

October 12, 1993

Brian Lamb
C-SPAN
400 North Capitol Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Lamb:

Your CALL-IN program this morning was a splendid illustration of the degradation of your offerings into the equivalent of two clergymen patting your audience on the head and each urging them not to sin. Unfortunately, sin is a specific act (or in the Catholic Church, a thought), and your guests came nowhere near to the real world. I could hardly believe it when I turned you off well before the program was finished. My head became too filled with arguments that should have been used to bring your guests down to earth.

I have had health coverage by employer-provided Blue Cross\Blue Shield (comprehensive), an HMO (a disaster), a PPO, and have just acquired Medicare, and throughout by a secondary coverage from my wife. I have managed a hospital laboratory. I often eat breakfast with one or more doctors in our small-town diner. I have interacted with, and watched the practices of many doctors, departments, other providers, and business offices in a larger city hospital; have met many sweet young things in their teenage years on Medicaid using an expensive ER just to diagnose a pregnancy; have met many patients with private insurance or Medicare who arrive in an ER with a antecubital patch done in a doctor's office during the day and have the same or more tests repeated because the results in the doctor's office are not available; have watched Medicaid patients bounce between three ER's in the same city on sequential nights; have watched mis-diagnoses and mis-treatments; have suffered the financial consequences of fee-for-service; have discovered (long after the operation) double the full fee for my surgeon from each of my insurance companies sitting in his account; have watched my insurance company pay without question for padding and inflation of the office visit; etc., etc., etc.

The litany could go on for pages, but the point is that you are performing at the level of Rush when you don't choose your guests so that they reflect the real world and know sin because they have met it.

As presently conceived, the Clinton plan is almost guaranteed to be a treasure chest for the medical profession. It would be much more financially sound to start out with a single-payer plan and modify it to make it more acceptable to those who do the work.

Sincerely,

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Cambridge, NY 12816

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