

Buzz Davis and Ian Smith: Trump has been a disaster for veterans & America

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America's veterans and current military members are troubled by thoughts of another 4 years of Donald Trump as President.

His plan is to privatize and close all Veterans Affairs (VA) healthcare centers in America. This action will send all vets to private healthcare systems which are unaccustomed to the unique health issues of veterans!

Today America can be proud that over 7 million veterans are cared for by the VA. The VA is the largest integrated healthcare system in America which provides quality of care as high, or higher, than the best hospitals in the private sector. Its costs are approximately 30% lower than private sector costs and has patient appointment wait times shorter than most private hospitals/clinics.

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The VA is on the cutting edge of COVID-19 care in research, providing care for vets with C-19, providing VA doctors and nurses to private hospitals in dire need, and serving as a backup for local hospitals when they run out of intensive care beds.

Most of the nearly 400,000 VA staff work at 170 hospitals and 1,074 clinics across the US. Over 5,700 VA staffers have contracted C-19 and 57 have died.

The wounds of war and training are physical, mental and emotional – some never heal. The emotional wounds are a major factor in veterans having a suicide rate

that is 1.5 times higher than non-veterans. The VA is the best at helping vets who are plagued with suicidal thoughts. More than 7 million vets use the VA. Nearly half are combat vets, half disabled and half very low income. Half of us are 65 and over with 6 or 7 life threatening diseases needing more care as we age.

Private sector healthcare facilities are, essentially, NOT equipped to treat such a sick group.

Here in WI there are 8,900 VA workers in 29 hospitals, clinics, vet centers, and 7 military cemeteries across the state. Hundreds of thousands of WI vets are well cared for.

The question to ask is: Why does President Trump want to send vets to private care when the cost is 30% higher and vets get slower care?

One answer, perhaps, is insatiable greed! Greed for money, wealth and power! Those on Wall Street, CEOs of insurance companies and hospital systems will make billions more in profits off sick veterans.

If these people are successful in their privatization effort, the best single payer, single provider, most cost effective, high quality healthcare system in America will be gone!

The result will likely be — YOU will never get Medicare for All because privatizers pushing this effort will have killed the best model for national healthcare in existence — the VA healthcare system.

In 2016 over 14.5 million veterans and military voted — 60% voting for Trump. After becoming aware of Trump's actions the last 4 years, hopefully our Nation is wiser! The power of our vote is crucial!

Preventing Trump's election shows veterans are supported. We do not need a leader who refers to America's women and men wearing the uniform and who've died in wars — as chumps, suckers and losers.

A Commander in Chief, with such disdain for those in our military, is a dangerous person to command military operations when lives are in danger.

President Trump should NOT be leading our Nation — make Nov. 3rd his day of reckoning!

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