

DEVELOPING A COHERENT NEGATIVE CASE

Because the affirmative team prepares its constructive speech in advance of the debate and because it organizes its case into a speech it presented at the opening of the debate, it has less difficulty coming up with a coherent case. While the negative can prepare parts of its arguments in advance, it also must prepare part of its case spontaneously in response to the affirmative case; therefore, at least part of the negative case must be delivered extemporaneously.

Another reason that developing a coherent case is more difficult for the negative team is that part of the negative's response is refutative: a part of the negative argument must be a refutation of a particular affirmative argument. Because its case is constructed quickly and refutes specific points of the affirmative case, the negative team faces a problem of coherence. If the negative is not careful, it may sound disjointed and fragmented. Learning to quickly construct a comprehensive refutation combined with a coherent negative plan is the challenge of debating the negative side of any proposition.

To present a coherent argument, we strongly suggest that the negative team present one or more arguments constructed independently of the affirmative's arguments. These arguments may be presented at the beginning or the end of the first negative speech; they may be independent of the affirmative arguments, or they may include points of refutation. The primary consideration, however, is to present the judge with a well-organized and coherent position that explains why the negative opposes the proposition. In the outline below, we offer two examples of arguments the negative might construct when opposing the proposition related to socialized medicine.

OUTLINE OF A POSSIBLE NEGATIVE CASE

- I. Socialized medicine does not lead to unnecessary surgery.
 - A. (Description) We agree that salaried doctors are a part of socialized medicine.
 - B. (Relationship) The relationship between doctors' salaries and unnecessary surgery is false.
 - C. (Evaluation) The affirmative claim of improved health care resulting from unnecessary surgery is therefore false.
- II. Socialized medicine leads to long waits for medical care.
 - A. (Description) A feature of socialized medicine is government rather than individual payment for medical services.
 - B. (Relationship) This form of payment causes increased demand that the system is unable to supply.
 - C. (Evaluation) The inability to meet the increased demand for medical services will result in long waits and decreased health care.

This outline presents two examples of coherent arguments the negative team might present as a part (or the whole) of its case. The first argument includes some