

MONEY FOR MEDICARE not private health insurance and war

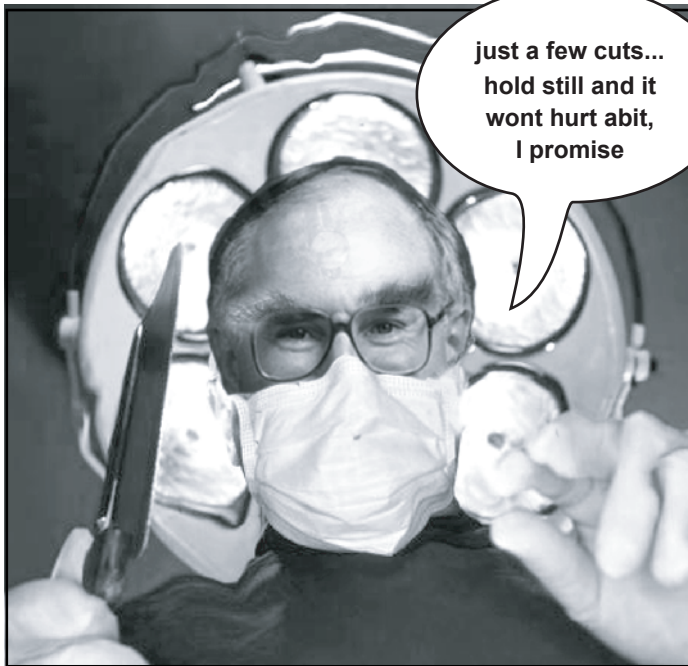


In Orwellian newspeak, the Howard government proposes a "fairer Medicare".

In fact, the Coalition's budget proposals would entrench and extend the US-style two-tier health care system that is developing in Australia, in which the rich insure privately and get first-rate care while Medicare becomes a second-class safety net for the very poor. The majority, medium- and low-income workers and their families, will be left to fall between the slats.

The fee rises that will result from the government's proposed co-payment system will severely hurt everyone except the rich. A working family with two children and an average number of doctor visits will face up to \$500 a year in extra costs for formerly free bulk-billed medical services. People who cannot afford co-payments will be forced to seek free treatment in the already crisis-ridden public hospitals.

The ALP says it will block in parliament many aspects of the Coalition's assault on what's left of the public health care system and is proposing incentives for doctors to bulk bill. But Labor's promises remain



within the economic rationalist framework of the Coalition and fail to deal with the fundamental causes of the public health care crisis.

Socialist Alliance says that a free, universal health care system in which everyone has equal access to quality care is entirely possible in a country as rich as Australia.

Redirecting current military

expenditure alone would enable the extension of Medicare to cover the full cost of all health, medical and ancillary services, including dental, aged care, prosthetics, rehabilitation, alternative therapies and preventative services.

Add to that the \$2.2 billion a year currently spend on the semi-compulsory private health insurance rebate, and the number of fully funded public hospitals could be doubled.

MODEL TRADE UNION MOTION

medicare not missiles

This branch of the [name of union] is committed to defending Medicare, and to its extension to a full, free, universal health-care system.

The resources that go to private health insurance, private hospitals and the huge profits of global medical corporations should be redirected to create a health system that meets public need.

We reject the federal government's proposal to abolish bulk billing.

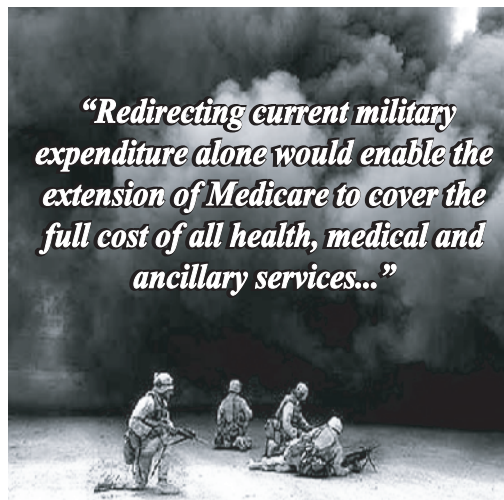
We call on the union to develop a campaign amongst the

membership to:

1. Alert all members to the dangers posed by the Howard government's attacks on Medicare, which would further widen the gap between quality health care for those who can pay and a second-rate health system for the rest of us.

2. Organise delegate and workplace meetings to consider what action can be taken to defend and extend Medicare.

[3. Optional - Affiliate to the Campaign, endorse the ... demonstration.]



sick of the attacks? JOIN THE FIGHTING ALTERNATIVE

Socialist Alliance is an historic initiative that has already brought together eight socialist organisations and hundreds of unaffiliated individuals. It represents left, green, progressive and radical forces focusing on what we have in common and our shared desire in fighting for a world based on social and environmental justice.

Socialist Alliance is an exciting and inspirational development on the Australian political scene. Make sure that you are a part of it! Join SOCIALIST ALLIANCE today...

You can join the Alliance for only \$12 a year for students, or \$24 for low-waged workers (\$60 high waged). Details are at the website. Or see phone numbers (above)

www.socialist-alliance.org

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Socialist Alliance stands for:

- * Universal bulk-billing.
- * Scrapping the private health insurance rebate, and ending funding for private hospitals and health services.
- * Re-opening closed facilities in rural and outer metropolitan regions, and establishing new facilities to ensure that rural and remote communities have the same access to services as urban communities.
- * Establishing many more community managed local health centres that deliver universal medical and social support services.
- * Fully funding quality health education and screening programs which emphasise preventative care and are freely access to all.
- * Significantly expanding the number of positions at tertiary health education facilities to overcome the shortage of health workers in nursing, aged care and general practice; and ending the racist discrimination against overseas-trained health professionals.
- * Extending the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme to keep the cost of all medicines down, but also establishing state-owned pharmaceutical manufacturing plants to put an end to the PBS handout to the big drug companies.