

mental programs of rehabilitation must be expanded including those involving the administration of controlled amounts of drugs under strict medical supervision.

Churches should assist in developing half-way houses and similar centers to provide a therapeutic and supportive community for addicts. (1964 Methodist Discipline, Paragraphs 1820 and 1822).

The provisions of H.R. 15758, Title III, for constructing, staffing, operating, and maintaining new facilities in the treatment of alcohol and narcotic addicts is a basic step toward providing the kind of comprehensive care needed, if society is going to take seriously its responsibility toward those afflicted by alcohol and drug problems. We are grateful for the steps already taken by the Congress and Executive branch of government, and believe that H.R. 15758 will make available much of the necessary funding to implement plans already envisioned.

THE NEED FOR H.R. 15758

Obviously the Congress was aware of the pressing need for facilities to prevent and treat alcoholism and narcotic addiction or this bill would neither have been drafted nor would these hearings have been held. Others will document this need with statistics, so just let me underline the urgency of this legislation by citing one image of the enormity of the problem of alcoholism. According to the report of the Cooperative Commission on the Study of Alcoholism if all the psychiatrists and all the social workers in the United States were transferred to California, they could give only minimum care of one individual interview per week and one home visit per month to the alcoholics and their families in that *one* state. (I would remind the committee that, even though narcotic addiction is a dramatic and urgent problem, narcotic addicts are numbered in the thousands while alcoholics are numbered in the millions.) This astounding fact calls for a massive effort on the part of the whole nation to provide comprehensive care for the sufferers of this disorder of mind, body, and spirit and an equally massive effort to prevent others from being afflicted. H.R. 15758 is a highly commendable beginning because it provides for both treatment and prevention and specialized facilities such as half-way houses.

We should not fail to see this legislation within the context of the President's Commission on Civil Disorders, as well as the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Justice, because the Commission on Civil Disorders noted the well known fact of the high rate of alcoholism and narcotic addiction in our inner cities. Implementing some of the recommendations of the Commission regarding jobs, education, and housing will get at many of the root causes of these twin illnesses, but in the meantime our urban poor need services. H.R. 15758 is one way of dealing with the crisis in the nation.

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCHES

The sheer size of the problems of alcoholism and narcotic addiction has moved the churches to unite in inter-faith efforts to deal with the problems. No single denomination or religious tradition has all of the resources of insight and competence to provide all the answers, but jointly, in cooperative ways that complement one another, the religious community can provide a relevant ministry to the total community.

The National Council of the Churches of Christ said in 1958:

The churches share a pastoral concern for alcoholics, problem drinkers and their families...

Alcoholics are persons in need of diagnosis, understanding, guidance and treatment. They are especially in need of pastoral care and the divine love which the church can bring them. There need be no condoning of their behavior, but neither should a church permit its antagonism to alcohol to prevent its offering an effective ministry to alcoholics and their families. (The Churches and Alcohol, 1958.)

At the same time the churches have been moving together to form a united ministry, they have been joining with forces in the community, professional and volunteer, to support and take their place on the inter-disciplinary team we know as the care-giving systems of our society—health, law, education, welfare, volunteer service groups, and religion. Again I cite the 1958 statement of the National Council of Churches: