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WASHINGTON, D.C., Dec. 14 -- Sp. 5 Gary L. Bartlett, Dighton, Kans., will leave the Fitzsimons hospital, Denver, Colo., one Army grade higher than when he entered because a hospital visitor made an offer, and Bartlett took him up on it.

Bartlett's legs were amputated after he stepped on a land mine near Da Nang, Vietnam, last February. Since arriving at Fitzsimons hospital he has learned to use his artificial limbs and to ride a horse and snow ski.

The plucky veteran had an additional goal, however. He wanted the promotion to Sp. 5 that, under normal conditions, would have been made last August.

U.S. Senator Bob Dole (R-Kans.), in Denver last October for a speaking engagement, stopped at the hospital to see Bartlett. Dole, also a disabled veteran, told Bartlett if there was anything he could do for him, to let him know. Bartlett did.

As a result of that October conversation, the young veteran now has his Sp. 5 rating, and an Army policy has been changed.

After returning to Washington, Dole initiated an investigation of Army policy regarding promotions in cases such as Bartlett's.

The new policy, as regards personnel hospitalized for extended periods, will provide promotion consideration and opportunity for all, upon attainment of the normal time in grade and time in service requirements.

"Men like Bartlett are a credit and an asset to our country," Dole said. "It was a privilege to be of assistance."

Dole recalled that he had a similar promotion problem in 1946 while he was at Battle Creek, Mich., recovering from wounds received in Italy. The late Senator Arthur Capper provided the assistance Dole needed to get his promotion.