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Press Release - How Will the Muskie Veteran's Proposal Affect Maine

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MUSKIE

Maine

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HOW WILL THE MUSKIE VETERAN'S PROPOSAL AFFECT MAINE?

FOR RELEASE

- * Senator Muskie's proposal would provide job training and placement services, high school diploma instruction and improved GI educational benefits.
- * 13,224 Vietnam veterans were discharged to Maine during 1969 and 1970.
- * 3,827 veterans are presently unemployed in Maine.
- * Only 2,012 veterans (less than 16% of those applying for service) were placed in jobs and only 421 placed in training during FY 1971.
- * An estimated 3,000 veterans lack a high school diploma.
- * 2,476 veterans are now enrolled in post-secondary schools in Maine, but 6,000 more are eligible.

Employment Needs

As of September, 1971, there were 30,000 veterans from the Vietnam era in Maine, representing half of the 48,000 veterans who have returned to Maine since the Korean conflict. During FY 1971, Vietnam veterans were returning to Maine at a rate of over 600 per month.

Maine veterans have come home to a sluggish economy with high unemployment. As a result, some 3,827 Vietnam veterans are currently out of work in Maine.

Job placement and job training services available to Maine's returning veterans are seriously inadequate. During FY 1971, 12,843 veterans applied for services from the Maine Employment Security Commission. Only 2,012 (less than 16%) were placed in jobs. Training opportunities are also limited. In FY 1971, only 421 veterans were enrolled in Department of Labor training programs in Maine.

Federal Funds Unavailable

Job training and counseling monies are inadequate and unavailable. After a thorough review of veterans problems by Governor Kenneth M. Curtis' "Task Force on Veterans Job Opportunities" this spring, in response to urging by the Nixon Administration, an application for funds was submitted to the Department of Labor. The request was rejected on the basis that no money was available.

Educational Needs

High School - An estimated 3,000 Vietnam era veterans (10%) in Maine presently lack a high school diploma. Senator Muskie's bill would assure all veterans an opportunity to study for at least a high school diploma before they are discharged from the service.

Post-Secondary - Only 2,476 veterans are presently enrolled in Maine's colleges or vocational institutes. The Veterans Administration estimates that there are some 6,000 Maine veterans who are eligible for, but not receiving, post-high school education.

GI Educational Benefits - In most instances, existing GI Bill benefits (\$205/mo. for a married veteran) fall short of meeting educational costs. The University of Maine estimates its total cost for a married veteran with no children to be \$4,620 per year. Present GI benefits provide only \$1,845 per year. Senator Muskie's proposal would assure veterans full tuition costs, plus living expenses if aid is unavailable to the veteran from other sources.

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