

Washington Hot Line

by Congressman Ron Wyden

Q. WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS TO PROHIBIT INDEPENDENT MEDICAL LABORATORIES FROM CHARGING SENIOR CITIZENS AND MEDICARE MORE FOR ROUTINE LAB TESTS THAN THEY CHARGE OTHER CUSTOMERS?

A. The issue of discriminatory lab billing has been under investigation by Congress and the Administration for some time. In fact the Inspector General of Health and Human Services recommended some time ago that this practice be prohibited.

That is why I introduced legislation earlier this year (HR 1106) that requires independent medical laboratories to charge Medicare and its beneficiaries the same fees as other customers.

We've known all along that this discriminatory practice needed to be

stopped, but until now, we just haven't had the hard, cold figures to prove it.

Just last week, however, the Congressional Budget Office released a report that says the federal government will save \$161 million in Medicare costs over the next five years if my legislation is adopted. In addition to these government savings, senior citizens would realize an additional \$35 million in savings in 1984 alone if my bill is passed.

Under current law, many independent labs charge Medicare and its beneficiaries an average of \$2.75 more per test for routine laboratory tests than they charge doctors and other customers. Multiplied by the 18 million laboratory tests performed per year, that adds up to a devastating financial impact for senior citizens and the government.

Q. PRESIDENT REAGAN LAST WEEK WENT BEFORE A JOINT

SESSION OF CONGRESS TO REQUEST INCREASED U.S. AID TO EL SALVADOR. IS THIS REQUEST JUSTIFIED?

A. The crux of the President's request is a continued reliance on a military solution to the conflict that is ravaging El Salvador — and I just don't believe we are justified in using U.S. tax dollars for this means.

Few individuals inside or outside of our government question the seriousness of the conflict in El Salvador and its implications for the United States. American dollars alone, however, cannot buy a military victory in El Salvador.

In fact, the Congress could give more money than the President requested for the current military effort in El Salvador, but there is little evidence to suggest this assistance would stem the violence that has become all too commonplace.

I wish the President had put more

emphasis on the social, economic and political problems that are the breeding grounds of conflict in this region.

Two years of pouring millions of dollars in military aid into El Salvador has not brought that nation any closer to peace or any closer to resolving these basic issues. Up to now, U.S. military aid has only intensified the conflict and increased the prospect of its escalation into a region-wide war.

The president's decision to send a special envoy to this war-torn nation to help facilitate negotiations is a step in the right direction. It will take dialogue, not arms, to resolve this conflict, and only when the violence ends can efforts be made to enact meaningful reforms that will address the root causes of instability and will bring hope to the Salvadoran people.

Holidays celebrate triumph of workers

This week the world is celebrating two holidays that honor the working people of the world — May Day, the International Workers' Day, and Cinco de Mayo.

On Sunday millions of people throughout the world celebrated May Day, but in the United States, where it originated, the workers' day is largely forgotten.

May 1, 1886 was a beautiful day in Chicago. It was a sunny, quiet day. The factories were empty, warehouses closed, construction halted, the stockyards silent and the streets deserted. It was Saturday, ordinarily a work day. Thousands of men and women and their children dressed in their best clothes for a parade on Michigan Avenue; they were marching for the eight-hour day.

May 1, 1886. Three hundred and forty thousand workers all over the United States marched for the eight-hour day as 190,000 people went out on strike. In Chicago alone 30,000 walked out, many of them participating in the Michigan Avenue parade.

They were workers from the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor — blacks, whites; Catholics, Protestants and Jews; Democrats, Republicans, Anarchists, Communists, and just regular working people all united in their effort to improve the conditions of the U.S. workers.

The march was peaceful, much to the disappointment of thousands of armed police and National Guardsmen. The next day, as the strike continued, police charged workers on strike at McCormack Harvester Works. When the police retreated six people were dead.

The next night a meeting was held at Haymarket Square. A hundred police were stationed nearby. Chicago's mayor called the police station to report that all was peaceful and that the police should be withdrawn. Later, the police

tried to break up the meeting and a bomb was thrown. Confusion reigned. The police fired wildly; people were trampled.

It was suspected that the bomb was thrown by a hired provocateur, a suspicion that was later confirmed. The bomb was used as a pretext to go after the labor movement. Union offices were raided and foreign language newspapers were wrecked. Police raided workers' homes and large numbers of labor leaders and foreign born were jailed.

In a few days eight men were indicted for conspiracy in the bombing. At the trial it was proved that six of the men were not even present. Most of the evidence given was pure fabrication by people who were threatened by the police if they did not cooperate.

It was clear from the beginning that the men were not on trial for murder but for their ideas.

One defendant, August Spies, said, "And if you think that you can crush out these ideas that are gaining ground more and more every day; if you think you can crush them out by sending us to the gallows; if you would once more have people suffer the penalty of death because they have dared to tell the truth.... I say if death is the penalty for proclaiming the truth, then I will proudly and defiantly pay the costly price! Call your hangman!"

On October 9th Oscar Neebe was sentenced to 15 years in prison and the others to death.

It was all over but the hanging, but Albert Parson's wife, accompanied by their two children, made a tour of the country. While the case went to the Supreme Court, Lucy Parsons addressed more than 200,000 people in 16 states in less than a year, asking their support.

A massive protest movement grew until it became world-wide. When the U.S. Supreme Court refused to examine the case, the execution was

set for November 11, 1887. The only hope was commutation. Thousands of people petitioned the governor for clemency. The Chamber of Deputies in France as well as protest meetings in Italy, Spain, Russia, Holland and England asked for the men's lives.

The day before the execution date the governor commuted the sentences of two men to life imprisonment; one committed suicide that day. Four went to the gallows.

As he faced the noose Spies said, "There will come a day when our silence will be more powerful than the voice of those assembled here today."

The struggle for the eight-hour day continued. The organized labor movement grew. Leaders of organized labor meeting in Paris formed an international association of working people. They designated May 1, 1890 as international day of support for the eight-hour day. Workers all over Europe showed their solidarity with workers in the U.S. by taking part in parades and demonstrations.

May Day — International Workers Day — was born. Growing out of the struggle for the eight-hour day it became a symbol for the Haymarket Martyrs who gave their lives to better the lives of all working people.

In 1861 the imperial powers of Europe were at their height. Europe, with enormous material advances, held to the conviction of European superiority. The European nations had vast holdings in Africa and the West and considered nations such as Mexico as areas of great natural wealth inhabited by inferior people who could not rule themselves.

France launched an expeditionary force to conquer Mexico. It was headed by Comte de Lorencez who despised the Mexicans and considered them to be barbarous people.

He headed France's finest army, considered to be the best in the world.

The passages to the city of Puebla were held by Ignacio Zaragoza, with a force that included many Indians armed only with machetes. He told his men, "Your enemies are the first soldiers in the world, but you are the first sons of Mexico. They have come to take your country from you."

The Mexicans held commanding ground with two stone forts. On May 5th Lorencez attacked three times; a thousand of his men were killed. Lorencez was forced to retreat, with the Mexicans at his back, and called France for 20,000 more troops.

The battle of Puebla fired the Mexicans to continue the defense. Zaragoza wired President Juarez, "The arms of the nation are covered with glory!" Cinco de Mayo, the 5th of May, is an important day in Mexico — a celebration of the day when the common people of Mexico defeated the army of France.

'Disappeared' salmon found

Salmon thought to disappear annually between Bonneville and McNary Dam on the Columbia River are most likely an accounting error rather than an actual loss of fish, according to draft conclusions of a radio-tag study conducted last fall by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Each year between 30,000 and 40,000 bright tail chinook were thought to disappear. No one could explain why fish counted at Bonneville failed to show up three dams later (tributary-bound chinook and harvested fish are subtracted from the numbers expected at McNary.)

After a 1981-1982 federal undercover investigation of illegal fishing and a raid on an Indian village, a scapegoat was found. Indian poaching was named by the National Marine Fisheries Service, Washington Department of Fisheries and other federal and state agencies as the major contributor to interdam fish losses.

The agencies' only basis for expanding some allegations of illegal fishing into the reason for an annual disappearance of tens of thousands of fish was that the number of fish seized from Indians in the undercover investigation amounted to about five percent of the chinook

that had disappeared between Bonneville and McNary in 1981. In spite of lack of evidence, the idea that Indians are primarily responsible for the missing fish has been repeated in public forums, agency documents and the media.

The Columbia River tribes, concerned for some time about the unaccounted for chinook, asked the Bonneville Power Administration to fund research on the interdam loss and supported a special law enforcement task force that escorted the 1982 fall chinook runs from coastal areas off the mouth of the Columbia to McNary Dam.

At the end of October, the largest ever police force on the river finished its work. It patrolled for 12,891 hours in Zone 6 (the treaty Indian fishing area between Bonneville and McNary Dams) and for 8,633 hours in downstream and coastal waters. Although there was a 50 percent greater patrol in Indian waters only seven percent of the total arrests and citations were Indians. Ninety-three percent of the arrests and citations were from non-Indian fisheries in the ocean and lower river. Also, preliminary results showed the interdam loss to be similar to 1980 and 1981 losses, proof that poaching could not explain the missing fish.

The National Marine Fisheries Service study verified that conclusion. Its results indicate that management agencies have routinely overestimated the number of fall chinook that come from above McNary and thus return there to spawn as adults.

The surprising conclusion is that rather than originating in areas above McNary Dam, as had been thought, a large portion of the "missing" fall chinook appear to be spawning near the mouth of the Deschutes River and in areas just below both John Day and McNary Dams. Researchers have apparently discovered some "new" Columbia River chinook populations.

The study recommends further research to determine the extent of this interdam spawning, as well as additional study of dam passage and other environmental problems that could be causing some chinook loss in these stretches of the Columbia River.

In the meantime the prosecution of Indian people accused of poaching continues. David SoHappy and his son, David, Jr., of Cooks Landing, Washington and Bruce Jim of Warm Springs were found guilty of illegal fishing by a federal court in San Francisco.

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Street Beat

by Lanita Duke and Richard Brown

The Supreme Court ruled recently that the federal government has the right to store nuclear waste in states where it is not welcome. The Street Beat team asked, "Should the state have the right to deny the federal government their terrain for nuclear waste?"



Jayne Turner
Unemployed

"Sure, the state should be in control of their own property. The citizens are in control of the state, not the federal government."



Lu Avery
Bus Driver

"Yes, the states should have that right. The federal government can be wrong. They should not have the right to tell us what to do."



Sue Ziglinski
Medical Secretary

"Of course. It is the government's junk and we don't need it in our state. I'd like to tell Reagan where he can put his nuclear waste."



Floyd Booker
President
Courtesy Janitorial Services

"Yes, the state should have the right. If no more than to protect their citizens. I would have some reservations about living in Oregon if it was contaminated."



Charles Leech
Manager

"Yes, if each individual state does not take the initiative to protect themselves and depends solely on the federal government, then it is like depending on a burglar to watch your house while you are on vacation."



Betty Turner
Clerical Specialist

"Yes, we should have the right as a people to express what will affect our health. This is supposed to be a free country. We should have the right to say no."