

Update

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More Public Monies Turned Over to Aetna-Humana, Cigna and Other Health Insurance Monopolies

Across the country, more than half of all Medicaid recipients have already been forced to enroll in Managed Care Organizations (MCOs). A December 2014 report by a consulting firm called PricewaterhouseCoopers placed the figure at 66 percent. Some states have much higher rates. For example in New York, health insurance monopolies have enrolled over 3/4 of all Medicaid recipients. As of 2012, forty-five states, Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico had all already instituted commercially managed plans for Medicaid recipients to some degree. Accelerated nation-wide privatization of Medicaid is now taking place to an extent hailed by the Democratic and Republican parties as a “historic transformation.” And the capitalists are drooling over the prospect of getting their hands on even more of the funds earmarked for Medicaid. Several states have even set up yearly quotas to speed up the contracting out of Medicaid recipients to the health insurance mo-

nopolies.

In many cases MCOs have already enrolled the low income families that qualify for Medicaid in plans that require payment of burdensome out-of-pocket expenses. In addition, as the MCOs have enrolled Medicaid recipients in managed care plans, the public health safety net is further undermined as public clinics and hospitals find their reimbursement rates drastically reduced.

Privatization of Medicaid bails out the rich but costs the country a fortune. While overhead for traditional fee-for-service Medicaid is less than 3%, the private sector MCOs serving Medicaid recipients skim between 33% and 50% of the government funds off the top in profit and administrative costs. Privatization of Medicaid also costs lives because minimizing and denying care is the operating principle under managed care. Unlike traditional fee-for-service Medicaid, Medicare, public hospitals and other health care facilities which make up at least a partial recognition of the people’s right to health

care, MCOs organize health care delivery with the sole aim of maximizing profit.

Slashing funds for social programs and turning the funds over to big business is part of the anti-social agenda of the two parties, which, through the fiscal policy of government, extract billions in taxes from the working people and turn this money over to the monopoly capitalists. This anti-social offensive is intensifying because the capitalists seek to further shift the burden of the economic crisis onto the backs of the working people. According to the political economy of the capitalists, the government has no responsibility for the well-being of the people and the people have no rights by virtue of their humanity. According to the political economy of the capitalists, the workers and people can have no claims on the public treasury, no claims on the country’s yearly social product.

The shredding of the public

CONTINUED

Despite High Taxes, CPS Doesn’t Have Enough Money to Fully Staff the Schools

A budget deficit is to blame for plans to layoff 1,400 more public school employees according to Chicago Public Schools officials. Mayor Emanuel said the layoffs would be part of a plan to cut \$200 million in spending during the coming school year.

To emphasize its alleged scramble for funds, CPS even tried to negotiate this month for an extension of its obligation to pay into the Teacher’s Pension Fund. The plan was rejected and CPS is hanging the prospect of even deeper cuts over the heads of the teachers and other CPS employees.

The effects of the policy of using taxpayer money to pay char-

ter school operators and other private sector “educational entrepreneurs” are being felt. Layoffs which put needed teachers out of work have been ongoing for several years. The consequent understaffing and overwork hurts both students and teachers as well as other staff. So too, taking large sums out of the city treasury in order to contract out services to for-profit companies robs the schools of needed funds for future budgets.

The issue is not one of resources but of rights and priorities. Everyone knows that our country creates more than enough wealth and has far more than enough resources to guarantee the best possible education for all.

The real issue is: “Whose claims are recognized?” The real issue is: will the social system recognize and guarantee the RIGHT to education? Or will this right be trampled underfoot so that big business can continue to steal the funds earmarked for public education?

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U.S. Imperialism Plans to Exact Revenge on the Cuban Workers and Peasants

The following article is reprinted from the Anti-Imperialist News Service, July 5, 2015.

Today, the U.S. is asserting itself as the world's only superpower not only by imposing military blackmail and waging full scale wars, but also by exercising its economic power against so-called "rogue regimes." In Cuba, the Obama administration is following in the footsteps of previous administrations by relying on the dual tactics of military blackmail and economic blockade.

Last winter, shortly after Cuban President Raul Castro agreed to allow the U.S. to open an embassy in Cuba for the first time in over half a century, Obama announced that although diplomatic relations were being re-opened, the Helms-Burton law would remain untouched by his administration. Obama's defense of the blockade both "on principle" and according to the argument that provisions of the Helms-Burton law make it impossible for sanctions to be lifted against Cuba without an act of Congress – shows once again that the U.S. monopoly capitalist class has not and will not abandon its opposition to the sovereign rights of the Cuban people.

This is not the first time the U.S. government has relied on doublespeak to advertise its colonial agenda as "defense of democracy." All the war and fascism imposed on Latin America by U.S. imperialism has been carried out in the name of "freedom" and "democracy."

The truth is that the genuine path to democracy for peoples in Latin America has been and will continue to be the path of struggle against U.S. imperialism – against

its subversion, aggression, and support for internal reactionary regimes.

The colonial agenda of the U.S. monopoly capitalist class is reflected in U.S. laws which define U.S. relations with Cuba. The Helms-Burton law in particular, explicitly criminalizes Cuban foreign trade according to the logic that it is a violation of the "property rights of U.S. nationals" whose property was confiscated by the Cuban workers and peasants after the overthrow of the U.S.-backed Batista regime in 1959.

The Helms-Burton law also calls for "settlement of outstanding United States claims to confiscated property in Cuba." In short U.S. imperialism aims at forcibly returning to the days when U.S. multinationals robbed the wealth and exploited the labor of the people of the country. But U.S. imperialism will not be satisfied with "only" confiscating property and plundering the wealth of Cuba. The U.S. monopoly capitalist class is already drooling over the prospect of teaching the people of Cuba a lesson for the "crime" of inspiring people throughout Latin America and the world that they can break the stranglehold of U.S. colonialism and develop their independent, national life. For the "crime" of proving that it is possible to resist the blandishments of foreign capital and colonialism. For the "crime" of proving that by taking the economic lifelines of the country into its own hands, even a small country can provide for the well-being of the people. For the "crime" of daring to stand up against the blackmail, threats and bullying of U.S. imperialism and speaking out in defense of the rights of other countries and

peoples who are fighting against U.S. aggression and dictate.

For the American people, the very touchstone of our commitment to genuine democracy is resolute, uncompromising struggle against any and all interference by the capitalist-imperialist government in Latin America. The touchstone of genuine American democracy, a vital part of opposition to the colonialism, racism and war program of "our own" government is to struggle to get *U.S. imperialism out of Latin America, lock, stock and barrel!*

Public Monies

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health safety net and the restructuring of our country's entire health care system along the lines of managed care is bringing the contradictions of the for-profit system to the bursting point. The tremendous monopolization of the industry – which is controlled by a handful of multi-billion dollar conglomerates – reveals the high degree of socialization of economic life. A modern medical infrastructure combined with a large army of trained health care workers is already organized into vast, nationwide networks able to provide health care for hundreds of millions of people. If the people had decision making power the funds in the public treasury would not be used to pay the rich and the medical infrastructure would immediately be turned over to the public and used to meet the needs of the people. Instead, the system is in crisis and the government is actively stepping in to make matters worse.

The responsibility to find the way forward falls on the shoulders of the workers because the monopoly capitalist class is squandering the nation's resources and leading our country to ruin. We must develop a nation-wide political struggle. The only way to resolve the contradictions of the for-profit health care system is by taking the entire health care sector out of private hands and turning it over to the public. The aim of the health care sector must be to guarantee the needs and rights of the people.

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