

*June 11, 2005. A Canadian living in America (articulate and well versed in matters of policy) writes a friend living in the Maritimes. . . I know them both and the Maritimer shares the message with me. The correspondents were both kind enough to give me permission to reprint the email but the names have been changed to respect their privacy.*

**United States of America: June 11, 2005 - . . . .** Will and I were both down with the flu. I recovered; he didn't. Called the doc, described symptoms, and was told to call 911 and get him to a hospital. Did so, and he had emergency surgery for a perforated colon. Massive peritonitis kept him in ICU for more than a week. Lungs failed, kidneys failed, thought we'd lost him more than once that week. He came back slowly but was in hospital for a month and lost nearly 45 lbs. Released at the end of March, very, very frail, barely moving in the apartment with a walker, and fitted with a colostomy bag -- this last being no joy for anyone but the procedure saved his life. Insurance for hospital and medical bills maxed out at about a quarter of the final costs, which are about \$300,000. So...the fog I've been in has been filled with spending mega hours at the hospital all of March, then doing all Will's nursing and care (on top of all the usual household + biz stuff) since he's been home, finding my way through the maze of US health insurance, and negotiating fee decreases with docs and hospital.

It's absolutely beyond me how these judges -- all very well cared for with excellent health services, I'm sure -- could be so classically myopic in their decision.

It's been an absolute nightmare, especially since he will require additional surgery once he has regained his strength.

Given my background with this, I was utterly appalled at the SC decision re: private health care and insurance in Quebec, and it's potential for introducing a US style of health care and insurance in Canada. It's absolutely beyond me how these judges -- all very well cared for with excellent health services, I'm sure -- could be so classically myopic in their decision.