

The veteran or widow entitled to pension has very limited income, so the children of these beneficiaries need a great deal of financial assistance in order to further their education after age 18 years.

Since the present law does not provide for this group, AMVETS would recommend that additional payments be allowed to pensioners who have children in school 18 years or older.

THE NATIONAL CEMETERY SYSTEM

In his recent message to Congress, the President said that every veteran should have the right to burial in a national cemetery, reasonably close to his home. We were pleased to hear the President's views on this important matter.

AMVETS would like to commend this committee for their support and help in passing H.R. 241, which transferred legislation of all Federal cemeteries at home and abroad, where veterans are, or may be buried, from the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs and Department of the Army to the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. AMVETS feel that the Veterans' Administration, which is responsible for administering the affairs of veterans, should be charged with the responsibility of administering the National Cemetery System for the burial of veterans.

In 1967 AMVETS made an extensive study of the availability of State-owned and federally owned land that might be made use of for national military cemeteries.

Replies were received from the Governors of every State, and in all but one instance it was determined that the problem of diminishing burial space for veterans had been recognized and was being worked upon in a variety of different ways. We are filing with the committee copies of the replies from the 50 Governors.

1. A State program of establishing military cemeteries on State land.

2. Donations of State-owned land had been offered to the Federal Government for cemetery use.

3. Use of federally owned land adjacent to Federal institutions already existing in the State.

4. Purchase of land on a combined State and Federal program for future use for cemeteries.

AMVETS strongly recommend that consideration be given to the appointment of a National Cemetery Site Committee, similar to the U.S. Veterans Advisory Commission, on which there would again be representation by the major veteran organizations, to assist in an overall study of a permanent plan for the future burial of our deceased veterans.

We, therefore, Mr. Chairman, recommend that the committee work toward the establishment of a national policy for our Federal cemetery system which would provide burial grounds for our veterans, under the direction of the Veterans' Administration.

In addition, we recommend:

1. That Arlington National Cemetery be reopened to all eligible veterans until it is completely filled.

2. A national cemetery be established in each State or at least in an adjoining State.