



Written by [Ralph R. Reiland](#) on October 6, 2009

Healthcare, Obama, and Atlas Shrugged

The headline in *Investor's Business Daily*, September 16, 2009: "45% of Doctors Would Consider Quitting If Congress Passes Health Care Overhaul."

The headline in the *Boston Globe*, September 28, 2009: "States risk it, raise tax on rich."

The problem with four of nine U.S. doctors saying they "would consider leaving their practice or taking an early retirement" is that "the number of doctors is already lagging population growth," reports *Investor's Business Daily*.



Add millions of new patients to a shrinking supply of doctors and the obvious result is an English-style queue, longer waits in pain, and a centrally directed rationing of service.

The aforementioned *Boston Globe* article on soaking the rich explains that New York's increased confiscation of income from the "deep-pocketed rich" through higher taxes is producing a "millionaires' exit."

Said New York's lieutenant governor, Richard Ravitch, regarding the flight of the state's millionaires and the decline in government revenues that has already occurred as a result of the higher tax rates: "People aren't wedded to a geographic place as they once were."

In [Atlas Shrugged](#), a novel by Ayn Rand, the most productive and creative citizens in the United States — the innovators, risk-takers, artists, entrepreneurs, capitalists, intellectuals, industrialists — overturn the conventional concept of victimhood and go on strike, refusing any longer to be exploited by society, refusing to be demonized as too successful, too rich, too individualistic, too free.

Led by John Galt, the novel's hero, the industrious organize a strike against the ever-expanding yoke of government coercion. They strike to halt the murder of man's spirit, to halt the confiscation of man's work, to defend individualism, reason, liberty, human achievement, and the market economy.

They strike by mysteriously disappearing, by withdrawing their productivity from society, by withdrawing their minds and ingenuity, in a walkout that Galt describes as "stopping the motor of the world."

Near the climax of the novel, Galt takes over a radio broadcast to reveal the strike and its rationale, explain why society has collapsed into an ever-growing crisis of scarcity and misery, and deliver a manifesto for liberty to a corrupt society:

I am the man who has deprived you of victims and thus has destroyed your world....

All the men who have vanished, the men you hated, yet dreaded to lose, it is I who have taken them away from you. We are on strike against self-immolation. We are on strike against the creed of unearned rewards and unrewarded duties. We are on strike against the dogma that the pursuit of one's happiness is evil. We are on strike against the doctrine that life is guilt....



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You have sacrificed justice to mercy. You have sacrificed independence to unity. You have sacrificed reason to faith. You have sacrificed wealth to need. You have sacrificed self-esteem to self-denial. You have sacrificed happiness to duty....

Your ideal had an implacable enemy, which your code of morality was designed to destroy. I have withdrawn that enemy. I have taken it out of your way and out of your reach. I have removed the source of all those evils you were sacrificing one by one. I have ended your battle. I have stopped your motor. I have deprived your world of man's mind....

While you were dragging to your sacrificial altars the men of justice, of independence, of reason, of wealth, of self-esteem, I beat you to it — I reached them first. I told them the nature of the game you were playing and the nature of that moral code of yours, which they had been too innocently generous to grasp....

There is a difference between our strike and all those you've practiced for centuries: our strike consists, not of making demands, but of granting them. We are evil, according to your morality. We have chosen not to harm you any longer. We are useless, according to your economics. We have chosen not to exploit you any longer. We are dangerous and to be shackled, according to your politics. We have chosen not to endanger you, nor to wear the shackles any longer.

The inauguration of Barack Obama took place on January 20, 2009. *The Economist* magazine reported that week that *Atlas Shrugged*, published in 1957, had moved up to 33rd place among Amazon's top-selling books.



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