



ObamaCare's Horror Show

Then the danger is gone, considered dead, until it surfaces again — and again — with eerie regenerative power.

On Christmas morning, timed conveniently, the *New York Times* ran a piece by Robert Pear headlined "Obama Returns to End-of-Life Plan That Caused Stir," a policy resurrection that produced less stir this time around because most of us were either too busy stuffing turkeys or getting groped at the airports.

Mr. Pear explained that the panels, after touching off a political storm last year, were dropped by the Democrats from the health care bill. "But the Obama administration," he noted, "will achieve the same goal by regulation, starting Jan. 1."



On top of the news being released on Dec. 25, it appears that the strategy was to get the panels up and running in a milieu of silence and deception. "Congressional supporters of the new policy, though pleased, have kept quiet," reported Pear. "After learning of the administration's decision," according to Pear, the office of Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., author of the original end-of-life proposal, "celebrated 'a quiet victory,' but urged supporters not to crow about it."

Pear quoted an e-mail from Blumenauer's office: "We would ask that you not broadcast this accomplishment out to any of your lists, even if they are 'supporters' — e-mails can too easily be forwarded. Thus far, it seems no press or blogs have discovered it, but we will be keeping a close watch and may be calling on you if we need a rapid, targeted response. The longer this goes unnoticed, the better our chances of keeping it."

This is the promised "new transparency"? No crowing or broadcasting the accomplishment, lest the rest of us might find out what's going on behind the curtain.

On January 5, Dr. Jeffrey A. Singer, a Phoenix surgeon, posted a response to the aforementioned events at Reason.com: "A Physician's Take on the 'Death Panel' Revelation: The Truth About End-of-Life Counseling."

First, charged Dr. Singer, it's about the money. "It's to allow for the denial of care at a time when Medicare money is scarce. The whole idea is to get younger, healthier Medicare patients to give advanced directives that will be used at a later time to deny them care. Remember that ObamaCare cuts Medicare by \$500 billion — and that doesn't even take into account the coming demographic cataclysm that awaits the program when the baby boomers become Medicare beneficiaries."

Medically, "the 'directives' that health care providers will elicit may be significantly different from what they would have been if the patient was actually confronting a life-and-death situation," cautioned Singer. What's more, "the future might offer technological advances that are not available at the time of



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the theoretical discussion, thus making a patient reach a very different decision when that future reality arrives."

The plan, additionally, will "incentivize health care providers" to have end-of-life discussions, warned Singer. "Providers will get paid extra if they have this conversation."

More broadly, Obama is in "complete defiance of Congress," Dr. Singer charged. "The executive branch is enacting by regulatory fiat what the legislative branch explicitly opted not to enact. This can only lead to the tyranny of an unelected bureaucracy."

White House officials, doing another about-face, told the *New York Times* on January 5 that the end-of-life panels were dead. Again, Jason had crawled back into the swamp.

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