

# New Enemy for GI in Korea... Culture Shock

Seoul, Korea — (NC)—“Culture shock” and a high rate of drug use are producing a rate of psychiatric hospitalization of U.S. Army personnel here that is three times higher than it was during the Korean war, according to a U.S. Army psychiatrist.

Maj. R. Paul Penningroth, M.D., director of the new U.S. Army Mental Health Clinic scheduled to open here in June, said the hospitalization rate is higher than it is in any other

place where the U.S. Army is stationed, including Vietnam.

“Culture shock,” he explained, is the inability to cope with a new set of culture codes and mores in a strange society.

“When thrust into a group of people who have different behavior patterns, many of us cannot understand our new surroundings, and sometimes turn to drugs, alcohol and women,” Penningroth said.

“And this can lead to further complications ranging from drug addiction to dealing in the black market to support their girl friends.”

No statistics have been released on drug addiction among GIs here, but Penningroth admitted it is “considerable, due particularly to the easy availability of drugs here in Korea.”

Korean law has a blind spot as far as the sale and use of narcotics are concerned. Marijuana is openly sold in every village where U.S. military compounds are located.

Penningroth continued: “In Korea, there are stresses and temptations on the soldier without the unifying goal or spirit that is present with the soldiers in Vietnam to help alleviate these problems.

“With little being done to prevent trouble and a shortage of professional help, these problems create a high rate of mental problems among soldiers here.”

Penningroth said that the Surgeon's Office of the U.S. 8th Army here recognized the increasing need for local treatment of mental cases and then

came up with the idea of setting up a clinic at the Army's headquarters in Seoul.

“The idea behind the clinic,”

he said, “is to allow the doctors to get at the problems when they first happen, and to prevent them from becoming more serious.”



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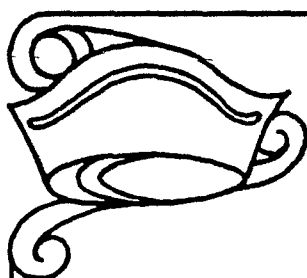
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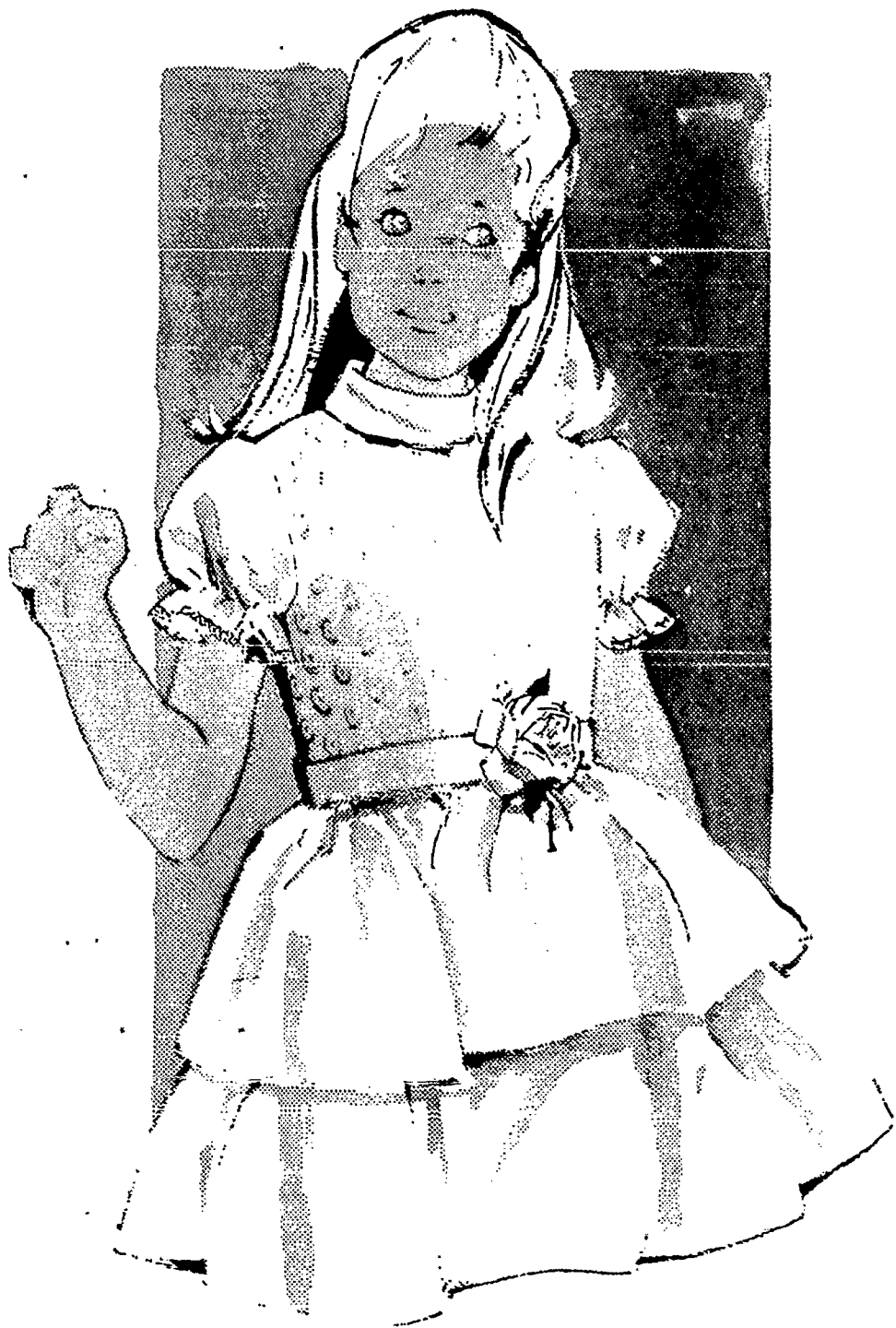
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