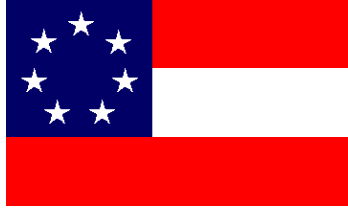
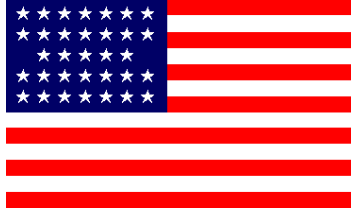


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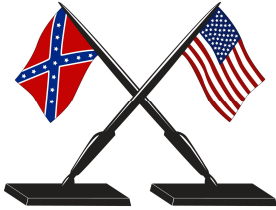


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www.WalterCoffey.com

FROM THE AUTHOR



changes have taken place since last month, not all of them good...

On a good note, *The Confederate Trust* is finally complete! It has been submitted for publication, and after proofing and printing, the new novel should be available in June. This has been one of the most challenging projects I've ever worked on, and I'm greatly relieved that it's finally over. I only hope that you will read the finished product and think that it was worth the wait.

On another good note, Gianna and I adopted two puppies, a brother and sister from the same litter. They are black lab/wire-haired pointer mixes, and their names are Izzy and Moe. They just turned eight weeks old, and they're getting

Hello again from the writing cave in Houston, Texas! Another spring is upon us, and all the plants and flowers are in full bloom here in the South. In addition to spring, lots of

bigger by the day. They are good pups, but it would be nice if they'd let us sleep once in a while!

On a sour note, the federal government finally succeeded in taking control of our health care system this past month. As a libertarian, I am opposed to government intervention in the private sector because I think the unintended consequences will outweigh the benefits. As an employee in the health insurance industry, I fear my job could soon be obsolete. I've chronicled how the disastrous law was passed in this newsletter.

Also in this newsletter is a celebration of the independence of Texas, which was secured at the Battle of San Jacinto in April 1836. And if the federal government continues restricting the liberties of the people, Texas may have to celebrate independence a second time...

To end on a good note, I am excited that another baseball season is about to open. I missed baseball over the winter and go White Sox! As always, thanks to all of you for your support. Until next time...

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APRIL 1862:

The War Escalates

As the month began, Federal armies were advancing on several fronts in a massive effort to capture the Confederate capital at Richmond and split the Confederacy in the West. Southerners watched these advances with apprehension because they knew hard fighting lay ahead if they wanted to maintain their independence.

The U.S. Adopts Gradual Emancipation

President Abraham Lincoln approved a law that abolished slavery in the District of Columbia. Lincoln also signed a congressional resolution approving the gradual compensated emancipation of slaves. Under this plan, slaveholders would receive federal funding for voluntarily freeing their slaves. Despite many urgings from Lincoln, the slave states that remained loyal to the Union did not act upon this proposal.

McClellan Lays Siege to Yorktown

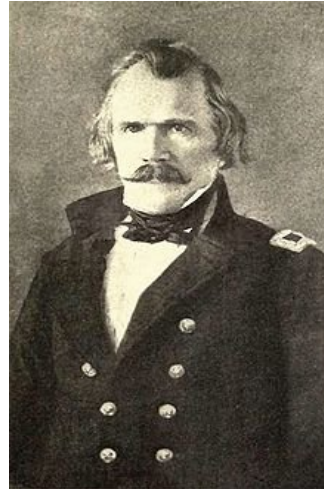
Federal General George McClellan finally began moving his 100,000-man Army of the Potomac out of Washington to capture Richmond. McClellan sailed his troops to Fort Monroe on the Virginia Peninsula, a strip of land between the York and James Rivers that led to the Confederate capital. Lincoln insisted that McClellan leave behind enough men to defend Washington, and this insistence would provide McClellan an excuse for future defeats.

McClellan's first target on the way to Richmond was Yorktown, which was defended by less than 15,000 Confederate troops. Despite his numerical superiority, McClellan took his time laying siege to the town instead of overrunning it. This gave Confederate General Joseph Johnston enough time to shift his forces from northern Virginia to block McClellan's path to Richmond.

Meanwhile, the Confederate commander at Yorktown, General John B. Magruder, tricked McClellan's scouts into believing he had more men by marching his troops in an endless circle through a forest clearing. Magruder knew that Yorktown would have to be surrendered, but he held out as long as possible to allow Johnston's men to reinforce him.

The Shenandoah Valley

As Confederate troops in northern Virginia shifted to the Peninsula, a Confederate army under General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson remained in the Shenandoah to fend off the Federal army under General Nathaniel Banks. As Banks moved south, Jackson slowly withdrew. By month's end,



-- General Albert Sidney Johnston, top Confederate commander who was killed at Shiloh this month.

Jackson's men were approaching Staunton and Jackson was preparing a counteroffensive that would soon make him famous.

The Fall of Island Number Ten

At New Madrid, Missouri, Federal troops dug a canal connecting the town to a Confederate fort on the Mississippi River named Island Number Ten. When Federal gunboats ran past the Confederate batteries carrying artillery and transportation, it proved that Federals could land on the vulnerable side of the island. The Confederate garrison had no choice but to surrender on April 8.

The fall of Island Number Ten was a serious break in the Confederate defense of the Mississippi, and it made the Federal commander, General John Pope, a new hero in the North.

The Battle of Shiloh

Over the past few months, Confederate forces had been steadily driven southward out of Tennessee. The Confederate commander of the Western Theater, General Albert Sidney Johnston, consolidated the Confederate Army of the West at Corinth, Mississippi to counterattack. Johnston led his troops into Tennessee to attack the Federal Army of the Tennessee, camped at Pittsburg Landing, under General Ulysses S. Grant. The armies clashed on April 6, near a small church named Shiloh.

The Confederates initially caught the Federals by surprise

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and drove them back toward the Tennessee River. The fighting was vicious and disjointed, as most of the troops involved had never been in combat before. A group of Federals held their ground in a thicket that saw such terrible fighting that it became known as the Hornet's Nest. The Federals there finally surrendered, but the remainder of the army fell back and stood its ground on the bluffs above the river.

On the Confederate side, Johnston was killed while leading a charge and command passed to the hero of Bull Run, General P.G.T. Beauregard. Beauregard planned to continue the advance the next day and finish the Federals off. But on the Federal side, reinforcements arrived through the night from Nashville. When morning came, a replenished Federal army advanced first.

The Federals regained all lost ground on April 7, and Beauregard withdrew his army back to Corinth to end the horrible two-day battle. The Federals lost 13,047 killed, wounded or missing, while the Confederates lost 10,694. This was by far the worst battle ever fought on American soil, as the casualties exceeded those of all previous American wars combined.

This defeat shocked the Confederacy, which already suffered from a manpower shortage and could ill afford such terrible loss of life. Furthermore the death of Albert Sidney Johnston, whom many believed to be the greatest field commander in the South, was considered an exceptionally harsh blow to the cause.

Although Shiloh was a Federal victory, many in the North were shocked by the number of casualties. As a result, Grant's superior, General Henry Halleck, arrived to take command of the Federal army at Pittsburg, thereby demoting Grant to second-in-command. Halleck cautiously prepared a methodical advance on Corinth, and Grant nearly resigned from the army in disgust.

The Confederacy Enacts Conscription

Following the costly defeat at Shiloh, President Jefferson Davis approved the Conscription Act, which created a military draft to induct all able-bodied white males between 18 and 35 years of age into the Confederate Army for three years. This was the first military draft ever enacted in North America. Many southerners bitterly opposed this law because it infringed upon the civil liberties and states' rights that prompted so many to secede from the North in the first place. Davis argued that he had no choice due to limited manpower against a superior enemy.

The Fall of Forts Macon and Pulaski

Federal forces continued their relentless attacks on Confederate forts along the Atlantic Coast. Fort Macon, North Carolina surrendered to the Federals after a siege, and Federal forces began bombarding Fort Pulaski, Georgia at the entrance to Savannah harbor. Pulaski fell on April 11, allowing the Federals to block the main channel to Savannah and strengthen the naval blockade.

At Fort Pulaski, Federal General David Hunter issued a controversial order confiscating and freeing all nearby slaves. Lincoln rescinded this order, believing that emancipation was a political, not a military, issue and thus beyond Hunter's authority.

The Great Train Robbery

A locomotive chase occurred when Federal spies led by James J. Andrews stole the Confederate train *General* at Big Shanty and moved toward Chattanooga in an effort to seize the rail line to Atlanta. Confederates pursued on the *Texas* until the Federals abandoned the *General* north of Ringgold, Georgia when it ran out of fuel. The Federals were captured in the woods; Andrews and seven of his men were later executed for their daring raid.

The Fall of New Orleans

For several months, the Federals had prepared an attack on New Orleans, the Confederacy's largest and richest city, in their drive up the Mississippi River from the Gulf of Mexico. The Confederates could do little to counter such an attack except to bolster two forts, Jackson and St. Philip, on the river below New Orleans. If those forts fell, nothing could save the city from being captured.

The Federal advance began on April 18 when naval forces began pounding Forts Jackson and St. Philip with artillery. Six days later, the Federal naval fleet under Admiral David Farragut was able to run past the forts. The bombardment was heavy, but the fort cannons were no match for the large number of moving ships on the water. Farragut anchored in New Orleans the next day.

City officials surrendered to the Federal naval commander on April 25. The fall of New Orleans was considered a terrible defeat in the South. Soon the Federals had a new base of operations against the Confederate heartland, and Farragut joined Grant and Pope as a new northern hero.

New Mexico and Arizona

West of the Mississippi River, Federal forces spent most of April chasing retreating Confederates through New

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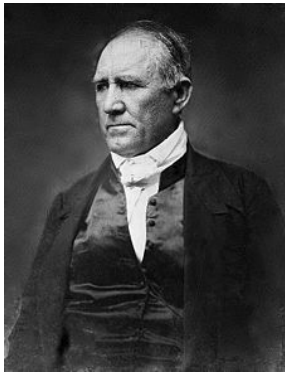
Mexico Territory. Federals occupied Albuquerque after the town was abandoned, and the Confederates withdrew to El Paso. A small Federal victory at Picacho Pass, Arizona threatened the Confederate garrison at Tucson.

Conclusion

April 1862 was the most disastrous month of the war for the

Confederacy thus far. A Federal army was advancing on Richmond, forts on the Atlantic Coast had fallen, a terrible defeat had been suffered at Shiloh, river commerce on the Mississippi had been weakened, and the most important city in the South was now in Federal hands. A quick turnaround was needed or else the Confederacy would soon collapse.

U.S. HISTORY: Texas Wins Independence



-- General Sam Houston,
commander of the victorious
Texas forces at the decisive
Battle of San Jacinto

On April 21, 1836, an army of Texans under General Sam Houston routed the Mexican Army at San Jacinto near present-day Houston. This was the culmination of a movement that led to the independence of the Republic of Texas from Mexico.

Early Settlement

When Mexico secured its independence from Spain, the new country included present-day Texas. At the time, few Spaniards lived in Texas. To expand its economy and help fend off Indian attacks, the Mexican government encouraged immigration to Texas, mostly from the U.S. In the early 1820s, the first wave of American immigrants to Texas was led by Stephen F. Austin. More followed in later years, many of whom were southerners who brought their slaves along.

By 1830, about 8,000 farmers and 1,000 slaves resided in the Brazos and Colorado River Valleys near modern-day Houston. However a series of acts by the Mexican government began fueling resentment among the settlers calling themselves Texians. These acts included:

- Demanding that slaveholders free their slaves and renounce slavery
- Rescinding property tax exemptions

- Raising tariffs on imported U.S. goods
- Prohibiting further immigration into Texas and deploying troops to defend the borders
- Permitting corruption in the capital at Coahuila
- Demanding that all settlers convert to Catholicism and pay a tithe to the Catholic Church
- Demanding that Texian farmers produce foodstuffs rather than the more profitable cotton

Santa Anna Seizes Control

The excessive government intervention into Texian affairs increased when Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna overthrew the Mexican government in 1833 and became president. Santa Anna abolished the Mexican constitution that Texian settlers had agreed to follow and began centralizing government power in his regime.

When Stephen Austin attempted to work with Santa Anna, his request to separate Texas from the corrupt Coahuila was denied. Austin expressed anger about this denial in a letter, and he was imprisoned for 18 months when the letter was confiscated by Mexican officials. Austin's imprisonment caused many protests among the Texians, and Santa Anna sent Mexican forces into Texas to suppress these protests.

Meanwhile other Mexican states began rebelling against Santa Anna's oppressive policies. Resistance in Zacatecas was brutally suppressed using rape and pillage. Santa Anna also ordered the military to disarm the militias in the rebellious states, including Texas. When Austin was finally released from prison, he began raising volunteer militias in Texas to oppose Santa Anna and secede from Mexico.

Gonzales

In the fall of 1835, a Mexican force ordered local Texians

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to return a cannon stationed in Gonzales in accordance with Santa Anna's order to disarm all militias. When the Texians refused, the Mexicans tried to attack, but they were stopped by the deep Guadalupe River and 18 Texian militia, nicknamed the "Old Eighteen."

The Texians waved a flag over the cannon. The white flag had a black star and the words "COME AND TAKE IT" stitched into it. The Mexicans tried to take the cannon, but after a small battle they were forced to withdraw to San Antonio. Gonzales marked the first official battle between the Texians and the Mexican government, and as such is considered the start of the Texas Revolution.

Proclaiming Independence

On March 2, 1836, a group of Texians organized and signed the Texas Declaration of Independence from Mexico. Proclaiming the Republic of Texas, the new Texans drafted a constitution based on the U.S. Constitution, including legalizing slavery. The provisional government consisted of President David G. Burnet and Vice President Lorenzo de Zavala.

In addition, a regular army was created and Sam Houston was appointed commander. Stephen Austin, commander of the volunteer militia, resigned to become the commissioner to the U.S. The new nation was nicknamed the Lone Star Republic because its flag featured a single white star.

Santa Anna ignored the proclamation, instead leading a 6,000-man army into Texas to put down the rebellion. He divided his force and moved with 3,000 of his men on San Antonio, the political and military center of Texas, where a Texan volunteer force was stationed at a mission called the Alamo.

The Alamo

The volunteers at the Alamo had withdrawn to the Alamo to await reinforcements, but none came. This left 187 Texans under Colonels William Travis and James Bowie to defend the mission against Santa Anna's 3,000 Mexicans.

After an 11-day siege, the Mexicans attacked the Alamo. Within an hour, the fort was overwhelmed and all the defenders were killed; the Mexicans suffered from 600 to 1,000 casualties in the attack. The defenders were hailed as heroes by the Texan rebels, and the fall of Alamo inspired Texas settlers to redouble their efforts to secure independence. "Remember the Alamo" became a war cry.

Goliad

While Santa Anna led half of his force against the Alamo, the

other half advanced on Goliad, which was defended by 500 Texans under Colonel James Fannin. After some heated skirmishes, Fannin surrendered his force to the superior foe. However Fannin was unaware of Santa Anna's order to execute all prisoners. Fannin and his 342 remaining men were marched near the San Antonio River and executed by firing squad. This became known as the Goliad Massacre.

Goliad, along with the Alamo, sparked desperate resistance to Mexican authority in Texas. Santa Anna was branded a cruel dictator, prompting the U.S., Great Britain and France to support the Texans. Meanwhile Santa Anna's next target was Sam Houston's Army of Texas.

Pursuing Houston

Following his victory at the Alamo, Santa Anna hoped to force a decisive battle with Houston's army. Houston withdrew his men to the east, knowing that he could not win an open fight with Santa Anna's seasoned troops.

As Houston's men withdrew, the Texas government was forced to abandon the capital at Washington-on-the-Brazos and relocate at Galveston. Fleeing with them were thousands of panicked settlers in what became known as the "Runaway Scrape."

Santa Anna's advance was slowed by swollen rivers, which gave Houston time to train and equip his army. Finally Houston's frustrated men grew tired of retreating. Without Houston's consent, about 900 troops turned to meet the Mexican advance. Houston had no choice but to follow.

San Jacinto

On April 20, the two armies camped within about 1,000 yards of each other near the San Jacinto River. Santa Anna was so confident that the Texans would not attack that he did not post sentries.

The next day, the Texans attacked, catching the Mexicans completely by surprise. As they moved across the plain, the Texans shouted, "Remember the Alamo!" and "Remember Goliad!" The Mexican defenses quickly crumbled and the 18-minute battle became a complete rout.

About 630 Mexicans were killed, 208 were wounded and 730 were captured. There were only nine Texan casualties. Santa Anna escaped but was later captured disguised as a servant. A legend spread that Santa Anna was "entertaining" a woman when the battle began, and

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this inspired the song “The Yellow Rose of Texas.”

Independence

The stunning Texan victory at San Jacinto made Houston a national hero and assured the independence of Texas. Houston spared Santa Anna’s life in exchange for recognizing Texas as an independent nation and withdrawing Mexican troops. However the terms would prove not to be so clear-cut.

While Santa Anna was in Texas, his regime was overthrown in Mexico City. Therefore when he agreed to grant Texas

autonomy, he no longer had the authority to do so. As a result, the Mexican government plotted for the next 10 years to retake Texas. After deciding that protection was more important than independence, Texas requested to become part of the United States.

Finally, after the U.S. defeated Mexico in the Mexican War of 1846-1848, Mexican officials signed a treaty formally recognizing the independence of Texas. By that time, Texas had already been a state in the U.S. since 1845. The Lone Star Republic had lasted nine years.

BOOK REVIEW:

***Shiloh: Bloody April* by Wiley Sword**

This non-fiction book chronicles the Battle of Shiloh, which took place on April 6-7, 1862. The battle ended in Federal victory, but it was extremely costly for both sides. Wiley Sword’s account is one of the best on this very important battle.

Shiloh nearly became one of the Union’s worst disasters, but instead turned into a stinging defeat for the Confederacy. Fought by inexperienced troops and commanders, Sword describes the circumstances that made the battle such a chaotic mess, including confusion, misjudgments and human frailties among commanders as well as soldiers.

Sword depended entirely on original sources and viewed this battle from both sides in a vivid shot-by-shot account of the two hard-fought days. The battle defined the careers of two

future U.S. legends—Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman—and ended the career of the great Albert Sidney Johnston. More importantly, the battle resulted in nearly 25,000 total casualties.

Despite the decisive importance of the battle, it has been largely overlooked by Civil War historians. Some of the reason for this is that the battle was executed so poorly by inexperienced soldiers and commanders. Sword puts the details together in an original and valuable reconstruction of events, accurately depicting the savagery of the fight.

After reading this book, one can understand why the most a seasoned soldier could say of any future battle was, “I was worse scared than I was at Shiloh.”

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OUR NEW NATIONAL HEALTH CARE NIGHTMARE --3/30/2010

Despite opposition from most Americans, President Obama and the Democratic majority in Congress ignored the will of the people by passing one of the most oppressive laws in U.S. history. This "health care reform" essentially places the government in control of the health of all Americans, and thus violates civil liberties guaranteed by the Constitution.

Here is a summary of how this infamous legislation came to pass.

The Takeover Begins

Nearly 14 months ago, the president and Congress pledged to stake taxpayer money into placing the nation's health care industry under federal control, despite the fact that the country was languishing in one of the worst recessions in modern times.

Since all new laws must originate in Congress, and Congress consists of two chambers (the Senate and the House of Representatives), the process required both chambers to pass a health care bill, reconcile the differences between the two bills, pass a unified bill, and send that unified bill to the president to sign into law. However corruption and partisan politics warped the process into something rather different.

Due to intense public disapproval through the summer of 2009, Congress missed several deadlines imposed by the Obama administration to pass a bill. Since the Democrats have a decisive majority in both chambers, there was no consideration of Republican ideas, despite false claims to the contrary (see the Republican proposals in H.R. 2520, 3002, 3217, 3400, etc. at www.govtrack.us).

The House Acts First – H.R. 3200

In November, the House passed H.R. 3200 by a vote of 220 to 215. This 2,000-plus page bill placed the health care industry under strict federal control and required that all Americans purchase health insurance or else face fines or imprisonment. The bill passed late on a weekend evening to avoid media coverage, literally passing one of the most wide-sweeping changes in our government in the dark of night. Only one Republican voted in favor of this bill, and many voting in favor admitted they had not even read it beforehand.

The Senate Christmas Present – H.R. 3590

Late on Christmas Eve, when most of Washington had gone home for the holidays, the Senate passed its version of health

care reform, H.R. 3590, by a vote of 60 to 40. Since Senate rules require at least 60 "yes" votes to pass legislation as significant as this, the bill passed by the bare minimum. All 40 Republican senators opposed this bill.

Several backroom deals were made to get the 60 necessary votes. When Senator Ben Nelson of Nebraska indicated he may oppose the bill, his state was granted permanent federal exemption from Medicaid expenses. When Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana indicated opposition, her state was given \$300 million for hurricane relief. Both Nelson and Landrieu ultimately voted "yes."

Enter Scott Brown

Once the House and Senate each passed a health care bill, the next step would have been to set up a committee consisting of members of both chambers to iron out differences, combine the bills into one, and then resubmit the bill for a final vote in both chambers. However this step was thwarted when Scott Brown became a U.S. senator in January.

Brown won a special election for the Senate seat that had belonged to the recently deceased Ted Kennedy in Massachusetts. While Kennedy's interim replacement voted "yes" on H.R. 3590 in December, Brown, a Republican, pledged to oppose the revised bill when it came out of committee. This meant that the Senate would fall one vote short of passing the health care bill. As a result, the Democratic leaders came up with an end-run around that pesky 60-vote rule.

The Democrats declared that they would use "reconciliation" to pass the health care bill in the Senate. Reconciliation is used for revenue and budget-related bills, and under this process, only 51 votes are needed to pass a bill instead of 60. Since health care reform affects revenue, they reasoned, why not just forsake the established rules and push it through with a simple majority?

While invoking reconciliation is most likely constitutional, it is hardly ethical to invoke such a process with such significant legislation, especially when many Democrats (including Senator Barack Obama) denounced such a procedure when President Bush recommended invoking it to get the Senate to more quickly approve his judicial appointments. Appointing judges is not quite as important as legislation that would control one-sixth of the national economy and change the way Americans receive health care forever.

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The Final Run

Although the Obama administration said that the election of Scott Brown meant that they would put health care aside and concentrate on creating jobs, they disingenuously pushed for health care reform even harder in spite of increased public opposition to their efforts. They even convened a “health care summit” that was supposed to address Republican concerns. The Republicans expressed their concerns, and then Obama ignored them and continued shoving the Democratic plan down the nation’s throat.

To allow the Senate to invoke “reconciliation,” the House was required to pass two bills: one was the Senate’s H.R. 3590 without any changes, and then a “fixes” bill that included all the goodies the House wanted added. House members would then have to blindly trust that the Senate would approve the “fixes” bill after Obama signed H.R. 3590 into law.

So the process, while legal, was contorted to achieve the end of controlling health care, even though the Senate did not have the votes to pass it and the people overwhelmingly opposed it.

In the week leading up to the House vote, congressmen who had opposed the Senate bill mysteriously began changing their votes:

- Eric Massa of New York resigned from the House because he claimed the Obama administration was bullying him into voting “yes” when he intended to vote “no.”
- Dennis Kucinich of Ohio, who had always opposed the bill, suddenly changed to “yes” after visiting Obama on Air Force One.
- Dennis Cardoza and Jim Costa of California changed to “yes” after the administration pledged to allocate more water to the farmers in their water-starved districts.
- Bart Stupak of Michigan claimed that he and a dozen other pro-life Democrats would vote “no” due to provisions allowing federal funding of abortions. However they caved when Obama pledged to sign an executive order that would (unconstitutionally) trump the bill; Stupak also received federal funds to build airfields in his district.

And so when all the backroom deals were made, and all the necessary critics were silenced, and all the citizens’ dissent was ignored, Senate bill H.R. 3590 passed the House on Sunday, March 21 by a vote of 219 to 212. Not a single Republican in either chamber voted for the final product. It

was signed into law on March 23.

Lost in the hoopla of signing the bill into law is the disturbing fact that hardly anybody voting for this bill, along with the president who signed it, have actually read what is in its 2,000-plus pages. In a horrifying confession, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced that, “we have to pass the bill so we can see what’s in it.”

Thus the federal government now controls the health care industry, and the once-private relationship between patients and doctors will never be the same again.

An Added Bonus

Although hardly reported, the House “fixes” bill that the Senate approved (H.R. 4872) contains a provision that requires virtually all student loans to be regulated by the federal government. So now the government will have a measure of control over higher education as well as health care. History has proven that when government controls education, freedom suffers.

And nobody has explained just exactly how the federal government, which is already trillions of dollars in debt and currently fighting two wars, will pay for any of this. We can only expect higher taxes, greater inflation, and soaring interest rates that could very well bankrupt our country within a decade.

What’s Next?

Well, since Obama has been inaugurated, we have seen the government either seize complete or partial control of the financial industry, the banking industry, the mortgage industry, the auto industry, and now the health care and student loan industries. Next will most likely be the environment, as Congress is planning to more stringently regulate carbon emissions from factories and manufacturing plants. And then comprehensive immigration reform will be introduced granting amnesty to illegal aliens, thereby creating a massive new group of voters that could keep the Democratic Party in power for decades to come.

Sadly, all of this represents a fundamental change in the relationship between the people and our government. This country was founded on the premise that government should be the servant, not the master, of the people. When government controls the health and education of the citizens, the opposite is true. Thomas Jefferson once said, “When government fears the people, there is liberty. When the people fear government, there is tyranny.” Welcome to tyranny, comrades.

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