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Fighting the wrong fight [1]

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The two leading democratic presidential candidates, Hilary Clinton and Barack Obama, have begun a war sure to last through the primary season and into the nominations. While fighting over policy and personality, many attacks concentrate on their respective plans for universal healthcare. Clinton criticizes Obama, claiming that his plan will fail to cover everyone in the nation. Obama argues in return that her plan will also leave some out. The *New York Times* thinks neither of the plans goes far enough, approvingly citing [3] an economist who thinks people should be fined for not having insurance.

These policies, and the fights and commentaries that stem from them, indicate an unfortunate trend in politics ? a faith in the abilities of the government and the idea that programmes like universal care will mean more freedom, not less. Many falsely view government provisions as a release from economic hardship, rather than an intrusion into individual choice. Obama should be defending his plan because it allows people to opt out, not in spite of it.

The Democrats are fighting over the wrong issue, and pandering to the belief that the success of a government programme rests on the number of people forced to abide. One would think that the voters of a party meant to be the champion of individuality should be wary of any policy which forces all citizens into anything, and candidates from a true party of freedom would argue over the openness offered by their programmes, not the coercion.

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