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# Army Suspects Drugs in 89 Viet Deaths

SAIGON (AP) — The U.S. Army said Friday that 89 American soldiers may have died from overdoses of drugs in South Vietnam during the past 10 months.

Expressing "grave concern" about the problem, the Army said 25 drug abuse deaths were confirmed through autopsies and that doctors suspected overdoses caused 64 other fatalities.

The Army also disclosed that 746 troops were admitted to medical facilities in drug-related cases through September, compared with 527 cases during all of 1969. Last year, there

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were 16 confirmed drug deaths, the Army said.

The Army statement came after Sen. Thomas J. Dodd, D-Conn., issued a statement in Washington Thursday saying investigators of his Juvenile Delinquency subcommittee had found that GI deaths in Vietnam from overdoses of drugs had skyrocketed and that military leaders had failed to clamp down on drug abuse.

"The situation is disastrous among the troops and has spilled over into civilian life as the GIs return home," Dodd said.

The Army announcement in Saigon acknowledged a "significant increase in incidents of drug abuse," but said also that

a new and more accurate reporting procedure went into effect last Aug. 1. Prior to that time, some drug-related cases may have been listed on medical records under other categories of illness, the Army said.

The Army said, however, that the new procedures alone could not account for the increase. The announcement also blamed more widespread usage of hard drugs such as heroin for the higher toll.

"There are indications that there has been an increase in the available supply of high-potency heroin in Vietnam," the statement said.

To alleviate the drug problem, the Army said, new programs are being inaugurated which in-

volve improvement in law enforcement, better educational programs and more intensive medical and psychiatric treatment.

Teams of American and South Vietnamese policemen are being organized in an effort to crack down on manufacturers, distributors and pushers, the announcement said.

The Army already has inaugurated an amnesty program under which drug users can turn themselves in for treatment and rehabilitation without risking punishment.

"Responses to this program have indicated that military personnel are seeking assistance in stopping the use of drugs," the Army said.

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