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NEWS RELEASE

from the Desk of SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

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HEALTH COSTS CHALLENGE TO NATION

Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (D., Minn.) last night called for a united four-point approach for improved medical care to "reduce the annual toll of human suffering and economic loss".

Speaking before the Group Health Institute at a banquet in St. Paul, Minn., Senator Humphrey warned that illness now costs the Nation \$30 billion a year -- "just about the total take of the Federal income tax".

"Our government, our great medical profession, and the American people themselves all have a stake and a responsibility in cutting down that toll," he warned. "But to do it, they must move forward together, instead of at cross purposes."

Senator Humphrey said there are "four basic problems of health that today face the American society", including:

1. High cost of medical care.
2. Mal-distribution of medical facilities
3. Shortage of qualified personnel.
4. Need to expand research and conquer disease.

To meet those problems, Senator Humphrey, urged:

1. "Encouragement and development of voluntary health insurance programs and pre-payment health plans offer our best hope of lowering costs of medical care. Great progress has already been made in this field, but still more can and must be done..."
2. "Increased hospital construction, and establishment of community health clinics under the auspices of cooperative and non-profit organizations..."
3. "Federal aid to medical, dental, nursing and other healing art schools, along with increased voluntary contributions to medical education..."
4. "Greater investment in research through Federal and state funds, as well as through private and philanthropic sources..."

"Work of private, cooperative and philanthropic organizations toward improved medical care, better health facilities, adequately trained personnel, and expanded research must be reinforced by active cooperation of responsible agencies and officials of government through well-formed and carefully planned programs", Senator Humphrey declared. "We need constructive goals and objectives for our national health program, not hit or miss assistance in terms of Federal, state, and local expenditures".

Every dollar expended for health protection, Senator Humphrey insisted, "provides great dividends in health and happiness, in production and performance".

"Our Nation has made great progress, and all of us can be proud of the accomplishments of modern medicine," he declared. "Doctors, dentists, nurses, technicians, and self-sacrificing workers in the field of medical research have every right to be justly proud of their achievements for the American people. But in the face of growing needs, we still face new challenges to overcome -- challenges which must be shared by all the people, not the medical profession alone."

Responsibility of Federal government to help meet those health needs "has been recognized by three successive national administrations," Senator Humphrey declared. "The responsibility to meet health needs of American people is indeed now an established American policy. We must move forward with constructive and imaginative legislation to help meet those needs. The price we pay for inaction is too high."



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