

# Peace Plight of Draft Resisters

## London

The war in Vietnam may be over for the U.S. but it still haunts Americans who chose self-imposed exile around the world rather than fight in that controversial war.

For the draft resisters, and for the hundreds of U.S. servicemen who deserted to avoid the killing in Indochina, the end of the conflict means little.

While the Vietnam veterans go home to a new life, the draft resisters face prison and fines if they step on American soil. They are still wanted fugitives.

### AMNESTY

Their hope of returning to their homeland is a general amnesty. Few believe it will come.

"Nothing has changed for us," said Fritz Efaw, a 26-year-old Oklahoman who fled to Britain in May, 1969, and now heads the Union of American Exiles here. "Amnesty is our only hope and that isn't any hope, not while Nixon's president."

Efaw and others like him point to Mr. Nixon's election promise last year to oppose any moves to grant amnesty. But some pin hopes on Americans' ability to forgive and forget.

### SCAPEGOATS

The U.S. Defense Department says there were 2391 servicemen deserters "at large" in foreign countries — 70 per cent in Canada and 10 per cent in Sweden. The figure did not include draft resisters, on which there

was no estimate of the total available.

Lew Simon, an Army deserter who lived out the war in Sweden, believes the draft resisters and deserters will be made scapegoats by the Nixon administration for America's first military impasse.

"Amnesty is bound to be a central issue in American domestic politics when the war is really over," he said in Stockholm. "Deserters won't go home when the fighting stops. We want a real amnesty where we are not regarded as criminals."

Mike Powers, another of the estimated 500 deserters in Sweden, added: "I doubt Nixon will grant an amnesty for deserters or draft dodgers."

"Perhaps there will be some sort of ploy with partial amnesty for draft dodgers — on certain conditions, of course."

### CANADA

In Canada, where authorities estimate more than 70,000 Americans moved to flee the draft, a Toronto exile group is helping plan an international conference to push for amnesty.

John Colhoun of American Exiles in Canada said the cease-fire has added incentive to the conference planned for February 17 in Paris. Delegates from U.S. peace groups as well as peace activists from Canada, Britain, Sweden, France and Germany are to attend.

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