

Rep. Hensley Requests HHH For Military Medical Assistance

Rep. William L. (Willie) Hensley has requested of the chairman of the National Council on Indian Opportunity, Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, that the national council staff pursue the utilization of the military medical personnel in Alaska to supplement the work of the public

health services in the villages.

"The hospital centers in large towns do about all that can be expected—but how can the health of villagers be helped by a two-way radio?" said Hensley.

"These hospitals receive patients that are in dire medical strait."

"The Public Health Service personnel," he continued, "just cannot visit villages often enough to do preventive work. Teeth need to be examined, eyes need to be checked, and people need to be given checkups more than once or twice a year.

"I feel that military personnel that aren't particularly busy can surely make a few visits a year to assist village people who are sorely in need of aid."

Hensley said that the native population in Alaska is young; that the median age is 16.3 and the rate of natural increase rivals that of Southeast Asia and that is 29 persons per thousand per year.

"But we also die young," Hensley stated. "The average age

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at death for natives is 34.5 and our crude rate of death is three times that of whites in Alaska, at 9.6 deaths per thousand. Our principal causes of death are accidents, influenza and pneumonia, and diseases of early infancy...

"The health problem of course, is one aspect of a total problem, clearly related to poor sanitation, low economic standing and the apathy of people in power who feel that all the native is good for is a vote and somebody to justify asking Uncle Sam for more funds.

"We need help—and perhaps this suggestion may be one avenue of improving the health conditions of the villages."