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4 BILLS SEEK AID FOR ADDICTED G.I.'S

Aim Is to Cure Men Before
They Are Discharged

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WASHINGTON, May 23 — Apprehension that a deluge of drug-addicted former servicemen may be released into American society is reflected in four bills coming up in Congress to require the armed services to keep such men in uniform until they are cured.

One of the bills, sponsored by Representative Seymour Halpern, Republican of Queens would oblige an addict to undergo treatment and rehabilitation on his own time. His enlistment would be suspended while he was being cured.

This proposal was designed to meet objections raised by Pentagon experts who said it would be legally impossible to keep a man in the service for treatment beyond the end of his period of enlistment.

Two other bills are being introduced by Representative Paul G. Rogers, Democrat of Florida, and Representative John S. Monagan, Democrat of Connecticut. Provisions of a fourth proposal sponsored by Representative Edward I. Koch, Democrat of Manhattan, Representative Hugh L. Carey, Democrat of Brooklyn, have been incorporated in an omnibus welfare bill. All of these would merely extend a soldier's enlistment to provide for rehabilitation.

Meanwhile, Odyssey House, the New York drug addict rehabilitation center, has proposed that a 960-bed rehabilitation test project be divided among the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps.

Project Proposed

The trial project, which would cost \$5,710,400, could be expanded as required. It would be based entirely on therapeutic group psychology, without the use of methadone or other substitutes for heroin.

Pentagon officials contend that treating and rehabilitating addicts is beyond the mission of the Army, Navy and Air Force, which were created to fight wars. But implicit in the proposed legislation is the idea that the services' mission must now be broadened. For this the legislators give two reasons:

First, many of the military became addicted because the armed services exposed them to the peculiar circumstances of Vietnam. The armed services are, therefore, under special obligation to cure them.

Second, the armed services are under obligation to American society because the threat from such a flood of addicts is as great as from war itself.

Representative Halpern, who has just returned from Vietnam, where he found heroin easily available from street vendors near Army bases, estimated that at least 60,000 men there were using hard drugs.

"If a G.I. had typhoid or malaria," he said, "the military wouldn't send him home just because he was due for discharge. Well, narcotics addiction is contagious and it's become epidemic. It's time for laws to be changed to recognize this tragic reality.

Mr. Halpern reported that marijuana was becoming less popular in Vietnam because its odor made it easily detectable.

Latest Fad in Vietnam

"The big scene now," he explained, "is the smoking of heroin sprinkled in ordinary cigarettes."

Estimating that 20 to 30 per cent of soldiers in Vietnam were using hard drugs, he noted that "in some units, like Longbinh, usage has reached an estimate of 50 per cent among the G.I.'s in the E5 category and under.

Two more Congressmen voiced a demand that "under no circumstances should military authorities be permitted to return heroin addicts to civilian life unrehabilitated."

The men, Representative Morgan F. Murphy, Democrat of Illinois, and Representative Robert H. Steele, Republican of Connecticut, said in a statement after a tour of the Far East that the number of military hard-drug addicts might be as high as 78,000.

Pointing out that these men had become accustomed to sniffing, smoking or injecting heroin that is 94 to 97 per cent pure they observed:

"Men who have acquired an appetite for the Vietnamese product are going to have more fixes a day back here. When you're talking about fixes, you're talking about money and that means you're talking about crime."

The Congressmen reported a strange combination of interests supporting the Southeast Asian drug trade, including American veterans and deserters, high-ranking Thailanders, Laotians and Vietnamese, a division of Chinese Nationalist troops in Burma, and Vietnamese hill tribesmen who are supported by the Central Intelligence Agency. American and allied aircraft were being used to transport the drugs, they said.

In an address to 250 business delegates at a Pentagon seminar last week, Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird said that during a recent trip to Vietnam he had impressed personally on South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu "that we expect them to deal with this problem much more effectively than they have."