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57% TAXES, FEAR MONGERING...

57% Taxes, Fear Mongering, and Internet Wingnuts

The New York Post, that bastion of responsible, even-handed journalism, ran a headline recently designed to make even the staunchest Obama supporter run screaming into the night with a fit of bed-wetting fear.

The headline screams, "DEM HEALTH RX A POISON PILL IN NY TERRIFYING 57% TAX LOOMS FOR BIGGEST EARNERS"

Could this actually happen? What are the consequences? According to the NY Post, Congress plans to initiate the biggest overhaul of American health care on the backs of the rich, and subsequently...small business? According to the Post, "...it penalizes employers with a payroll bigger than \$400,000 some 8 percent of wages if they don't offer health care."

The scaremongering here is amusing to read. The Post article wording is especially suspect. "...COULD have a job-killing effect on New York..." (emphasis mine.)

"New York's top income bracket COULD reach as high as 57 percent..."

and the real doozy, "That means New York's top earners, small-business owners and most dynamic entrepreneurs WILL be facing new fees and penalties." (emphasis mine.)

Oh, really?

Before you fly off into a rage about "socialism" and "Obama liberalism" or "lefty lunacy" let's all just calm down a moment and remember that no legislation has passed. What we're talking about here are IDEAS, not REALITY.

Not yet, anyway.

What frightens me about all this isn't the idea of a massively elevated tax, the New York Post's fear mongering tactics or the idea that we could wind up with a health care Frankenstein system that works about as efficiently as the George W. Bush's Iraq war plans.

No, what scares the crap out of me is the reader comments section for this NY Post article. One of the very first replies was some sour grapes guy whining about how Ron Paul should have been the Republican candidate for President. Live in the past much? Listen, fella...it's OVER. Paul couldn't do it. He only stands a chance if Palin makes a Presidential bid in 2012, and that's about as likely to succeed as me getting a spontaneous sex change. She won't make it in national politics on that scale, EVER. But I digress.

Another comment came from someone who stepped out of your grandpappy's time capsule. Anytime I see the phrase "liberal jews" in all caps, I hit DELETE. But in this case, I couldn't because it was the Post's message board, not mine.

Too bad, as I believe first and foremost than anyone who uses all caps to write an entire sentence should be airlifted to Alcatraz and left to rot with the pigeon poop. Secondly, the use of the word "jew" as a pejorative makes me barf. Not just because it's intolerant, ignorant and stupid--it's also a clear indicator of dull little minds at work. And dull little minds irritate me to no end.

One comment that made me go "hmmm" was the one that stated in no uncertain terms that one of the NY Post's sources, the Tax Foundation, was suspect. "The Tax Foundation is a right wing non-profit with questionable



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WALLACE

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means of reporting data" said the commenter.

I know nothing of the Tax Foundation, but I do find it amusing that most right-leaning conservative think-tanks try to adopt official sounding names to lend that missing air of credibility to themselves. The Tax Foundation sure does sound like a real government agency, doesn't it?

I must have a closer look at this Tax Foundation to see what they are all about. I have added it to my list, along with the Peter Sellers-sounding Cato Institute, and the gay-unfriendly Focus on the Family, which to me sounds like somebody in a sniper nest taking aim at Mom and Dad's bank account.

Again, I digress.

The New York Post is quite happy to declare a financial Armageddon and wait for blood, fire, and feces to rain down upon us all at the mere hint of national health care. But before you run out to buy your poop umbrellas and build a concrete bunker in the back yard of your McMansion, consider this:

When I was a reporter for Air Force Television News, I did a story on a flight crew on a mission to Lithuania. We made a stopover in Norway. One of the crew got sick, and had to be rushed to a Norwegian hospital. Turned out he had kidney stones and got some treatment which included prescription for a codeine-based painkiller to take the edge off during the flight home.

Our crewmember was a non-citizen with no "priority" in their healthcare system. He got treated right away and the only thing he had to pay for was the prescription painkiller--about \$50 in US dollars. The only reason he even had to pay was because he wasn't a citizen.


That's my one and only experience with nationalized health care, and it went like a dream.

Oh--wait a moment. I forgot something. I DO have experience with nationalized health care. You see, I am an Air Force veteran. I spent 13 years in the military healthcare system, which is for all intents and purposes socialized medicine. They just don't call it that.

If the NY Post thinks national healthcare in America is such a horrible, rotten thing, what do they have to say about what the troops get? Do they really expect us to swallow that such a plan is "fine for those dumbasses in the military but not for us?" No, I'm not quoting anybody at the Post, but I think you're getting the message here.

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