

3662 RECOMMENDATIONS OF VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS, 1968

Wyoming.—Governor indicated that the earliest opportunity to present this proposal to the Legislature will be January 1969.

It is interesting to note that in the middle 1940's the Quartermaster General prepared a two volume report which indicated the desirability of establishing 79 new cemeteries and expansion of 13 existing cemeteries. This would have included the National Cemetery to be established at Fort Devens, Massachusetts. This is borne out by the statement of Colonel James C. McFarland, Chief, Memorial Division, Department of the Army, on June 14, 1966 when he stated, "In 1947 the Army favored enactment of H.R. 516, 79th Congress, providing for one national cemetery in each State and territory and such others as were needed. The fiscal effects of establishing the cemeteries and administering them for 1 year was then estimated at \$122,938,331. This bill, and several others, which were similar and also were favorably reported, were not enacted, though they had the strong backing of veteran groups.

"On January 9, 1947, the Army sponsored legislation proposing that national cemeteries be established on surplus military reservations. Among the installations deemed suitable by the Army were Fort Devens, Mass.; Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind.; Fort Des Moines, Iowa; Fort Logan, Colo.; and Fort Lewis, Wash. When the measure was finally enacted and approved on August 4, 1947, as Public Law 342, it provided merely for the expansion of two existing national cemeteries, Fort Rosecrans and Jefferson Barracks."

Although the matter of National Cemeteries does not at this time come under the jurisdiction of the Veterans Administration, AMVETS believe that this is a growing problem, with the eventual depletion of burial sites available within the present system, that, an alternative plan should be introduced in which the Veterans Administration should be administratively charged with the responsibility of managing a cemetery in each State in the Nation for the burial of veterans and their dependents with no qualifying criteria as is currently imposed at Arlington National Cemetery.

This is particularly important today because of the ever increasing number, cost and complexities of competing non-veteran social programs. These programs enjoy a highly organized, articulate and politically influential backing by their own special interest groups. For this reason it is especially important that all matters affecting veterans and their dependents be concentrated under the highly effective administrative management of the Veterans Administration, which has been responsive to appropriate veterans concern in a wide variety of programs which formerly had been entrusted to other Agencies.

STATE OF ALABAMA,
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE,
Montgomery, April 20, 1967.

Mr. A. LEO ANDERSON,
National Commander, AMVETS,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: Thank you for your letter of March 21, 1967 concerning the donation of state land for a National Cemetery for war veterans.

The matter has been referred to Mr. Walter C. Head, Jr., director of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and I am sure that you will hear from him within the near future about this.

We appreciate your letter and if we may be of further service please call upon us.

Very truly yours,

LURLEEN B. WALLACE, Governor.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
STATE HOUSE,
Phoenix, Ariz., March 28, 1967.

A. LEO ANDERSON,
National Commander, AMVETS National Headquarters,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: Governor Williams has asked that I reply to your letter of March 24 regarding establishment of a National Cemetery in our state. As you point out, this raises some very complex problems.

I am just wondering if your local members have taken part in this program or anticipate doing so. If they are going to take an interest, it might be well for