

City Will Hold All Venereal Victims

By KEELER MacCARTNEY.

A well-planned medical program for handling persons found to be infected with venereal diseases will be in operation here within the next two weeks instead of tossing the diseased persons back upon the public after a relatively light court sentence, it was revealed last night.

Heretofore, persons arrested and found to be infected with syphilis and gonorrhea either paid fines or served prison sentences before beginning medical treatment.

An average of 700 persons are brought into the police station each month on charges of prostitution, soliciting or being found in the room with a prostitute. Examinations by the city physician show that 500 of them have venereal diseases in one stage or another.

Clinic "Hold" Order.

Sentences in such cases run to a maximum of \$52 fine or 30 days in jail on each count, with a "hold" order for the city clinic when the court sentence is disposed of. In cases where multiple charges are brought, infected persons serve as much as 90 days without medical care.

There is no means of segregating infected persons at the stockade because of a lack of room, officials pointed out. They sleep in the same rooms, eat from the same tables, use the same toilet facilities and drink from the same fountains with prisoners who are not infected.

However, with the new system

in effect, health authorities intend to have infected persons sent first to the city clinic at 60 College street. There, Dr. Edward S. Armstrong will decide whether the patient can safely be placed among other prisoners.

Gonorrhea Victims.

Gonorrhea victims will be held at the clinic for five days before going to the stockade, health officers said, since that disease can usually be brought under control within that length of time. Prisoners with syphilis in an infectious stage will be held until there is

Continued on Page 13, Column 2.

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All Venereal Cases Will Be Held by City

Continued From First Page.

no danger of transmitting the disease.

When prisoners reached the stockade, the new clinic will be waiting to carry on the treatment. Trained investigators from the city clinic will take over infected persons when they have finished court sentences and take them either to private physicians or the clinic.

The program will reach full stride with the opening of the new stockade two months from now, health officials said. Part of the present stockade will be converted into a hospital.

Police Drive Pushed.

In the meantime, the police drive against organized prostitution is being pushed to the utmost. Eleven plain clothes men are assigned full time to tracking down prostitutes, working 24 hours a day over the weekend.

Every man on the force is constantly reminded to be on the lookout for solicitors.

Records show that the 700 cases each month are made from rooming houses, tourist camps, hotels and juke joints.

Police are not alarmed by the fact that 500 out of every 700 show infections. However, they are worried because 200 out of each monthly haul are repeaters.

Arrested 27 Times.

One woman arrested 27 times for open soliciting was found to be infected each time. Records show that she paid light fines each time and apparently ignored the court order for treatment.

Here is the case of "Miss X," a known prostitute, taken at random from the station records:

Arrested April 8, 1942, paid fine of \$17; arrested April 26, paid fine of \$12; arrested May 2, paid \$12 fine; arrested May 30, paid \$27; arrested June 20, paid \$17; arrested June 21, paid \$7; arrested June 25, paid \$7; arrested June 27, paid \$27; arrested June 27, case dismissed.

In each instance, she was found to be suffering from syphilis.

Medical Problem.

"We can catch the prostitutes and see that they get court sentences, but we can't cure their diseases down here," said Chief Hornsby. "That is a medical problem."

Health officials agree, and that is the reason for the creation of the stockade clinic.

The problem of arresting prostitutes, though, is not always an easy one. Police have raided known hangouts until they are practically deserted. Hotels and downtown rooming houses are producing fewer contacts each week on Army and Navy reports.

The prostitutes are "fanning out" to escape detection and that, within itself, makes their detection extremely difficult.

Co-operation Urged.

The police and health departments are geared to handle the situation, Chief Hornsby and health officials said. But the problem now has expanded to residential areas in outlying sections and the co-operation of the general public is imperative.

As for the question of the May act, about which there has been so much fanfare in the last several weeks, this threat is not at all new. It has been held over the heads of city and county officials for more than a year, and repeated warnings have been given.