

STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY PRESIDENT ANSWERS RALEIGH NEWS & OBSERVER SLANDER

Full Information Given on Medical Aid Now Available to Those Over 65

BY T. B. RAIFORD, PRESIDENT
 MEDICAL SOCIETY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Three weeks ago, the American Medical Association sponsored paid advertisements in North Carolina newspapers calling attention to the fact that a program of medical care for people over 65 who need help in paying medical expenses is available now in North Carolina.

These advertisements were placed in these newspapers with the approval of the Medical Society of the State of North Carolina. They were prompted by the belief that many citizens of our state did not know of the existence of this Medical Assistance to the Aged program, which was made possible by the enactment of the Kerr-Mills Law by Congress in 1960.

The response to this educational effort indicates that the public indeed had not been adequately informed about the Kerr-Mills MAA Program. Many inquiries have been received by people who are not eligible for Kerr-Mills MAA assistance because they are not over 65 or for other reasons. The News & Observer, therefore, editorially branded the program a "cruel hoax." And in the process, the News & Observer made a pitch for Medicare.

Physicians of North Carolina submit that the real hoax is this so-called Medicare scheme, which responsible public opinion polls as well as surveys by members of Congress have shown is opposed by a majority of the American people.

Let's examine both the concept of Kerr-Mills MAA and Medicare and what each provides.

The News & Observer has implied that Kerr-Mills MAA requires an elderly person to pauperize himself before he can receive benefits. The reverse is true. The Kerr-Mills Law was designed to help those over 65 who need help when they need it and at the same time to conserve their resources. In North Carolina, for example, an elderly person can have income of \$104 a month, own his home, and \$2,000 in savings and other assets, all of which he can keep untouched and still receive benefits under Kerr-Mills MAA. This program is intended to prevent a person over 65 from becoming totally destitute before he can get help.

Kerr-Mills wisely provides help only to those who need it, thus avoiding waste of tax money. The Medicare proposal, on the other hand, would force wage earners and their employers to pay a substantial increase in payroll taxes to provide hospitalization and related benefits to everyone over 65, regardless of need, the wealthy included. Physicians believe such a compulsory program which would force higher taxes on the working people of this state or nation and use any part of the taxes to provide hospitalization to people financially able to take care of themselves is both economically unsound and morally wrong.

North Carolina's Kerr-Mills MAA program provides complete hospitalization for 30 days or longer at no cost to the patient. The Medicare proposal, on the other hand would offer the elderly a confusing choice of plans, without regard to their medical needs. One plan would require the patient to pay up to 100 out of his own pocket. Another would force him to pay

for it. If the publisher of the News and Observer believes there is, he should produce the evidence.

The Kerr-Mills MAA program provides dental care (except for payment for dentures.) The Medicare scheme would provide no dental care at all.

The Kerr-Mills MAA program by the first of January will pay for drugs prescribed by a doctor whether the patient is in or out of the hospital. Medicare would pay for only those drugs provided in a hospital or a nursing home.

Medicare would not pay the family doctor or surgeon. North Carolina's Kerr-Mills MAA program does not pay doctors bills either. No funds were provided for this purpose, primarily because the doctors themselves requested the Legislature not to include doctor fees in the program at the outset. Doctors prefer to take care of these patients without charge, and they do, so that hospitalization and other services can be provided. There is provision in the law for payment of physicians if that is later deemed advisable. There is no provision at all for payment of physicians in the Medicare proposal.

The fact is that no one in North Carolina is being denied medical care because he cannot

pay for it. If the publisher of the News and Observer believes there is, he should produce the evidence.

The Kerr-Mills MAA program provides dental care (except for payment for dentures.) The Medicare scheme would provide no dental care at all.

The Kerr-Mills MAA program by the first of January will pay for drugs prescribed by a doctor whether the patient is in or out of the hospital. Medicare would pay for only those drugs provided in a hospital or a nursing home.

Kerr-Mills MAA in North Carolina does not provide nursing home care. Many people believe that Medicare would provide nursing home care. There is a sneaker in that provision, however. Nursing home care would be provided only in a nursing home owned by or affiliated with a hospital, and there are only about 500 of these in the entire United States.

The Medicare scheme has been sold to the American people as the answer to all the medical problems of the elderly, but in North Carolina and elsewhere, it would provide less at greater cost to the aged patient who needs help and to the taxpayers who pay the bill than the Kerr-Mills program.

When citizens of North Carolina know the truth, we are willing to let them judge which is the real hoax, Kerr-Mills or Medicare.

Furthermore, with a Kerr-Mills Program working and voluntary health insurance and prepayment plans rapidly expanding in coverage for the elderly, we are willing to let the people judge whether Medicare is necessary.

We believe the Legislature acted in good faith to provide this program, which is governed and controlled by the people who know the problem best, the people of North Carolina. We believe the people of North Carolina when they know the facts will agree that they don't want federal bureaucrats meddling in our hospitals and interfering

with medical decisions that should be left to those who are qualified to make those decisions — your doctors.

We further believe that State Welfare Commissioner R. Eugene Brown and his staff, within the countless limitations imposed on them by a slow-moving State Board of Public Welfare and by budgetary restrictions, have done a commendable job in developing North Carolina's Kerr-Mills MAA program.

The News & Observer urged you to write your senators and representatives in Congress about this issue. We urge you to do likewise.

**RENEW YOUR JOURNAL
SUBSCRIPTION TODAY!**

If you are planning to build a new home.
 If you are planning to sell your farm.
 If you are planning to buy or sell any kind of real estate.
 Contact the real estate man who wants to make just a small profit.

M. BAILEY BARROW
 REALTOR

REAL ESTATE SALES - BUILDER - BROKER

2004 N. Queen Street
 Kinston, North Carolina Phone JA 3-6981

"Bunk!"

"Hard to believe..."

"Must have had a 50-year-old Rolls..."

"Come on now..."

"Amazing..."

The world's leading acoustical experts make the test.
 The U. S. Auto Club certified the results.
 at 20 mph... at 40 mph... at 60 mph...

**The 1965 Ford
rides quieter
than a Rolls-Royce!**

That drive Total Performance '65...best year yet to go **FORD**

"This ad kills me..."

"Incredible!"

"Ridiculous!"

"Far fetched!"

"Hooley!"

To the 5 out of 10 people who didn't believe this ad... a sporting proposition

Take a no-obligation test drive in a 1965 Ford. Maybe you just couldn't believe the ad (reprinted above) which appeared in this paper a few weeks ago. After all, many consider Rolls-Royce to be one of the world's finest cars. But Ford does ride quieter. The world's leading acoustical experts (Bolt, Beranek and Newman, Inc.) made the tests. The U. S. Auto Club certified the results.

This year's Ford has the strongest body ever... a revolutionary new frame that "tunes out" vibrations... new ultrasoft coil-spring suspensions... all contributing to the new hushed ride. But the ride is only part of what's new.

■ New swept-back instrument panel adds five inches extra knee room. ■ Transmission tunnel is lower than in competing cars for extra foot room. ■ Trunk has more usable space than ever—holds four 2-suiters standing upright.

■ New ultra-luxurious LTD series — unmatched by any other car in Ford's class. ■ Silent-Flo ventilation (standard on 4-door hardtops) removes stale air, provides fresh air even with all windows closed. ■ Exclusive new twin-edge key—works with either side up.

■ Hot, but hushed, 289-cu. in. V-8 is standard equipment in XL and LTD models.

■ Smooth, thrifty all-new Big Six in other models—the most powerful standard Six offered by any car in Ford's class. ■ V-8 options to 425 hp.

■ All Ford automatic transmissions have 3 speeds, not 2 as in many competing cars. ■ Fully synchronized manual transmissions—you can even shift down to first without clashing gears.

If all this sounds like a lot for one car to offer... take a test drive. See why more people are buying Fords than ever before in post-war history.

PRODUCTS OF MOTOR COMPANY

Test drive Total Performance '65...best year yet to go

FORD
 MUSTANG - GALAXIE - TORINO - FORD - THUNDERBOLT

BROCK MOTOR COMPANY
 Trenton, N. C.