



common sense  
transform

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## DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Towards the beginning of the video, Mr. Witt contends that, “... there’s an important difference between these two [ideological and political] extremes: The crazies on the right have no voice. Indeed, they are shunned. They live mostly on the far fringes of the Internet. The crazies on the left have a loud voice. Indeed, they are celebrated. They live in the halls of Congress, in state legislatures and in governors’ mansions.” Why do you think that some people on both sides take such extreme positions? Explain. Why do you think that the crazies on the Left have a significantly louder voice than the crazies on the Right? Explain.
- After Mr. Witt proposes a thought experiment, he points out that for the Left, “Private health insurance would be abolished. The government would provide all health care services. Everyone in the medical field from doctors, nurses and administrators would be government employees. Americans would pay for this government health care through much higher taxes,” but for the Right, “The health care system would be opened to free market reforms. For example, insurance companies could sell policies across state lines.” Do you think that nurses, doctors, and administrators want to have a choice to be government employees or not? Explain. Do you think that they should have a choice? Why or why not? Considering how poorly the Veteran’s Administration is run, in what ways might freeing up the private health care system to be more competitive have better outcomes for most Americans rather than a complete government takeover of the private healthcare system? Explain.
- Mr. Witt goes on to note that if the Left got what it wanted, “The Green New Deal would be adopted. Hundreds of billions of dollars of subsidies for wind and solar power would be added to the federal budget. Drilling for fossil fuels, the current source of 80% of our energy, would be sharply curtailed or eliminated altogether. So would nuclear power. As a result, consumer’s electric bills would be much higher.” How do you think adding such an enormous expense to the federal budget would negatively affect the United States and the energy industry? Seeing as how raising the cost of electric bills so much would negatively impact low-income families so severely, do you think supporting the Left and having them pass the Green New Deal would be worth it? Why or why not?
- At the conclusion of presenting a litany of likely outcomes if both sides got what they wanted, Mr. Witt asks, “So, what can we conclude from our experiment? It’s not hard to figure out. If the Right got everything it wanted, the government would get much smaller. The citizen would have more freedom. If the Left got everything it wanted, the government would get much bigger. The citizen would have less freedom.” In what ways, specifically, do the size of government directly correlate to the degree of freedom that its citizens have? Explain. Which do you think is better for most Americans- having more freedom or having less freedom? Explain.
- At the end of the video, Mr. Witt concludes that, “You’re not radical if you want America to be what it’s always been- committed to individual liberty. You’re only radical if you want to fundamentally transform America into something it’s never been. Which country do you want to live in?” What exactly does Mr. Witt mean by ‘fundamentally transform America into something it’s never been?’ Explain. How would you answer Mr. Witt’s question?

## EXTEND THE LEARNING:

### CASE STUDY: Single-Payer Healthcare

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “Single-Payer Would Devastate The Economy,” then answer the questions that follow.

- Why is a single-payer system attractive to many people? How does the VA system work, and what are some of the problems with it? How does Medicare work? How much over the original budget was Medicare spending in 1990? Is Medicare financially sustainable? What would ‘Medicare for All’ do to the economy? How does Senator Sanders propose to fund his program? Under Medicare for All, how many *additional* taxes would high-income workers be hit with? Even with those taxes, how much does the CFRB report Medicare for All would be short in funding over 10 years? What’s wrong with the single-payer system in Canada, and how would those shortcomings affect Americans if the U.S. had a similar system? What do wealthy Canadians do if they don’t want to wait for healthcare? Under a single-payer system, what does health care spending have to compete with at the government level? What about each healthcare sector? In a single-payer system, who makes life or death choices instead of patients and doctors?
- In what ways would single-payer healthcare take freedoms away from Americans? In addition to doctors and hospitals being paid less, in many cases significantly less, what other negative consequences could result from government-run healthcare?
- Why do you think that the Left so often looks to the government to solve problems—usually with legislation that limits freedoms? Why do you think that the Left often focuses on what *sounds* good, like the Green New Deal, without thinking through the consequences to see if the proposal would actually *do* any good? Explain.



# QUIZ

## WHO'S MORE RADICAL: THE LEFT OR THE RIGHT?

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1. Some of the crazy position of the Left are \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. that a man can get pregnant
  - b. that the world is going to end in a decade if we don't cap carbon emissions
  - c. that the real purpose of the American Revolution was to preserve slavery
  - d. all of the above
  
2. How do the voices on the Right compare to the voices on the Left?
  - a. Voices on the Right have a loud voice.
  - b. Voices on the Right are celebrated.
  - c. Voices on the Right live mostly on the fringes of the internet.
  - d. Voices on the Right are predominant in higher institutions of learning.
  
3. If the Left got everything they wanted, illegal immigrants would receive free healthcare, free education, and free housing.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
4. What would happen if the Right got everything it wanted?
  - a. everyone in the medical field would be government employees
  - b. income, capital gains, and corporate taxes would be permanently cut
  - c. drilling for fossil fuel would be sharply curtailed or eliminated altogether
  - d. speech codes would be enforced throughout American life
  
5. You are not radical if you \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. want to fundamentally transform America
  - b. want less freedom for citizens
  - c. want bigger government
  - d. are committed to individual liberty



# QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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<https://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2017/12/07/single-payer-would-devastate-the-economy/#4e279bf06442>

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# Single-Payer Would Devastate The Economy

Guest commentary curated by Forbes Opinion. Avik Roy, Opinion Editor.

POST WRITTEN BY

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Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., center, accompanied by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., center right, speaks at a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Sept. 13, 2017, to unveil their Medicare for All legislation to reform health care. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik)

With debate raging over federal tax reforms, health care has temporarily moved off center stage in U.S. policy debates. But with costs soaring, it won't stay in the backseat long. Progressives will continue to promote the single-payer idea, with Senator Bernie Sanders and others advocating for "Medicare for All."

The Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as Obamacare, is a highly complex law and has made our current health care system more confusing. A single-payer system is attractive to many people because of its perceived simplicity – the U.S. government would provide direct health services to all Americans.

We already have two examples of a single-payer system in the U.S. The Veterans Administration (VA) health care system is a socialized, single-payer program. Taxpayers fund the system, hospitals are owned by the government, and providers are all government employees. Although the VA system has offered good

health care to many veterans, we have learned that on balance the system is plagued with cost overruns, inefficiencies, and prolonged wait times for care.

The second example is Medicare, which began in 1965 and is a single-payer system for seniors, 65 years of age and older. Funding is through payroll taxes, premiums, and an ever-increasing percentage of money from federal general taxes. By 1990, spending in Medicare was seven times over the original budget. Medicare is not financially sustainable in its present form.

Like the VA system, Medicare has helped many people, but the cost of “Medicare for All” would devastate the overall economy. The non-partisan Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget (CRFB) analyzed Senator Sanders’ proposal from a financial standpoint. He calls for six new or expanded taxes. Everyone would pay 6.2% more in payroll tax and 2.2% more in income tax.

Higher-income workers would experience four additional taxes. Income taxes would increase, capital gains would be taxed as ordinary income, certain current deductions would be eliminated, and estate taxes would increase.

Even with these expanded taxes, the CRFB reports that multiple analysts, including the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, find Senator Sanders’ calculations to be short by up to \$14 trillion over 10 years.

Canada has had a single-payer system for over 30 years and its experience is revealing. Canadians are proud that every citizen has health insurance. From a cultural standpoint, the principle of universal coverage is a priority for the country. It also makes it easier for the citizens to overlook the problems within the system.

The demand for health care far outweighs the supply of care in Canada. Health care spending is now one of the greatest expenses for every province in the country.

The long wait times in Canada are not in the patient’s best interest and would not be acceptable for the vast majority of Americans. Health care rationing through waiting-lists is effective when supply is overwhelmed by demand. The question is whether government bureaucrats should have the authority to pick and chose what procedures patients receive and who should actually receive those treatments, while others are forced to wait for care.

Canada actually has a two-tiered health care system. Wealthy Canadians who do not want to wait for care and can pay cash, can and do receive treatment in the U.S.

Under a single-payer system, health care spending must compete with all other government activity for funding. This makes health care very political and subject to change with every new budget. It also forces each health care sector to compete with the other for limited money.

A single-payer system sounds like a simple solution to the U.S. health care problem. The reality is far different. Fundamentally, a single-payer system centralizes all health care with the government, is far too expensive, and limits access to health care by rationing. Instead of patients and doctors making key decisions, bureaucrats get to make those life and death choices about the kind and amount of health care people receive.