

## **"Trojan horse" holds modern protest**

By Christopher Baughman

*The Baton Rouge Advocate*, August 16, 1994

It's a sure bet the ancient Greeks didn't fret meter maids the night they left their wooden horse outside the walls of Troy.

Ed Priola should have such luck.

"I darned near got a parking ticket in New Orleans this morning," Priola said, rushing Monday to pump change in a parking meter on Main Street to pay for the 22-foot-long, 10-foot-high wooden horse he hauled to Baton Rouge.

Priola, field director for the National Taxpayers Union, and Dwight Williams towed the 1,500-pound horse here as a symbol of protest of President Clinton's health-care plan.

The idea is a takeoff on the Trojan horse ancient Greeks employed in its war with Troy in 1200 B.C., Priola said.

That horse hid Greek soldiers who surprised their enemies once inside Troy's gates.

Priola's horse highlights concealed issues he contends are in the president's plan.

"It represents all of the hidden objectives of the Clinton health plan," Priola said.

Government health care would raise taxes on ammunition as well as cigarettes and alcohol.

It would also add 18 other new taxes and require 50 layers of bureaucracy to the government, Priola asserted.

Priola and Williams, en route to Alexandria after leaving Baton Rouge, are crisscrossing Louisiana to pressure Democratic Sens. John Breaux and J. Bennett Johnston to vote against government-managed health care.

The pair parked the trailer holding the horse on Main Street, near One American Place, the downtown building that houses local offices of both senators.

Priola and Williams have tugged the horse, all 1,500 pounds of it, through 22 states and 32 cities since setting out from Alexandria, Va., less than four weeks ago.

"I have real strong feelings about the size of government," said Williams, a private businessman from Colorado who owns the horse.

He said he is volunteering his time and horse to the NTU for the tour.

"The Clinton administration especially has become very intrusive in our lives," he said.

Williams built the brown bronco from hem fir two years ago to protest a sales tax in his home state.

After the success of that protest and another in Missouri where protesters used the horse, the NTU asked Williams to hitch up his pony for their campaign.

"So far he's saved the taxpayers of Colorado and Missouri \$2 billion," Williams said of his horse with no name.

Only three members of the media and a curious traffic officer paid any attention to the horse during its Baton Rouge visit.

That didn't discourage him, Priola said. The gimmick has been received well at other stops.

Their schedule is sort of day-to-day right now, and Priola said he wasn't sure where the duo would go after leaving Louisiana.

They just want to get the word out that America's health-care system is the world's best, and the last thing it needs is the government taking over.

"Those are the folks that manage the postal system with the compassion of the IRS," Priola said.