

Predictions as to how carbohydrates will react in various antisera can be made, the findings also show, when the con-

stitution of the repeating chemical unit in the carbohydrate is known.

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## PUBLIC HEALTH

## Plan Physician Control

**New federal body to allot physicians to medically neglected communities is advocated by committee of physicians. U. S. Public Health Service would operate it.**

► A CENTRALIZED federal body to control medical manpower and distribute physicians so that the health of the civilian population as well as the armed forces will be maintained is advocated in a statement by the Committee of Physicians for the Improvement of Medical Care, of which Dr. Channing Frothingham of Boston is chairman and Dr. John P. Peters of New Haven is secretary.

"Maintenance of the health of the civilian population is as much a national responsibility as is the control of the production and distribution and the proper allocation of commodities between the armed forces and civilians," declares this eleventh statement to be issued in the seven years of the committee's existence.

Only a nation-wide plan will be effective, it is argued, because of the barriers of medical licensure and the uneven distribution of physicians between the several states. No reliance can be placed, it is declared, on plans predicated upon the voluntary relocation of physicians.

Calling attention to the shortage of physicians reported by the Office of War Information, it is stated that "so critical has the situation become that the health of many communities is seriously threatened." The Procurement and Assignment Service now in operation has been unable to maintain an adequate supply of physicians in many areas, it is stated, although it was set up "to protect these civilian communities by preventing inequitable and uneven recruitment of physicians for the armed services."

The United States Public Health Service would be the operating agency entrusted with the responsibility of protecting the health of the civilian population, under the committee's plan. It is suggested that it may be necessary for the Public Health Service to grant commissions to physicians in order that they may be assigned to communities where

they are needed, without interference from state licensure.

Nurses and other medical personnel would be included as would be hospital and other facilities where they are needed. Health centers would be established at which groups, including specialists, could work as coordinated units. The plan contemplates the full use of Negro physicians and of qualified refugee physicians.

Where services are provided by U. S. Public Health Service officers who cannot accept fees, the persons treated, when they can afford it, would pay for their medical services on a pre-payment plan or by fees for services rendered. These funds would be devoted to an expansion of the medical services, a plan that is now in effect in certain localities.

Changes in medical education made by military authorities were criticized in the committee's report. Reduction of the premedical course to 21 months instead of the earlier war-accelerated 36 months period makes it "difficult to obtain adequate preparation for medical education" although this action will not give the armed forces more physicians until 1949.

Replacement of younger medical school teachers by older physicians threatens to cause "deterioration in the quality of teaching."

"Instead of vesting the control of our educational system in the military authorities," the report states, "it would be preferable to establish at once a comprehensive authority to assume direction of medical education, with separate bodies responsible for the major scientific and technical branches."

The endorsement of the committee is given to the bill, S. 1161, introduced into the Senate by Senator Robert F. Wagner (Dem. N. Y.) which provides "a framework and a basis for discussion from which a constructive program for

improved medical and health care of the American people may be developed." The bill provides for an advisory health council.

The Committee of Physicians' report also controverts the claims of the National Physicians Committee for Extension of Medical Services, another organization more closely aligned with the American Medical Association, that the private independent practice of medicine has been responsible for practically all the important advances of medicine in modern times.

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## BIOLOGY

## Penicillin Production on Large Scale Now Planned

See Front Cover

► PENICILLIN, powerful germ-killing substance made from a mold like that which grows on stale bread, may soon be manufactured on a large scale for military use if efforts of the Squibb Biological Laboratories and other large drug manufacturing companies are successful (See *SNL*, May 29).

The mold from which penicillin is made is pictured on the front cover of this week's *SCIENCE NEWS LETTER*. What



**GERM KILLER**—The hole of this doughnut was made when staphylococcus germs in the white area, which originally filled the plate, retreated before the onslaught of penicillin, germ-killing chemical from the mold, *Penicillium notatum*, seen as the white spot in the center of the hole and, greatly enlarged, on the cover.