

Is Privatization of Everything an American Family Value?

Is privatization of essential services, which provide for individual health and security and the common good, a traditional American family value? You decide.

To each of these scenarios answer YES or NO as to whether or not it reflects American family values.

- Your house burned to the ground simply because you could not afford to pay for **private “fire-fighting” insurance**. You called all the of private fire depts. listed in the phone book for help & all said “No insurance? Sorry, sucker!”
- Your **children are not entitled to a public education**, so unless you can afford a pricey private school, you’ll have to teach them higher math & science, grammar, geography, and a foreign language so they can get into private-only college and find a decent job when they grow up.
- Your **“police” insurance** only covers catastrophic crime of attempted murder, so when your home is vandalized (repeatedly) the folks in blue tell you to quit calling or they will come and arrest you!
- The family budget is tight so, despite little Mary and Tommy’s teary-eyed pleas, **library book rental and story-time admission fees** have to go.
- Even though your tax dollars go to fund the police department, the **Police Board thinks it would be more profitable to stockholders to also charge premiums, deductibles, and co-pays** to citizens, which would be set and raised at its sole discretion. And, police could also deny service to anyone, at any time and for any reason.
- Thank goodness that we’ve gotten rid of those rotten **socialist programs called Social Security and Medicare** – even though it’s too bad for grandma, who had to sell the family home and is now being taken for a ride by the nursing home “industry.” It’s her own fault, though. Had she been personally responsible, she would have amassed a fortune to see her through her golden years (even if she came down with a personally irresponsible disease like Alzheimer’s or cancer).
- “Sorry, ma’am, but the **“grade school” premiums** you’ve been paying (for Johnny) only allow him to see a teacher five times a year; books, lessons, and tests are subject to deductibles and co-pays.”
- Access to **state parks and wildlife areas based on fee-for-use**: “Sorry, kids, but daddy can’t afford to pay for us to walk along the nature path or swim in the lake, but this picnic area with termite-infested tables and an old-fashion out-house nearby will be a lot of fun.”
- Hallelujah! We’ve **abolished the EPA & Safe Water Drinking Act** that once guaranteed safe drinking water to all for little or no cost. Now it’s every man, woman, & child for her or himself. Dig a well (beware: no EPA to watch for underground water contamination), hall it up from a pristine river (good luck with that), or spend (tens of) thousands to buy from a water insurance company. Who needs a bath anyway? Cleanliness is overrated. Drink sparingly & you can get by for just a few bucks a day.
- **Per-use charge of all interstates, highways, & streets**: “Sorry sir, but your “road” insurance only covers use of city streets. You’ll either have to pay an increase in monthly premiums or pay out-of -pocket if you want to drive on I-40. Wait! Check that. I see on your record that you received a warning in 1981 for a rolling stop – that makes you uninsurable, so it’s out-of-pocket only for you.”
- There are many **private post offices**. Each will only deliver to home mailboxes that consumers pay directly to them to own or rent. And if you want your mail held when you go on vacation or re-directed when you move, that will cost you, too. Oh, and no two letters cost the same because rates are different between carriers and not all carriers cover all areas.

Think these scenarios reflect American values? If so, you have not been living in the United States. This truth is, Americans have been happily benefiting from publicly funded services for the individual & public good for a long, long time. So why not health care?

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