The Queenstown News

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Friday, November 5, 1954

The Picture Has Changed

Is it true that a considerable proportion of the American people are unable to pay medical bills—and that the cost of medical care has risen unreasonably?

An answer is provided by two sets of government figures. According to one set, less than three per cent of the population need help to meet their medical bills. According to the other, between the 1935-39 period and 1952 medical costs increased 65.5 per cent as against 90.8 per cent for living costs as a whole.

The dramatic growth of voluntary health insurance has changed the whole picture in a comparatively brief period of time. Well over 100,000,000 have this protection now. The charges are easily within the means of the vast majority of workers. And a great step forward is found in new forms of insurance which cover disabling illnesses of long duration. These are usually written on a deductible basis, muck like automobile liability insurance, and the rates are modest when judged by the [illegible] coverage given.

[illegible] to pe[illegible] insurance. The [illegible] The American Medical Association has proposed a solution for this. It lies in further expandng the voluntary insurance plans, and in expanding whatever financial aid is needed at the state and local level. Only at that level,he observed, can the medical needs of individuas be determined, and their economic status assessed in relation to those needs. To put the federal government into the picutre would mean concenrating all the authority in Washington. That would be the worst and most costly way to attack the problem.

Midterm Elections Under Popular Presidents

A President's popularity spills over to his party's candidates, President Eisenhower has been told by Republican leaders who want him to dive head first into this year Congressional elections. A President's popularity make little dent on the local and personal issues that decide most midterm elections. He is being warned by his advisers who want him to keep relatively detached from the 1954 elections.

Neither side finds its arguments fully supported by our 20th century politicalhistory. Three20th century Presidents — Theodore Roosevelt, Coolidge, Franklin D. Roosevelt — were without question highly popular at the midterm elections during their administrations, yet the results of those elections varied considerably.

In 1902 the Republicans lost only one Senate (net) and eight House seats (net), and in 1906 they actually gained three Senate seats—result that may well have been due to T.R.'s popularity. However, in 1906 they lost 28 House seats out of the total at that time of 386, a fairly substantial loss.

In 1926, under Coolidge, the G.O.P.lost only tenHouse seats out of 435, much below the average loss for the party in power at midterm elections.But it lost six Senate seats, certainly no less than average.

In 1934 the Democrats actually gained in both houses—a reflection of the 1929-33 Republican depression. In 1938 they lost six Senate seats and 71 House seats and in 1943 nine Senate seats and 45 House seats, but they had won so many in both houses in 1936 and 1940 that these heavy midterm losses still left them with substantial majorities. In 1954 the Republicans have majorities in both Senate and House so paper thin that they can't afford to lose many seats in either.

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