

Rangel Says GI Addicts Slip By

WASHINGTON — Rep. Charles Rangel charged on the House floor Monday that many G.I. addicts in Vietnam were escaping detection, despite the heroin tests made on homeward-bound American soldiers.

He said many G.I.'s were doing everything they could to avoid detection since a positive test meant they had to remain longer in Vietnam for treatment.

"Some drink beer to dilute the urine, some strap a bag of another's urine to their side, some detoxify ahead of time and some simply pay off people. Despite the methods used, it is evident that addicted sol-

diers are getting by undetected," he said.

On Monday, The House voted to expand the Veterans Administration's drug treatment program to include active-duty servicemen and dishonorably discharged veterans. The bill was passed by a vote of 378 to 0.

The Senate is expected to

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—Rangel

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approve the measure within the next few weeks.

The expanded drug treatment programs are expected to cost \$89.3 million during the next five years.

Rangel was speaking in support of the Veteran's Drug Treatment Act which he and the Congressional Black Caucus is supporting. The bill authorizes the Veteran's Administration to provide rehabilitation services to returning G.I. addicts.

Rangel said the bill "is not a moment too soon" since "the large number of returning addicted G.I.'s makes it more likely than ever before that when a mother's son returns home, she gets not a hero, but an addict."

Current Policy

He said the bill would authorize the Veteran's Administration to treat addicts, whether or not they received a dishonorable discharge. Under current policy, he said, the V.A. refuses to treat veterans with dishonorable discharges and requires an administrative decision to treat bad conduct or undesirable discharged veterans.

"This has caused a ridiculous problem," he said, "since in the past the military has given most drug dependent soldiers dishonorable or bad conduct discharges which rendered them ineligible for V.A. treatment."

Rangel said the bill would also permit a member of the armed forces who was an addict to be transferred immediately to a V.A. hospital for treatment. The serviceman would be returned to military duty when his addiction condition was stabilized.

Finally, he said the bill would authorize the V.A. to treat any ex-serviceman who had been committed by Federal courts for drug dependency. He would then remain in the V.A. for treatment up to 36 months and may not voluntarily withdraw.