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Physician, Professors Debate Plan of Health Aid for Aged [ARTICLE]

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Physician, Professors Debate Plan of Health Aid for Aged

"Medical Benefits for the Aged" was the topic of debate on last night's Ithaca College TV program "Controversy." Prof. Gordon F. Streib, of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and Prof. Louis S. Reed, of the School of Business and Public Administration, supported government-directed old age medical programs, opposing the views of Dr. Stewart Wallace, president of the Sixth District, Medical Society of the State of New York.

Though all three agreed that some sort of program is needed to furnish medical care to the 16 million Americans over 65, Wallace stated that private physicians well aware of old age health needs, are most competent to devise effective medical assistance.

Pointing out that U.S. aged are healthiest and best cared for anywhere, Wallace warned that federal control of health programs means that an individual might be unable to choose his own doctor, and that well to do oldsters might receive undeserved money benefits, taxed from people even less financially secure than they are.

Wallace noted that a comprehensive program would soon require far greater funds than originally outlined in answer to Streib and Reed's contention that would cost only one-fourth of one per cent of a worker's salary.

It is the responsibility of society to provide needed medical care to old people who are unable

to afford medical fees, maintained Streib.

In opposition, Wallace outlined a reasonably priced comprehensive voluntary health insurance, which could solve a problem while avoiding a welfare state situation.

Professor Reed summed up his own and Streib's views by maintaining that an effective program is possible only under federal direction. Dr. Wallace concluded that the planning by competent physicians under free enterprise would result in continuing medical care

—William B. Freedman

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