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CONCHIES FILL VITAL GAP AT HOSPITAL

They're Strictly on The Level Declares Doctor at Marlboro

Dr. J. Berkeley Gordon was speaking of the 41 conscientious objectors working in the State Hospital at Marlboro, when he said, "They're strictly on the level, and a blessing to our institution in relieving the manpower shortage. We've asked for 15 or 20 more this fall.

The doctor explained the hospital is running on half its normal personnel, a serious state, but it was more serious before last November when the "objectors" were sent to Marlboro to serve as attendants. Sixty were also sent to Greystone Hospital in Morris County. "They're clean living men--don't drink, smoke or gamble", the doctor explained. "Most of them are Mennonite farm boys in their 20s from the Middle West. They're not cowards, they just don't believe in war, more specifically in killing their fellow men, for religious reasons."

To illustrate the point the doctor told how many of them had volunteered for hazardous jobs after serving their minimum of 90 days training. Some went into experimental work and research; others joined the daring parachute division of forest fire fighters, and still others are now relieving labor shortage pressure in mental institutions such as Marlboro and Greystone.

"But" Dr. Gordon said, "they would not treat wounded soldiers. That would be against their religious principles. They figure they would be aiding a man who was killing."

The objectors wear hospital white uniforms which are supplied them along with board and \$10 a month. Some have brought their families east with them. Their wives and sisters work at the hospital as salaried attendants.

Dr. Gordon said Marlboro's staff of 65 graduate nurses dropped to 15 in two years. They normally carried a personnel of 650 to care for approximately 2600 inmates. They are now still 150 short in personnel, but expect the next group of objectors will lighten the burden. "There's more chance of getting additional objectors in the fall when dangers from fires is lessened and when the harvesting is over," Dr. Gordon said.

Because most of the objectors were farmers, it was first thought that they should go into farm work, but Selective Service limits their pay to \$10 a month, and farm organizations objected to hiring hands at such low wages.

Dr. Gordon says one time they attempted a payment system which would be satisfactory to farm organizations--they would pay the conchies by regular scale and arrange to have them turn all but \$10 a month for War Bonds. The objectors refused saying they would be furthering the war effort.

Sig Elmer, this appeared in a Newark paper. That you and Eako might get a kick out of it. Lois