

that the presumptive period for establishing service-connection for cancer be extended to 3 years from the current 1 year period.

(5) The growing number of older and infirm veterans (average age is over 70) have created an immediate demand for more beds for the Veterans' Administration nursing home care program. Current local ordinances and controls or requirements in this relatively new activity serve to make the Veterans' Administration and community home nursing care difficult to come by or unavailable for use by the chronically ill requiring such care. To meet this demand, AMVETS asks your continued support of all appropriate action and funding to hasten the expansion of this Veterans' Administration sponsored nursing home care program.

Currently only a Veterans' Administration hospital inpatient, except in Alaska and Hawaii, can be admitted to a Veterans' Administration nursing home; obviously such a restriction will prevent other deserving veterans from gaining admission. This would affect especially those veterans who cannot avail themselves of the privilege of being admitted to a Veterans' Administration hospital, or who because of the nature of their condition could not undertake to travel to the nearest Veterans' Administration hospital. We therefore urge that this restriction be eliminated.

(6) (a) AMVETS goes on record as being opposed to the requirement of a "pauper's oath" by a veteran requesting hospitalization for a non-service-connected disability. The discretion for admission should rest in the Administrator of the particular facility.

(b) The Social Security Administration has long recognized that 72-year-olds have reached stable incomes and accordingly they are exempted from further reporting. AMVETS feels that these facts should inspire legislation exempting 72-year-old pensioners from filing required annual income questionnaires.

(7) Presently a veteran's transitional period from the military to civilian life poses several problems:

(a) Upon discharge the family of a veteran loses all medical entitlement. Commercial major medical policies have certain time limitations before specific coverages are applicable for his family. The gap in time should be spanned by allowing at least 1 year of hospital medical coverage to the veteran's family during this transitional period, preferably in a Veterans' Administration hospital.

(b) Veterans presently have a 120-day grace period to convert their Serviceman's Group Life Insurance. In many instances, the veteran in his concern to re-establish himself in the community allows this grace period to expire and the coverage to lapse. AMVETS suggests that this grace period be extended to a minimum of 6 months.

(c) One of the most valuable services that can be provided returning war veterans is a mustering out allowance so that their readjustment from the military to civilian life is eased. You will recall that such benefits were accorded World War II veterans and the program proved to be a worthwhile social investment during this critical readjustment period. We therefore recommend that an appropriate allowance be given based on length of service and other relevant criteria and this program to be supervised by the Veterans' Administration.