change the metaphor

Joseph Campbell first offered this sage aphorism:

“If you want to change the world, you have to change the metaphor.” – Joseph Campbell

The president subtly changed the metaphor this morning in a major financial address. Instead of the phrase health care reform he used the phrase health insurance reform. Ah, now we are framing the right debate. Was this metaphorical or strategic?

We have argued for months now that this is not about health care reform. Want real health care reform — you change the paradigm. Read Deepak Chopra’s OpEd this morning in SFGate. Then read all our past and future posts. The advent of the 21st century is quickly evolving. Old paradigms, companies, and entire industries are vanishing.

The current debate is about economic reform. And economic reform is about insurance reform — catastrophic economic reform.

If health care is central and vital to the health and well-being of the nation, then health insurance should be regulated as a utility. As if Dr. Howard Dean had been following our very advice, just yesterday on Meet the Press, he offered the same prescription:

There’s another way. There’s two countries in Europe that have universal health care without—and it’s entirely run by insurance companies. But they treat the insurance companies like regulated utilities. If the insurance companies would prefer to be treated like regulated utilities, we’d drop the public option in a heartbeat.

— Howard Dean

This graphic from the morning’s news even better. Shows that the administration may be serious about the fundamentals of a healthy economy first.
financial reform first