

Under Sam, M. D. No. 2

# Federal Health Bill Gives Patient Right To Pick Own Doctor

Fees Would Be Set by Local Boards, 'Free' Medicine Is Not Proposed

This is the second of a series of articles.

By CHARLES T. LUCEY, Scripps-Howard Staff Writer  
WASHINGTON, Apr. 4.—It is tabbed simply Senate Bill 5—a measure "to provide a national health insurance and public health program."

It spills hygienic herby and whereas across 84 printed pages few will read. It proposes the federal government's first adventure touching medical practice in this U. S. A.

This proposal has set one section of organized medicine into ardent protest against "socialized medicine" and another section into sharp criticism of the backwardness of the American Medical Association.

The public is beginning to be aware of a hot cross-fire of argument. Congress in early hearings will give the whole idea a clinical examination.

What is it all about?

First, all wage-earners and their families would be taken into a system providing complete medical, surgical and hospital care. It would include service by general practitioners and specialists, dentists, home-nursing and hospital care up to 60 days a year—longer if funds and facilities permit.

There would be diagnostic, X-ray and radium treatments, eyeglasses and drugs for all who need them.

Choose Own Doctors  
Individuals could choose their own physicians from among those signing up for the plan, but there would be no compulsion on doctors to join. The poor and the jobless would be covered through federal grants to states.

Voluntary prepaid health plans could continue to exist—though there is doubt as to whether they would amount to much.

A five-man National Health Insurance Board would establish broad policy from Washington, with the Federal Security Administrator, the executive boss. Another board called the National Advisory Medical Policy Council would advise the Health Board on policy, professional standards and the like.

The National Health Board would have power to regulate, through a system of state and local agencies, the national health insurance system. States would organize their own plans but Washington could step in if they didn't come up to scratch.

Fees Set Locally  
The aim would be to decentralize as fully as possible to local administrative officers, who would work with local boards on which "consumer" interests, rather than hospital-doctor, would dominate.

But the doctors themselves would settle strictly professional questions. Hospital and doctors' fees would be set by the local board—so much for home or office visits, so much for an appendectomy. Under the so-called Murray-Wagner-Diagell bill a look would be taken at annual income to decide whether a doctor's "take" was too great—or to set a floor under incomes where deemed necessary.

The state could fix the number of patients a doctor could accept—and the doctor could accept or reject patients on his own say-so. Doctors and nurses couldn't be shifted from one area to another against their will. Race, creed or color discrimination would be out.

The federal planners are up in the air on the question of dental benefits. So many people need a dental overhaul that for any insurance program it stacks up not merely as risk but calamity.

There is some thought dental care should be restricted to emergency and not restorative work, as the planners phrase it, or perhaps to children's care. Anyway, the costs wouldn't come out of the employer-employee kitty, but from federal subsidy.

New Bill Draws  
A new and broader national health bill is being written, and it will have special sections for loans and grants to medical schools for expansion of facilities for scholarships to students. The hospital construction program under the so-called Hill-Burton bill would be liberalized to make it easier for states to meet federal fund-matching provisions.

From Washington also would flow funds to expand state and local public health services, maternal and child health care, for programs to control tuberculosis, venereal diseases, mental disorders and for medical care of the aged and chronically ill.

The bill authorizing this program says nothing of how the money for it is to be raised. The

assumption is that there would be a separate bill levying a 4½ per cent tax on employer and employee alike, with an additional kick-in from the government.

The doctor opposition charges the labor and public welfare committees, which would be more favorable than the tax-raising committees.

U. S. Ranks 10th

It isn't "free" medicine that is proposed here, of course. It is medicine paid for in advance partly by a payroll tax. That tax wouldn't be enough so the government—the taxpayers as a whole—would pay the rest. Nobody knows for sure how much it would be. Only the first \$3600 of earnings would be taxed.

Now, for Mr. Ewing's case for all this—

He says 228,000 Americans who die every year could be saved with full health care for all. He says 25 million Americans suffer chronic disease. He says this waste of human resources cost the U. S. more than \$25 billion yearly. Smug America, he says, actually ranks only 10th among nations in national health.

The plan envisions getting top health care for "everyone"—though even today, after a decade of Social Security, there are millions uncovered. Mr. Ewing foresees a "tooling up" period in which the machinery would be prepared, and even if enacted this year it would not become effective for two years. Because the U. S. is short on medical care facilities, it is estimated no plan could be rolling fully for 10 years.

Mr. Ewing says only one in five can afford the medical care he needs.

"By and large, only the well-to-do and, to a certain extent, charity patients get satisfactory medical care," he says. "The in-between groups—other than the fairly small portion who are covered by voluntary insurance plans—are the ones desperately in need of better care."

But Mr. Ewing is convinced the voluntary insurance plans cannot do the job.

Substitute Plan  
Five U. S. Senators—Lester Hill (D. Ala.), Herbert O'Connor (D. Md.), George Aiken (R. Vt.), Garrett Withers (D. Ky.), and Wayne Morse (R. Ore.)—have just introduced a bill in sharp disagreement with the Ewing philosophy.

They bill would take advantage of the voluntary plans as they now operate and would provide government funds to pay medical care insurance premiums of those unable to pay for themselves. Those able to pay would do this just as do the millions who already are members.

This bill would limit care to that provided by hospitals and diagnostic clinics, and would not include office and home calls as the proponents of complete compulsory government care urge.

Those unable to pay their own premiums would carry the same cards entitling them to care as would those who do pay—an attempt to avoid the "means test."

"Here is a voluntary movement which cannot be ignored," Sen. Hill says, "if we believe there is a way of life for the voluntary system."

TOMORROW: The critics look at compulsory health insurance.

Weights Experts To Convene Here  
City, state and national authorities on weights and measures will hold a three-day conference in the Claypool Hotel, starting tomorrow.

Rollin E. Meek, director of the Indiana Board of Health division of weights and measures, said that the session will mark the first time in more than 20 years that the national association met in Indiana.

New developments in weights and measures, such as electronic weighing and self-service, portable packaging of merchandise, will be among the subjects discussed.

Gov. Schricker will address a luncheon meeting of the group Wednesday.

## Auditioned for Amateur Hour Wednesday



"Monty and His Buckaroos" . . . (standing left to right) "Wild Bill" Milan, "Monty" Montague, "Fatso" Welding, "Curley" Brooking, Marshall May and, seated, Donald "Pappy Slocum" Gowin. All are residents of Indianapolis. They are one of the top acts auditioned for the Old Gold Original Amateur Hour at the Coliseum Wednesday.

## Winners Listed In Music Event

1000 Pupils Complete In Festival at IU

BLOOMINGTON, Apr. 4.—The contest had ended but the melodies lingered on today at Indiana University, where some 1000 high school musicians competed in the first division of the High School District Competition Festival Saturday.

When the notes had cleared away, Judges Beldon Leonard, of Arthur Jordan Conservatory, Indianapolis, and David Kolle, Indiana State Teachers College, had chosen these winners:

Class BB orchestras—University School, Bloomington, first division; Class BB bands—University School, first division; Linton and Salem, second division; North Vernon, third division.

Class B bands—Seymour, Martinsville, first division; Class CC bands—Switz City, first division; Cloverdale, Worthington, second division; Amo, third division; St. Paul, fifth division; class CC choruses—Amo, second division.

Class D choruses—Martinsville, Columbus, first division; class BB choruses—Greensburg, University School, first division; class D choruses—Versailles, first division; class C girls' choruses—Charlestown, second division; class BB girls' choruses—Linton, first division.

Class D bands—North Vernon, first division; Columbus, third division; class CC bands—Versailles, first division; Solisbury, third division.

Club to Sponsor Radio Contest  
The East Side Charity Club will sponsor a program to decide the most popular Negro radio group Apr. 11, at 8:15 p. m. in Phillips C. M. E. Temple, N. West and Drake Sts.

The charity club includes the field workers for the True Vine Church Home, Inc., a haven for needy children and the aged. Groups to compete next Monday night and their directors include the Metropolitan Jubilee Singers, directed by Susie Thompson; the Eastern Star Jubilee Singers, by F. D. Clay; the Southern Harmonizers, Esse M. Hayden, and the Sacred Four Quartet, James Beck.

Tickets will be on sale at the Bruce Pharmacy, 1601 Columbia Ave.; the Wilson Gulf Station, 2446 Hillside Ave.; the Howard Pharmacy, 551 N. Senate Ave.; Maxey Cut-Rate Drugs, 21st and Boulevard Pl.; the Indianapolis Recorder, 518 Indiana Ave.; and Spurling Clark Pharmacy, 27th and Northwestern.

Riley Hospital Receives \$325 Gift From Sorority  
A check for \$325 was presented to the James Whitcomb Riley Hospital for Children by the Lambda Province of Sigma Phi Gamma, international sorority, yesterday in the Indiana University Medical Center.

The money, contributions from the 12 province chapters, was presented to Miss Mary Heckard, supervisor of nursing in Riley Hospital by Mrs. Andrew Lindquist, 5901 E. Washington St., province president.

## Taxi Owners In N. Y. Call Strike Broken

Operators See Fleets Back to Normal Tomorrow

NEW YORK, Apr. 4 (UP)—Operators claimed today that taxicab operation was two-thirds normal despite increased picketing by striking members of John L. Lewis' taxi union.

"The strike is broken as far as we are concerned," said Harold Riegleman, attorney for several large fleet operators while waiting to see Mayor William O'Dwyer, who scheduled a meeting with the operators. He said normal operations were expected tomorrow.

George McIntyre, spokesman for taxicab fleet owners, estimated that 1852 fleet cabs were operating on the fourth day of the strike. Jack J. Jackman, chairman of the board of the League of Mutual Taxi Owners, said 80 per cent of 4000 of the independent cabs were operating.

This would total 6932 cabs. A "normal" Monday sees about 9600 cabs working.

Union organizers had threatened to keep all cabs off the street today, both fleet and independently owned.

"We'll wipe every cab off the street," a United Mine Workers organizer said. "Independent or fleet, not a cab will roll."

Two persons were arrested today, bringing the four-day total to 50.

STOPS CORROSION  
A 70-30 copper-nickel alloy is sometimes used to prevent corrosion.

## Police Diagnose Auto Ailments



Patrolman James Fletcher

SPRING CHECKUP . . . Ailing automobiles were being ferreted out by "doctors" of the Indianapolis police traffic division in blockades like this one at North St. between Meridian and Pennsylvania Sts. today. Here Patrolman James Fletcher stops a car to check for bad lights, faulty brakes and other safety ailments. These police "safety doctors" will prescribe complete overhauling of faulty safety features for drivers who want to live to see another spring.

## Shrine Circus Stars on Radio

Members of the cast of the Shrine-Polack Bros. Circus will appear on a number of radio programs during the next week. Sid Collins will interview Chai and Somay Husung on WICE's "P. M. Party" tomorrow between 2 and 3:30 p. m. James "Silver" Madison, trainer of M-G-M elephants, will be heard during "Rhythm at Random" between 3:45 and 4 p. m. on WFBM the same day.

On WIRE, between 12:15 and 12:45 p. m., Otto Griebing, one of the featured clowns of the circus, will be interviewed on "S'Prize High School."

## Club Pledges Student

Jack L. Fehrenbach, son of Mr. and Mrs. L. M. Fehrenbach, 6132 E. Ninth St., an engineering student in Purdue University, has been pledged by The Catalyst Club, an honorary society of chemical and metallurgical engineers. He is a graduate of Howe

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