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## **Material Security in Case of Illness Is a Human Right**

According to recent industry statistics, America's private health services, which employ 98.6% of the country's healthcare workforce, are expected to continue imposing a growing burden of new out-of-pocket expenses on consumers in the coming years. Currently, out-of-pocket spending on health care in the U.S. is just shy of \$500 billion annually. The source of these payments are families with employer-sponsored health insurance, those covered through the government health insurance exchange, and those without any medical insurance. One study, published on July, 21, 2021 by health care market research group Kalorama Information, predicts that the amount will increase to \$800 billion annually by 2026.

It is important here to recall that the material and technical base of America's health care sector has been established as a result of generations of the labor of the working people. In reality, this industry is the national patrimony of the people as a whole – it was built on the foundation of the relevant body of knowledge and tools accumulated by the whole society through collective experience. Yet in our country today,

millions are daily confronted with the fact that a major illness in a family can wipe out its life savings and require such hardships as working 2 or 3 jobs, sending out more family members to earn wages, giving up higher education, etc.

Every penny spent out-of-pocket by consumers for health care is spent because of the capitalist agenda of alienating the country's national health care patrimony in order to use it for the maximization of profits rather than to guarantee the economic right of all to universal, free, tax-funded medical care.

Furthermore, the current practice of drawing taxes from the public and spending them to decrease the amount of capital expended by the private owners into their own enterprise is robbery on a grand scale which further shifts the financial burden of the health care crisis onto the backs of the workers. This program of gifting state-supplied capital for "modernization" and to enhance the profitability of capital in the health care sector is the ultimate social-democratic and revisionist panacea of the day. It is even advertised as a path towards real guarantees for the right to health care.

Of course the capitalists shrink from using their profits for new investments and prefer to rely on the government to take the risks and advance the capital by expropriating yet more funds from the workers' pockets. The social-democrats and revisionists apologies for this robbery aim to disguise the class character of the state with "socialist" phraseology and thereby create breathing space for the expansion of the brutal economic domination of state monopoly capitalism.

As has been pointed out time and again, the unrestrained looting of the public treasury by monopoly capital does nothing to transform private capitalist property into public property. Rather, such fiscal policies of the capitalist state provide monopoly capital with huge markets, augment the concentration and centralization of capital by the monopolists and enhance their profits in order to guarantee and protect the class interests of monopoly capital.

The role of the state today in accumulating capital (from workers' tax dollars) and placing it at the disposal of the health care monopolies also exposes the absurd claims of the bourgeois

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apologists who never tire of praising the financial oligarchy and big industrial capitalists for "putting up the capital" in order to set up their health care enterprises and to run them for the common benefit and enrichment of the joint-stock company boards. Firstly, such capital as is independently advanced by private health care corporations was in the first place created by the workers themselves and merely accumulated in the hands of the capitalists through their exploitation of wage-labor. Secondly, when, as today, the economic power of the health care monopolies is directly merged with the political power of the state, it is the government itself which has become a principal instrument used by this sector in order to acquire its capital expenditures for the purchase of the required means of production and labor-power.

These days, the capitalist class, its politicians and economists are engaging in a big fuss over the structural details of private health service delivery. But behind the din of competing capitalist interests, the arguing over which capitalists should benefit the most from the latest regulations and loopholes, all are agreed on the essentials of preventing America's private health care system from being reorganized on the basis of need and right.

The theory and program of the Workers Party, USA, show the people how to break out of the

confines of the bourgeois agenda in healthcare and take the high road which harmonizes the interests of individuals, collectives and society as a whole. That agenda can be summed up as "Profits, profits, and more profits!" The program of economic rights is the alternative. The working class program of economic rights refuses the capitalist agenda and asserts that the rights of the people must be put in first place, must be the starting point and priority of economic life.

Health care must not be organized on the basis of making profits for a few. This basis is what prevents us from utilizing our modern health care infrastructure to provide for the health and well-being of the people. It is this issue

of ownership which must be addressed. The health care industry, built up by generations of labor and investment by the whole society, must be put in service of society as a whole. Ownership must be put in the hands of the people as a whole in order to insure that everyone is guaranteed the right to health care, including fully qualified treatment and treatment at a publicly accountable health facility. By immediately setting aside a portion of our economy's annual output in a social fund dedicated to the production and delivery of free, comprehensive health care for all, we can increase the life-spans and improve the quality of life for hundreds of millions of people.

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