

Anything But the Right Thing

by Dan Sullivan

The health care kerfuffle has got me to thinking about the underlying problem of socialism, which is that it is a distraction from actual justice and rights. Most socialists either don't know or don't care where rights come from, and so they say silly things like we have a right to health care, food, transportation, housing, and various other things that are not provided in nature.

This is consistent with a paternalistic view of government. The things socialists say we have a right to are things that, in nature, parents give their children. What would we think of a parent who allows some of his children to be diseased, hungry, stranded, homeless, etc., while others enjoy abundance?

But nature does not give us any of these things. Rather, nature gives us access to the earth, and does not impede us from providing these things for ourselves. It is government that says we cannot cooperate to enjoy any of these things without paying tribute in the form of rent to those who are the "favored children." Government sets up borders that we may not cross without permission (and the property line is just another border); we cannot trade, even within our own countries, unless we get permits and pay tribute in the form of sales and income taxes; we no longer enjoy the common-law right to travel by the commonly practiced means unless we pay various taxes and fees and get insurance. Obviously, if a rich person's car is hit by a deer, he does not demand compensation from the family of the deer, but the poor person must buy insurance in case he hits a rich person. This is considered "just" only because we are used to it. We allowed it to happen because preventing it offered no opportunities for bureaucracy.

The worst thing about the socialistic left demanding things as rights that are not rights is that the demands are a distraction that sucks the energy out of demanding rights that are rights — things that people could do for themselves and for each other, without interference, before government came along. If socialists had been around when Patrick Henry said, "Give me liberty or give me death," they would have been quick to say, "What about free health care? You don't want health care?"

Even public health care would be a good thing if it were funded from charges against privilege. If the people who had usurped the earth were paying land rent into a fund for my health care, I would be fine with that. Personally, I would rather have my rent

share in cash, but health care is better than nothing. However, the socialistic left champions a system that makes workers pay for their own health care through taxes on labor instead of paying for it directly.

When election time comes around, and you ask a politician what he is going to do about land monopoly, banking privilege, privatized rights of way, police brutality or any of a number of fundamental injustices, he will say, "Didn't I vote your way on health care, abortion, gay rights, free cheese for the poor, etc?" Because most liberals live in liberal districts and conservatives in conservative districts, the politician can easily pander, and the one with the most money can do the most pandering. The money comes from Privilege, and Privilege doesn't care about any of these issues, any more than a farmer cares about the behavior of his cows, as long as the milk keeps flowing.

Every time a genuine liberal demands justice, along comes a well funded socialist to drown him out with demands for sugar-plums, and a well funded anti-socialist do drown him out with objections to government coming and stealing from his well tended plum tree.