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Catholic Physicians' Guild

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An Editorial:

Compulsory Health Insurance Is Not Dead

THOSE who have faith in the traditional system of medical and hospital care as developed in the United States are relieved to know that legislation for compulsory health insurance has been defeated for the present term of Congress. This does not mean that the opponents of compulsory health insurance can relax. Compulsory health insurance has been stopped but it is not dead; it will be revived as soon as it is expedient to do so. The backers of compulsory health insurance are not discouraged. Their plan will be to try and try again until they succeed.

In the meantime, what can we do to continue effectively the fight against this government control of medicine? It is not sufficient that we lay plans for another congressional battle when legislation is presented. Eventually we will lose this type of campaign. We can do a great deal to prevent compulsory health insurance by extending our voluntary health plans to more people. If we can satisfy the needs of the American people with our voluntary pre-payment plans, they will not be interested in compulsory health insurance. On the other hand, if we fail to remove the fears connected with hospital and medical care, we may expect to see many good American citizens grasping in desperation for government help.

To the American who has a job and is well fed communism has no attraction. But when men are out of work, when they and their families are hungry, and when private enterprise offers them no sympathy or hope, they will listen to the beguiling promises of communism.

The parallel is true in health. Millions of Americans live in fear of catastrophic illness and surgery. They are afraid of the costs. Blue Cross and Blue Shield have done an excellent job and shown a marvelous development. They deserve more enthusiastic and widespread support from medical men. If these plans can be extended to enough of our American people, Federal agencies will not have an excuse to appeal to the people.