

PUBLIC HEALTH

Propose Medical Program

President's Commission on the Health Needs of the Nation proposes a nation-wide program of state-managed care for "personal health services."

► A FEDERAL-STATE program to help finance "personal health services," or, in other words, to help pay doctor and hospital bills, is recommended by the President's Commission on the Health Needs of the Nation in its report transmitted to President Truman on Thursday, Dec. 18.

The Commission was established on Dec. 29, 1951, with Dr. Paul B. Magnuson of Chicago as chairman. It was given one year to make its study of the nation's health needs. Its recommendations to the President and the Congress are in the first of the five volumes of the Commission's findings.

Prepaid medical and hospital care plans are good in principle and should be extended, the Commission reports. But, it finds, many people cannot pay even part, much less all, of the costs of prepayment medical care plans. So it recommends the cooperative federal-state program.

Under this, each state would draw up its own plan for as comprehensive health and medical services to all persons in the state as local facilities permit. The state plans would be subject to the federal health agency for approval. Federal funds for the program might come from those collected through the Old Age and Survivors Insurance mechanism and through grants-in-aid to the states made from general tax revenues. The grants-in-aid, the Commission reports, would run to \$750,000,000.

Objecting to this part of the Commission's recommendations were the following five members: Albert J. Hayes, president, International Association of Machinists; Elizabeth S. Magee, general secretary of the National Consumers League; Walter P. Reuther, president of the CIO and of the United Automobile Workers; Clarence H. Poe, president and editor of *The Progressive Farmer*, and Dr. Joseph C. Hinsey, dean of Cornell University Medical College.

Mr. Hayes, Miss Magee and Mr. Reuther objected that leaving the financing of personal health services to the option of the states would discriminate against those persons in the country whose states chose not to participate in the program. Mr. Poe agreed with the Commission but urged speedy action to aid rural people who have "neither wealth nor insurance," and wanted to make sure that the family that can pay or partly pay its way should do so, while the family that cannot should be helped by government and philanthropy.

Dr. Hinsey agreed to the Commission's recommendations "only if comprehensive personal health services are developed so as to maintain free choice of health personnel, freedom of type of practice and a system of

remuneration that is mutually satisfactory to the members of the health professions and the consuming public."

Besides its recommendation for a federal-state plan to help finance medical care, the Commission recommends federal funds for schools of medicine, dentistry, nursing and public health, and for scholarships so that there will be more doctors, nurses, dentists and other health personnel. The Commission also recommends that states improve their secondary and collegiate school systems, and that special programs be formulated to make more and better preprofessional and professional opportunities available for education and training of Negroes in the health professions.

The Commission wants Congress to establish a permanent Federal Health Commission to carry on the present Commission's work, and also recommends a Federal Department of Health and Security.

The health program advocated by the Commission, including aid to research and hospitals, would cost the federal government one billion dollars a year in addition to the "just over one billion dollars" now spent annually by the federal government for civilian health activities, including medical care for veterans and other federal beneficiaries, hospital construction, public

health, medical research, rehabilitation and training of health personnel.

Science News Letter, December 27, 1952

ASTRONOMY

Best-Yet Photographs Of Mars and Saturn

See Front Cover

► SOME OF the first photographs of the moon and planets made with the 200-inch Hale Telescope at the Palomar Observatory are the best so far obtained, Dr. Milton L. Humason reports.

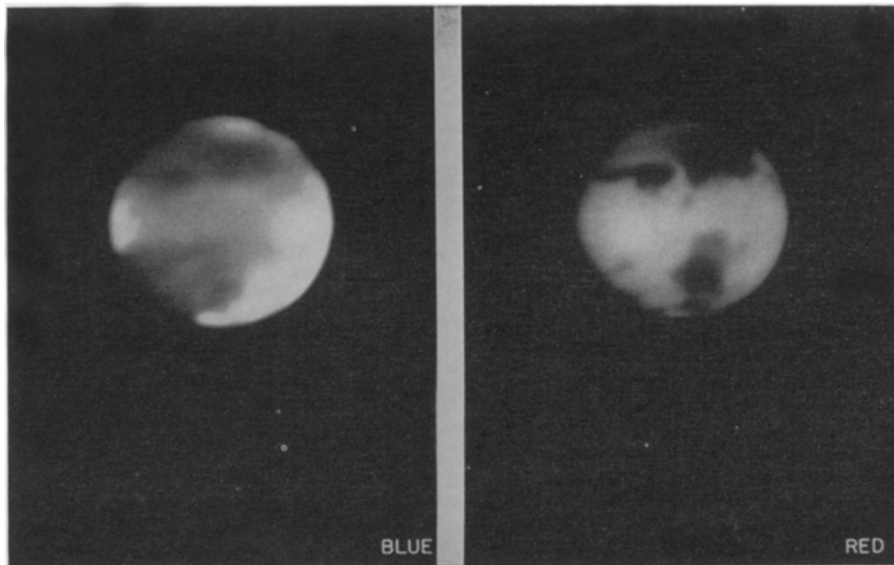
Clearer, sharper, pictures may sometime be made with better atmospheric conditions, he said, but ideal conditions are so rare that years may elapse before better pictures can be made with the 200-inch.

The Palomar Observatory is operated jointly with the Mount Wilson Observatory by the California Institute of Technology and the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

Its 200-inch telescope was expressly designed for, and is engaged in a systematic study of far-off objects, rather than the planets, which are earth's next door neighbors. It can penetrate the cosmos to a depth of about one billion light years. That is 6,000 million million miles, twice that of the next largest telescope.

Dr. Seth B. Nicholson, also of the Observatory, reports that although the new Palomar photographs show details on a larger scale, they do not reveal more details than can be seen visually with even smaller telescopes. One of the new pictures of Jupiter is shown on the cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, another below.

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PLANET MARS—These two views of our next door neighbor were taken with the 200-inch Hale Telescope. The left photograph was made with a plate especially sensitive to blue light, and shows the variable atmospheric conditions and clouds or haze in the atmosphere. The right photograph was taken through a red filter on a red-sensitive plate 30 minutes before the blue-light photograph. It shows the permanent surface of Mars.