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FORD'S Ai"INESTY PROGP..AJ.!

The· Ford Administration recently conceded that its amnesty program has been a spectacular failure because only one percent of the approximately 100,000 draft dodgers and deserters from the Viet nam War have turned themselves in and accepted the work obligation in lieu of a prison sentence.

Contrary to this dismal attitude, the amnesty program is really President Ford's most spectacular success. In one and the same stroke, he formul-ated a program that won the praise of the liberals ·but con stituted a just approach to a difficult moral and legal problem.

Robert Hutchins, former president of the University of Chicago, used to say that whenever he felt the urge to exercise, he would lie down until the urge left him. To borrow his expression, anyone who has the urge to beg the 99,000 draft dodgers and deserters to return home should suppress that urge by rereading the eye-witness accounts of the American POWs who served up to eight years' imprisonment in Vietnam.

Faced with every temptation and torture _to betray America, these POW patriots maintained their personal honor and loyalty to our coun try. Take the case of Army Chief Warrant Officer James Hestand, who was chained to a stake with a leg iron like a dog for two years. Or Major Thomas Norris, who was repeatedly subjected to the "pretzel torture": a vicious double hammer-lock applied with nylon straps to cut off the circulation. for Air Force Major Philip Smith, who said

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the pain of the "torture cuff" was so bad that "it would have been fun to have had a knife jabbed into him." Or Colonel Robinson Risner who was tied so tightly in a ball that his shoulders popped out of their sockets. Or Lieutenant Colonel John Dunn who said it would have been easier to face a firing squad than the "continuous high le.vel of pain." f>or Lieutenant Charles Rice who told how the Commun ists put an iron bar in his mouth to keep him from screaming in pain when he was kicked in the bead and the kidneys. Or Pilot Ernest Brace who spent three and a half years in a bamboo cage with an iron collar around his neck. Or Navy Lieutenant Rodney Knutson who was

beaten until his buttocks were "like hamburger'and blood spattered the walls whenever the club came down.for Captain Jeremiah Denton who was made to sit handcuffed o,:i a low stool for 20 days with no sleep, kept awake by blows under the nose. Or Captain James Mulligan who was stoned, beaten and kicked during 42 months in solitary confinement.

Yet these POWs returned with their faith in God and country in tact. Lieutenant Commander Johns. McCain III spoke for all our POWs when he said: "I had a lot of time to think over there, and came to the conclusion that one of the most important things in life -- along with a man's family -- is to make some contribution to his country."

As the time period_runs out for the draft dodgers and deserters, I'm not going to shed any tears for those who fail to step forth and accept President Ford's generous amnesty terms. Any urge to suspend our country's laws to give them special favors should be suppressed by rereading what happened to the American POWs who served a tour of slavery under the Vietnamese Communists.

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