

Government VIP's Use Military Hospitals But Pay \$37 a Day

Washington—UPI—Government VIP's often take their ailments to military hospitals, but this doesn't mean they get a free ride at taxpayer expense.

The Defense Department explained today, in reply to queries, that Senators, Congressmen, Cabinet members and other "very important persons" are charged \$37 a day for care in military hospitals.

This is a flat rate regardless of the ailment—whether a splinter in the finger or a complicated case requiring the most elaborate treatment and attention. It covers everything, including medicine and drugs.

The President of the United States does not fall into the VIP classification in this respect. As Commander in Chief of the armed forces, he is regarded as being on active military duty and the only charge for him or a member of his family—like any military officer—is \$1.75 a day. This is primarily for food the patient consumes.

Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy was charged \$1.75 a day for a total of \$12.25—for her recent week in the Otis Air Force Base (Mass.) hospital during which she gave birth prematurely to the child which died of a respiratory ailment.

JFK Paid Bill

This was included in a total of \$174.25, which The White House said Kennedy paid by personal check to cover subsistence at the hospital for his wife, her secretaries, Secret Service agents and the first lady's obstetrician, Dr. John Walsh.

The flat fee of \$37 a day for treatment in military hospitals of non-military persons is almost the average cost of treatment in civilian hospitals, according to American Hospital association studies.

The association, citing skyrocketing costs of hospital treatments, estimates that the average daily cost of a stay in civilian hospitals was \$36.83. This is double the estimate of 10 years ago.

The fee charges for treating VIPs at military hospitals is fixed by the Bureau of the Budget and is designed to cover the actual cost of providing care to prominent civilians. The rate was increased by \$1 a day July 1.

Special arrangements were made at Otis Air Force Base hospital to meet a possible emergency, which subsequently developed, as Mrs. Kennedy awaited the birth of her baby. The Air Force confirmed that about \$5,000 was spent to renovate a wing of the hospital.

The Air Force said the \$5,000 was not a special expense to the taxpayers. Officials said the refurbishing was part of a \$1.2 million improvement project for the hospital as a whole. Other sources indicated that the cost did come out of the \$1.2 million fund

although the renovation obviously was speeded up, at least, to accommodate the First Lady.

Law Is Vague
Defense Department officials explained that there is nothing in the law that specifically authorizes the military services to provide hospital care for prominent civilians.

The law provides that these hospitals may provide care for "others" outside the military services. This has been interpreted to mean high officials under policies which are similar in the Army, Navy and Air Force.

State Vet Says Horse Show Could Be Held

Salem—UPI—State Veterinarian Glenn B. Rea said today he felt the horse show at the Oregon State fair could be held without causing an increase in the number of cases of equine influenza.

Dr. Rea said reports from more than 30 veterinarians indicated the disease seemed to have run its course. He said between 700 and 800 cases of the disease had been noted, mostly in the northwest section of the state and down the Willamette valley.

Former President Dwight D. Eisenhower received extended care at Walter Reed hospital when he was in office and was charged only the \$1.75 subsistence fee.

Soviet Ships Seen Near Missile Range

San Diego—UPI—The Navy confirmed Wednesday night that two Russian fishing trawlers have been operating on the edge of the Pacific missile range during test firings of missiles and satellite launches.

Capt. R. M. Hartmann, information officer of the 11th Naval District, said the trawlers were about 200 miles southwest of San Clemente island. He said the two 168-foot vessels carry electronic gear and could scan missile firings at Vandenberg Air Force Base and

Point Mugu as well as Navy experimental activities on San Clemente.

They were typical fishing boats and appeared to be fishing," Hartmann said. "They had a lot of gear on them. I imagine that these have been doing what Russian trawlers off Cape Canaveral might be doing."

Hartmann said the vessels have been under Navy and Coast Guard surveillance for some time and their presence had not interfered with various Navy training activities off Southern California.

Thornton Reveals Group Formation

Salem—UPI—Appointment of a committee to advise on the administration of the Uniform Supervision of Trustees for Charitable Purposes Act was announced today by Atty. Gen. Robert Y. Thornton.

The act, adopted by the 1963 legislature, requires registration of charitable trusts and similar tax-exempt groups.

Exempt from provisions of the reporting statute are religious organizations, educational institutions, hospitals and public bodies.

Advisory committee members and the organizations they represent are:

Multnomah County Circuit Judge William L. Dickson, Oregon Judicial Council; R. R. Bullivant, Oregon Uniform Code Commission; Nicholas Jauregui, Oregon State Bar; Myron H. Gleason, Oregon Society of Certified Public Accountants; C. W. Hastings Jr., Oregon Bankers Association, all of Portland; J. J. Ferder, State Treasury Department, and Charles S. Johnson, State Tax Commission, both of Salem.

Thornton said the committee would hold its first meeting Sept. 5 in Portland to recommend procedures for enforcing the law.

DIGEST PUBLISHED
Salem—UPI—A 96-page digest of Oregon laws 1963 with tables has been published by the legislative counsel committee, the legislature's bill drafting and statute compiling agency, it was announced Wednesday.

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