I have an injury or condition that none of the doctors in my plan is able to cure, and the Gatekeeper refuses to authorize seeing a more experienced specialist of my choice outside of the plan, can I pay for his services myself, or will doing that make us criminals?

6. The National Health Board is supposed to set a "global" budget for all health care expenditures, public and private. Does this mean that health care services must be rationed in order to meet budget targets? If not, what's the point of a budget?

7. Professional sports teams maintain their own physicians, usually orthopedic specialists, to provide immediate, first-rate medical care for their injured athletes. Will these athletes have to wait in line for Gatekeeper-approval of expensive surgery like everybody else (from ordinary workers to drug addicts), or will they be allowed to buy their own deluxe services that the rest of us are denied? And if so, why can't any group of citizens form a "sporting club" and hire their own physicians to bypass the government controlled health plan?

8. If I am dissatisfied with my health care plan and need another specialist in an emergency, can I change to another plan immediately, or must I wait until next year's open-enrollment period?

9. Under England's health care system, tens of thousands of people die from kidney failure every year because it is national policy not to permit dialysis on patients over 55 years old. If the Clinton National Health Board establishes a policy like this, will I have to go to a clinic in Mexico to get this treatment on my own?

10. Does "one-tiered system" mean that, no matter how hard I work to provide for my family, I will not be permitted to use my own money to buy the services of a better physician specialist if I am dissatisfied with the one assigned to me?

11. Does "universal" coverage mean that everyone will be forced to buy health insurance whether you want to or not? Many young healthy Americans with enough income to buy health insurance have made the personal decision that health insurance is a bad deal, and that it is more cost effective to pay for their health care costs out of pocket.

12. How are you going to force the self-employed to buy the health insurance they don't want? Are you going to send the federal police to arrest them or confiscate their bank accounts?

13. The Clinton plan says that "all employers . . . contribute a pro rata portion" of employees' health care insurance. Do I have to pay for my babysitter's health insurance?

14. Why do you call it "universal coverage" if you don't cover illegal aliens? If health care is a fundamental "right," don't poor aliens have the same "right" as rich Americans? Will hospitals be permitted to turn away illegal aliens requiring emergency surgery?

15. I'm a non-smoker and my present health insurance gives me a discount for not smoking. Why does the Clinton plan force me to pay for health insurance for the smokers?

16. My religion leads me to treat some of my medical problems without doctors or hospitals. Can I opt out of the Clinton plan and avoid the costly health taxes?

17. I deal with stress through my religion rather than by seeing psychiatrists or psychologists. Can I save money on health insurance by not buying expensive mental health coverage for inpatient psychiatric hospitalization?

18. Will it be legal to have truly private hospitals, as we now have truly private and parochial schools? Or will hospitals be outlawed unless they conform to all federal regulations, such as performing abortions?

19. How much of the cost of the Clinton health plan will go to bail out the big corporations that promised gold-plated health insurance to their early retirees and now want to dump this financial liability onto the American taxpayers?

20. Will burning your Health Card be protected by the First Amendment?