

A 'Wimpy' deferred payment plan

Hush! If you listen carefully in our government's hallowed halls you might just hear the next stanza of the "star spangled bandits" theme song, "I'll gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today!"

That iconic line characterized mythical Wellington Wimpy, a Depression era "Popeye" cartoon character. Originally a major player, readers tired of his intellectualism, shadiness and windy rhetoric, so he remains representative today of a tired "play now, pay later" scam.

Interestingly, windbag Wimpy inspired a real-world, self-named chain of restaurants in none other than the "Sizzler of Socialism," Great Britain. Life imitates art, eh?

So, does conniving and confusing to consume today that which you can't pay for now or ever, sound familiar?

Think back to the health care bill debacle. Don't worry if you can't remember much. Such "agida" always keeps coming back. Savings that this inscrutable monster bill was supposed to produce are already sliding right by the media slicker than a politician bathed in Brylcreme.

Not surprisingly, its impossible largesse reveals that many of our statesmen possess intellect and integrity of Lilliputian proportion, excelling only at ignoring and incensing an increasingly informed public.

So now what happened? Congress on June 25 reversed the planned and scheduled nearly 25 percent scheduled Medicare cuts in physician payments. These



Kevin Ryan

are the cuts that were already counted on and sold to the public as crucial savings from the bill.

Of course this happened. Legislators, having painted themselves into a corner, faced either igniting an irreversible crisis in health care access and quality, or costs skyrocketing out of control as our

intrusive government continues to breed a new American, enfeebled by entitlement and increasingly ill-educated and nonproductive.

Add in the tinder of expiring Bush tax cuts, which hit everyone Jan. 1, and accelerate that cash-burn with typical Medicare and Medicaid 8- to 9-percent inflation and it's time for that next stanza of the "star spangled bandits" theme song.

So do not be surprised if the bipartisan deficit Divas, who can expect little realistic change of course by the administration, offer us all a little VAT to supplement the menu of preprogrammed across-the-board tax hikes. Wonderful. Consumers and corporations will then continue to sit on the sidelines fearing whatever next "play now-pay forever" increasingly intrusive government scheme is coming, such as "Crap and Charade."

This will not stop until the attempted reengineering of America based on wrongheaded intellectual arguments about the nature of man no longer rule the land. I do not doubt the resolve and sincerity of folks who think governments can and must legislate some utopian ideal. I fear it.

High-minded attempts to adjust outcome in advance, rather than access to equal opportunity, end poorly with morally unsavory consequences and hypocrisy.

We, the people, must stop this nonsense. Every burger made, served and unpaid builds expectations, brings sustainable nutrition to none and in time weakens all. Ignorance and uninformed anger are no excuse to not know what's being served to you by those whose job it is to serve.

Have we really reached the point where we treat two years of unemployment insurance entitlement as our head chef's *pièce de résistance* worthy of Rose Garden pomp and puffery?

We the people must get engaged in whatever legal and balanced way and the distracting manipulative race baiting and name calling on all sides must stop. For example, the Tea Party movement is an undeniable symptom, not a disease.

Stop the spending, supplemental VAT will never be removed. Do not let the present tax cuts expire. Stimulate business with aggressive tax policy, not unemployment insurance. Do not let Cap and Trade see the light of day and for God's sake, stop "wimping out."

Customers do not order what they cannot pay for and they drive the menu, not the other way around.

Dr. Kevin Ryan is a retired colonel, physician, musician and author who lives in Fairfield. Reach him at ryan_k@comcast.net.