

What the Government Gives, It Can Take Away

Those who are anxious to seek government solutions to all of our problems need to be reminded that what the government has power to give it also has the power to take away. In recent years, it has become quite routine for elected officials to use the taxpayers' money to buy the votes of both taxpayers and those who pay no taxes. Elected officials and bureaucrats are also empowered to terrorize citizens by threats or actually taking away promised government support. This practice has reached epidemic proportions and is on the verge of destroying trust of citizens in their government, collapsing our economic system and destroying the republic.

Threatened cuts in payments to doctors for Medicare and TRICARE patients, caps on Medicare payments for therapy and suspended payments for training of military spouses are only three current examples of the power of government to "take away."

The Obama Administration was elected and given control of the federal government by making promises to special interest groups that they and their pet projects would be favored and funded by the federal government. It was the opposite of the slogan of President John Kennedy who said: "Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country." It is also a repudiation of the often-repeated proclamation by President Ronald Reagan that:

"Government is not the solution to our present problems. Government is the problem."

Early in the Obama Administration's first year, Congress passed a law that was signed by the President cutting payments to doctors for Medicare and TRICARE patients by 21 percent beginning January 1, 2010. Such a drastic cut in payments would cause most doctors to lose money and would cause them to refuse to take Medicare and TRICARE patients. There are indications that this "cut" was part of the strategy to extract an endorsement for "Obamacare" from the AMA that claims to represent all physicians, but only represents a small percentage of the total.

Since the President's health care plan did not pass before the end of the year, the intended cut in payments to doctors was delayed until March 1, 2010. Now, with an ultimatum from the President to pass a health care bill before the Easter recess, the cut in payments to physicians has been delayed another 30 days until April 1.

It is clear that the pending cut is being used as both a "carrot and stick" over the heads of the medical profession. Medicare and TRICARE are government programs that can be used to give and take away medical treatment and payment to participating doctors. It can also be used to manipulate patients.

Congress drastically reduced the cap on payments for therapy treatments for Medicare patients to only \$1,860. This amount is inadequate for rehabilitation of most stroke and accident victims. This planned cut in payments for therapy has been delayed for one month. Medicare patients who do not have the funds to pay for their own therapy are desperate for government support and can be manipulated by government officials who may have no moral or ethical standards or respect for their fellow human beings. Once again they demonstrate that what the government can give it can

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Last year the Congress and Obama Administration provided funding for a well-publicized education, training, certification and credentialing for military spouses who suffer career disadvantages as a result of military-directed relocations of their spouses. This was intended to help military families cope with long separations and financial problems caused by trying to fight two wars and deal with natural disasters throughout the world with inadequate troop strength.

The Obama Administration abruptly suspended the program recently after more than 130,000 spouses signed up for it. Thousands were left dangling midway in their programs without funds to pay for the schooling. The abrupt cancellation was blamed on fear of a lack of funding for the program. Regardless, the crisis for the spouses resulted from poor planning by political appointees.

We must never forget that promises by elected officials are meaningless. What government gives it can take away.