

with dependent children program, I personally approve of the notion that we build into our public welfare programs some incentive to recipients to take vocational training, and to accept employment where it is appropriate. I do not feel that AFDC mothers should be required to accept training and employment, and, if they refuse, suffer a loss of assistance. The fact is that, contrary to public opinion, a great many such mothers, given some incentive to do so, are anxious to equip themselves for gainful employment and to enter the labor market, either on a part-time or full-time basis.

I have outlined my ideas on how our public assistance program can be made viable—to insure provision of adequate financial aid and social services, as well as providing training and employment for all who can benefit therefrom. Since our goal is to provide people with jobs if they can work, with financial aid if they cannot, and with adequate medical care for anyone who cannot purchase it himself, I will make one further recommendation: That we establish, by Federal legislation, a system of compulsory health insurance for every person in this country in covered employment, as well as his dependents.

If medicare is good for people over 65, and private health insurance—for those who can afford it—is good for people of any age, it seems only logical that a system of contributory insurance should be established to cover the millions of people who are not eligible for medicare, or who are not able to purchase their own health insurance.

There is no question but that many people in this country are being deprived of needed medical services because of their financial situation. I regard such services as a right, the same as the right to a job, or the right to financial assistance. And I do not know of any better system to insure that this right is made a reality.

I would further suggest that if everyone in this country received adequate medical care—at public expense, if necessary—the demand on tax revenues would be prohibitive. For the same reasons that we have a contributory insurance system—social security—that provides for many of the subsistence and medical needs of people over 65, I believe that such a system would be the least burdensome method of providing medical care to people of all ages.

As I indicated at the outset, there is undoubtedly some method, other than public assistance, that will guarantee everyone in this country a minimum adequate income. Since I have not been able to devise such a system, and feel particularly unqualified to do so, I have tried to suggest administrative changes and amendments to our present laws which would enable the public assistance system to carry out the purposes for which it was established, in an efficient and effective manner.

Thank you.

Representative GRIFFITHS. Thank you, Mr. Hursh.

Mr. Wyman?

STATEMENT OF GEORGE K. WYMAN, COMMISSIONER, NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Mr. WYMAN. Madam Chairman, members of the committee, my name is George Wyman. I am the commissioner of the New York State Department of Social Services. I, too, welcome this opportunity to