

DOCUMENT RESUME

Released
11/12/77

03977 - [B2854109] ~~(S)~~

[The Air Force's Decision Not to Permit Overseas Travel of a Dependent Wife]. HRD-78-5; B-146861. October 7, 1977. 2 pp.

Report to Rep. John F. Moss; by Gregory J. Ahart, Director, Human Resources Div.

Issue Area: Personnel Management and Compensation: Compensation (305).

Contact: Human Resources Div.

Budget Function: General Government: Central Personnel Management (805).

Organization Concerned: Department of the Air Force.

Congressional Relevance: Rep. John E. Moss.

The Air Force decided not to permit Mrs. Gladys Carroll to accompany her husband to Camp New Amsterdam in the Netherlands, because she has multiple sclerosis and the necessary medical treatment capability is not available at the facility. Findings/Conclusions: Data on dependents with multiple sclerosis who have accompanied service members to Camp New Amsterdam in the past 5 years are either unavailable or difficult and time consuming to develop. Computerized medical records for the Camp New Amsterdam clinic could not be used to obtain this data because the clinic provides only outpatient care, and computerized outpatient records are not maintained by specific diagnosis. Information would be incomplete since computerized assignment records for enlisted personnel are destroyed upon separation from the Air Force. The information for the past 5 years was not developed. (SW)

4109

RESTRICTED — Not to be released outside the General Accounting Office except on the basis of specific approval by the Office of Congressional Relations.

UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548



OCT 7 1977

Released
11/12/77

03977

HUMAN RESOURCES
DIVISION

B-146861

The Honorable John E. Moss
United States House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Moss:

Your August 1, 1977, letter requested that we look into the circumstances surrounding the Air Force's decision not to permit Mrs. Gladys Carroll to accompany her husband to Camp New Amsterdam in the Netherlands because she has multiple sclerosis and the necessary medical treatment capability is not available at the facility.

The medical facility at Camp New Amsterdam is a clinic with three physicians and support staff. Air Force officials told us that the clinic cannot provide necessary treatment for multiple sclerosis and that the nearest facility which can is a local university hospital about 12 miles away. Medical care at other military facilities can be obtained by using medical air evacuation planes which are scheduled to stop at Camp New Amsterdam each Thursday, if requested. According to an Air Force official, stops on other days can be arranged if 48 hours notice is provided.

Therefore, as a practical matter, any care required for Mrs. Carroll on an emergency basis would have to be provided at the local university hospital under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services.

There is only one dependent with multiple sclerosis currently at Camp New Amsterdam. The dependent, whose illness is stable, has received treatment at the clinic for related anxiety and depression. According to medical officials at Camp New Amsterdam and the Air Force Surgeon General's office, the Air Force was not aware of the dependent had multiple sclerosis until after arrival at Camp New Amsterdam. According to Air Force regulations, this information must be shown on the medical clearance form for dependents before they accompany service members overseas.

HRD-78-5
(990516)

With regard to your request for data on dependents with multiple sclerosis who have accompanied service members to Camp New Amsterdam in the past 5 years, we found that much of this information is either unavailable or very difficult and time consuming to develop. Computerized medical records for the Camp New Amsterdam clinic could not be used to obtain this data because the clinic provides only outpatient care and computerized outpatient records are not maintained by specific diagnosis. Obtaining this information would require:

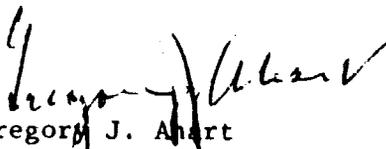
- Identifying by a computer search the approximate 4,000 individuals that have been assigned to Camp New Amsterdam during the past 5 years.
- Determining where those individuals are currently assigned, and visiting those locations, which could be spread all over the world, to manually examine their personnel records to see if dependents accompanied them to Camp New Amsterdam.
- Manually examining the medical records of accompanying dependents to establish whether they had multiple sclerosis while at Camp New Amsterdam.

Even if the above were done, the results would probably be incomplete because computerized assignment records for enlisted personnel are destroyed upon separation from the Air Force. According to Air Force officials, a manual search of enlisted personnel records to determine past assignments would require months of effort. About 90 percent of the persons assigned to Camp New Amsterdam are enlisted personnel.

Based on the foregoing, it was agreed with your staff that we would not attempt to develop the requested data over the past 5 years.

We regret that much of the information you asked for was not available. However, we hope the information we did obtain will be useful in resolving Mrs. Carroll's situation.

Sincerely yours,


Gregory J. Anart
Director