

HUMAN RIGHTS INDEX

*Prepared by the University of Iowa Center for Human Rights (UICHR)**

- 1: Number of US homes of every 15 estimated to have high levels of indoor radon, the second leading cause of lung cancer in the US (US Environmental Protection Agency, 2004)
- 6.63: Estimated number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births in the United States in 2004, ranking 185th in the world behind, for example, Singapore (2.28), Sweden (2.77), Japan (3.28), Czech Republic (3.97), Germany (4.2), France (4.31), Slovenia (4.5), Australia (4.76), Canada (4.82), Netherlands (5.11), United Kingdom (5.22), Greece (5.63), Cuba (6.45), and Taiwan (6.52) (CIA World Fact Book, 2004)
- 65: Approximate miles pregnant women must travel in rural central Mississippi to reach a hospital obstetrics ward since local physicians stopped providing obstetric care because of prohibitive malpractice insurance costs (US General Accounting Office, 2003)
- 68: Approximate number of toxin exposures had by average Americans daily due to 20% of the US food supply being contaminated by DDT, chlordane, dieldrin, and other pesticides listed among the US Government's "dirty dozen" poisonous substances independently linked to some form of cancer (WebMD Health, 2002)
- 868: Average number of sodas consumed by American teenagers annually (i.e., 9% of their total daily caloric intake), contributing to their increased obesity, Type 11 diabetes, loss of tooth enamel, and caffeine-induced attention deficit, while public school districts negotiate contracts for up to \$100,000 with Coke and Pepsi to place as many as 18 vending machines in one school to compensate for serious underfunding (Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatricians, 2001; Washington Post, 2001)
- 2,400: Dollars needed to purchase a new cancer drug, ampath, in the United States compared to \$500 in Italy, \$570 in Britain, \$660 in Canada and Sweden, and \$760 in France, with every industrialized country except the US having some form of patented medicine price controls, which American drug companies claim stifle innovation and discourage foreign sales even though only eight drugs are sold by American pharmaceutical companies that are not available in Canada, three of them contraceptives (ABC News, 2003)

- 4,672:** Dollars spent per person in the United States on health care in 2000, equal to 13.3% of the US gross domestic product (GDP), a percentage higher than any other industrialized country, with Switzerland closest at 10.7% of national GDP (Center for Disease Control, 2003)
- 24,000:** Approximate dollars charged by a New York City hospital for a July 2002 emergency appendectomy performed on an uninsured New Yorker who, though earning but \$19,000 yearly, was denied Medicaid coverage because she was not poor enough and was thereafter pursued by the hospital through six collection agencies (with which she had no negotiating power) and a resulting legal tactic called “body attachment” (involving lawsuit filings, liens on homes, seized bank accounts, and garnished wages) to extract payments, a not uncommon experience that can lead to arrest and imprisonment as hospitals are now ranked among the most aggressive collectors in the US even though they receive millions of dollars annually for charity or bad debt cases (Democracy Now, 2004)
- 4,500,000:** Estimated number of US citizens who suffer from schizophrenia and manic-depression (the severest forms of mental illness), 40% of whom go untreated, including $\frac{1}{3}$ of the US homeless population and $\frac{1}{5}$ of the US prison population (Treatment Advocacy Center, 2004)
- 43,000,000:** approximate number of US citizens without health insurance, many more with only limited coverage (Physicians for National Health Program, 2004)

**For additional facts concerning hunger and malnutrition, source details, and further information on human rights, please visit The University of Iowa Center for Human Rights (UICHR) web site: www.uichr.org*

Erratum: An entry in the Human Rights Index published in the Spring 2004 (Vol. 34, No. 1) issue of The Iowa Review should have read: “4,000,000,000: Number of dollars given in US government subsidies to US corn growers in 2001, driving global corn prices below production cost which, via liberalized trade agreements, facilitated the ‘dumping’ of nearly 6,000,000 metric tons of corn on Mexico’s market, forcing Mexican peasant farmers, unable to afford grain storage and dependent for food on about 43% of their gross income, to sell their crops at depressed prices and sustain immediate threats of hunger and malnutrition (US Department of Agriculture, 2002)” The initial figure was incorrectly stated as 4,000,000.