

FORD AD

Amnesty Deadline Extended to March 1

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 30 —

President Ford today extended until March 1 the deadline for Vietnam-era draft evaders and military deserters to apply for clemency.

In a statement issued by the White House, Mr. Ford said that he had reviewed the program, and "I believe that many of those who could benefit from it are only now learning of its application to their cases."

He said that there was a "significant increase in the number of applications and inquiries over the last few weeks," when a stepped-up publicity campaign was begun by the Presidential Clemency Board, which handles a third of the program.

Of 136,900 eligible to take part in the program, only 8,516 have signed up thus far. In the last-minute rush gener-

ated by the publicity campaign and the old Jan. 31 deadline for applications, participation in the program has increased from 3 per cent to 6 per cent.

Charles E. Goodell, chairman of the board, said that all members "were pleased by the extension."

"I think it is a reasonable response to our request," he added.

Mr. Goodell has long maintained that the poor acceptance of the program was attributable to ignorance on the part of those who might benefit from it. He said that the nationwide media campaign by the Clemency Board had swelled the number of applications.

"Three weeks ago, we were getting three or four applications a day," Mr. Goodell said today in a telephone interview after the President's announcement. "Now we're getting 350 a day."

The board had recommended an extension of the program. The Justice Department and the Defense Department, which handle separate parts of the program, declined to say what recommendations they had made to the President.

However, sources at the White House said that they had

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both recommended against extension.

As of today, the response to the program was as follows:

¶The Justice Department, which handles unsettled cases of violation of the civilian draft law, reported that only 324 cases out of 4,400 known draft evaders had been handled with 1,600 other cases dropped after a review of records.

¶The Defense Department, which handles unsettled cases of military desertion and absence without leave, reported that 4,023 cases out of 12,500 eligible persons had been settled, with 169 more now being processed at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis.

¶The Clemency Board, with 120,000 cases of convicted and punished civilian and military personnel, reported 4,000 applications for clemency in hand.

Mr. Goodell, appointed by President Ford to head the nine-member Clemency Board, is generally regarded as the Administration's spokesman, though he heads only one-third of the program. He gives the impression of a man trying to do his best with limited tools and without passing judgment on their quality.

"I think this is the only clemency program you're going to have," he told Senator Philip A. Hart, Democrat of Michigan, at a Congressional hearing last December.

Pragmatic Approach

In interviews last week in several cities, some of those who had signed up for the amnesty reflected Mr. Goodell's pragmatic approach.

"This is the only opportunity I had to get cleared, and I grabbed it," said Ronald Carr of Atlanta. "Running is humiliating. To me, this is reconciliation."

Some felt that though they had been through the program, they were still stigmatized.

"I'm hiding, man, I'm still hiding from society's eye," said a 28-year-old Army deserter from Phoenix who is working off his alternative service.

But he said that he had no regrets about turning himself in.

"From that day on, I didn't have to look back," he said. "I couldn't care less who's walking behind me now."

When President Ford announced the "earned re-entry program" last September, it was widely attacked and boycotted. But it also stirred many activities in the Government and among private groups.

Barry W. Lynn, coordinator of a program called "To Heal a Nation" sponsored by the United Church of Christ, said of the President's program, "It's not really the only game in town. There are a great number of options outside the program."

"A heck of a lot of people have taken the other options," he said.

People who have taken part in the Presidential program have had mixed reactions.

Mr. Carr, who was in hiding for 10 years after deserting from the Navy, works in a Presbyterian Church center in At-

lanta and hopes to become a missionary.

"Now that the secret is out, no one seems to hold it against me," he said. "It's so much different than when I was on the run. I was almost paranoid then about being picked up for something else and then being discovered as a deserter. Even jaywalking was unthinkable to me."

Afraid of Reprisals

The Phoenix man, who asked that his name be withheld for fear of reprisals, said that the amnesty program had saved him from going to prison. He turned himself in because he felt that the Federal Bureau of Investigation was close to arresting him. This was three days before the President announced the program on Sept. 16.

He said that he wanted to get his record cleared and luckily fell into the amnesty program instead of prison at Fort Leavenworth.

But he said that the public did not accept men who had been through the program.

He has an alternative service job, delivering supplies in a private hospital.

"I don't mention it here," he said at his job. "Even my pal downstairs, I don't tell him that I'm in the amnesty program. Hell, no."

He is paid \$2.14 an hour and said that if he had trouble living on the pay he would abandon the program.

But he added, "Insofar as legalities are concerned, I want to get myself together. That's the only reason I'm doing it."

Had Own Ad Agency

In Los Angeles, a 28-year-old man who went to Canada seven years ago rather than face the draft has come back and is working with retarded children. He also asked that his name be withheld, "because everything has gone so well, so far, I don't want to do anything to run ruin that."

He said that by the time he and his wife decided to apply for amnesty, they had a year-old son, were buying a \$30,000 home in Toronto and were run-

ning their own advertising agency, making \$24,000 a year.

They re-entered the United States last Nov. 30 at Detroit and drove to Los Angeles, where he turned himself in at the United States Attorney's office. He was given a 16-month alternative service job that he had selected before leaving Canada. It pays him \$9,000 a year.

"We are very pleased," he said. "We are actually quite surprised everything went through with far less red tape than I anticipated."

"I have not really tried to hide the fact that I went to Canada to stay out of the war. I will talk about it openly. So far, the reception has been quite good all the way along the line. The general attitude has been short of one of 'welcome back.'"

Asked why he had come back, he said, "My main interest was not to have this hanging over my head the rest of my life. There was always this feeling of only being able to travel east and west, but never south."

In Philadelphia, another 28-year-old draft evader angrily turned himself in this week. He was under indictment for failing to report for induction in the fall of 1971.

Finds It Demeaning

"I'm fed up," he said before surrendering. "The alternative to the clemency program for me is going to court and trial and the probability, because I avoided induction, of a felony conviction."

"I'm teaching now, and I don't think a felony conviction would look good on my record. They've got me between a rock and a hard place. It's demeaning. It's insulting. But it's the only route open to me so far."

"Eventually, they'd get around to me. I have been indicted. My address has always been public. I've never been underground. Fortunately, this opportunity has come along to salvage me from the court."

He called the program "far below minimum standards" and said that he thought it was more public relations than substance.

"When you look at it closely to take advantage of it," he said, "It doesn't offer too much."