

oursday • November 20, 1997 NATION

Sta a seamstress gave birth to four ys and three girls Wednesday, lisming intently as doctors told her e condition and sex of each child. vas only the second set of septuets known to be born alive.

nber 20.

Bobbi McCaughey's septuplets, rn two months early by Caesaresection, weighed from 2 pounds, unces to 3 pounds, 4 ounces. A edical team of 40 specialists elped with the delivery. All seven

"All the babies are so wellown, so well-developed, it just rikes me as a miracle," said Dr. ula Mahone, who helped perrm the delivery at Iowa ethodist Medical Center.

It was only the second such birth the United States. There are no own surviving sets of septuplets the world.

The first baby - also the heavi-- was nicknamed "Hercules" ause he "held all the others up" a pyramid formation in the mb, Mahone said.

News of the delivery came from ndfather Bob Hepworth, who id his daughter was resting comtably. "I'm probably one of the oudest grandfathers in this counat this moment," Hepworth said. His namesake, Kenneth Robert, sborn at 12:48 p.m. weighing 3 mds, 4 ounces. Alexis May came xtat 12:49, weighing 2 pounds, 11 mces, followed by Natalie Sue, 50, 2 pounds, 10 ounces; Kelsey

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) - An Ann, 12:51, 2 pounds, 5 ounces; Brandon James, 12:52, 3 pounds, 3 ounces; Nathanial Roy, 12:53, 2 pounds, 14 ounces; and Joel Steven, 12:54, 2 pounds, 15 ounces.

One of the infants, Joel, was initially listed in critical condition but was later upgraded to serious. All of the babies were on ventilators.

"It is not at all unusual for babies delivered at this stage of pregnancy to be in critical condition," Dr. David Alexander, medical director of Blank Children's Hospital, where the infants will be cared for, said. He said premature babies often need help breathing.

"I would ask that all believers across the world join us in praying for Bobbi and for the babies that their health will continue and only improve," Hepworth said. Doctors could not immediately

say whether any of the infants were identical.

McCaughey, 29, gained 25 pounds during the pregnancy, or just 5 pounds more than the babies weighed.

"You have to take into account she has been in bed for a very long time and lost muscle mass," Mahone said.

McCaughey was given an epidural anesthetic and was alert during the delivery. Doctors told her the condition of each child.

"As we delivered each baby and saw the size of the babies and how vigorous they were, we were very, very happy," Mahone said.

Experts call for less regulation of heroin addiction treatment

iction is a medical problem that n be cured if doctors are freed m heavy-handed restrictions on euse of methadone, a federal scific panel concluded Wednesday. The report by a committee at the ional Institutes of Health suports an earlier White House call for re physician control of dosing d distribution of methadone, a nthetic narcotic used to wean ad-

Committee chair Dr. Lewis L. dd of the University of California, n Diego, said physicians are relucnt to treat heroin addiction beuse of mountains of paperwork the use of methadone by federal encies and state governments.

'We know of no other area of edicine where the federal governent intrudes so deeply and coerely into the practice of medicine," dd said. "If extra levels of regulaon were eliminated, many more

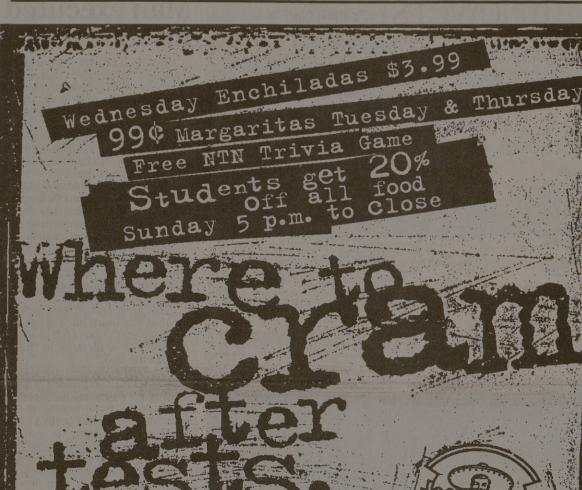
BETHESDA, Md. (AP) — Heroin prescribe and dispense methadone" and make the treatment more read-

> Methadone is a pill that has some of the same physiological effects on the brain as heroin, which helps blunt the effects of heroin withdrawal. Methadone does not produce a "high" most addicts crave, and it takes several hours for its biological effects to occur. For these reasons, Judd said, methadone is not considered a drug that is attractive to abusers and should be available for prescription.

"Laws to control methadone diversion are no longer necessary," Judd said. The laws were passed, he said, to limit distribution of methadone because of apprehension it could be sold on the black market to heroin addicts.

The report, drafted by 12 independent experts commissioned by the NIH, is consistent with a proposal made in September by Barry McCaffrey, director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy





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