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Convicted of Heroin Purchase

Ex-Senate Aide Gets Year's Probation

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U.S. District Court Magistrate Jean E. Dwyer yesterday sentenced Eric M. Breindel, a former Senate Committee on Intelligence aide arrested in a D.C. motel for buying heroin, to a year of probation.

In an emotional court hearing, Breindel, a Harvard Law School graduate whose resume at the age of 27 included a glittering list of honors and degrees, apologized to his family, his friends, and Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan (D-N.Y.), who had hired Breindel to work on the committee.

With his obstetrician father, his mother and friends almost filling the small hearing room, Breindel, who had previously pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge in connection with the heroin incident, said in a quavering voice, "I express remorse over what I did and the pain and much anguish I caused to a family that nurtured me and afforded me every possible advantage.

"I was engaged in public service, and it remains my view that public service is indeed a sacred trust. I have therefore violated that trust by my conduct, and brought anguish and shame to my direct superior, Sen. Moynihan, and to the public at large," said Breindel, who resigned from the Intelligence Committee at Moynihan's request and now is research director for a communications company in Reston.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Roger M. Adelman told Dwyer that both the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Drug Enforcement Administration have said they are satisfied with Breindel's cooperation in disclosing the circumstances of his drug problem.

Breindel's lawyer, William W. Taylor III, said Breindel compromised no classified information while working on the Hill. "What's been most impressive to me is, through it all, he hasn't offered excuses. He hasn't attempted to avoid the reality of the situation," he said.

Noting that Breindel is currently at-

tending a drug rehabilitation program and is employed, Dwyer said, "This court does not normally deal in vengeance." Under the terms of a special law for first offenders in drug cases, Dwyer sentenced Breindel to a year's probation, saying imposition of any further sentence would be suspended to see if he successfully completes the drug-treatment program. If he does, his record will be expunged, she said, but she warned that further penalties would be imposed if Breindel does not stay out of trouble.

"I'd hate to see so much talent wasted," she said.

Breindel graduated magna cum laude from Harvard and was about to receive a doctor's degree in economics from the London School of Economics. He held a position on the Council of Foreign Relations and continues to count as his friends many distinguished academics and journalists.

Winston B. Prude, a former Justice Department lawyer arrested with Breindel, is scheduled to be sentenced Friday.