

DRUGS: *Brigade Survey*

By Jim Koenig

Last month a selected group of Brigade soldiers were discreetly asked to participate in a confidential survey for the FIVE by FIVE. The individuals, seven men and four women, have one thing in common, they all use drugs.

The majority of the group admitted to using marijuana/hashish on the average of four times a week. One CI said he sometimes smokes nine or ten times each week.

A Specialist Fourth Class in her early twenties said she first tried grass when she was only 14. The 440th soldier admitted to getting "stoned" once while on duty but said, "I was so paranoid that my ICF would find out, I couldn't enjoy the high". Nearly every soldier surveyed agreed that smoking pot on duty was wrong, and said they don't do it.



90 percent of the men and women said they had used other drugs besides marijuana at least once. Those used were, Cocaine, Speed, Uppers, Downers, ICF, Magic mushrooms, and Acid.

The soldiers surveyed said they believe between 40 and 60 percent of their company indulged in illegal consumption of drugs, at least occasionally.

One soldier, in his teens, assigned to the 17th Signal Battalion said he didn't believe "toling" was harmful at all, outside of getting the munchies and eating a lot of junk foods. The teenage PFC said boredom was the main reason why he smoked.

A private in the 32nd said she has never used any drugs except pot. "It



relaxes me and I don't like alcohol." The C5C added that smoking one or two joints a week didn't effect her army job. Another 20 year-old soldier assigned to HHC Brigade admitted that "Sometimes my head just doesn't work right" on his job.

Some of the Brigade men and women said they used drugs because it is a status symbol in their units among enlisted personnel. Others were asked why they use marijuana/hashish and commented, "It makes me forget about the atmosphere", "Its a morale booster". Some said, "it makes me feel good," and others, "it relaxes me".

Urinalysis test

The question, what do you think of the Army's new program to spot marijuana/hashish users through Urinalysis Test brought a wide response. Some said it was a good measure but thought it would be hard to enforce. A female soldier said, "I think it is dumb because you crackdown on dope when you should crackdown on Alcohol". Another soldier added, "If you are going to condemn marijuana and hashish you should also put some more strong laws on alcohol use and abuse".

Marijuana is said to be a non-habit forming drug but a lower-ranking enlisted woman assigned to HHC Brigade told the FIVE by FIVE that she smoked Pot daily "to keep from feeling bad". The young PFC concluded, "I guess I have a psychological dependence for grass, I can't do without it".