

LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS OF VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS, 1968

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HEARINGS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES NINETIETH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

NATIONAL COMMANDERS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION,
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS, DISABLED AMERICAN
VETERANS, AMVETS, PARALYZED VETERANS OF
AMERICA, AND VETERANS OF WORLD WAR I OF THE
U.S.A.

FEBRUARY 7, MARCH 5, 12, AND APRIL 4, 1968

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DAV LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1968

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m., in room 302, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Olin E. Teague (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Mr. TEAGUE. The committee will come to order.

The committee is always happy to have the Disabled American Veterans appear before our committee. At this time I would like to recognize Mr. Mark Andrews, of North Dakota, to introduce the national commander of the Disabled American Veterans.

Mark, if I might say to the people who are here before we start, almost every Member of Congress has two or three committee meetings and that is why there are some absences this morning, but they will be coming in and out. One of the most disappointing things about being a Member of Congress is time; we do not have time to do all the things we would like to do.

STATEMENT OF HON. MARK ANDREWS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Chairman, I am well aware of this problem. I just left a briefing with Secretary Rusk to come here this morning because this, to me, is a very wonderful occasion, not only as a member of the Disabled American Veterans myself, but as a long-time personal friend of a fellow townsman of mine who is now the national commander of the DAV, Francis J. Beaton, whom you will hear very shortly and I do not want to intrude on his time.

Mr. Beaton comes from one of our distinguished families in North Dakota. His father served in the State legislature, and he is involved in one of our key industries, livestock. Mr. Beaton is doing a great job as National Commander of this fine outstanding veterans organization. It is a great deal of pleasure for me to introduce him to you to give his report of the Disabled American Veterans. I present to you Mr. Francis J. Beaton.

Mr. TEAGUE. Mr. Commander, Mr. Haley of Florida would like to say one word before you start.

Mr. HALEY. Mr. Commander and my good friend from your great State, you have a fine Representative serving you here in the Congress. Mr. Andrews is interested in all veterans.

I happen to have spent a little time in your great State. I was warmly received, even as a Democrat, out there. Somebody had told

me before I went out that it was hunting season and I had better watch out because there was no law against killing a Democrat. But I had a fine time and I appreciated the courtesy extended to me by the good people of your State. You do have a fine State and I want to welcome the national commander of the Disabled American Veterans here this morning.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you, Jim.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Commander.

STATEMENT OF FRANCIS J. BEATON, NATIONAL COMMANDER, DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS; ACCOMPANIED BY CHARLES L. HUBER, NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATION; AND JOHN J. KELLER, NATIONAL SERVICE DIRECTOR

Mr. BEATON. Thank you, Congressman Andrews, for those very fine introductory remarks, and thank you, Congressman Haley, for your very special additional remarks about our Congressman and our great State of North Dakota, of which we are genuinely proud.

At the outset I would like to introduce some of the staff of the DAV, along with the head of its auxiliary.

At this time I would like to introduce to you our national commander of the DAV Auxiliary, Mrs. Viola Green, from the great State of Washington. (Applause.)

Next I would like to present to your committee and to the guests our national adjutant, Mr. Denvel D. Adams. (Applause.)

Next I would like to introduce a gentleman who needs no introduction to this distinguished committee and its chairman, our very distinguished national director of legislation, Mr. Charles L. Huber, to my right.

(Applause.) Next I would like to introduce to you our national service director, Mr. John J. Keller, from Washington, D.C. (Applause.)

Working very closely with our national legislative director, Mr. Charles L. Huber, we have an interim national legislative committee. I am sure many of you have had the opportunity to visit with these gentlemen. Mr. Joe V. Adair of Oklahoma chairs this committee. Mr. Adair.

(Applause.)

Serving with him on this committee are Mr. John W. Bill of the State of New Jersey, and Mr. John R. Davis of the great State of Georgia and also Mr. Lyle Pearson from the State of Minnesota.

(Applause.)

This concludes the introduction of our staff members and those working closely with and related thereto.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee: It is, indeed, a privilege and a pleasure for me, as national commander of the Disabled American Veterans, to appear before you and present our legislative program for the second session of the 90th Congress.

On behalf of the DAV national and State officers assembled here this morning, I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for the cooperation, interest, and help extended to us by your committee throughout the past year.

We are also deeply indebted to you for your patience and understanding, and the personal consideration given to our many legislative requests.

The same compliments are extended to the very able staff members of the committee, who have gone out of their way to assist us.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, the ingredients of DAV legislative programs are found in resolutions adopted by our governing bodies, the national convention and the national executive committee.

Our most recent national convention, held in Denver, Colo., July 31 through August 4, 1967, approved more than 150 resolutions. A majority of the proposals call for modifications in existing veterans programs, while others would authorize new ones. Additionally, a limited number of proposals relate to our country's policy and position in Southeast Asia.

On this last score, with your permission, I would like to voice a few observations about the current epidemic of urban riots and antiwar demonstrations. I am thinking in particular of those who desecrate our flag, the draft-card burners and others who confuse freedom with license. Such matters may not be directly related to the immediate concerns of your committee; but I submit that they are of general concern to all Members of Congress—and to all Americans who cherish and understand the full dimensions of freedom.

Let me say first that no one, surely, understands better than the Members of Congress how precious is the right to dissent. We also recognize that our institutions have been carefully framed to accommodate all kinds of utterly opposing viewpoints—including the merits of our Vietnam policy. It so happens that the DAV is pledged by mandate of our national convention to support our policy in Vietnam—and we are proud to be counted in that category. But we recognize the right to those in opposition to disagree.

What we do not recognize—what we do condemn—what we view with disgust and outrage—are the antics of those who abuse their freedom, make a mockery of their rights and who subvert the whole meaning of liberty.

Let there be no confusion about the identity of these willful delinquents: I am talking about the so-called demonstrators who burn their draft cards, vilify the sacrifices of American soldiers, desecrate our flag, interfere with the movement of men and supplies, sit-in at the Pentagon and, in other viciously childish acts and protests, render aid and comfort to the enemies of everything we hold dear.

No single right of citizenship exists without a corresponding responsibility. Freedom is not license. The right of one individual cannot be equated as outweighing the rights of many individuals. There must be limits to tolerance. Otherwise we are inviting anarchy.

It is all well and good for crusaders to argue that personal folly and criminal disorder are the products of ignorance, want, and lack of privilege. But this country, this Government, and this Congress are fighting ignorance, want, and lack of privilege as never before in our history.

This great fight cannot and will not be sustained, if citizens cannot walk their streets in safety, if our shopkeepers are terrorized by criminals, if our police are maligned and attacked for doing their duty,

if—in short—something is not done—and done soon—to insure law and order.

Kooks and cowards have a right to their kookiness and a right to be cowardly in the privacy of their own kennels. They have no right to cripple the progress of our Nation and the pursuit of its legitimate policies in peace as well as war.

A man who burns his draft card or who counsels others to do so is in clear violation of the law of the land and must be prosecuted.

If there is no law to prohibit burning of the American flag, there definitely ought to be. The flag is more than a piece of silk or cloth. It is a symbol of all we honor and cherish.

It is heartening to know that the House of Representatives has already passed and sent to the Senate two bills to curb some of these manifestations of idiocy. I am referring to H.R. 10480 which would make the burning of or malicious damage to the flag a Federal crime, and H.R. 421 which would impose severe penalties for using interstate communications to incite, organize, and promote a riot.

We realize that proposals of this nature invariably invite controversy as to their constitutionality. We do not profess to be expert in constitutional law. But when anarchy becomes a way of life for certain individuals, and when people who obey the law suffer outrages beyond the point of endurance, we think a legislative solution to the problems must be found. The DAV sees the provisions of H.R. 10480 and H.R. 421 as steps in this direction and we earnestly hope the full Congress will soon concur.

Before turning to our own national convention resolutions, Mr. Chairman, there is another matter demanding brief comment.

We would be remiss if we did not at this time express our deep appreciation to this committee, and to the Congress, for your prompt and favorable response to the historic recommendations made a year ago by President Johnson in his unprecedented veterans message to the first session of the 90th Congress. The message was the first of its kind but, as we all know, it was not the last.

Later on in this testimony I shall address myself to the newest veterans' message received by Congress; but it is only fair, I think, to recap here the results of that first message. There's never any shortage of people telling you what you've done wrong. So I think it's only fair to have someone tell you occasionally what you've done right.

Among other things—

You have expanded educational allowance under the GI bill.

You have widened opportunities for veterans with educational shortcomings.

You have eliminated inequities in the treatment of Vietnam veterans.

You have given substantial pensions boosts to some 2 million disabled veterans, widows, and dependents.

In short, you took the recommendations of the President's first veterans' message and contributed much to the comfort and well-being of those who, in the President's own words, "have brought greater justice and decency to the world."

Yet as always there is unfinished business. We hope, for example, that the Senate will quickly pass H.R. 12555 which the House approved last December. It is needed to protect pension rights against

automatic reductions as a consequence of increases in other Federal retirement benefits such as social security. We are happy that the President, too, has asked for Senate concurrence in his newest message.

I also want to take this opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to voice our special thanks and deep appreciation for the steadfast support this committee gave to H.R. 2151 which provides for an annual audit of our accounts by the U.S. Comptroller General. As Public Law 90-208, this statute will enable us to avoid duplication and waste of effort in connection with filing our financial reports at State and city levels. Indeed, it will effectively serve to eliminate a perplexing problem that has plagued the DAV for a long time.

In particular I want to thank the distinguished chairman of this committee for steering the bill so competently through the full House of Representatives. He has our profound gratitude.

It is further in order, Mr. Chairman, to express our confidence in the work of the Veterans Advisory Commission whose report is due at the White House very soon.

The DAV is privileged to be represented on that Commission by a gentleman well known to the members of this committee, Claude L. Callegary, of Baltimore, Md., a past national commander of the DAV. Mr. Callegary has had a long and distinguished record of service to the cause of America's veterans. We are proud, very proud, to have him as our representative on the Advisory Panel.

Our national director of legislation, Chet Huber, was given the opportunity last October 3, to appear before the Commission and to discuss, in a general wrap-up, the recommendations of other DAV officers in previous appearances before the Commission.

The fact that the vast majority of our recommendations are concerned with the disability and death compensation programs is a reflection of the major emphasis placed on these issues by the mandates of our national convention.

I think, in these matters, we can anticipate that the Veterans' Advisory Commission will have quite a bit to say when it finally reports. This conviction is further bolstered by the fact that the President's message last week on veterans' affairs did not come to grips with these questions. The administration has itself acknowledged that it is looking forward to the recommendations of the Commission which has a mandate of its own for a comprehensive study of such matters.

We applaud the decision to put democracy to work in this fashion. But since we have only this opportunity to outline our own views, we cannot wait to see whether and where our philosophy may parallel the Commission's ultimate recommendations. Thus we come, Mr. Chairman, to the heart of our testimony.

After a thorough study of the subject, we have concluded that the present rates of disability and death compensation are grossly inadequate to permit the veteran or his widow a position in our society which we feel they are entitled to enjoy.

Much has been said concerning the adverse effect of the continued increase in the cost of living upon those who are compelled by circumstance to subsist on fixed incomes. The 90th Congress has already enacted legislation to ease the economic burden of military

personnel, Federal employees, social security beneficiaries, welfare recipients and non-service-connected pensioners. Sponsors of such legislation in each instance have documented and justified the necessity of increasing these benefits to bring them more closely in balance with the rise in the cost of living. The DAV also recognizes the need for these increases to offset the shrinking value of yesterday's dollar on today's market.

Surely, then, no one in this room needs to be reminded that disability compensation is also fixed income established by law. Or that the service-connected disabled veteran has also been caught in the very same economic squeeze that has so seriously affected other Federal beneficiaries.

The average increase of 10 percent, granted by Public Law 89-311, effective December 1, 1965, fell short of 6 percent of bridging the gap between the buying power of the compensation dollar and the increase in living costs. This deficiency has since been compounded by an additional 7-percent rise in the cost of living. Moreover, it is a sad certainty that prices will continue to advance through 1968 at a rate of about 4 percent. This will result in a corresponding decrease in the value of the veteran's compensation dollar.

We think it is abundantly clear that an overwhelming case exists for restoring the full value of disability compensation at the earliest possible date. This applies with special force to those who are so severely disabled as to be unemployable. This group has suffered an even greater erosion of their living standards.

It should be acknowledged that since 1933, when the present system of disability evaluation was established, there has been an overall increase of 154.6 percent in the rates of service connected disability compensation. However, during this same period, the average wage has increased nearly 600 percent, leaving a gap of over 400 percent between the increases in the rates of compensation and the wage of employed workers.

It should also be pointed out that the median annual income of full-time employed veterans is now \$7,300.

The veteran who is rendered totally unproductive because of disability incurred as a result of military service cannot reach this level of economic security. Because his total loss of earning power came about as a result of service to his country, it seems a matter of simple justice that the compensation payments for this particular veteran should be increased to a point commensurate with that of his able-bodied wage-earning contemporaries.

Veterans who are living solely on disability compensation payments stand to suffer most as the dollar's buying power diminishes. The net effect of this will be to push the veteran yet another step down on the economic scale. To forestall this adverse circumstance, the distinguished chairman of this committee has recently introduced at DAV request, H.R. 14995, a bill bearing the title "Service Disabled Veterans' Compensation and Benefits Act of 1968."

We realize, Mr. Chairman, that there will be numerous and varied requests made to your committee during the course of its hearings. We realize also that priorities in these matters must be established.

We hope and pray that serious study and thoughtful consideration of this bill and the facts set forth above will lead your committee to

give its highest priority to recommendations for well-deserved increases in the rates of service-connected disability compensation. As President Johnson has said: "We have not forgotten nor shall we ever forget their service to our country."

Another significant DAV proposal on the subject of compensation calls for a long-delayed increase in single statutory awards payable for loss of limbs, body organs, and arrested tuberculosis. On July 1, 1952, there was granted an increase of \$5 per month over the rate which had prevailed since September 1, 1946, a period of 21 years.

We believe that further consideration of the facts of this matter by the committee will lead to recommendations for substantial increases in the special monthly compensation for these disabilities.

Moving now to the subject of service-connected death benefits, Mr. Chairman, the DAV most emphatically supports the enactment of legislation to increase the present rates of dependency and indemnity compensation payable to the widows, children, and dependent parents of deceased veterans whose death resulted directly from service-connected causes. Our reasons for urging the adoption of such increases are essentially the same as those expressed earlier with respect to the need for increases in the rates of service-connected disability compensation.

Mr. Chairman, I would at this point like to mention, in concise fashion, a few of the proposals which represent some of the most prime and pressing problems for disabled veterans and their dependents. Nothing in the order of presentation should be construed as indicating degrees of priority.

The proposals call for: Extending the full range of wartime benefits for veterans disabled as a result of extra-hazardous service; additional monthly compensation for veterans who have suffered the service-connected loss of a kidney or the loss of a lung; clothing allowances for veterans who, because of service-connected disability, wear prosthetic appliances which tend to wear out or tear their clothing; raise to a realistic level the present \$1,600 allowance for the purchase of an automobile; to establish an independent court of veterans' appeals; to provide an additional monthly allowance for widows who are receiving service-connected death benefits and who are in need of regular aid and attendance; to provide for concurrent payments of compensation and pension under a specified formula; to provide additional compensation for dependents of veterans whose disability is rated not less than 40 percent; to increase the present burial allowance to \$400; to provide dependency and indemnity compensation to widows of deceased veterans who are rated 100 percent service connected for 20 or more years; to extend war orphans educational benefits on a proportionate basis to children of veterans rated at not less than 40 percent.

As expressed earlier, Mr. Chairman, time does not allow a detailed accounting of all our national convention resolutions. There is an assortment of proposals relating to employment, GI home loans, insurance and the national cemetery programs that will demand our attention during the course of this session of Congress.

In the field of insurance we favor, among other things, the enactment of legislation to increase the maximum coverage of GI insurance to \$30,000.

On the subject of housing, we request an increase in the grant for specially adapted housing in line with the increase in building costs

and an extension of this benefit to veterans who have suffered the service-connected loss or loss of use of an upper and lower extremity. We also recommend that the maximum entitlement for guarantee of home loans be increased to at least \$10,000.

The national cemetery system is a subject which has the abiding interest of the Disabled American Veterans. We support current legislative proposals calling for transfer of national cemetery operations from the Department of the Army to the Veterans' Administration.

Last October the DAV was pleased to support House Resolution 241 which transferred jurisdiction over legislation relating to the cemeteries to the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. This change in control is a firm attempt to improve the cemetery situation, an attempt which has been clearly nourished by support from President Johnson in his recent message to the Congress. The President told the Congress that every veteran should have the right to burial in a national cemetery situated reasonably close to his home. The President said, "I have asked the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs to make certain that the recommendations of the (Veterans' Advisory) Commission include proposals to assure this right in a meaningful sense."

The President's attitude, we are pleased to note, is in marked contrast to the administration's policy, which for the past two decades has urged halting any expansion of the cemetery system.

Another area of veterans' benefits which is of special importance to the DAV is the VA hospital and medical treatment program.

The Disabled American Veterans has a deep and abiding interest in the continuing effort of the VA's Department of Medicine and Surgery to maintain its prominence in the entire field of medical care.

One of the most serious obstacles to further progress is a shortage of adequately trained medical personnel. This shortage threatens to grow more serious as private hospitals compete for manpower. Moreover, unless more professional personnel in specialized fields are attracted to the VA, there will be a downward trend in the high level of patient care.

We are certain that this distinguished committee will continue to give its full and close attention to this aspect of the medical program.

Another facet in this field which requires attention is the furnishing of out-patient medical treatment. Under present law this benefit is generally restricted to service-connected disorders. Thus, with limited exceptions, veterans suffering from totally disabling service-connected disabilities are not presently entitled to outpatient treatment for non-service disabilities.

Complete medical services, including drugs and medicines, are, however, available for the non-service-connected conditions of veterans of the Spanish-American and Indian wars and to certain pensioners found to be in need of regular aid and attendance.

Because of the drastic reduction in the general health of a totally disabled veteran, we think it reasonable that he be entitled to outpatient medical treatment for any disability.

The DAV has a vital interest in the highly useful services performed by the Veterans' Employment Service in the Department of Labor. We have been and will continue to be concerned about adequate staffing of this Federal agency to assure that the disabled veteran receives effective job counseling, employment placement, and referral to occupational training opportunities to which he is entitled under the law.

In this connection, the President, in his recent message, placed a high degree of emphasis on the need for enlarging the opportunities for veterans' employment. The President proposed that service-disabled veterans receiving vocational rehabilitation on a part-time basis be given a training allowance. As you know, Mr. Chairman, presently a disabled veteran can take a vocational rehabilitation and receive a training allowance only if he trains full time. The President declared that "The disabled veteran should be able to keep his job while he prepares for a better one through vocational training, drawing the allowance it provides."

I think you might like to know, Mr. Chairman, that the DAV has also been inspired by the same spirit that motivated the President's recommendations. I am proud to announce, sir, that only yesterday our national executive committee—meeting here in Washington—has appropriated a quarter of a million dollars to institute two new programs of direct aid to veterans and their needy dependents.

We have earmarked \$200,000 for establishing a national scholarship program to create additional educational opportunities at the vocational training and college levels for children of service-connected disabled veterans of limited means—with first priority given to the youngsters of Vietnamese war veterans.

We have also earmarked \$50,000 for grants to accredited research projects working on the development of improved artificial limbs and other prosthetic appliances.

These projects are intended as a supplement to our existing national service program. You will be hearing more about them as the details for implementing them are worked out under appropriate guidelines by our national staff.

Mr. Chairman, my presentation this morning represents a general outline of our legislative objectives. There are many other significant proposals, both legislative and administrative, of high importance which we cannot possibly bring to notice at this hearing. It is a program that reflects the DAV's historic principle which seeks to improve the physical, social and economic well-being of men and women who sacrificed themselves for America. It focuses attention on the need for enhancing opportunity for employment and proper job placement so that the residual ability of the disabled veteran is used in the most productive way; that expert hospital and medical care be provided to restore disabled veterans to a state of good health; and to provide adequate and just compensation for service-incurred disabilities. In short, we want to assure that the disabled veteran is restored to as good a position in civilian life as that to which he may have aspired had he not been disabled in the service of his country.

At present, the people of our country are particularly conscious of military service and the national defense. The intensity of the war in Vietnam has markedly stimulated public interest in that war and its related issues.

These related issues, of course, are meaningfully represented in the programs which this committee and the Congress have approved for the benefit of the wartime disabled, his widow and orphans. These problems will continue to warrant and receive the attention of the DAV. As already indicated, the mainstream of our effort for this session of Congress is directed to improving the compensation pro-

gram. As the purchasing power of the dollar has decreased, we feel it necessary to help the recipients of compensation by giving them substantial increases.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I want to say that this hearing has been the high point of our midwinter conference, and to say again that you have been most courteous and indulgent, and we do appreciate it.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I should like to submit for the record, copies of our national convention resolutions and an additional statement which the DAV presented on October 3, 1967, to the U.S. Veterans' Advisory Commission. The statement sets forth a full and comprehensive account of the legislative objectives of the Disabled American Veterans.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Without objection, they will be made a part of the record at the conclusion of today's hearing.

(The material referred to appears at the conclusion of testimony taken on this date.)

(RESOLUTION No. 11, LEGISLATIVE)

TO EXTEND WARTIME BENEFITS FOR VETERANS OF SERVICE AFTER JANUARY 1, 1961

Whereas, the effective date of August 5, 1964 for Vietnam wartime benefits is considered by the Disabled American Veterans as unjust and indisputably wrong, and therefore we are under a strong obligation to oppose it most vigorously, and

Whereas, official records indicate that from January 1, 1961 to August 3, 1964, 179 members of the Armed Forces serving in Vietnam died as a result of hostile action, 84 died as a result of non-hostile action, and 1,071 were wounded in action, and

Whereas, the troops who served before August 5, 1964 gave of themselves in the same extraordinary military effort and sacrifice, showed the same skill, firmness and courage as that displayed by the troops who served on or after August 4, 1964, and

Whereas, we believe that the men who fought in Vietnam prior to 1964 will be disheartened to learn that they are not considered war veterans, that they do not qualify for a pension because they had the misfortune to be honorably separated from service prior to August 5, 1964,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, supports S. 16, as amended by the House of Representatives, and advises the Senate Finance Committee of our desire for early action on this legislation.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 43, LEGISLATIVE)

TO PROVIDE FOR CONCURRENT PAYMENT OF DEATH PENSION AND DIC UNDER A SPECIFIED FORMULA

Whereas, the Disabled American Veterans is concerned with the widows and orphans of veterans; and

Whereas, these widows should be compensated,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the widows of deceased war-service connected disabled veterans who die of non-service connected disabilities be entitled to draw the full rate of non-service connected death pension and a proportionate amount of DIC or Death Compensation under a specified formula.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 44, LEGISLATIVE)

SUPPORTING A COST OF LIVING INCREASE IN COMPENSATION RATES

Whereas, there has been a substantial increase in the cost of living since the last service connected disability compensation increase was granted in 1965, and

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Whereas, the failure of disability compensation rates to keep abreast with the cost of living has resulted in a decrease in the living standards of seriously disabled veterans who must depend upon their compensation to offset the effects of lost earning power,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, shall support cost-of-living increases in the compensation rates for service connected disabilities.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 54, LEGISLATIVE)

TO PROVIDE SERVICE CONNECTED DEATH BENEFITS FOR VETERANS RATED TOTALLY
DISABLED FOR A PERIOD OF 20 OR MORE YEARS

Whereas, service connected death benefits may be awarded upon an evidentiary showing that the cause of death is directly due to service or service connected disabilities, or contributed materially to by service connected disabilities, and

Whereas, medical science upon which the determinations of the Veterans Administration are made is inexact, and

Whereas, because of this there results much uncertainty as to the interrelated or contributory effect that one disease, disability or injury may have in the production of other conditions or in the debilitation of the bodily systems and organs to the extent that they are more readily susceptible to the onslaught of other conditions, and

Whereas, the responsibility of furnishing proof, including expert medical opinions, rests upon the claimant, and

Whereas, the dependents of a veteran who has been severely disabled over a prolonged period from one or a combination of multiple disabilities, most likely would not be able to afford or produce expert medical testimony as to etiological or causal relationship.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the cause of death of any veteran who has been rated at 100% or more disabled for a period of 20 or more years shall be held to be due to, or contributed materially to by, service connected conditions unless contraindicated by the circumstances of the death.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 67, LEGISLATIVE)

REQUESTING LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR WIDOWS OF VETERANS
WHO DIE OF A SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY

Whereas, a veteran may die of a service connected disability and his wife be too young to retire, and

Whereas, the widow may have taken care of her husband for the past 20 years because of his service connected disability and has been out of contact with employment, and

Whereas, as the latest training and techniques are new to her, she cannot compete for a substantial job,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record sponsoring a law to provide the widows of veterans who die of service connected disabilities with training or educational rights so they may be better prepared for a useful life after their husbands have passed away.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 93, LEGISLATIVE)

FAVORING LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE DIC BENEFITS FOR THE WIDOWS OF SERVICE-
CONNECTED VETERANS RATED 100-PERCENT DISABLED

Whereas, when a veteran, with a service connected disability, dies from a non-service connected disability, his widow will not be eligible to receive Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, and

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Whereas, when a veteran with a service connected disability, dies from a non-service connected disability, his widow will be eligible for Death Pension Benefits, if she qualifies under certain income and corpus of estate limitations, and

Whereas, widows of veterans who had service connected disabilities have sacrificed much, while caring for their disabled husbands and at times were unable to live a normal life having to rear their families on reduced incomes, and

Whereas, many veterans were totally disabled by wounds or injuries which were not of a nature to terminate in death, therefore the cause of death would be determined to be non-service connected,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the widow of a veteran who was totally disabled, 100% service connected, should be eligible to collect Dependency and Indemnity Compensation after his death, from any cause, provided that she meets the qualifications of a widow as defined by the Veterans Administration.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 95, LEGISLATIVE)

OPPOSING THE REDUCTION OF DIC PAYMENTS TO THE CHILD OF A DECEASED VETERAN DUE TO RECEIPT OF SOCIAL SECURITY OR RAILROAD RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Whereas, a grateful Government has recognized the need and obligation to care financially for the dependents of the members of the Armed Forces who were killed or died in service, or who died of injuries or wounds incurred in service, and

Whereas, the Government of the United States, through the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, is paying dependency and indemnity compensation to the surviving dependents of members of the Armed Forces, who died in service or who died as the result of wounds or injuries received in the service of our country, and

Whereas, in certain cases, the amount of dependency and indemnity compensation paid to a widow for the minor children of the veteran is reduced by an amount equal to social security benefits or railroad retirement act benefits received,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the amount of dependency and indemnity compensation paid under Title 38, U.S.C., for the orphaned children of deceased veterans, shall not be reduced due to the reduction or deduction provisions under Section 403 of Title 42, USC, nor under the reduction provisions of Sections 228c or 228e of Title 45, USC.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 96, LEGISLATIVE)

FAVORING LEGISLATION TO EXTEND THE \$1600 AUTOMOBILE GRANT TO QUALIFIED VETERANS OF WORLD WAR I

Whereas, the Disabled American Veterans is always interested in the welfare of veterans of all wars, especially those suffering from service connected disabilities, and

Whereas, the Congress of the United States has deemed it proper to authorize a grant of \$1600 to certain disabled Veterans for the purchase of an automobile, and

Whereas, these disabled veterans include amputees and blind World War II and Korean Conflict veterans, and

Whereas, amputees and blind and those suffering from loss of use of limbs of World War I are also deserving of identical benefits,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the organization be mandated to gain the identical benefits enjoyed by amputees, blind, and those suffering from the loss of limb of World War II and the Korean conflict, for veterans of World War I, by seeking legislation to this effect.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 98, LEGISLATIVE)

REQUESTING AN INCREASE IN THE RATES OF DEATH BENEFITS TO THE MOTHERS OF DECEASED VETERANS TO \$125 PER MONTH

Whereas, many Gold Star Mothers (1) are widowed and have no income except the pension paid them by our Government for the loss of their child in the service of our country; (2) are unable to work by reason of age and condition of health; (3) have no other children who can help support them; (4) have living husbands who are unable to work by reason of age and condition of health; (5) are often ill and must have medical services and at times must be hospitalized, and

Whereas, the pension of \$75.00 per month now paid the Gold Star Mothers for the loss of their child or children in the service of our country is greatly appreciated by the Gold Star Mothers, but is wholly inadequate to sustain them by reason of the high cost of rent, groceries, clothing, medical services, hospitalization, and all other necessities of life, and

Whereas, by reason thereof, many of such Gold Star Mothers are denied necessary medical care and attention, proper diet, and other necessities of life, and are in dire need and circumstances,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the pension paid to Gold Star Mothers widow and dependents be increased to \$125.00 per month.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 113, LEGISLATIVE)

SUPPORTING AN INCREASE IN STATUTORY AWARDS

Whereas, the cost of living has increased many times in the last 15 years, and Whereas, there is the case of the forgotten veteran, the disabled veteran on statutory award who has not had an income increase in over 15 years, and

Whereas, these statutory award increases are vitally necessary to the welfare of disabled veterans and their families.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, support an increase in these awards.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 124, LEGISLATIVE)

REQUESTING ADDITIONAL COLD WAR EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

Whereas, education has played a key role in power and prosperity of the United States, and

Whereas, education will contribute to our national wealth and power, and Whereas, the experiences of the World War II GI educational programs has shown that the financial returns to the Federal Treasury has been many fold the cost of such educational programs, and

Whereas, the Cold War Educational Program is too limited to permit full time and uninterrupted studies for most recipients.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, support legislation authorizing additional benefits to Cold War education recipients to cover costs of tuition, books and other charges made directly by the institution of higher learning.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 205, LEGISLATIVE)

ENTITLEMENT TO SUB-PARAGRAPH (N) BENEFITS FOR BILATERAL AMPUTEES WHO INCUR OTHER DISABLING CONDITIONS

Whereas, currently where a service connected bilateral amputee, involving the lower limbs, is able to use his prosthetic appliances he is compensated under sub-para. L or M, and

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Whereas, other severe major organic condition, e.g., a cardiac condition, medically compels him to permanently discard the use of his prosthetic appliances thereby confining him to a wheel chair thereafter, and

Whereas, it is an accepted fact that the stress, strain, and fatigue imposed upon the individual in using these appliances is a responsible factor, which will cause additional impairment upon the other bodily organs, and

Whereas, there should be provided additional compensation in cases of this type by elevating the rating to subparagraph N, equivalent to amputations at a high level with no ability to use the prosthetic appliances,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, urge the adoption of such a law through the United States Congress at their next session.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 209, LEGISLATIVE)

WARTIME RATES FOR SERVICE CONNECTED DISABILITIES INCURRED AFTER
JANUARY 31, 1955

Whereas, currently, veterans who have served in the Armed Forces after January 31, 1955, and acquire a service-connected disability are paid at the rate of eighty percent of wartime rates, unless it is shown that the disability was acquired under conditions simulating war, and

Whereas, prior laws granted wartime rates to veterans of the Korean Conflict even though their service may not have been in a zone of war, and

Whereas, the "Veterans Readjustment Benefits Act of 1966" provides benefits equal to those afforded wartime veterans such as educational assistance, hospitalization, guaranteed home and farm loans, and many other benefits, except wartime compensation rates for service-connected disabilities,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the "Veterans Readjustment Act of 1966" be amended to provide wartime compensation rates for service-connected disabilities occurring after January 31, 1955, and

Be it further resolved that the Disabled American Veterans go on record urging the National Legislative Chairman of the DAV to introduce such legislation before the appropriate committees of the United States Congress.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 215, LEGISLATIVE)

ON-THE-JOB, ON-THE-FARM, AND CERTAIN FLIGHT TRAINING TO BE INCLUDED IN
VETERANS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Whereas, training on-the-job, institutional on-farm training and certain flight training is not authorized for the veterans of the Post-Korean conflict periods, and

Whereas, these education assistance programs were available to World War II and Korean veterans, and

Whereas, these programs of training were proven to have been of benefit to many veterans.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that Title 38, United States Code, be amended so as to broaden the educational assistance programs to cover on-the-job training, institutional on-farm training, and certain flight training.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 305, LEGISLATIVE)

TO STANDARDIZE THE COMPUTATION OF INCOME OF DEPENDENT PARENTS

Whereas, under present laws and regulations veterans whose disabilities are rated at 50% or more are entitled to additional compensation for dependent parents providing the parents' income meets certain limitations; and

Whereas, certain income such as GI insurance; VA compensation; pension or other VA benefits is not considered as income for the parents in order for the veteran to be eligible to receive additional compensation for his dependent parents under the compensation laws; and

Whereas, upon the veteran's death parents who submit proof of dependency and meet certain income limitations are eligible for death compensation payments; and

Whereas, under present laws and regulations such income as GI insurance; VA compensation; pensions; other VA benefits and certain other income are considered as income in computing a dependent parents' income for eligibility to receive death compensation benefits,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record requesting the necessary action to obtain a revision of the laws and regulations for computing income of dependent parents for eligibility for death compensation benefits to conform with and on the same basis for computing income for dependent parents when considering eligibility for a veteran to receive additional compensation for dependent parents.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 308, LEGISLATIVE)

EXTENDING PRESUMPTIVE PERIOD FROM ONE TO SEVEN YEARS FOR PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Whereas, under present laws and regulations presumptive period for Parkinsons Disease is one year, and

Whereas, Parkinsons Disease is an insidious neurological disorder with confusing symptoms that remain dormant for long periods of time, is confused with other neurological disorders difficult to diagnose as Parkinsons Disease for several years in many cases, and

Whereas, advanced medical knowledge has resulted in the extension of presumptive period for similar neurological disorders, such as Multiple Sclerosis, to seven years by the Veterans' Administration.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record recommending that the presumptive period for Parkinsons Disease be extended to seven years.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 319, LEGISLATIVE)

INCREASED DISABILITY COMPENSATION PAYMENTS TO VETERANS FOR SERVICE CONNECTED DISABILITIES

Whereas, the historic policy of this nation as its first duty to the wars' disabled is to provide adequate compensation to veterans with service-incurred disabilities and to compensate them for the pain and suffering, loss of employment opportunities, loss of health, vitality, life expectancy and financial opportunities and therefore regarded as earned benefits, and

Whereas, compensation payments are based on the loss of earning capacity and based on cost of living, and

Whereas, the cost of living has increased considerably since the last increase in disability compensation rates, December 1, 1965, and

Whereas, disability compensation rates for wartime disabilities have lagged very far behind the rapid increase in the government cost of living index, and

Whereas, a veteran rated 100% disabled and unable to follow a gainful occupation receives \$300.00 per month, or \$3600.00 per year, as compared to the average wage earner's income of \$7000 per year, and

Whereas, totally disabled veteran is unemployable, has been denied the opportunity of this average earning because of his service connected disabilities; and veterans rated less than 100% disabled also have had their earning power curtailed because of the service connected disabilities, and

Whereas, although we do not oppose liberal and ever-increasing nonservice connected pension payments to veterans who served a mere 90 days statewide and received no disability from such service, we do feel that veterans with serv-

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ice connected disabilities should receive first priority in the distribution of the nation's wealth,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record recommending legislation that will provide an across the board increase in compensation rates comparable to the average wage earner's income.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 320, LEGISLATIVE)

REQUESTING PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION AND PENSION CONCURRENTLY TO CERTAIN DISABLED VETERANS

Whereas, the historic policy of this nation is that its first duty is to veterans with disabilities incurred in or aggravated by military service during time of war and to adequately compensate the veteran for pain, suffering, loss of health, vitality, life expectancy, employment and financial opportunities and, therefore, regarded as earned benefits, and

Whereas, nonservice connected pension benefits are a gratuity benefit payable to veterans who served a mere 90 days or more, have an honorable discharge, are considered permanently and totally disabled from disabilities not due to service and whose income is within certain income limitations, and

Whereas, many veterans entitled to wartime disability compensation for their service connected disabilities are also entitled to nonservice connected pension payments for disabilities not due to service exclusive of their service connected disability, however, upon the theory that payment of compensation and pension concurrently is in conflict with the dual compensation laws, the service connected veteran must forfeit his compensation for his service connected disability in order to receive the greater amount as pension, and

Whereas, although we do not oppose liberal benefits to veterans who served a mere 90 days and received no disabilities whatsoever as a result of military service, we do hold that it is most inequitable for veterans with gunshot wounds and other disabilities incurred in combat, such as a veteran whose leg was shot off on the battlefield entitling him to only \$82.00 per month compensation, to have to relegate him to a second-class citizen by having him forfeit his compensation in order to receive the same nonservice pension benefit as the veteran who only served 90 days statewide and received no disability as a result of such service, and

Whereas, veterans who received severance pay as a result of a certain disability incurred in military service may not receive compensation for that particular disability for which he was discharged from service, however, he is entitled to compensation for other service connected conditions and payment in cases such as this is so held not to be in conflict with the dual compensation law upon the theory that the veteran is not being paid dual benefits for the same disability.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record recommending the passage of legislation correcting the existing inconsistency and inequity in the interpretation of the dual compensation law by the passage of legislation that in cases wherein a veteran receiving compensation for a service connected disability who has sufficient nonservice connected disabilities, exclusive of the service connected disability, to meet the schedular requirement for nonservice connected pension payments and who are otherwise entitled, would be entitled to receive the full amount of his compensation payment and in addition thereto the full amount of nonservice connected pension benefits with no total payment to exceed the compensation rate payable for a 100% service connected disability; we hold this consistent with the interpretation of the dual compensation law pertaining to severance pay and would not be paying the veteran twice for the same disability and therefore not in conflict with the dual compensation laws.

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(RESOLUTION No. 321 LEGISLATIVE)

CONCURRENT PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION AND PENSION UNDER A FORMULA

Whereas, the historic policy of this nation as its first duty to veterans with wartime disabilities is to adequately compensate the veteran for disabilities in-

curred in or aggravated by military service and to compensate for the pain and suffering, loss of health, vitality, life expectancy, employment and financial opportunities and therefore regarded as earned benefits, and

Whereas, nonservice connected pension benefits are a gratuity benefit payable to veterans who served a mere 90 days or more, one day during wartime, have an honorable discharge and are considered permanently and totally disabled from disabilities not due to service and whose income is within certain income limitations, and

Whereas, veterans entitled to wartime disability compensation rates, who are totally disabled from a combination of their service connected and nonservice connected disabilities entitling them to nonservice connected pension benefits, must under the present interpretation of the dual compensation law forfeit their disability compensation in order to receive the greater amount in pension benefits upon the theory that to pay both benefits concurrently would not conflict with the dual compensation law, and

Whereas, although the Disabled American Veteran does not oppose liberal benefits to veterans who served a mere 90 days stateside, we do hold that it is most inequitable for veterans with gunshot wounds or other disabilities incurred in combat, such as a veteran whose leg was shot off on the battlefield, entitling him to only \$82.00 per month compensation, to have to forfeit his compensation in order to receive the same nonservice pension payment as a veteran who served a mere 90 days stateside and received no disability as a result of such service,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record recommending passage of legislation correcting the existing inequities and provide that veterans entitled to disability compensation for disabilities incurred in or aggravated by military service and where the service connected disability in combination with nonservice connected disabilities meets the schedular requirements for nonservice connected pension benefits and otherwise meet the pension requirements, shall be entitled to receive the full amount of his disability compensation and in addition thereto, after subtracting the service connected disability evaluation rating from 100%, shall be entitled to receive that percentage of nonservice connected pension entitlement under the prescribed income limitations exclusive of his compensation payment. We hold that this benefit would not be in conflict with the dual compensation laws.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 324, LEGISLATIVE)

INCREASE IN WAR ORPHANS' EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

Whereas, educational assistance payments under the War Orphans' Act as amended by Public Law 88-361 have lagged far behind the rising cost of education, tuition, books, laboratory supplies, etc., and

Whereas, educational assistance rates for veterans have been increased to meet the increased educational cost,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record recommending necessary legislation to provide for a substantial increase in the educational assistance benefits payable under the War Orphans' Act as amended by Public Law 88-361. To deny such increase would work undue hardship on the child already in school under the Act, and in some cases result in the child having to discontinue or alter educational objectives due to lack of funds and would defeat the purpose for which the original act was enacted.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 325, LEGISLATIVE)

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN OF VETERANS RATED 50 PERCENT OR MORE DISABLED AS THE RESULT OF SERVICE CONNECTED DISABILITY

Whereas, Public Law 88-361 amended the war orphans educational assistance act to include the children of veterans permanently and totally disabled from their service connected conditions, and

Whereas, many veterans are suffering from service connected disabilities not rateable as total by the rating schedule, but which disabilities curtail the

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veterans employment, opportunities for advancement to higher brackets and employment, and

Whereas, these veterans rated less than total because of their service connected disabilities, are unable to provide educational opportunities beyond the high school level, which is almost an absolute necessity in these times,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, recommend that Public Law 88-361 be amended to include the children of veterans rated 50 percent or more for service connected disabilities.

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(RESOLUTION No. 327, LEGISLATIVE)

CONCURRENT PAYMENT OF HOUSEBOUND ALLOWANCE AND STATUTORY AWARDS FOR LOSS OR LOSS OF USE

Whereas, Public Law 86-663, known as the housebound law, provides payment in the amount of \$350 per month to veterans rated 100 percent by schedule and whose service connected conditions are disabling to a degree rendering the veteran housebound, or if the veteran has a single condition rateable at 100 percent by schedule and sufficient other disabilities independently rateable at 60 percent or more, and

Whereas, regulations governing payment of benefits under Public Law 86-663 provide for either payment of compensation under Public Law 86-663 or under other laws, whichever benefit is the greater, and

Whereas, this discriminates against veterans who are rated 100 percent by schedule and are receiving an additional \$47.00 statutory award for loss of or loss of use of a hand, leg, eye, or both buttocks entitling him to compensation payments at the rate of \$347 per month, and

Whereas, historically, the statutory award for loss of or loss of use of a hand, leg, eye, or both buttocks was intended to be compensation in addition to any other compensation the veteran may be entitled to receive, and

Whereas, many of these veterans also meet the requirements for benefits under Public Law 86-663,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record recommending that veterans who meet the requirements for benefits under Public Law 86-663 and who otherwise are entitled to a statutory award for loss of or loss of use of a hand, foot, eye or both buttocks should be entitled to receive compensation at the rate payable under Public Law 86-663 and, in addition thereto, the statutory award for loss of or loss of use of a hand foot, eye, or both buttocks.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 331, LEGISLATIVE)

EXTENDING THE PRESUMPTIVE PERIOD FROM 1 TO 2 YEARS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SERVICE CONNECTION FOR MALIGNANT CANCER

Whereas, the present law provides only one year presumptive period to establish service connection for malignant cancer, and

Whereas, this is a slow progressive disease, and in many instances does not manifest itself for two or three years after its inception,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record requesting legislation to extend the presumptive period for granting service connection on malignant cancer from one year to two years from the date of discharge from military service.

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(RESOLUTION No. 352, LEGISLATIVE)

TO INCREASE THE RATES FOR CERTAIN STATUTORY AWARDS

Whereas, a veteran, who is so severely disabled as to qualify under the VA regulations for paragraphs above K may need the assistance of another, and

Whereas, other veterans receive allowances for aid and attendance, and

Whereas, those in the categories of paragraphs L, M, N, O, P and S represent less than 11,000 seriously injured and wounded, double amputee, paraplegic and blind veterans, and

Whereas, if hospitalized, their attendants draw pay while the veterans are hospitalized, and

Whereas, these men from paragraphs L, M, N and S need special assistance, Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that special compensation rates for aid and attendance be allowed as follows: para. L add \$125, para. M add \$150, para. N add \$175, para. O add \$250, para. P add \$250, para. S add \$125, and

Be it further resolved that while hospitalized at government expense these men shall continue to receive the same allowances and benefits.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 359, LEGISLATIVE)

TO REVISE THE PROCEDURE FOR REPAYMENT OF SEVERANCE PAY

Whereas, present laws and regulations provide for the repayment to the government of amounts paid former servicemen for Disability Severance Pay prior to the start of compensation benefits, and

Whereas, experience has shown that many veterans do not file claim for compensation benefits until long after their honorable separation from the service, when the veteran is oftentime in dire need of the compensation benefits, and the withholding of the benefits for such repayment may cause distinct hardship to the veteran concerned, and

Whereas, it is not considered to be the true intent of the Congress to cause such veterans unnecessary hardships, particularly at time when the benefits are most needed,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, recommend to the United States Congress that legislation which requires repayment of Disability Severance Pay prior to receipt of compensation benefits be changed to provide that the veteran will be given credit toward this repayment in an amount equal to the monetary benefits which he has been awarded eligibility, computed retroactively to the date following his honorable discharge from the active military service, and

Be it further resolved that no veteran will accrue any cash payments based on such retroactive eligibility for benefits which will serve only to repay such Disability Severance Pay.

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(RESOLUTION No. 370, LEGISLATIVE)

TO REVISE PARS. 29 AND 30 OF THE 1945 RATING SCHEDULE TO PROVIDE A TOTAL DISABILITY RATING AFTER 7 DAYS OF CONTINUOUS HOSPITAL TREATMENT

Whereas, Paragraph 29 and 30 of the 1945 Schedule for rating disabilities provide for a 100% rating, under certain conditions, where the veteran is hospitalized because of a service connected disability, and

Whereas, prior to April 8, 1959 the 100% rating was made effective from the 22nd day of hospitalization. At that time the schedule was changed to provide for the 100% rating to become effective from the day of admission, and

Whereas, since 1959 great progress has been made in medicine and hospital care. As a result, numerous veterans are admitted and it is not necessary that they remain on in-patient care for the 21-day period, and

Whereas, these veterans are discharged within a week or two and then carried on CBOC status, but are not permitted to return to work until their convalescence period at home is completed, and

Whereas, in some cases the veteran can't return to work for a period of six weeks to two months, and

Whereas, these veterans suffer undue hardship because they lose income from employment because of their service connected disability,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967,

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that these provisions should be changed to seven days of continuous hospital treatment to meet the requirements of the 100% rating, and

Be it further resolved that this resolution be made a part of our legislative program for the year 1967-68.

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(RESOLUTION No. 375, LEGISLATIVE)

PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION FOR MANIFESTATIONS OF CHRONIC DISEASES WITHIN 5 YEARS AFTER THE DISCHARGE OF A FORMER PRISONER OF WAR

Whereas, the veteran who had been a prisoner of war of our nation's wartime enemies has suffered experience unique to that of the average ex-serviceman, and, in many instances, was subject to disease, malnutrition, exposure or brutality sufficient in nature to weaken his mental and physical resistance to such an extent that he was prone to have lowered resistance to physical and mental hazards for many years after his release from military service, and

Whereas, the former prisoner of war's plight has not been recognized by the passage of any significant legislation to acknowledge the fact that his ordeals precipitated a physical or mental breakdown beyond the presumptive periods for establishment of service connection for chronic diseases granted all wartime veterans,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31, through August 4, 1967, that the Congress of the United States be petitioned to pass legislation granting veterans who were prisoners of war for 90 days or more, service connection for any of the chronic diseases now recognized on a one-year presumptive basis if such diseases are shown to be disabling to a compensable degree within five years after his discharge from military service, and

Be it further resolved that chronic bronchitis and chronic bronchial asthma be included as presumptive disabilities in reference to former prisoners of war.

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(RESOLUTION No. 376, LEGISLATIVE)

FULL WARTIME BENEFITS FOR EXTRA HAZARDOUS SERVICE

Whereas, veterans classified as having peacetime service who incur disabilities under extra hazardous conditions or conditions simulating war are paid wartime compensation rates by the Veterans Administration, and

Whereas, peacetime veterans who qualify for wartime compensation rates based on disabilities incurred under extra hazardous duty or conditions simulating war are not eligible for other benefits to which a wartime veteran may be entitled, and

Whereas, dependents of peacetime veterans receiving wartime compensation rates based on a disability incurred during extra hazardous duty or conditions simulating war are not eligible to any Veterans Administration benefits unless the veterans dies as the result of his service incurred disability,

Now, therefore be it resolved, by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the Congress of the United States be petitioned to pass legislation granting eligibility to full wartime benefits to any peacetime veteran who is receiving wartime disability compensation rates based on a disability incurred during extra hazardous duty or under conditions simulating war, and

Be it further resolved, that eligibility to full wartime benefits also be extended to the widow and orphan children of deceased veterans who received wartime compensation rates based on disability incurred during extra hazardous duty or under conditions simulating war.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 377, LEGISLATIVE)

TO EXTEND THE PRESUMPTIVE PERIOD FOR SERVICE CONNECTION FOR PSYCHOSIS FROM 1 TO 2 YEARS

Whereas, service connection has been recognized for many years so that VA hospitalization and treatment could be afforded wartime veterans who develop

symptoms of psychosis, 10 percent or more disabling, within two years following discharged from military service, and

Whereas, the wartime veterans, who meet the aforementioned requirements, have been recognized as service connected for treatment purposes only—not for compensation purposes, and

Whereas, this creates a twofold standard for those veterans afflicted with psychosis as no other physical disability which can be service connected on a wartime presumptive basis recognizes the disability as service connected yet fails to allow payment of compensation, and

Whereas, this inequity has been the primary cause of much hardship to the partially service connected wartime veteran, who has established service connection for psychosis on the two year presumptive basis, as well as his dependents.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the Congress of the United States be petitioned to pass legislation whereby this inequity be relieved and compensation be made payable to two years presumptive wartime veterans service connected for psychosis for treatment purposes only on the same basis as other presumptive diseases for which both compensation and treatment may be received by a service connected veteran.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 378, LEGISLATIVE)

TO ELIMINATE CHILDRENS' SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS AS A FACTOR IN DIC PAYMENTS TO WIDOWS

Whereas, under present law governing payment of death benefits to widows of deceased wartime veterans it is possible for a widow with minor children receiving death pension on a non-service connected basis to receive monetary benefits equal to a widow with the same number of minor children who is receiving death compensation on a service connected death basis, and

Whereas, this inequity in the long established principle to pay greater benefits where payments are based on service incurrence is due to the fact that payments of social security benefits to minor children is not a factor in non-service connected death pension. However, payment of social security benefits to minor children is a factor in payment of service connected death indemnity compensation,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denever, Colorado, July 31, through August 4, 1967, that Congress be petitioned to pass legislation eliminating the social security benefits of minor children as a factor in payment of death indemnity compensation to a widow and that she be granted an additional dependency allowance for each of her minor children.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 386, LEGISLATIVE)

AID AND ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE FOR SERVICE CONNECTED WIDOWS

Whereas, legislation has been introduced in the 90th Congress to amend the non-service-connected death pension program to provide a special aid and attendance allowance for certain widows, and

Whereas, the enactment of such legislation would provide benefits for non-service-connected widows that are unavailable to the widows of veterans who die as the result of service incurred disabilities, and

Whereas, this nation's first duty to veterans is to its wartime service connected disabled, their widows and dependents,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denever, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the National Director of Legislation shall sponsor and support legislation in the United States Congress to provide Aid and Attendance allowance for the widows of veterans who died of service connected causes.

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(RESOLUTION No. 392, LEGISLATIVE)

CLOTHING ALLOWANCE FOR SERVICE CONNECTED AMPUTEE VETERANS

Whereas, a grateful government has spent millions of dollars to produce new devices which will help to rehabilitate the handicapped, and

Whereas, these devices in many instances are a lot more complicated than those devices furnished severely disabled veterans at the close of World War I and World War II, and

Whereas, some of these devices contain certain gadgets which wear out and tear clothing faster than the uncomplicated prosthetic devices previously furnished,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that we go on record to seek the passage of legislation to grant outright a sum of \$300.00 annually toward the replacement of clothing.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 421, LEGISLATIVE)

PROPOSE INCREASE IN BURIAL ALLOWANCE

Whereas, the Veterans Administration has been paying \$250.00 towards the burial of veterans for a number of years, and

Whereas, to keep in line with the ever-increasing cost of funerals, we believe that the burial allowance should be increased substantially,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record requesting that the Congress of the United States enact legislation to increase the burial allowance paid by the Veterans Administration to \$350.00.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 436, LEGISLATIVE)

PROVIDE ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR DEPENDENTS OF VETERANS RATED 40 PERCENT OR MORE

Whereas, existing law provides for additional compensation for dependents for service connected disabled veterans rated 50 percent or more, and

Whereas, this creates inequity under existing laws and the majority of service connected veterans are evaluated at less than 50 percent disabled, and

Whereas, many of these veterans evaluated less than 50 percent disabled are seriously handicapped in earning a livelihood, are severely restricted in advancement or promotion in their social activities and are handicapped in providing adequate care of their families, and

Whereas, by enacting PL 499, Congress recognized the need for additional compensation for veterans with dependents when they granted additional compensation for more than three children to veterans 50 percent or more disabled,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record urging Congress to enact legislation for dependency allowances for those veterans with a disability rating of 40 percent or more.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 437, LEGISLATIVE)

INCREASE PRESUMPTIVE PERIOD FOR PROGRESSIVE MUSCULAR ATROPHY FROM 1 TO 7 YEARS

Whereas, present laws do not provide for the establishment of service connection for insidious diseases such as those in the category of progressive muscular atrophy beyond one year from the date of separation from service, and

Whereas, these diseases are of obscure origin and at times the most difficult conditions even for the expert in disorders of the central nervous system to diagnose, and

Whereas, there is marked variability in the clinical manifestations among patients in the course of the disease in each individual,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the law be amended to include a presumptive period of seven years for the progressive muscular atrophies, the same as now applicable to multiple sclerosis.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 444, LEGISLATIVE)

PROVIDE 7-YEAR PRESUMPTIVE PERIOD FOR AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS

Whereas, the Veterans Administration has seen fit to provide for a presumptive period of 7 years for multiple sclerosis, and

Whereas, the present presumptive period of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis is only one year,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record requesting a seven (7) year presumptive period be provided for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 445, LEGISLATIVE)

SPECIAL HOUSING FOR VETERANS HAVING AMPUTATION OF ONE LOWER AND ONE UPPER EXTREMITY

Whereas, present law provides special housing for service connected double leg amputees and paraplegics, and

Whereas, no such provision is made for service connected veterans who have suffered loss or loss of use of one upper and one lower extremity,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that Pubic Law 702, which provides specially adapted housing for disabled veterans be amended as follows: To include service connected double amputee veterans with an amputation of one lower and one upper extremity.

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(RESOLUTION No. 457, LEGISLATIVE)

SUPPORTING LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE INCREASED BENEFITS FOR MILITARY RETIREES

Whereas, the Distabled American Veterans has over the years fought for benefits for all service connected disabled veterans, and

Whereas, since 1950 military personnel who are disabled in excess of 30% are placed on the temporary retired list for five years, and

Whereas, depending on rank it may be more beneficial for these personnel to receive benefits and pay from the military service, and

Whereas, the Disabled American Veterans' legislative program has not been enlarged to cover benefits for these veterans, and

Whereas, no other veterans organization has taken action in the area of military retirement benefits for service connected disabled veterans, and

Whereas, the Disabled American Veterans, because of their lack of action, is in effect discriminating against these veterans who they are also seeking for membership under the recently revised membership qualifications,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, add the following items to the permanent legislative program to be presented annually to the Armed Services Committees of the House and Senate:

1. Provide for beds to care for retired veterans and their dependents in military hospitals and, after enabling legislation is adopted, to legislate appropriations to cover the expense of these beds.

2. Elimination of the great differential between the percentage of retirement versus current rate of military pay.

3. Request the Armed Services Committees to increase the allowance for commissary and to increase the number of commissaries in the United States.

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4. Provide increased availability of out-patient care for retired military and their dependents.

5. Promote the maintenance of military PXs throughout the continental limits of the United States.

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(RESOLUTION No. 488, LEGISLATIVE)

TO ESTABLISH MINIMUM RATES FOR MILITARY RETIREES DISABLED BY COMBAT INJURIES

Whereas, a serviceman disabled in combat is entitled to receive only a percentage of his military base pay, causing an injustice to NCOs and their families, and

Whereas, a Marine Corporal picked up in a coma, battered, and bleeding, now with a plate in his head, part of his brain missing, and his body held together with wires and screws, as a Lance Corporal, can only get \$136 per month under Section 1401 of Title 10, U.S. Code, and

Whereas, in our concern over the proliferated efforts of the United States government to eliminate poverty and cushion the effects of human misfortune we have overlooked some of the most obvious injustices, and

Whereas, our late comrade, former President John F. Kennedy, prior to his untimely death, said that he wanted war disabled veterans, and their families, to live in dignity, which are the objectives of the Disabled American Veterans, to return them to as good a position as they would have enjoyed had they not been disabled, and

Whereas, an enterprising newspaper (San Francisco Examiner) awakened many to this injustice, and

Whereas, because of the youth and lower income of non-commissioned officers, their injuries will more seriously jeopardize their future than for the high ranking commissioned officer with the same injuries, and

Whereas, H.R. 9670, introduced by Congressman C. S. Gubser, is designed to correct this injustice,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disable American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, support H.R. 9670, urging Congress for early favorable consideration.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 509, LEGISLATIVE)

ELIGIBILITY FOR \$1600 AUTO GRANT

Whereas, existing law allows eligible veterans \$1600.00 toward the purchase of an automobile, and

Whereas, the cost of such vehicle purchases has risen sharply since the enactment of the original legislation,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, recommends that this allowance be increased to enable said eligible veterans to purchase an automobile of average reasonable price at such time as their eligibility is established.

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(RESOLUTION No. 103, LEGISLATIVE)

FAVORING LEGISLATION TO REOPEN NSLI FOR A PERIOD OF 1 YEAR

Whereas, World War II and Korean veterans regard their service insurance as one of the most valuable benefits made available to them by the Congress of the United States, and

Whereas, under existing legislation the privilege of purchasing Government insurance or reinstating lapsed insurance is permanently lost to millions of those veterans, and

Whereas, this action has unjustly deprived many veterans of the right to invaluable insurance benefits and has resultingly caused a serious and widespread hardship upon the families of untold numbers of veterans who today are

without vital insurance protection because their low-cost service insurance is forever lost to them and because they are unable to afford the costlier coverage of commercial insurance policies,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, go on record as favoring legislation which will allow World War II and Korean veterans one year from date of enactment of such legislation to purchase or reinstate their service insurance.

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(RESOLUTION No. 156, LEGISLATIVE)

SUPPORTING AN INCREASE IN GOVERNMENT LIFE INSURANCE COVERAGE TO A MAXIMUM OF \$30,000

Whereas, Government life insurance, which originated in World War I, still has as its maximum \$10,000, and

Whereas, the President, in his message to Congress on January 31, 1967, proposed the maximum be increased, and

Whereas, that Government Life Insurance with the Veterans Administration as administering agency for veterans and servicemen, the insurance program which had its origin in World War I, known as USGLI, other programs added NSLI, Special Life Insurance and Service Disabled Veterans Insurance. The maximum amount of Government insurance that can legally be in force on one's life on each of the above policies is \$10,000, and

Whereas, we are at the close of a half century without an increase in the value of a serviceman's life or veteran's insurance, and

Whereas, the value of our dollar is at an all time low, and what \$10,000 could buy fifty years ago it will not do so today,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, feel that the time has come for our government to supply our servicemen with an adequate amount of life insurance by increasing the maximum from \$10,000 to \$30,000, and

Be it further resolved that the total amount of \$10,000 be changed to \$30,000 on each of the plans that are now available for all uniformed servicemen, or insurance programs that may come into existence in the future.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 60, LEGISLATIVE)

TO PROHIBIT THE TREATMENT OF NONVETERANS IN VA HOSPITALS

Whereas, the Congress of the United States established Veterans Administration hospitals for the exclusive use of veterans, particularly the service connected veteran, and

Whereas, cross-servicing between federal agencies has allowed non-veterans of other agencies to be admitted to VA hospitals, and

Whereas, allowing non-veterans' admission to VA hospitals is contrary to the intent of Congress and a threat against the VA as the sole agency for veterans benefits,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the order allowing non-veterans admission to VA hospitals be rescinded and the laws regulating the use of the VA hospitals by veterans only be strengthened.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 68, LEGISLATIVE)

REQUESTING INCREASED ALLOWANCE FOR TRAVEL IN CONNECTION WITH MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

Whereas, the VA has been paying our veterans 5¢ a mile to travel to VA hospitals, outpatient treatment, and examination, and

Whereas, many veterans have had to travel over 100 miles and arrive at 8:00 in the morning for outpatient treatment, hospitalization and examination,

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Now, therefore, be it resolved, by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the veterans allowance for travel be increased to 10¢ a mile, and

Be it further resolved, to pay the veteran a night's lodging and meals if he has to travel 100 miles or more and arrive before 10:00 in the morning.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 208, LEGISLATIVE)

TO PROVIDE INDEFINITE NURSING HOME CARE FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED CASES

Whereas, under present conditions a totally disabled service connected veteran receiving maximum compensation benefits including aid and attendance allowance of \$250, who is in need of convalescent care, generally is transferred from a VA Hospital to a private convalescent home and the Veterans Administration bears the total cost for a period of only six months, during which period the veteran's \$250 is withheld from his compensation, and

Whereas, when at the end of the six months period the Veterans Administration terminates their obligation of cost, the \$250 is again restored to the veteran, and he must assume the convalescent cost at his own expense, and

Whereas, the minimal convalescent cost in these facilities ranges from \$350 on up and the veteran must pay the difference between the \$250 the Veterans Administration provides and the cost, and

Whereas, it imposes a financial hardship upon his wife and children to sustain a reduction in compensation benefits in order to pay this convalescent need, and

Whereas, it should be the responsibility of the Government to cover the entire cost of convalescent care since their hospital facilities are inadequate to provide it,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, requests the National Legislative Department to urge the adoption of such a law through the United States Congress at their next session.

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(RESOLUTION No. 431, LEGISLATIVE)

PROVIDE COMPLETE MEDICAL SERVICES FOR TOTALLY DISABLED SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS

Whereas, the VA Out-Patient Program for veterans is limited primarily to VA recognized service connected disabilities, and

Whereas, the cost of medical, dental, optical, and other expenses for disabilities unrelated to the service of the serious disabled veterans often takes most of, or the best part of, their income which, in most instances is limited to their VA compensation,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, urge the Congress of the United States to pass a bill to provide complete in-patient and out-patient services, including drugs, medicine, appliances, etc., for any disability or condition of a veteran who is rated as totally disabled from a service connected disability.

* * * * *

(RESOLUTION No. 471, LEGISLATIVE)

SUPPORTING A 4,000 BED VA NURSING CARE PROGRAM

Whereas, the ever present need for nursing care beds becomes more prevalent each day, and

Whereas, the daily influx of new Cold War Veterans makes it more evident that the continuation of such a program is necessary, and

Whereas, it has been statistically proven that such a program needs to be expanded, due to the increasing demands and lack of available space, and

Whereas, it has been said by many of our Executive Members to be the duty of the government to take care of its veterans and that a grateful country owes this much to them,

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Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, request that Congress review the Nursing Care Program to improve it and to grant additional beds to fill the need now existing.

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(RESOLUTION No. 473, LEGISLATIVE)

SUPPORTING 125,000 BED VA HOSPITAL PROGRAM

Whereas, the Congress has provided appropriation for 125,000 operational beds in the 165 VA Hospitals, which the veterans of this nation are most grateful, and

Whereas, the present demand for beds in VA Hospitals has been gradually increasing over the past few years and has now become greater than the VA can supply, and

Whereas, the number of eligible veterans increases every day with the return of our Vietnam veterans and the VA will be handicapped with its limitation of beds,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, urge the United States Congress to enact or support future legislation, to increase the VA Hospital beds from 125,000 to 150,000 by January 1968, or as early as can be enacted.

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(RESOLUTION No. 17, LEGISLATIVE)

REQUESTING EXTENSION OF GI LOAN BENEFITS FOR VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II

Whereas, less than four months remain for veterans of World War II to use their GI loan privileges, and

Whereas, for the past 2½ years the tight money market made it impossible for these veterans to receive this consideration,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that the Congress be requested to initiate legislation that would extend the GI loan benefits for World War II veterans for an additional three years.

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(RESOLUTION No. 38, LEGISLATIVE)

REQUESTING AN INCREASE IN FEDERAL PAYMENTS TO STATE VETERANS HOMES

Whereas, at the present time the Veterans Administration pays State Veterans Homes \$2.50 a day for domiciliary care of bona fide veterans, and

Whereas, the United States Government recognizes the services of these individuals to their nation and the need to provide care for them, and

Whereas, the costs to the various states in operating veterans homes have increased tremendously in the past few years, and

Whereas, increased costs have had the effect of deflating the Federal payments, and

Whereas, H. R. 3045, "A bill to amend title 38 of the United States Code in order to promote the care and treatment of veterans in state veterans homes", would increase the Federal payments to states providing care to veterans,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, that this organization declares its support of House of Representatives Bill 3045, and

Be it further resolved, that this organization most strongly urges that those individuals to whom this Resolution is addressed do everything in their power to achieve the enactment of H. R. 3045.

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(RESOLUTION No. 434, LEGISLATIVE)

ESTABLISH A COURT OF VETERANS APPEALS

Whereas, a Veterans Appeals Court would afford many veterans a new approach to their VA claims problems which date back into the past for a period of many discouraging years, during which many veterans feel they received less than fair and impartial decisions by the VA, and

Whereas, a review of these claims, by this Court of Veterans Appeals, would in all probability provide a more objective and fair decision to both the veteran and to the Government and by so doing show these veterans who contend that they have been wronged by the VA, that the true intentions of our grateful nation are based on liberty and justice for all,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled American Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, urge the United States Congress to establish a Court of Veterans Appeals.

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(RESOLUTION No. 449, LEGISLATIVE)

REDUCTION OF INTEREST RATE ON VA HOME LOANS

Whereas, the interest rate for GI home loans has been increased to the same rate as FHA loans, and

Whereas, the Veterans Home Loan Program should have more favorable interest rates than regular or FHA loans,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Disabled Americans Veterans in National Convention assembled at Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 1967, does hereby request that legislation be enacted to lower the interest rate on GI home loans.

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STATEMENT OF CHARLES L. HUBER, NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATION, DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS, BEFORE THE U.S. VETERANS' ADVISORY COMMISSION, OCTOBER 3, 1967

Mr. HUBER. Mr. Chairman, members of the Veterans' Advisory Commission. The Disabled American Veterans appreciates the opportunity of appearing before the Commission to discuss with you some very important matters in connection with benefit programs for veterans and their dependents.

Our discussion will include recommendations which were put forth by DAV officers in previous appearances before the Commission together with legislative resolutions adopted by our most recent national convention held in Denver, Colo., July 31, through August 4, 1967. Some of these recommendations and proposals, if approved, would serve to modify existing programs while other would authorize new ones.

I should like to begin our presentation by recalling that President Johnson, in his unprecedented message to the Congress on January 31, recommended a wide range of legislative proposals to remove inequities existing in the benefit programs not only for Vietnam conflict veterans, but also for veterans of America's past wars. The Congress responded promptly and favorably by passing S. 16, the Veterans Pension and Readjustment Assistance Act of 1967. This bill, endorsed by the DAV, contained a good number of the recommendations set out in the President's congressional message. As a result, the welfare of disabled war veterans and their dependents has been substantially improved. These improvements were needed and were most welcome.

The DAV must now turn its attention to improved benefits that are in prospect rather than with those benefits which have already been secured. We are confident that this Commission, which carries with it the prestige of President Johnson's mandate, will respond with the support required to fulfill our hopes and expectations.

Mr. Chairman, it is sometimes said that Presidential Study Commissions, by their very nature, travel a difficult road; that if their purpose is not merely to ratify decisions already made, then it is to deal with problems so perplexing and sticky that the White House has been unable to make the decisions and so is "passing the buck."

It is also said that Commission memberships are carefully balanced among different interest groups, and that frequently the diversity only guarantees a conflict. In short, Presidential Commissions are viewed suspiciously as creatures of the executive branch.

The DAV wishes to say at once, Mr. Chairman, that no such charges can be directed to this Veterans Advisory Panel. There is no diversity of interest here, since each member of the Commission is, himself, a veteran with a long and dedicated history of service to the cause of America's veterans. Each has a wealth of background experience that fits him perfectly to perform the task for which the Commission was created. Indeed, we know of no group that has been more devoted, more conscientious, or more qualified to undertake the study than the members of this Advisory Commission. We are certain that the President will accept its findings and recommendations which, we firmly believe, will have a profound effect upon the whole structure of veterans programs.

We come now to the specific recommendations which we shall put forward for the Commission's consideration. However, before doing so and in order to place our proposals in proper perspective, I think it appropriate to mention here that the Disabled American Veterans was founded on the principle that the Nation's first duty to veterans is the rehabilitation of those who were honorably discharged during a period of war and who were wounded, injured, or otherwise disabled by reason of such service. Included in the term "during a period of war" are veterans whose disabilities were incurred as a result of armed conflict, or while engaged in extra-hazardous duty, including service under conditions simulating war.

To fulfill its function, the DAV strives to bring about the enactment of legislation to meet the national obligation for improving the physical, social, and economic well-being of men and women who sacrificed themselves for America. Our attention is primarily focused upon legislative objectives which seek to enhance opportunities for employment and proper job placement so that the remaining ability of the disabled veteran is used in the most productive way; to provide expert hospital and medical care to restore disabled veterans to a state of good health; and to provide adequate and just compensation for service-incurred disabilities.

Our principal goal, then, is to restore the handicapped veteran to as good a position in civilian life as he would have enjoyed had he not been disabled in the service of his country. The matter of adequate compensation applies also to the widows, children, and dependent parents of those who died from service-connected causes.

SERVICE-CONNECTED COMPENSATION

A review of the DAV proposals presented to the Commission during its previous meetings indicates that major emphasis centered on the disability and death compensation program.

We consider the present rates of disability and death compensation (DIC) grossly inadequate to permit the veteran or his widow the place in our society which we believe they should enjoy.

Many disabled veterans must depend solely upon their compensation to provide the necessities of life. They are caught in a seemingly hopeless struggle to stretch their fixed income of disability compensation to meet the ever-increasing cost of living.

Much has been said concerning the adverse effect of the continued increase in the cost of living upon those who are compelled by circumstances to subsist on fixed incomes. The administration has sponsored and urged the Congress to adopt measures which would ease the economic burden of military personnel, Federal employees, social security beneficiaries, welfare recipients and non-service-connected pensioners. Sponsors of legislation have documented and justified the necessity of increasing these benefits to bring them more closely in balance with the rise in the cost of living.

The DAV recognizes that there is a need for these increases to offset the shrinking power of yesterday's dollar on today's prices. I would only remind you that disability compensation is also fixed income established by law. The service-connected disabled veteran has been caught in the same economic squeeze that has so seriously affected other Federal beneficiaries.

During the 2 years since the last cost-of-living increase in disability compensation was granted, prices have since increased approximately 7 percent and the basic rates have lost much of their purchasing power.

When we speak in terms of the year 1968, which we are doing here, we can safely expect that prices will have advanced at least another 3 percent with a corresponding decrease in the value of the veteran's compensation dollar.

We think it is abundantly clear that there is an overwhelming case for restoration of the value of disability compensation at a very early date in 1968. This applies with special force to those who are so severely disabled as to be unemployable, a group who have suffered even greater erosion of their living standards.

In this regard, it should be noted that since 1933, when the present system of disability evaluations began, there has been an overall increase of 154.6 percent in the payments of service-connected disability compensation. During this same period, the average wage of employees in manufacturing industries has increased by 594 percent, leaving a gap of 439.4 percent between the increases in the rates of compensation and the average wage of employed workers. Additionally, it should be pointed out that the median annual income of veterans employed full time is \$7,300.

The veteran who is rendered totally unproductive because of a service-connected disability can never hope to attain this level of economic security. Because his total loss of earning power came about as a result of service to his country, it seems a matter of simple justice that the compensation payments for this particular veterans should be in-

creased to a point commensurate with that of his able-bodied, wage-earning contemporaries.

It may be argued, with a degree of merit, that the compensation increases described above were reasonable since they were granted as a means of offsetting in some measure the rise in living costs. However, we think it fair to say that the compensation rates for the unemployable service-connected veteran were set far too low from the very beginning. Hence, the increase in rates to cover the corresponding rise in living costs did not really provide for adequate compensation payments.

The present compensation rates for this particular veteran are in fact so markedly deficient they have served only to place him in an actual condition of poverty.

It would appear that wage increases and concurrent increases in the costs of goods and services represent an unending cycle. These increases invariably result in less dollar value, less buying power, and a further strain on resources already too meager to provide more than the bare necessities of living for this veteran and his family.

Moreover, in view of the costs associated with the Great Society projects and the costs for financing the war in Vietnam, it can be realistically predicted that the Consumer Price Index will continue to increase. Veterans who are living solely on disability compensation payments stand to suffer most as the dollar's buying power diminishes. The net effect of this will be to push the veteran to a still lower step on the economic scale.

We realize, Mr. Chairman, that there have been numerous and varied requests made to the Commission during the course of your regional meetings. We realize also that priorities in these matters must be set.

We believe that serious study and thoughtful consideration of the facts set forth above will lead the Commission to give the highest priority to recommendations for well-deserved increases in the rates of service-connected disability compensation.

Another DAV recommendation on the subject of compensation calls for a long-delayed increase in single statutory awards based on service-connected disability. It seems rather odd that the rates for these special awards have not been increased in the past 15 years. On July 1, 1952, there was only a small increase (\$5 per month) over the rate which had prevailed since September 1, 1946. In short, there has been a \$5 increase in 21 years.

The conditions which are the basis for these special awards include disabilities that can never be adequately compensated for in terms of monetary benefits. Not only is physical inability impaired but the traumatic effect of these losses has been tremendously adverse for many individuals. Included in this category are the anatomical loss or loss of use of one foot; of a creative organ; or one hand; or both buttocks; or blindness of one eye; or complete organic aphonia with constant inability to communicate by speech; or deafness of both ears. In addition to these conditions, there is a statutory award for arrested tuberculosis. We believe that further consideration to the facts of this matter by the Commission will lead to recommendations for increases in the present rates by approximately 55 percent.

Another DAV recommendation in the field of compensation concerns a proposal to enable certain permanently and totally disabled veterans to receive the full rate of disability compensation found payable for their wartime service-connected disabilities and also a proportionate amount of disability pension under a specified formula. The formula would apply to compensable ratings ranging from 10 through 90 percent.

The amount payable under the formula is determined by deducting from 100 percent the compensation rating evaluation, the result representing the percentage of pension payable in the case. For example, a veteran rated 40 percent for compensation purposes would receive his full rate of payment, \$82 a month for his service-connected disability, and in addition, an amount equivalent to 60 percent of the pension ordinarily payable.

The recommendation does not ask that a veteran be given the full amounts of both compensation and pension, and we make no such request, nor are we asking that the veteran be paid twice for the same disability. We are only asking, and we think with complete justification, that the service-connected disabled veteran, who is drawing compensation, be permitted to participate in the non-service-connected pension program.

The next DAV recommendation associated with compensation proposes to reduce from 50 to 40 percent the minimum-disability requirement in determining eligibility of service-connected disabled veterans for additional compensation for dependents. Under existing law, a veteran who is totally disabled and has a wife receives an additional \$25 compensation monthly. A veteran rated 50 percent and with a wife receives additional compensation equal to one-half of \$25, or \$12.50. Veterans rated 40 percent receive nothing additional for their dependents. Presently, a veteran rated 50 percent who has a wife and three children receives \$181 per month as opposed to a 40-percent disabled veteran with the same number of dependents who receives only \$82 monthly.

This seems highly unreasonable in view of the fact that many disabilities rated at 40 percent for compensation purposes reflect a high degree of impairment. Some of the disabilities rated at 40 percent include leg amputations; multiple-finger amputations; enucleation of an eye; and severe symptoms associated with diseases covering all systems of the body. Any one of these conditions can place the individual in the seriously disabled class where his industrial capacity is adversely affected.

We earnestly urge that the Commission recommend favorably on this proposal.

The following additional recommendations relating to compensation are set forth for the Commission's consideration:

Under existing law, provision is made that a disability which has been continuously rated at or above a certain percentage for 20 or more years shall not thereafter be rated at a lesser percentage, except upon the showing that the rating was based on fraud. It has been brought to attention that occasions arise where a disability rating is reduced during the statutory 20-year period and a short time later, on the basis of previously unrevealed facts or additional medical evidence, the prior rating is restored. Instances also occur where a rating reduction is

based on an actual showing of improvement in the disability. In a large number of these cases, however, the improvement is merely a temporary relief of the symptoms. Soon after the reduction, medical evidence is introduced indicating the symptoms have resumed their ordinary level of severity. The former rating is then restored.

Considering the circumstances distinctive in the cases just cited, we feel that these veterans are being unfairly deprived of the protective feature of the law. The DAV recommends that this inequity be corrected by providing, with respect to the 20-year statutory period that, "breaks of continuity for periods of less than 1 year in any disability rating applicable to any individual shall be disregarded."

On this same subject it has also come to attention that the Veterans' Administration, in its application of the law, has denied the 20-year protection to disabled veterans who are receiving special compensation rates under paragraphs (K) through (S) of section 314, title 38, United States Code.

We think the Veterans' Administration's interpretation of the law, in this instance, represents a contradiction of the true and basic purpose of the statute. We cannot believe that it was ever, even for a moment, the intention of the Congress to deny the protective feature of the law to those whose service-connected wounds and injuries involve the most seriously disabling conditions of all.

We believe the Commission will see the equity and the need for favorable action on these two proposals.

The next two proposals have a similar purpose in that they would amend section 314, subparagraph (k) of title 38, United States Code, to provide for additional monthly compensation for veterans who have suffered, respectively, the loss of a kidney or the loss of a lung.

The Congress, by enactment of prior legislation, has determined that in cases of loss of limbs or body organs, a special award should be authorized by statute for the specific disability. At present, a statutory rate of monthly compensation is set at \$47 for certain single losses.

It is the feeling of the DAV that an individual who has suffered the loss of either a kidney or a lung has a serious, special disability which deserves a special statutory award. Definitely, the infection of the remaining kidney or lung would result in extreme hazard to life.

There are approximately 700 wartime service-connected veterans suffering with the loss or loss of use of a lung, and approximately 6,000 suffering with the service-connected loss of a kidney. These are insignificant numbers compared with the general veteran population. Moreover, the cost of these proposals would also be insignificant.

We strongly urge that the Commission recommend favorably on these most worthy proposals.

Present law provides that any veteran who has suffered blindness of one eye, total deafness in one ear, or the loss or loss of use of one kidney, as the result of service-connected disability and has lost or lost the use of the "paired organ" as a result of non-service-connected disability (not the result of his own wilful misconduct) shall be entitled to the applicable compensation rate for service-connected disability of both organs.

This principle recognizes the additional disability attendant on the non-service-connected loss of function of a second paired organ when service connection has been established for the other organ.

We, in the DAV, believe that this same principle applies with equal force to veterans who have suffered the service-connected loss or use of one extremity and who, subsequent to service, incur a similar disability of the paired extremity. The resulting disability is the same in each case and we urge the Commission to recommend this reasonable extension of the principle of "paired organ" impairment established by the Congress in 1962.

The next recommendation would authorize an annual clothing allowance of \$300 to veterans who, because of service-connected disabilities, are constrained to wear prosthetic appliances which tend to wear out or tear their clothing.

The proposal expressed in this recommendation is a matter of special importance for veterans who suffer with limb amputations. It is a fact that the necessary prosthetic appliances hasten the wearing out process of items of clothing. Trousers and sleeves of their jackets are subject to tearing or wearing out very quickly.

We think it most fair and reasonable that these veterans be compensated with an allowance, and we urge the Commission's approval of this most deserving and appealing relief measure.

Another provision of existing law urgently in need of revision is the allowance of \$1,600 toward purchase of an automobile for veterans who, as a result of military duty, have lost or lost the use of one or both feet, one or both hands, or who have suffered permanent impairment of vision of both eyes as defined by law.

The basic rate of \$1,600 was authorized by Public Law 663, 79th Congress, effective August 8, 1946, and has remained constant ever since. In asking for favorable consideration in this matter, we think it only necessary to say that this amount is entirely out of date with current prices.

If the merit of this proposal is properly accessed, we think the Commission will agree, at once, that a proposed increase in the \$1,600 grant is both reasonable and supportable.

Also in need of revision, are the current provisions with regard to the recoupment of military disability severance pay.

Members of the Armed Forces of the United States rendered permanently unfit to perform their military duties because of a service incurred disability may, under certain specified conditions, be granted disability severance pay, which is a lump-sum, nonrecurring benefit computed on the basis of rank and length of service.

Present law requires, however, that the amount of such severance pay shall be deducted from any compensation for the same disability to which the veteran may be entitled under laws administered by the Veterans' Administration. As severance pay often amounts to several thousands of dollars and recovery of this amount from disability compensation generally requires an extended period of time, the present recoupment provisions often result in hardship situations.

On many occasions the service connected disability, which may have been ratable at 10 to 30 percent disabling at the time of discharge, unexpectedly changes into a totally disabling condition with consequent termination of the veteran's income.

In these instances the veteran may be granted a 100 percent disability rating by the Veterans' Administration, but the recoupment provisions continue to bar the payment of disability compensation until such time as the full amount of severance pay has been recouped.

In order to alleviate this type of hardship situation, the DAV recommends that the rate at which disability severance pay may be recouped should be limited to a monthly amount not in excess of the compensation to which the veteran would currently be entitled for the degree of disability assigned on his initial VA rating, and that the balance between that amount and any elevated evaluation should be made payable to the veteran rather than being applied toward the recoupment of his severance pay.

We also propose a modification of existing law for the purpose of extending the full range of wartime benefits to a very deserving group of VA beneficiaries.

Enactment of the cold war GI bill, Public Law 89-358, in March of 1966, and the Veterans Pension and Readjustment Assistance Act of 1967 on August 31 of this year, did much to provide a measure of wartime benefits for veterans who have served in time of peace under wartime conditions.

There still remains, however, a group of some 5,939 disabled peacetime veterans who are paid disability compensation at wartime rates but who are not entitled to other wartime benefits.

We wish to strongly emphasize that the right of appeal is entirely limited to the issues of service connection of disability or cause of death and the right of a widow, dependent parent, or child to receive compensation therefor.

The need for approval of this recommendation—which proposes to give to the Nation's veterans their day in court—is real and critical.

DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION

The DAV most emphatically recommends approval of increases in the current rates of dependency and indemnity compensation payable to widows of veterans who die from service-connected causes. Our reasons for urging adoption of such increases are essentially the same as those expressed earlier with respect to the need for increases in disability compensation rates.

The second recommendation would authorize payment of dependency and indemnity compensation to widows of veterans who, at time of death, are entitled to receive compensation for a service-connected disability rated permanently and totally disabling for 20 years or more.

We in the DAV believe that a veteran who became disabled under wartime conditions, while performing extrahazardous service, should be fundamentally entitled to the same benefits provided for war veterans who became disabled under similar circumstances. We heartily recommend that, in the American spirit of fairplay, equal treatment be accorded these deserving veterans and the full range of wartime benefits be provided for them.

Before leaving the subject of service-connected compensation benefits, I wish to mention one of the more urgent DAV recommendations

which pertains to the creation of an Independent Court of Veterans Appeals.

This proposal, if approved, would for the first time permit judicial review of decisions of the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs.

Under existing law, U.S. district courts have jurisdiction to review decisions of the Administrator relating to claims under life insurance contracts but decisions of the Administrator on the issue of service connection of disability or death are final and conclusive.

The great volume of claims in this area prohibits judicial review by the existing Federal court system. For this reason, the proposal would provide for the establishment of a new court.

It should be kept in mind that the proposal would make absolutely no change in the present system of administrative adjudication. Service officers may continue to represent claimants exactly as they have in the past. All the proposal does is give a right of appeal to those who have been finally denied by the Administrator. Under existing law, they are required to accept the Administrator's denial of their claim. Under terms of the proposal they may appeal to the Court of Veterans Appeals.

With respect to this recommendation, there are a number of widows of service-connected seriously disabled veterans who do not qualify for dependency and indemnity compensation because the precise cause of death cannot be directly related to the veteran's service-connected disability. We believe these widows to be deserving of special consideration since they were constrained to provide what amounted to aid and attendance in connection with the long period of ill health suffered by their veteran husbands. Moreover, we think it fair to say that any veteran who endured the agony of total physical incapacity for 20 years should, for as long as he lives thereafter, have assurance that upon his death his wife will be provided for through payments of dependency and indemnity compensation. It may also be said, in fairness, that it should not really matter how the veteran died, but how he lived, and if he was a 100-percent service-connected disabled war veteran for 20 years, then his wife played a very great part in his living which ought to be more fully recognized.

We urge that the Commission give serious consideration to this very meritorious proposal.

Another recommendation concerns a matter which came about through enactment of Public Law 90-77 on August 31, 1967. This law expanded the veterans benefits program by adding a new concept with regard to death payments to widows whose husbands died as the result of non-service-connected causes.

Under the new law, the monthly rate of pension payable to any widow who is in need of regular aid and attendance is to be increased by \$50. It is apparent that there exists in this area a situation in which some widows, whose husbands died as the direct result of service-incurred disabilities, are not furnished an important financial benefit which is, nevertheless, available to certain widows whose husbands' death was in no way connected with the performance of military service.

We respectfully ask that the Commission rectify this discriminatory feature of the law.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

As you are aware, under present law, educational assistance is provided for children of veterans who died of a service-connected disability, or are permanently and totally disabled from service-connected causes.

The DAV recommends that war orphans educational assistance be extended, on a proportionate basis, to the children of veterans having a service-connected disability rated at not less than 50 percent.

In urging favorable consideration of this proposal, we point out that the Veterans' Administration has conceded that a 50-percent rating places the veteran in the class of seriously disabled. Our recommendation refers specifically to seriously disabled individuals rated as 50, 60, 70, 80, and 90 percent. These high disability ratings are for disease or injury that is always present and must be overcome by constant extra effort and strain which often causes a serious weakening of physical well-being at an abnormally early age.

Since normal employment has been adversely affected for this group, and since the reason for their depreciated income status is military service, and since millions of dollars will be spent in the next few years by the Federal Government in the laudable program of advanced education, we can think of no more appropriate way to implement that program than by helping to educate the children of those men who help the country in time of war. The recommendation does not ask for the full subsistence allowance granted war orphans and the children of the totally disabled, but only the amount which would be payable on a proportionate basis.

Our next recommendation is to amend the veterans educational assistance program to remove the existing limitation of 36-months maximum entitlement for war orphans who are also veterans and have earned educational benefits in their own right.

Entitlement to war orphans educational assistance is based upon the service of the parent who gave his life or became totally disabled in the service of his country.

Eligibility to veterans educational assistance is an earned right granted in recognition of the veteran's performance of military duty.

Under these conditions, we do not regard the extension of eligibility to be a dual benefit, as the periods of entitlement are not based upon military service performed by the same individual but are separate, distinct, and unrelated one to the other.

We also propose for your consideration an extension of the war orphans educational assistance program to cover the unmarried widows of deceased veterans who have died from service-connected causes.

GUARANTEED AND INSURED HOME LOANS

The GI home loan program came into existence in recognition of the fact that most veterans had not had an opportunity during their years of military service to save enough money to meet requirements generally made by lenders for obtaining home loans. The law was designed to substitute the credit of the U.S. Government as an inducement for lenders to make loans to veterans on relatively favorable terms.

The fact that the primary purpose of the GI guaranteed and insured home loan program has succeeded is beyond question. The DAV believes, however, there still remains a few areas in which further improvements can be achieved. Housing costs have continued on an ever-ascending curve and the average purchase price paid by veteran buyers has shown a continuous increase through the life of the loan guarantee program. Yet the maximum guarantee of \$7,500 has not been increased since 1950, when 90 percent of all home loans were less than \$12,000.

In the year in which the present ceiling was established, \$7,500 exceeded the 60-percent minimum coverage of the average home loan. It is, however, woefully inadequate in today's market when the average loan is in excess of \$16,000 and less than 50 percent of the current loan is covered by the maximum guarantee.

DAV recommendations associated with this subject are as follows:

(1) Increase the maximum entitlement for the guarantee of home loans to at least \$10,500 in keeping with the direct loan ceiling of \$17,500 established by Public Law 89-358.

(2) The current interest rate, which has risen from the original 4 percent to the current $5\frac{3}{4}$ percent, should be reduced to a level at least one-half of 1 percent lower than the FHA rate.

(3) Strict control should be exercised over the discount rate to prevent lenders from artificially increasing the interest rate by charging excessive points.

(4) A substantial increase in the grants to disabled veterans for the purchase of specially adapted housing under the provisions of chapter 21 of title 38, United States Code, should be provided in line with the enormously increased building costs since the inception of this program. Provisions should also be made to provide direct-low interest VA loans in amounts up to a maximum of \$15,000 for the balance of the purchase price.

(5) Extend the eligibility for specially adapted housing to disabled veterans who have suffered the service-connected loss or loss of use of one upper and one lower extremity.

(6) Liberalize the policy adopted by the VA in connection with the waiver of indebtedness due to default on GI loans where the debt arose as a result of compelling reasons without fault on the part of the veteran.

HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL TREATMENT

We think it is obvious that the system of Veterans' Administration hospitals and clinics is a national resource which, through its primary mission of bringing the best available treatment and care for the veteran patient, advances the progress of medicine in the United States and, indeed, the world.

The Disabled American Veterans, by its very nature, has an abiding interest in and strongly supports the position that the Veterans' Administration Department of Medicine and Surgery continue to maintain its prominence in the entire field of medical care.

VA's progress in acute medical hospitals, particularly, depends upon a favorable relationship with affiliated medical schools who, in effect, provide professional skills for the new treatment methods that are receiving much publicity in the press and scientific journals. In this

connection I would like to mention that the DAV has accumulated data based on reports received nationwide from our national service officers who are in constant contact with the program's operation as well as the personnel responsible for its administration.

A digest of the reports discloses almost unanimous agreements that there is a breakdown in the relationship as it currently exists between student doctors and veteran patients. The reports make clear that the student doctors are not at all cognizant of procedures, rights and entitlements of veteran patients, including both the service-connected and the nonservice connected. Moreover, they appear to be more concerned with the "interesting case" than with a medically well-known chronic disease. Many of the student doctors look upon the VA hospital as an institution extending welfare medical service instead of rendering a service which has been well-earned by the veteran patient.

We, therefore, recommend that student doctors be given a course of indoctrination regarding provisions of laws and regulations associated with the VA medical program as well as its policy, procedure, and philosophy.

Another element in which we have received a unified response, concerns the long waiting period an applicant must endure in preparation for hospital admittance. In some cases the veteran applicant may be seriously ill or injured, yet he must wait and complete the entire application form even before seeing a doctor. It is conceivable that in some instances such a delay could result in serious, if not fatal, consequences to the applicant. A lack of professional personnel in this department and the present procedure appear to be the factors for the long delay in admitting a patient to the VA hospital.

The reports also indicate that a serious obstacle to further progress is a shortage of adequately trained medical personnel. This shortage threatens to grow more serious as private hospitals compete for manpower. This applies not only with regard to physicians but also to psychologists, social workers, trained nurses, and other professions in the medical field. Unless more of these scarce-category professions are attracted to the VA, there will be a downward trend to the present high level of patient care.

We are certain that this Commission will give its full and close attention to improvements in these unfavorable aspects of the VA medical program.

Another aspect of the medical field which requires attention is the furnishing of outpatient medical treatment which, under present law, is generally restricted to service-connected disorders. Thus, with limited exceptions, veterans suffering from totally disabling service-connected disability are not entitled to outpatient services for their non-service-connected disorders.

Complete medical services, including drugs and medicines are, however, available for treatment of the non-service-connected conditions of veterans of the Spanish American or Indian wars, and to certain veterans found to be in need of regular aid and attendance.

Due to the debilitating effect which a disability severe enough to be rated totally disabling would have on other systems of the body, and the drastic reduction in the general health of a totally disabled veteran, we suggest that the Commission give serious consideration to recommending that section 612 of title 38, United States Code, be amended

to provide that any disability of a service-connected totally disabled veteran shall be considered for the purposes of outpatient medical treatment to be a service-connected disability incurred or aggravated in a period of war.

Mr. Chairman, on August 15 of this year, the Disabled American Veterans presented testimony relating to the veterans' nursing home care program to the Subcommittee on Intermediate Care of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. As our position on this important matter was fully covered at that time, I am attaching a copy of my statement in an attempt to conserve the Commission's valuable time.

BURIAL BENEFITS

The hearing records indicate there were many recommendations made to the Commission in connection with the national cemetery system. This is a subject which has the abiding interest of the DAV.

Our primary recommendations in this regard are that the operation and maintenance of the national cemeteries be transferred from the Department of the Army to the Veterans' Administration; that legislative matters relating to the cemeteries be transferred from the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee to the jurisdiction of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. We firmly believe that this transfer will serve to bring about solutions to the many longstanding problems associated with the national cemetery system; that at least one national cemetery be established in each State; and that the present \$250 burial allowance be increased to \$400.

It is noted that, in some instances, the next of kin are reluctant to have the veteran buried in a national cemetery. Some are unwilling to use national cemetery space because the cemetery is too far removed from the veteran's hometown. In these circumstances, a \$400 allowance would more adequately defray the expenses of burial in a private cemetery.

CIVIL SERVICE

The DAV has a fundamental and continuing concern with keeping intact the benefits accorded veterans under the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944, as amended. Despite repeated efforts by groups and individuals to weaken or eliminate this protective legislation, the DAV, in cooperation with other veterans' organizations, has thus far successfully opposed and defeated these efforts.

It is our hope that the Commission will recommend that benefits now available under the Veterans' Preference Act continue undisturbed.

INSURANCE

Recommendations in this category include:

- (1) Increase to \$30,000 the amount of servicemen's group life insurance which may be held by members of the Armed Forces.
- (2) Include in national service life insurance policies a provision for payment of double indemnity for death resulting from service incurred disability.
- (3) Permit for 1 year the granting of group life insurance to compensated service-connected veterans in a maximum amount of

\$30,000 with the Government paying the extra premium charged because of the service-connected disability.

Mr. Chairman, in this presentation we have tried to cover and give emphasis to some of the major recommendations advanced by DAV State and National officers during the course of the hearings. There are many other significant proposals, both legislative and administrative, of high importance which we cannot possibly bring to attention at this hearing. They have, however, been made a part of the Commission's hearing record, and we trust that all of them will receive your thoughtful and sympathetic consideration.

We wish also to call your attention to the attached charts in which we have attempted to portray the cost of the veterans' program in its proper perspective. You will note that, in spite of the vast increase in the size of the program that has occurred since 1933, when the present system was adopted, the total Government expenditures for veterans benefits have actually decreased in comparison to their percentage of the gross national product.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I want to say that you and your associates on the Commission have been most cooperative, very responsive, and warmly compassionate. On behalf of the Disabled American Veterans I want to thank you very much indeed.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Commander, you made an excellent statement. I would like to present the members of our committee and ask them to make any comments they might like to make.

I would like first to present Mr. James A. Haley of Florida.

Mr. HALEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, you have presented a very fine and I think a needful program from your organization. Looking over the men and women in this room this morning, who have contributed time and services to our great Nation, I feel this Nation should be grateful for that service and the sacrifices that you have made. I say that anything this Government, a grateful government, can do to alleviate the suffering of these men and women, we should gladly do. We seem to think that we must take care of other peoples of the world and sometimes it seems to me that we forget the men and women who have served us so well in time of crisis. We have carried the battle flag of this Republic in the far-flung battlefields of the world and have been victorious. With men and women of your type we can continue to do this.

I was very grateful, Mr. Commander, to hear that your great organization, and I think all organizations of veterans and all Americans should become alarmed about the situation that we have in our Nation today. I think that probably you are a little light, I might say, on what should be done with people who burn draft cards and burn the flag of our Nation. I think I have a better remedy for those people. I would load them aboard a ship, take them 500 miles out in the ocean, chain an anchor around their necks, and tell them to swim to any nation whose flag they could respect. I don't think we need that type of people in this great country of ours. I deplore the fact that apparently organizations and people high in government have continued to encourage, I might say, this kind of a situation. I just don't think those kind of people are Americans, and I wish we could get rid of them.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you, Congressman, for those fine remarks.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Agair of Indiana.

Mr. ADAIR. Mr. Chairman. Commander, first of all, let me compliment you on your fine staff. They are competent, dedicated, capable people and particularly would I mention Chet Huber upon whose counsel and advice we have come to rely so heavily. The Disabled American Veterans are to be commended in having people of this type here to work with us. A great deal of the success of your program obviously depends upon the activities of your legislative director and his staff.

Now, on another point, you have made some complimentary remarks about the work of this committee and we are glad to have them. You have mentioned the President's message and we, too, were glad to have the two Presidential messages upon veterans' affairs. Reference was made, either directly or indirectly, to the speed with which some of the Presidential recommendations were passed by this committee and, indeed, enacted into law. Again giving ourselves a pat on the back, which we sometimes I think need to do, let me say that at least one reason that the Presidential recommendations met with such a favorable and speedy response was that this committee had had those matters under consideration, as you well know, for many years. In fact, upon some of them we had already held hearings long before the Presidential messages came up. So we were prepared to act and have been prepared to act. When we found that the Executive was also willing to move, that made it very easy for those provisions to be enacted into law.

Third, and the only specific question I want to put to you, you made reference to national cemeteries. You are quite correct in indicating that this is a matter to which we expect to devote considerable time and attention. Now, there have been proposals that, rather than enlarging existing cemeteries or establishing new ones, or perhaps as a substitute for the creative of new cemeteries, we arrange for areas in existing private cemeteries to be used for the burial of veterans. In some cemeteries these areas already exist, to a degree, and are called fields of honor, or something of that sort.

Does your organization have a position upon that point? Would you look with favor upon it? I might say it would not really be an incorporation in the national cemetery system but establishing in existing private cemeteries areas for the burial of veterans, and thus limiting to that degree the expansion of the national system.

Mr. BEATON. We have before us a study group and we have recommended a study in connection with this specific matter, Congressman Adair. We have taken no definite action that I know of presently, specifically in this area, on these separate assigned plots in cemeteries.

Mr. ADAIR. I would urge you to have your study group act rather quickly and then submit to our committee the results of its findings, because I take it, Mr. Chairman, that this will be one of the basic decisions that we will have to make. We would be glad to have the benefit of your studies in that respect.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you, Congressman Adair. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Dulski, of New York.

Mr. DULSKI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Commander, first of all, may I congratulate you on the fine statement that you have presented. I do not think you have missed any points that need

clarification on any of the subjects which you have mentioned. I, too, am very much disturbed by the "Yankee Go Home" attitude that we have in foreign lands. Of course, the President has issued an order, a request that traveling should be curtailed to these foreign lands because all they do want is moneys from us, forgetting what we have done, not only in World War II but in World War I and the Korean conflict. I, too, am very much pleased that you, Mr. Commander, have incorporated into your statement a comment about the devaluation of our dollar. I think all of us, the majority of us who have family life, know very well that when you bring a certain amount of money into the homestead, you cannot expect steak every day. You have to eat bologna sometimes and make sure that you live within your budget. That point was very clearly pointed up by the increase in pensions statement.

Secondly, I am very much interested in the message that was sent by the President of the United States in the last few days pertaining to the civil service. As chairman, I have called a meeting of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee to consider the proposed resolution. I have always supported legislation that will benefit the people that have contributed so greatly to our country. I believe they should be given every consideration such as in veterans preference. Many of these men because of their disability are not able to meet some of the harsh specifics that exist in industry today.

So may I just say that I congratulate you, Mr. Commander. You can rest assured that full consideration will be given by our distinguished Chairman, who has always been very generous to the veterans.

Thank you.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you, Congressman Dulski. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Paul Fino, of New York. [Applause.]

Before you start, Paul, I might mention that this building is being remodeled and we are trying to stop the noise. I hope you will have patience with us. Paul.

Mr. FINO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, would like to join in welcoming the members of this fine organization here this morning. I would like to say a further word, that as a Member of Congress from New York State that we do have a delegation from New York State and, more particularly, my good friend Sidney Siller, who is a distinguished lawyer, a man who has done a very good job and has been very active in the cause of disabled veterans. I am wondering if Sid Siller is here. Welcome to Washington. [Applause.]

Mr. Commander, I would like to also compliment you on your very constructive and very informative statement. I have been a member of this committee for 15 years. I want to say it has been an honor and a privilege to serve on this committee. In all of the 15 years I have always supported and will continue to support legislation for veterans' benefits, and I have always felt that the benefits should and must be kept in pace with the rising cost of living. This is a very unfortunate situation because we always find ourselves far behind in trying to keep pace with the cost of living. I assure you that the members of this committee are fully cognizant of this problem and that we have all worked, in a very nonpartisan way, in trying to meet the problems confronting the veterans of this country.

Thank you very much for coming.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you very much. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Horace Kornegay, of North Carolina.

Mr. KORNEGAY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, you stated in conclusion that this appearance or hearing here before our committee was the highlight of your midwinter conference. I want to say that it occurred to me, as one member of this committee, that the appearance of the Disabled American Veterans each year before this committee is certainly a highlight and high point in the year's activities of the committee. We welcome you here and certainly congratulate you on one of the finest statements that I have ever, frankly, heard coming from a commander of any veterans' organizations in my years here in Congress and on the committee.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you.

Mr. KORNEGAY. Not only did you succinctly and very reasonably set forth your mandates and the needs of the veterans of this country, you touched on another matter that is of great concern to me and, I am sure, to all the Members of the Congress. As has been indicated to the members of your organization, we are all interested in it, that subject of disloyalty in this country, one of disregard for law and order and the rights of others and the carrying of the right of dissent to a ridiculous and very destructive conclusion.

I congratulate you on that statement and say we would be in much better shape in this country if more people felt as you and your organization do. So again, thank you for that.

In connection with your staff, I would like to join with my other colleagues in saying that you have a marvelous staff here in Washington. Your very able assistant legislative counsel, Mr. Chet Huber, to my way of thinking is one of the finest persons I have known. He enjoys the confidence and the help and support of all the Members of the Congress and it is always a pleasure to have him come in and talk to us in behalf of the Disabled American Veterans. He is doing a great job for you. I know you are certainly proud of him, as we here on the committee are.

You spoke of compensation. To me, that is certainly a must matter, a must item of business in our committee because in so many areas increases have been granted by the Congress; twice I think, in connection with the military pay, civil service pay, social security, non-service-connected pensions. There has not been an increase in service-connected pensions recently. I want to assure you of my great interest in that matter. There are others, but that is certainly one of the first matters of business we ought to take up in this committee. I also appreciate a great deal your reference to a Board of Veterans' Appeals, a matter which I have long been interested in and certainly have not forgotten about it, and appreciate the fact that the DAV has through the years stood so strongly behind that effort to create that Board.

I am very hopeful something can be done about it.

Thank you very much for coming. It is always a pleasure to see you.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you very much, Congressman. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Seymour Halpern, of New York. You might notice there are six New Yorkers on this committee and here is another one.

Mr. HALPERN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

What a breath of fresh air we have had this morning, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. National Commander, for making all of us breathe a little easier. Your presentation is one of the finest patriotic and constructive talks I have ever heard. I am going to say what I know all of you want me to say, and it is what I want to say, and that is that I am with you 100 percent in your program. [Applause.]

I agree enthusiastically with every word that you stated, Mr. National Commander. Your legislative goals are excellent. They are fair, they are reasonable and equitable. Believe me, they are richly deserved. I commend you, Mr. National Commander. I want to compliment you. I want to particularly compliment the fine representation of your organization from our great Empire State of New York. They do an incredible job and they are among the greatest bunch of fellows I have ever seen. I salute the DAV. You are a credit not only to the veterans of America but to all the people of our Nation. Congratulations to you, and thank God for the DAV. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Ray Roberts, of Texas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, it has been wonderful having you here. I think you can tell from the reception of this committee what they think of your statement. I would like to add one thing with reference to your statement concerning anarchy. I wish we had 100,000 veterans to be here in April when we are to be assaulted by some of the other groups. I do not believe that march would come off if we just had about 100,000 veterans here.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you, Congressman. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Duncan, of Tennessee.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

May I also compliment you, Mr. Commander, on the excellent statement you have made. I agree it is one of the finest statements that has ever been made here. The people I represent in the Volunteer State never question why we are in a war, but they always ask where it is. But once the veteran has returned and is maimed or disabled, they have always believed that it is just as much a cost of war as buying guns, tanks, battleships, to take care of the disabled veteran, his widow and his orphans. It is always notable to me, though, that in the President's recent message he did not recommend an increase in compensation for the disabled veterans. The cemetery program certainly has been a real problem and very little, if anything, is being done about it. It has always been a problem. There was some indication last year in the hearings that we had that some people want to phase out the entire cemetery program, but it is my opinion that since the program has been transferred to the Veterans' Affairs Committee that under the direction of our fine and able chairman you will see some action within this year on that program.

Thank you.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you, Congressman. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. George Brown of California.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I can only say that I share the very high regard expressed by the other members of the committee for the statement you have made, Mr. Commander. I think it is a very fine statement. I was particularly

pleased to notice the attention that you devoted to improvement of educational benefits for war orphans and for the improvement of vocational training for veterans.

As the chairman of the Subcommittee on Education and Training, I want to assure you that I will do everything I can to help get these through but, frankly, I think the whole program you have presented is a wonderful program. I hope we can get 100 percent of it through.

Thank you.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you very kindly. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Another New Yorker, Mr. Kupferman. [Applause.]

Mr. KUPFERMAN. National Commander, I just want to say that I have always felt that the disabled veteran has had the greatest claim to his country's recognition and I would like to add my felicitations, along with Paul Fino, for my good friend Sidney Siller who is one of your outstanding members and who I think is a perfect example of a veteran taking part in his community activities in a worthwhile way. I might say, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Siller is a member of your party rather than mine but his allegiance to veterans and work in the community knows no party.

Thank you.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Helstoski of New Jersey.

Mr. HELSTOSKI. Ladies and gentlemen, members of the DAV, Mr. Commander: I want to congratulate you on your lucid and provocative statement and on the pertinent points you addressed to our concern. It is also the President's concern as evidenced by his messages to the Congress. I hope the second session produces the desired legislation to resolve some of these problems. I want to express assurance that I will work toward the end and achievement of these particular goals that are your goals.

Thank you.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Hammerschmidt of Arkansas.

Mr. HAMMERSCHMIDT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, there is very little I can add to the fine expressions given to you by my colleagues on this committee. I, too, congratulate you on this wonderful statement that you brought to us this morning. As you know, this is the first year I have served in this Congress and on this committee. I do not think I could have served under a finer chairman or a finer ranking minority member. You know the great interest that people under these men have, and all of us have, for the veterans of this country. Let me congratulate you for your fine leadership and congratulate all of the people in this room and thank you for the leadership that you bring, representing the disabled veterans of this country.

Thank you.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Another New Yorker, Mr. Jim Hanley.

Mr. HANLEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Commander Beaton, I, too, want to commend you on your very comprehensive report and I can only echo the evaluation of those who have preceded me, inasmuch as we look upon it as probably one

of the finest statements ever to have been offered to this committee. In particular, I was delighted with your position, the position which you have again expressed relevant to our involvement in Southeast Asia. Many of those around the dais this morning come to you fresh from a meeting with our Secretary of State, Dean Rusk. I can only wish that every one of you had the opportunity to be present at that meeting and certainly your confidence in the integrity of those charged with the awesome responsibility insofar as our foreign policy is concerned would indeed be bolstered. I commend you on your position and your support. I commend you on your reflection on the President's messages. For the first time in the history of this Nation our Chief Executive has seen fit to pursue this course of action. There are many things we would like to talk about, but time does not allow.

The cemetery issue, for instance, has been one which I have looked upon with disgust relevant to the ruling of the Department of the Army with respect to the use of Arlington. As has been said before certainly in death there should be no rank. You can take great pride in the activity of Mr. Callegary and his activities on the Veterans' Advisory Committee. He is serving in a great way. I can only conclude with the message that I support your legislation, your legislative objectives, entirely. In my estimation this Nation's greatest obligation is to those labeled disabled American veterans. [Applause.]

Mr. BEATON. Thank you very much.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Our lovely lady from Massachusetts, Mrs. Heckler. [Applause.]

Mrs. HECKLER. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Mr. Commander, I also wish to extend my warm welcome to all present and tell you how very delighted I am to see you here. We in Washington have observed so many who illogically, irrationally demonstrate and protest that it is a joy to see those who believe and exercise their constitutional rights to change the existing law within the legitimate channels of government by appearing before this committee. [Applause.]

As the only New Englander on the committee, I also have a special warm welcome for those of you from New England and especially those from Massachusetts.

Mr. Commander, your statement pleased me from the outset. I must say that I was influenced slightly by the very fact that you gave special prominence to the distaff contribution and to the national commander of the auxiliary and her staff, quite appropriately I felt.

So I was definitely on your team, you probably noticed my use of a crutch on the way in. I have by virtue of a personal experience a special sympathy for anyone who has a disability. As a matter of fact, the chairman this morning asked me as I hobbled in, whether or not I was going to apply for membership. [Laughter.]

I certainly would like to. However, my disability was not service connected; automobile connected, rather. So I am afraid I do not qualify.

As a result of your statement, however, I feel that you have left us, each of us, with a very clear idea of what your organization needs and we certainly feel that your proposals are meritorious and your needs most deserving. As one member of this committee, I certainly intend to support your requests and to follow the great leadership, the

bipartisan leadership which this committee certainly has in promoting benefits and the best interests of especially the disabled veteran. But I also want to commend you on your general remarks in regard to the problems of law and order in our society. Our headlines are so monopolized by the colorful account of disruption, violence, and dissent which negatively influence the youth of our country and, unfortunately, some of the adults as well. It is extremely important for all of us to exercise leadership in preserving legitimate functions of law and order. This is something that will not receive the same press coverage, unfortunately, but is vitally needed in our society today.

I want to express my appreciation at your commenting on the general atmosphere in our country and my sincere hope that this organization in every State in the country will go out and make the same statements over and over again. The right to dissent does not include the right to destroy society. [Applause.]

If we pursue the course which, unfortunately, is so heavily publicized in this country, America will not be the land that our forefathers fought for and our fathers, and that you indeed suffered your disabilities for. This we must prevent at all costs.

So I salute you, encourage you, and shall join with you in a very worthy pursuit of the goals of your organization. [Applause.]

Mr. BEATON. Thank you.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. And last but not least, Mr. Bryan Dorn. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to welcome you, of course, to the committee—not only to the committee but to Washington—Mr. Commander, and your commander of the auxiliary, too, who is with us from all the way across the country. We are delighted to have you. I want to commend you on your distinguished Congressman here who represents the kind of philosophy that you enunciated in your statement. I enjoyed the convention so much in Denver. I never attended a finer convention anywhere of any kind.

Of course, we are grateful to Chet Huber for all of the arrangements and for the fine job he is doing here, and also to the Cincinnati office. You have a fine staff there.

I am glad that Commander Claude Callegory is serving on the Veterans' Advisory Commission. I think you are well represented all the way around.

I did want to commend you for this timely and outstanding statement. I believe our distinguished chairman of this committee is going to place it in the Congressional Record. I have never seen a statement made before this committee more worthy of the Congressional Record. I want to tell you and your men gathered here and the ladies of the auxiliary that you are certainly meeting in Washington at the right time because today we have, as you know, the demonstrators here again protesting what they call American crimes, escalation of the war in South Vietnam. They are at the wrong place at the wrong time. If they want to point to an aggressor and to war crimes, they ought to be pointing the finger at Hanoi and Peking and not here in Washington. [Applause.]

Thank you, Commander Beaton.

Mr. BEATON. Thank you, Congressman Dorn. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. I would like, Commander, to tell all of you that we have a wonderful committee, that there has never been any kind of partisan politics in our committee, that we work together. We are all interested in the good of veterans and the good of this country. I certainly believe in our political system of two parties, but I think as far as veterans are concerned it is much better that it never becomes a political issue. [Applause.]

We have an excellent staff of our committee, as I am sure Chet Huber will tell you. I would like for all of them who are here to stand, please. [Applause.]

I would like to give you a very quick report on our committee. I would say first it is going to be a very busy committee this year. The leadership of the House, the chairmen of all the committees have met and everyone has agreed we would be through with our business by the 1st of August. That is some number of months away, but legislatively speaking it is not very far away.

I would like very much to wait for a report from the Veterans' Advisory Commission before we take action on compensation, but I do not intend to wait until we do not have a chance to pass a bill. We are going to wait a while. If we can get their report—and as far as I know the Commission has done an excellent job of going into the problems of veterans' affairs—right now they are sifting through all the hearings they have had and they are trying to come to agreement on priorities. If it were not for money, I could be for everything you recommend in your speech. We do have to consider money. We do have to set priorities. It is a tough job for this committee to set priorities on what we should pass. With the number of veterans we have today, everything we do costs a large amount of money.

Just this little thing last year of trying to take care of pensions and social security ran over \$100 million. Nearly everything we do costs money.

We are going to do something on housing. We are going to do something on the cemeteries. But more important than anything, we are going to pass this compensation bill. [Applause.]

But Claude, I hope you and your commission will start working around the clock to get your business together and get a report to us because we would like to have it. We are not going to wait too long on your report. We will wait as long as we can but not too long.

Mr. CALLEGARY (Mr. Claude L. Callegary, former national commander). Mr. Chairman, we are sitting around the clock now.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Commander, there has been some talk of our veterans' organizations giving a year's honorary membership to men returning from service today. Has DAV considered that or is it taking any action on it?

Mr. BEATON. We have a study group fully considering it at this time.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. I think, personally, it is an excellent idea.

Mr. BEATON. As a matter of fact, we are ready to act immediately on the subject.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Good.

One other question I would like to ask you: As I understand it, today the wife of a retired officer is entitled to go into military hos-

pitals or a VA hospital. Has the DAV talked at all of the widows of men, and I would say men killed directly as a result of the war, on the possibility of their being permitted to go into a VA hospital?

Mr. BEATON. That is a highly technical question and I am going to ask our legislative director to answer that, with your indulgence, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Chet?

Mr. HUBER. Yes, we considered this at our last national convention. I heard very much about this subject during our travels with the Advisory Commission. Our attitude is that we would favor that they be given care and treatment when they need it, but on a similar basis that is provided to the military, sort of a medicare-type program—direct payment—rather than have them admitted directly to the hospital. We sort of feel veterans' hospitals are for veterans, at this point.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Commander, I notice that you did not comment on the President's proposal of extending educational benefits to veterans who would serve in poverty areas after their release from service. Did that have any meaning?

Mr. BEATON. It certainly did. We certainly concur that these people ought to be given special attention. We did run through this particular area. I do not know just why we decided that should not be included in our report. As a matter of fact, I think we did have it at one time.

Mr. HUBER. The reason we did not take a legislative position is that the proposal does not specifically apply to disabled veterans but to veterans generally. That is why we did not comment. It is not that we do not favor it. Rather, it is our policy to take a legislative position only on programs that pertains to disabled veterans.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. The reason I ask is I am not sure that I favor it. Our veterans' program has always been tied to what a man did in service. I am rather suspicious of a program that ties our veterans' programs into a welfare program. [Applause.]

I have not made up my mind but that is my first impression after reading it, that I have considerable doubts about beginning to tie our veterans' programs into any kind of a welfare, Great Society program. We will take it under consideration. We hope you people will be ready to testify on it.

Mr. BEATON. Certainly we will.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Again, it is good to have all of you here. We hope you have enjoyed your stay in Washington. Any of you who would like to visit our committee, it is just around the corner and we would be glad to have you.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. If there is nothing else, the committee will be adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 11:20 a.m., the committee adjourned.)

AMERICAN LEGION LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 1968

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met at 10 a.m., pursuant to call, in room 362, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. W. J. Bryan Dorn presiding.

Mr. DORN. The committee will come to order.

Mr. Commander, I want to express to you Chairman Teague's regret that he cannot be with us this morning. One of his very personal and closest friends in Texas passed away. Mr. Teague will be back, however, in time for the banquet tomorrow evening, at which time he hopes to see and pay his respects to you.

I might say at this juncture that those of us on the committee who are associated with Chairman Teague are proud of him and we are proud of his war record and of his able, distinguished leadership of this committee in behalf of the veterans and the people of the United States.

We are proud of Mr. Teague and regret that he cannot be with us today.

After the distinguished national commander completes his presentation to the committee, I will call on each member of the committee at that time.

We are proud to have with us this morning our distinguished colleague from the great State of Nebraska—and I might say that is where William Jennings Bryan also came from—but Bob Denney is one of my dear personal friends here in the Congress. We have served on another committee together, the Public Works Committee.

Bob is a dedicated American, a man who believes in the principles and ideals that made this Nation great. He served in the Federal Bureau of Investigation, I believe. So, you know his record as it relates to communism and those insidious things that threaten the welfare of our Nation.

Commander, I want to congratulate you and the people out there for sending to this Congress a man like Bob Denney, and I now present to the committee and to the gathering here the Honorable Bob Denney, who will present our distinguished visitor this morning.

STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE ROBERT V. DENNEY

Mr. DENNEY. Thank you, Chairman Dorn, and members of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

It is a real personal privilege and pleasure for me to present the national commander, William Galbraith, of Beemer, Nebr. As a constituent of mine and as national commander, we have been in Legion work for many years together since World War II.

Bill Galbraith was the unanimous choice of the 49th Annual Convention of the American Legion and he is a World War II Navy veteran who served in the Atlantic. He is a member of the Beemer Post No. 159, which he joined immediately upon his release from active service in 1946, and served as service officer, adjutant, and post commander.

He has served his department as a member of the Boys' State board of directors, as a member of the legislative committee, and department commander in 1962-63. On the national level, he held the office of vice commander, 1965-66.

I first became acquainted with Bill at the end of World War II through our joint efforts in behalf of the American Legion. I know from personal conversation of the time and talent that he has devoted to the purposes of that organization.

Mr. Chairman, I would like at this time to introduce his lovely wife, Gwen, who travels with him. She is a real support for Bill Galbraith. Gwen Galbraith. [Applause.]

Mr. Chairman, coming up through the ranks as Bill has has given him a wealth of understanding as to the problems that face veterans, and he looks upon the office which he now holds as an opportunity to render further service to the patriotic principles and ideals of the American Legion, and, in turn, to further serve his country.

In addition to his American Legion activity, he is active in civic, social, and professional organizations and in business as a livestock feeder and farmer.

In light of the current dissension sweeping the country over the Vietnam war, I consider the commander's theme for his year in office "Freedom Is Not Free" especially appropriate.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, from my congressional district, a fellow Nebraskan, the national commander of the American Legion, Bill Galbraith. [Applause.]

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM E. GALBRAITH, NATIONAL COMMANDER, THE AMERICAN LEGION

Mr. GALBRAITH. Thank you, Congressman Denney.

I think this is as fine a tribute as I could have from someone from my own home area, the State that also brought about William Jennings Bryan, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee: I would like to take this opportunity first to introduce those that are associated here with us this morning.

I would like to introduce Mr. Bill Lenker, who is the chairman of our national rehabilitation commission.

Mr. Clarence C. Horton, chairman of our national legislative commission.

Mrs. Vernon H. Randall, national president of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Miss Doris M. Anderson, national secretary of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Mrs. Minor L. Freeman, national treasurer of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Mrs. Arthur B. Hanell, chairman of the National Rehabilitation Committee of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Mrs. R. L. Parker, chairman of the National Legislative Committee of the American Legion Auxiliary.

I feel now very appropriate being here this morning with this distinguished committee, especially with so many associated with us from the auxiliary and might I say here that we are most happy to have you with us and join with us this morning.

Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, it is a pleasure to express my personal gratitude and that of the membership of the American Legion for the opportunity to appear here this morning to speak briefly on that part of our legislative program which comes within the jurisdiction of this committee. Bearing in mind that mutual helpfulness is a prime purpose of the American Legion, I have no assignment of greater importance.

As you know, we are continually grateful for the special arrangements you have made to accommodate the Legionnaires and members of our auxiliary who came to share with me this honor and responsibility. They are a part of the more than 1,000 members participating this week in our eighth Washington conference, including the 45th Annual Rehabilitation Conference of the American Legion.

Because of our concern with veterans' affairs, national security, the Nation's posture in foreign affairs, Americanism, and child welfare, many of our standing national commissions will meet during the conference to review related programs of the American Legion within their areas of responsibility, and to formulate plans for their advancement.

Of particular importance to our organization are the studies and deliberations of two special groups. One of these, the Task Force for the Future, is a panel of seven members under the chairmanship of James F. Green of Nebraska, commissioned by me to make an intensive study of the organization of the American Legion and to suggest major changes, if this is what it takes, to help us make the most effective contribution to the Nation's greatness in the years ahead.

This task force will report its findings and recommendations to the organization's membership during the American Legion's 50th anniversary year, which begins this fall.

The second group, the 50th Anniversary Committee, is charged with the task of programing the 50th anniversary observance of the founding of the American Legion. Born in the crucible of war but devoted to peace, our organization has been an integral part of the fabric of American life throughout the almost 50 years since its founding. From the beginning, its objectives have included the strengthening of our way of life, maintenance of our national security, and aiding those who have fallen in battle or in the service of their country, and their widows and orphans.

As plans go forward to celebrate our golden anniversary, the American Legion continues as a strong, vigilant, and responsible organization of patriotic Americans dedicated to the maintenance of law and order, service to the community, State and Nation, and to the advancement of freedom under our democratic ideals.

Before continuing, let me say that the American Legion is deeply indebted to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the members of your committee, for its dedication to the cause of veterans.

As an example of this dedication and responsibility is the enactment of Public Law 90-77, which, among its many beneficial provisions, conferred a war-veteran status on those of our Armed Forces who served since August 5, 1964, equal to that of veterans of prior wars.

Also, we include in this the House's passage of H.R. 12555, an act to restructure the death and disability pension, and dependent parents' dependency and indemnity compensation programs. For these, we thank you, the Congress, and the President of the United States.

In addition, I take this moment to express our appreciation and gratitude to the members of your staff for their cooperation and willingness to assist us in the presentation of our veterans' programs. They are an able, conscientious, and hardworking staff, and I hope you are justly proud of them.

At this point, Mr. Chairman, may I say that I look forward to tomorrow evening, when we shall have the pleasure of honoring the Members of Congress at our annual banquet, at the Sheraton Park Hotel. At that time, Members and Legionnaires from every State will meet and renew acquaintances in a social atmosphere. I sincerely hope that each of you will find it possible to come.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I will discuss only our major rehabilitation legislative objectives for this session of the 90th Congress. Submitted as an attachment to this statement is a complete listing of our resolutions on veterans' benefits legislation.

First, increase the compensation payable for total or 100-percent disability.

At present, the law authorizes payment of compensation of \$300 a month to those veterans whose war service disabilities are evaluated at 100 percent. Disability compensation rates were last increased effective December 1, 1965.

According to the legislative history associated with the act which granted this increase—Public Law 89-311—the increased rates were responsive to the rise in the cost of living that had occurred since 1933, as measured by the Consumer's Price Index published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor.

The American Legion agrees that cost-of-living increases in compensation and other benefit programs are frequently necessary. The Consumer's Price Index, however, is definitely not a measure of "How much does it cost to live?" This depends on the age, size, type of family, and other factors.

An important factor that is not given consideration by applying the Consumer's Price Index formula is a family's standard of living.

Studies of the Bureau of Labor Statistics on changes in the consumption standard for the period of 1951-66 reveal that the rise in a moderate standard of living, after adjustment for price changes, averaged about 3.5 to 4 percent a year.

Other pertinent studies by the Bureau of Labor Statistics developed a typical city worker family budget for a moderate standard of living. This established that the annual cost of living for a family of four persons—husband 38, wife not employed outside the home, a boy of 13, and a girl of 8—averaged \$9,181 in the autumn of 1966 in urban areas. About 80 percent of the total cost of the budget was allocated to family consumption items—food, housing, transportation, clothing, personal care, medical care, and other items used in family living. The

budget was an attempt to measure a modest but adequate standard of living.

From the foregoing, it is manifest that a veteran who, because of service-incurred disability, is disabled to the degree that precludes gainful employment, could not, with the \$300 compensation received monthly from the Veterans' Administration, meet the cost of maintaining himself and his family under prevailing standards of what is necessary for health, nutrition, and participation in community activities.

Mr. Chairman, the American Legion strongly urges your committee's consideration of increasing the monthly rate for 100 percent disability to \$400. This increased amount, with the added compensation for those with dependents, and other Veterans' Administration benefits available, would assist him materially in meeting the cost of living in today's economy in the United States within a standard of living which is not demeaning to his status as a veteran.

Secondly, increase a widow's monthly rate of dependency and indemnity compensation by \$25 for each child.

Dependency and indemnity compensation is the monthly payment made by the Veterans' Administration to a widow, child, or parent, because of a service-connected death. Under existing provisions, the payment to the widow is at a monthly rate equal to \$120 plus 12 percent of the basic military pay of her deceased husband. With some exceptions, widows with children under the age of 18 do not receive additional dependency and indemnity compensation for the children. This provision of the Servicemen's and Veterans' Survivors' Benefits Act is a distinct departure from the traditional method of providing survivor benefits for widows with children.

In the foregoing discussion of the need for increasing compensation payments to the totally disabled, we cited the budget needs of families as developed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. There is no reason to believe that the needs of a family unit headed by a widow are less than those that may be headed by a veteran.

We urge your consideration of legislation to amend the dependency and indemnity compensation provisions of title 38, United States Code, to provide that the widow's monthly rate shall be increased by \$25 for each child under the age of 18 years.

An inequity of the present provisions is illustrated further, to a degree, by the fact that a widow with three children may receive as little as \$132 monthly. Yet, on her remarriage, although payments to her as a widow are discontinued, as custodian of three children of the veteran and while they are under 18, she would receive \$149 in their behalf.

Third, development and maintenance of an adequate system of national cemeteries.

A division of our country's legislative and executive jurisdiction over national cemeteries has led, we believe, to the absence of a clear policy on the present and future development of a system of national cemeteries. As a result, in most areas of the country, burial of war veterans, or of those who die in service, cannot be made in a national cemetery that may conveniently be visited by the next of kin. Constructive action should be taken soon or this privilege will be denied to all who have served in its Armed Forces.

To restore this privilege, and to guarantee its continuation in the future, the American Legion recommends:

First, that jurisdiction for the administration and maintenance of all national cemeteries be assigned to the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs;

Second, that the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs be given the responsibility and authority to develop a national cemetery system that will be adequate for the burial of those potentially eligible; and

Third, that those committees of Congress which have legislative responsibility for veterans' affairs also have jurisdiction over national cemetery matters.

We are pleased, Mr. Chairman, that the House of Representatives, by approval of resolution 241 on October 20, 1967, has amended its rules to provide that national cemeteries, other than those under the Department of Interior, are now under the legislative oversight of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. We commend your intention to hold hearings on national cemeteries during this session of Congress.

Needless to say, our anticipation of constructive approaches to the national cemetery problem was heightened by the President's veterans' message on January 30, 1968, when he said:

Every veteran who wants it—those who risked their lives at Belleau Wood, Iwo Jima and the DMZ—should have the right of burial in a national cemetery situated reasonably close to his home. I have asked the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs to make certain that the recommendations of the Veterans' Advisory Commission include proposals to assure this right in a meaningful sense.

Fourth, appropriation of funds sufficient for the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs to carry out the benefit programs for which he is responsible.

Members of this committee and the American Legion know that strong and valid reasons support the belief that veterans' programs are a meaningful expression of the gratitude and concern of a grateful Nation to those who have served it, particularly in time of war, and that these programs should not be the victim of any move to economize in the expenditures of the Federal Government.

A discussion of the VA budget in terms of dollars spent in relation to the gross national product, or in relation to any other national standard, is frequently necessary to illustrate the ability of the Nation's economy to bear the cost of the program established or to be enlarged on by the Congress at the urging of the people of the Nation. Such discussion becomes more meaningful when we talk of the calculated or projected costs in relation to the person to be served by these programs.

The committee and the people are in agreement, we think, with the concept that economy at the expense of benefits and service to these wards of the Veterans' Administration, or to their dependents and survivors, is a false economy—one not in keeping with our country's long-existing policy that it provide its war veterans with a program of benefits that reflects the esteem in which our Nation's veterans are held by those whom they served.

As you know, the American Legion is not against economies achieved through improved planning, organization, or modern management principles. It is, however, opposed to achieving economy by the lessening of service, curtailment or reduction of needed benefits, or by the destruction of the concept that the veteran is a special citizen because of

service in the Armed Forces of the United States during a time of war or national emergency.

As you so well know, these costs are but a continuation of the cost of our fight to preserve our freedoms. As I have consistently and constantly stated during my term of office:

Freedom is not free. Its price is continuing vigilance, wisdom, courage, and dedicated effort.

I have unbounded faith in the only source of freedom—the resources and people of this great country.

Mr. Chairman, members of this committee, let me again express my thanks for the opportunity to speak on part of our rehabilitation legislative program for veterans and their survivors, and for providing this forum to express our gratitude to you as well as to the Congress and to the President of the United States for your awareness of, and attention to, the special problems of our veteran population, those who died in the service of our country, and the survivors who have lost their loved ones.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. [Applause.]

(The document referred to follows:)

RESOLUTIONS THAT REQUIRE LEGISLATIVE ACTION

POLICY

Increase mileage allowance for VA beneficiaries

1966 Convention Resolution No. 93 (Minn.) urges that the VA pay a mileage rate consistent with the reasonable expenses incurred by a beneficiary while traveling pursuant to a VA authorization. (HR-15256 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

VA hospital be named for Louis A. Johnson

1966 Convention Resolution No. 186 (W. Va.) urges that the Veterans Hospital now located in Clarksburg, W. Va. be named and become known as "The Louis A. Johnson Memorial Hospital." (S-213 introduced by Senator Randolph (W. Va.)).

Oppose hospitalization of nonveterans in VA hospitals

1966 Convention Resolution No. 236 (Pa.) urges that The American Legion oppose any administrative or legislative proposal that would authorize the VA to conduct a hospital program within its facilities for nonveterans.

Curb activities of the Bureau of the Budget

1966 Convention Resolution No. 325 (Idaho) seeks legislation to curtail the power of the Bureau of the Budget over the operations of the VA; and, to provide that the Congress of the United States and the Administrator of Veterans Affairs shall set the policies for the operation of the VA and the administration of benefits for veterans, their survivors, and their dependents.

Oppose reduction and closing of VA services and facilities

1. 1966 Convention Resolution No. 414 (Ohio) urges that the Congress of the United States exert its authority to provide sufficient funds for the VA, so that the Administrator of Veterans Affairs may maintain adequate facilities and offices to prevent the centralization of the administration and adjudication of the active elements of the various programs assigned to the Department of Veterans Benefits.

2. 1966 Convention Resolution No. 489 (Wyo.) seeks legislation to provide that any future plans to close VA facilities be submitted to Congress at least six months prior to the proposed closing date.

Cabinet rank for Administrator of Veterans' Affairs

1966 Convention Resolution No. 660 (Nebr.) seeks legislation to raise the office of the Administrator of Veterans Affairs to that of Cabinet rank. (HR-7659 introduced by Congressman Dorn (S.C.)).

Retirement of members of the armed services

1966 Fall NEC Resolution No. 25 seeks legislation to provide that members of the Armed Forces shall be retired in the highest grade satisfactorily held in any Armed Force. (HR-839 introduced by Congressman Mailliard (Calif.)).

Conditional discharge

1966 Fall NEC Resolution No. 28 seeks legislation to establish eligibility to VA benefits of those veterans conditionally discharged or released from active service who immediately reenter such service. (HR-9241 introduced by Congressman Roberts (Tex.)).

Oppose reduction of existing attorney or agent fees

1966 Fall NEC Resolution No. 33 urges that we oppose enactment of any legislation that would remove the existing attorney or agent fee limitations and penalty provisions in claims before the VA.

Oppose use of words "War Veterans" for the incorporation of any organization or association of persons who did not serve in the Armed Forces

1967 Spring NEC Resolution No. 47 urges that we oppose the use of the words "War Veterans" in any Acts or articles for the incorporation of any association or organization of persons who did not serve in the Armed Forces of the United States during a period of war or armed conflict.

Hospital and outpatient care for dependents of veterans who die of service-connected disabilities after release from active duty

1967 Convention Resolution No. 154 (Tenn.) urges legislation to provide that the surviving dependents of those war veterans who die of a service-connected disability after discharge from active duty in the Armed Forces be authorized hospital and outpatient care in civilian medical facilities. (HR-14961 introduced by Congressman Haley (Fla.)).

VA remain as the single agency to administer veterans benefits

1967 Convention Resolution No. 315 (Ill.) urges that we oppose those reorganization plans, legislative or administrative, which would take from the Veterans Administration any of its responsibility of serving veterans and their dependents or which would cause the VA to share this responsibility of service with other agencies of the Federal Government.

Oppose the policy of the AMA to convert VA hospitals into community hospitals

1967 Convention Resolution No. 577 (Convention Committee) urges that the American Legion voice its disapproval of the self-serving policy of the AMA; and to use every means at its disposal to oppose those suggestions or plans or legislation which would take from the VA the responsibility of maintaining its singular system of hospitals and other facilities for the care and treatment of veterans.

NATIONAL CEMETERIES

Conversion of the VA cemetery at Houston, Texas, into a national cemetery

1966 Convention Resolution No. 520 (Texas) asks that the Senators and members of Congress be urged to use all means to see that the VA cemetery in Harris County, Texas, is converted to a National Cemetery.

The national cemetery policy of the American Legion

The 1967 Convention Resolution No. 497 (District of Columbia) seeks legislation to: (1) transfer to the VA existing national cemeteries presently under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, and the Department of the Army; (2) provide the VA with authority and responsibility for the operation, care, and maintenance of these cemeteries; (3) direct the VA to plan a system of national cemeteries and creation of additional ones so that the capacity and distribution of sites shall at all times be sufficient to assure burial in a national cemetery for those who so desire; and (4) authorize the VA to acquire such lands as are needed: by gift, purchase, condemnation, transfer, or any other means; to provide that jurisdiction of national cemeteries be placed under those Committees of the U.S. Senate and of the House of Representatives which have jurisdiction of veterans affairs; and, petition the President, the Congress of the United States, and the Secretary of Defense to rescind the discriminatory order of February 10, 1967, which limited burials in Arlington National Cemetery. (HR-12801 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

MEDICAL AND HOSPITAL

Domiciliary beds

1966 Convention Resolution No. 344 (Vt.) seeks legislation to provide that the Administrator of Veterans Affairs, subject to the approval of the President, be authorized to establish and operate not less than 18,000 beds for the furnishing of domiciliary care in facilities over which he has direct and exclusive jurisdiction. (HR-10962 introduced by Congressman Haley (Fla.)).

Clothing allowance for service-connected veterans with prosthetic appliances

1966 Convention Resolution No. 457 (Va.) seeks legislation to provide that a clothing allowance be payable to those veterans eligible for an artificial limb or brace because of a service-connected disability. (HR-8915 introduced by Congressman Brown (Calif.)).

Oppose reduction in appropriation for VA hospital system

1966 Convention Resolution No. 605 (Ill.) urges the President, the Bureau of the Budget, and the Congress, to provide funds sufficient to carry out the program established in 1959 of renovating and constructing hospitals and domiciliaries needed to maintain the VA hospital and domiciliary system as one of the finest in the world.

Hospital and medical care for veterans in Alaska

1966 Fall NEC Resolution No. 26 seeks legislation to provide hospital and medical care for nonservice-connected conditions for veterans residing in Alaska. (S-995 introduced by Senator Bartlett (Alaska)).

Nursing home care in Alaska and Hawaii

1966 Fall NEC Resolution No. 30 seeks legislation to provide nursing home care for veterans living in Alaska and Hawaii. (HR-3593 introduced by Congressman Mink (Hawaii)).

Outpatient treatment for non-service-connected conditions for service-connected totally disabled veterans

1967 Convention Resolution No. 178 (Ohio) seeks legislation to provide that veterans whose service-connected disability is rated total for compensation may be furnished outpatient treatment, as well as drugs and medicines, for nonservice-connected conditions. (HR-14669 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

Increase per diem to State homes for hospitalized veterans

1967 Convention Resolution No. 441 (Va.) urges that the per diem rate payable to State homes shall be \$3.50 for domiciliary care; \$5.00 for nursing home care; and, \$10.00 for hospital care; however, the per diem rate payable shall not be more than one-half the cost of the veteran's maintenance in such State homes. (HR-3045 introduced by Congressman Everett (Tenn.)).

Oppose sale, lease, or other disposition of land under control of VA

1967 Fall NEC Resolution No. 24 opposes any proposal or recommendation to declare surplus any acreage of land now controlled by the VA at the Murfreesboro VA hospital site or at any other VA hospital, domiciliary home, or center by either sale, lease, or otherwise to any agency, be it Federal, State, city, or private.

Training of health service personnel by the VA

1967 Fall NEC Resolution No. 29 opposes those legislative proposals designed to eliminate the requirement that VA training of health service personnel be related to its basic responsibility of operating a complete hospital and medical service for veterans.

CLAIMS AND RATINGS

Burial allowance

1. 1966 Convention Resolution No. 250 (Ga.) urges that The American Legion oppose legislation which provides that VA burial allowance be reduced by the lump sum death benefit payable under section 202 of the Social Security Act, as amended, or under any other Act.

2. 1966 Convention Resolution No. 448 (Va.) seeks legislation to provide that VA burial allowance be increased from \$250 to \$350. (HR-4111 introduced by Congressman Fino (N.Y.)).

Death gratuity benefit

1966 Convention Resolution No. 420 (Ohio) seeks legislation to amend PL 89-214 to provide that beneficiaries not be required to renounce their rights to death compensation, and dependency and indemnity compensation, and that the death gratuity not be reduced by any death compensation or dependency and indemnity compensation received; and, that the death gratuity not be reduced by the receipt of an USGLI or NSLI, but, that the aggregate of the death gratuity and USGLI and NSLI payable shall not exceed \$10,000. (HR-3959 introduced by Congressman Everett (Tenn.)).

Improve the disability compensation program

1. *Increase statutory awards.*—1966 Convention Resolution No. 202 (Wash.) seeks legislation to provide that the statutory awards under 38 USC 314 (k) be increased to \$60 monthly and under 38 USC 314 (q) to \$80 monthly. (HR-3772 introduced by Congressman Kornegay (N.C.)).

2. *Seven-year presumption for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.*—1966 Convention Resolution No. 450 (Va.) seeks legislation to provide that amyotrophic lateral sclerosis existing to a compensable degree within 7 years following separation from wartime service shall be presumed to have been incurred in military service. (HR-3307 introduced by Congressman Haley (Fla.)).

3. *Extend chronic disease period for progressive muscular atrophy.*—1967 Convention Resolution No. 51 (N.D.) seeks legislation to provide that progressive muscular atrophy developing to a compensable degree within seven years of separation from wartime service shall be considered to have been incurred in or aggravated by such service. (HR-14668 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

4. *Extend chronic disease period for psychosis.*—1967 Convention Resolution No. 173 (Ohio) urges legislation to provide that a psychosis developing to a ten percent degree of disability or more within two years from the date of separation from wartime service shall be considered to have been incurred in or aggravated by such service. (HR-14667 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

5. *Additional dependents allowance for those rated below 50%.*—1966 Convention Resolution No. 459 (Va.) seeks legislation to provide that those veterans rated less than 50 percent for compensation purposes be entitled to additional allowance for dependents. (HR-8058 introduced by Congressman Helstoski (N.J.)).

6. *Increased rates and equalization.*—1967 Convention Resolution No. 146 (Nebr.) seeks legislation to increase the disability compensation payable each month for 100 percent disability to \$400 and to provide that the compensation payable for disability or disabilities rated less than 100 percent shall bear the same ratio to that payable for 100 percent disability as the percentage of disability bears to 100 percent. (HR-14666 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

Improve the dependency and indemnity compensation program

1. *Service-connected death.*—1967 Convention Resolution No. 192 (Colo.) urges legislation to provide that where a veteran with a service-connected disability rated at 100 percent dies from causes not related to service, his death will be presumed to be service-connected for the purpose of the widow's eligibility to dependency and indemnity compensation. (HR-7118 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

2. *Increased amounts of DIC to widows with children.*—1967 Convention Resolution No. 193 (Colo.) seeks legislation to provide that the monthly rate of dependency and indemnity compensation payable to a widow shall be increased by \$25 for each child. (HR-14939 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

3. *Rates for dependent parents.*—1967 Convention Resolution No. 533 (Texas) seeks legislation to improve the rates as well as the corresponding annual income limitations in the dependency and indemnity compensation program for dependent parents. (HR-12555 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

4. *Increased awards to widows in need of regular aid and attendance.*—1967 Fall NEC Resolution No. 28 seeks legislation to provide that any widow entitled to dependency and indemnity compensation and who is in need of the regular aid and attendance of another person shall have her monthly rate of DIC increased by \$75. (HR-15258 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

RECOMMENDATIONS OF VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS, 1968 3601

Improve the disability and death pension program

1. *Comprehensive improvements.*—1967 Convention Resolution No. 143 (Nebr.) seeks legislation to accomplish the following amendments to title 38, USC:

Amend the table of rates and income limitations applicable under subsection 521(b) to provide that an unmarried veteran with annual income of—

	May receive a monthly pension of		May receive a monthly pension of
\$100 or less	\$135	Between \$1,200 and \$1,300	\$75
Between \$100 and \$200	130	Between \$1,300 and \$1,400	70
Between \$200 and \$300	125	Between \$1,400 and \$1,500	65
Between \$300 and \$400	120	Between \$1,500 and \$1,600	60
Between \$400 and \$500	115	Between \$1,600 and \$1,700	55
Between \$500 and \$600	110	Between \$1,700 and \$1,800	50
Between \$600 and \$700	105	Between \$1,800 and \$1,900	45
Between \$700 and \$800	100	Between \$1,900 and \$2,000	40
Between \$800 and \$900	95	Between \$2,000 and \$2,100	35
Between \$900 and \$1,000	90	Between \$2,100 and \$2,200	30
Between \$1,000 and \$1,100	85	Between \$2,200 and \$2,300	25
Between \$1,100 and \$1,200	80	Between \$2,300 and \$2,400	20

Amend the table of rates and income limitations under subsection 521(c) applicable to married veterans or veterans with children to provide that a veteran having a dependent and whose annual income is—

	May receive a monthly pension of		May receive a monthly pension of
\$100 or less	\$152	Between \$1,800 and \$1,900	\$98
Between \$100 and \$200	149	Between \$1,900 and \$2,000	95
Between \$200 and \$300	146	Between \$2,000 and \$2,100	91
Between \$300 and \$400	143	Between \$2,100 and \$2,200	87
Between \$400 and \$500	140	Between \$2,200 and \$2,300	83
Between \$500 and \$600	137	Between \$2,300 and \$2,400	79
Between \$600 and \$700	134	Between \$2,400 and \$2,500	75
Between \$700 and \$800	131	Between \$2,500 and \$2,600	71
Between \$800 and \$900	128	Between \$2,600 and \$2,700	67
Between \$900 and \$1,000	125	Between \$2,700 and \$2,800	63
Between \$1,000 and \$1,100	122	Between \$2,800 and \$2,900	59
Between \$1,100 and \$1,200	119	Between \$2,900 and \$3,000	55
Between \$1,200 and \$1,300	116	Between \$3,000 and \$3,100	51
Between \$1,300 and \$1,400	113	Between \$3,100 and \$3,200	47
Between \$1,400 and \$1,500	110	Between \$3,200 and \$3,300	43
Between \$1,500 and \$1,600	107	Between \$3,300 and \$3,400	39
Between \$1,600 and \$1,700	104	Between \$3,400 and \$3,500	35
Between \$1,700 and \$1,800	101	Between \$3,500 and \$3,600	31

With \$5 a month to be added to these rates for each additional dependent.

Amend the table of rates and income limitations under subsection 541(b) applicable to widows without children to provide that a widow with annual income of—

	May receive a monthly pension of		May receive a monthly pension of
\$100 or less	\$90	Between \$1,300 and \$1,400	\$51
Between \$100 and \$200	87	Between \$1,400 and \$1,500	48
Between \$200 and \$300	84	Between \$1,500 and \$1,600	45
Between \$300 and \$400	81	Between \$1,600 and \$1,700	42
Between \$400 and \$500	78	Between \$1,700 and \$1,800	39
Between \$500 and \$600	75	Between \$1,800 and \$1,900	35
Between \$600 and \$700	72	Between \$1,900 and \$2,000	31
Between \$700 and \$800	69	Between \$2,000 and \$2,100	27
Between \$800 and \$900	66	Between \$2,100 and \$2,200	23
Between \$900 and \$1,000	63	Between \$2,200 and \$2,300	19
Between \$1,000 and \$1,100	57	Between \$2,300 and \$2,400	15
Between \$1,200 and \$1,300	54		

3602 RECOMMENDATIONS OF VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS, 1968

Amend the table rates and income limitations under subsection 541(c) applicable to a widow with one child to provide that a widow with annual income of—

	<i>May receive a monthly pension of</i>		<i>May receive a monthly pension of</i>
\$100 or less-----	\$106	Between \$1,800 and \$1,900-----	\$70
Between \$100 and \$200-----	104	Between \$1,900 and \$2,000-----	68
Between \$200 and \$300-----	102	Between \$2,000 and \$2,100-----	66
Between \$300 and \$400-----	100	Between \$2,100 and \$2,200-----	64
Between \$400 and \$500-----	98	Between \$2,200 and \$2,300-----	62
Between \$500 and \$600-----	96	Between \$2,300 and \$2,400-----	60
Between \$600 and \$700-----	94	Between \$2,400 and \$2,500-----	58
Between \$700 and \$800-----	92	Between \$2,500 and \$2,600-----	56
Between \$800 and \$900-----	90	Between \$2,600 and \$2,700-----	54
Between \$900 and \$1,000-----	88	Between \$2,700 and \$2,800-----	52
Between \$1,000 and \$1,100-----	86	Between \$2,800 and \$2,900-----	50
Between \$1,100 and \$1,200-----	84	Between \$2,900 and \$3,000-----	48
Between \$1,200 and \$1,300-----	82	Between \$3,000 and \$3,100-----	45
Between \$1,300 and \$1,400-----	80	Between \$3,100 and \$3,200-----	42
Between \$1,400 and \$1,500-----	78	Between \$3,200 and \$3,300-----	39
Between \$1,500 and \$1,600-----	76	Between \$3,300 and \$3,400-----	36
Between \$1,600 and \$1,700-----	74	Between \$3,400 and \$3,500-----	33
Between \$1,700 and \$1,800-----	72	Between \$3,500 and \$3,600-----	30

With \$18 a month to be added to these rates for each additional child.

Amend 521(f) (1) to liberalize the spouse's income provisions by providing that where a veteran is living with his spouse, all income of the spouse which is reasonably available to or for the veteran in excess of whichever is the greater, \$1500 or the total earned income of the spouse, shall be considered as the income of the veteran.

Amend paragraph (4) of section 503 to provide for exclusion of not exceeding \$10,000 in aggregate face amount of (a) payments under policies of United States Government life insurance or National Service life insurance, (b) payments of servicemen's indemnity, and (c) in the case of claims for death pension, payments under policies or contracts of private or commercial life insurance.

Amend paragraph (6) of section 503 to provide for exclusion from determination of annual income 10 percent of payments to an individual under public or private retirement, annuity, endowment, or similar plans or programs; provided that where an individual has made contributions thereto, the exclusion under this paragraph shall not apply until there has been received an amount equal to his contributions.

Amend subparagraph 7(b) of section 503 to provide for exclusion from annual income determinations the expenses of the veteran's last illness paid before his death.

Add the following to the list of items in section 503 which may be excluded from annual income determinations:

(a) The unusual medical expenses of the veteran, widow, or child to the same extent as now applicable to income computation of dependent parents for dependency and indemnity compensation.

(b) Income of patients derived from participation in a Community-Hospital-Industrial Rehabilitation Program while hospitalized in a Veterans Administration, other Federal, or State hospital; and

that subsection 502(a) of title 38, United States Code, be amended to provide that an otherwise eligible veteran be deemed permanently and totally disabled if 65 years of age or over and unemployed, or is suffering from active tuberculosis and is hospitalized for such disease; and

that the provisions be repealed of subsection 3203(d) of title 38, United States Code, which require the reduction of a veteran's pension to \$30 a month after two months hospitalization or domiciliary care by the Veterans Administration; and restore the provisions of section 3203 of title 38, United States Code, as were in effect on June 30, 1960, relating to pension payments to veterans while in a Veterans Administration hospital or domiciliary home; and further

that chapter 15 of title 38, United States Code, be amended to provide that a person receiving death or disability pension based on service in World War I, World War II, or the Korean conflict, shall have the right to elect or re-

elect to receive either under chapter 15 of this title or under those provisions of title 38, United States Code, in effect on June 30, 1960. (HR-12555 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

2. *Income exclusions.*—(a) 1966 Convention Resolution No. 449 (Va.) seeks an administrative change in VA regulations to exclude from pension income determinations the additional railroad retirement annuity payable for dependents in the family group; and, failing in this, it directs that the Legion seek legislation to amend the Railroad Retirement Act to accomplish the purpose of the resolution. (H.R.-12490 introduced by Congressman Staggers (W. Va.)).

(b) 1967 Convention Resolution No. 39 (Miss.) seeks legislation to provide that income derived from the inheritance of savings and checking accounts shall not constitute income for annual income determinations in claims for pension and dependency and indemnity compensation (HR-15257 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

(c) 1967 Convention Resolution No. 144 (Nebr.) seeks legislation to provide that the amount of the proceeds of mortgage insurance equal to the indebtedness against the property paid to the insured or to his beneficiary shall be excluded from determinations of annual income. (HR-15255 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

3. *Restoration of remarried widows entitlement to VA benefits.*—1966 Convention Resolution No. 676 (Convention Committee) seeks legislation to provide that a remarried widow's entitlement to VA benefits shall be restored upon termination of her remarriage. (HR-5761 introduced by Congressman Dorn (S.C.)).

4. *Presumption of Soundness in Determinations of Basic Entitlement.*—1967 Convention Resolution No. 256 (Ky.) urges legislation to provide that the presumption of soundness shall apply in determinations of basic entitlement to disability pension in the case of a veteran with less than 90 days service who was discharged or released because of a service-connected disability. (HR-15530 introduced by Congressman Adair (Ind.)).

5. *Effective date of reduction or discontinuance of pension.*—1967 Convention Resolution No. 432 (Va.) seeks legislation to provide that the effective date of reduction or discontinuance of pension by reason of death of a dependent of a payee shall be the last day of the calendar year in which such death occurred. (HR-15254 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Extend delimiting date for correction of military records

1966 Convention Resolution No. 458 (Va.) seeks legislation to delete the delimiting date for applying for a correction of a military, naval, or air service record. (HR-5144 introduced by Congressman Hagan (Ga.)).

INSURANCE

Increased servicemen's group life insurance coverage

1966 Fall NEC Resolution No. 32 seeks legislation to increase the maximum Servicemen's Group Life Insurance coverage from \$10,000 to \$30,000. (HR-7199 introduced by Congressman Hammerschmidt (Ark.)).

Reopen NSLI for 1 year

1967 Convention Resolution No. 434 (Va.) seeks legislation to reopen for a one-year period the right to apply for National Service life insurance for those insurable and service-disabled veterans of service between the inclusive dates of December 7, 1941 and September 2, 1945, and June 27, 1950 and July 27, 1953 under policies providing for a premium charge which will include administrative costs. (HR-15239 introduced by Congressman Duncan (Tenn.)).

Extra hazard determinations

1967 Convention Resolution No. 436 (Va.) seeks legislation to provide that extra-hazard determinations of the Administrator of Veterans Affairs shall be, except for fraud, final and conclusive unless reviewed within two years after the date of original determination. (HR-14799 introduced by Congressman Kornegay (N.C.)).

Waiver of service-connected disabilities in certain cases

1967 Convention Resolution No. 437 (Va.) seeks legislation to provide that service-connected disabilities may be waived for the purpose of meeting good health requirements under 38 USC 715 where veterans hold policies with total disability income provisions authorized by the Insurance Act of 1946, with a similar waiver of good health. (HR-14801 introduced by Congressman Kornegay (N.C.)).

USGLI and NSLI not be subject to the Federal estate tax

1967 Convention Resolution No. 438 (Va.) seeks legislation to provide that proceeds of USGLI and NSLI shall not be subject to the imposition of the Federal estate tax. (HR-14814 introduced by Congressman Kornegay (N.C.)).

Reinstatement of lapsed NSLI in certain cases

1967 Convention Resolution No. 439 (Va.) seeks legislation to provide for waiver of service-connected disabilities less than total, for reinstatement of lapsed NSLI policies of veterans of service between the inclusive dates of December 7, 1941 and September 2, 1945, or June 27, 1950 and July 27, 1953, if application therefor, with a remittance covering all missing premiums, plus interest, is received by the VA within two years from the date such policy lapsed, as is now provided for holders of USGLI. (HR-14800 introduced by Congressman Kornegay (N.C.)).

Fixed schedule of premium rates for certain NSLI

1967 Convention Resolution No. 440 (Va.) seeks legislation to provide that the Administrator of Veterans Affairs, at the end of one five-year period of experience from the effective date of the insurance plans established under section 38 USC 725(b), shall establish a fixed schedule of maximum premium rates, and to provide that those policies of insurance continued after notice to the policyholder of the future fixed rate of premium shall be on a participating basis. (HR-14938 introduced by Congressman Teague (Tex.)).

Mr. DORN. Mr. Commander, on behalf of the chairman and those of the committee here this morning, I want to personally express my deep gratitude for a splendid, concise, and very reasonable statement to this committee.

I want to thank my distinguished colleague for so ably presenting you to the committee.

I am pleased to announce that hearings will begin before this committee the last week in March on the proposal for national cemeteries closer to the areas where our veterans live.

I might say this on behalf of the American Legion: That I couldn't let this opportunity pass without thanking you and each member of the American Legion of the United States for their devotion to the security of this Nation. A lot of people are unaware that in addition to a very fine veterans' program, that since 1919 at every national convention you have advocated measures which I believe would have prevented World War II and certainly the Korean war.

Had the Congress and the people of the country followed the recommendations of the Legion, I believe it would have prevented the trouble in Southeast Asia today.

You have also advocated a strong view which I want to commend you for. Certainly your view has been helpful to the Members of Congress who agreed with the Legion that this Nation must be strong, and that the only thing that the enemies of this Nation really respect is force. So I want to commend you for that.

Mr. Commander. I am sorry Bill Ayres had another committee meeting but he asked us to express to you his deep regrets that he had to leave to attend this other committee meeting.

Mr. Dulski, I am going to call on you first because I know you have another committee meeting and have to leave in a few moments.

Mr. Dulski from New York.

Mr. DULSKI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, my colleagues, I am very much impressed with the very fine statement you have made here. I know the American Legion is one of the organizations that stood out for the great things that have been echoed by our good friend, Mr. Dorn. I don't want to repeat the same words. But I am a member and Chairman of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee where a joint resolution has been introduced to remind everyone that there is a veterans preference law on the books. We are going to have a meeting this afternoon on this measure.

Secondly, I have another meeting at the Department of Agriculture of concern to many veterans from my area working in the grain industry. Grain storage has been cutting back. So, we are having a meeting with Secretary Freeman and the staff.

I want to congratulate you on your presentation and take the opportunity to remind you that this committee is a nonpartisan organization. It is a pleasure for me to serve with this committee because we fight in a different way. We have disagreements but we agree on one thing: There is unity for the benefit and the liberty of our country.

Again, I want to congratulate you on your fine statement and thank the chairman for giving me the privilege to say a few words to my comrades who are here from all over the country.

To you, Mr. Commander, may God bless you and all the work that you endeavor in the future.

Thank you very much.

Mr. GALBRAITH. Thank you. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Mr. Commander, I want to present to you now a member of the committee that stood by the chairman and vice chairman and the rest of us throughout the years, James Haley from Florida.

Mr. HALEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, let me say this: That you should be very proud of the able Congressman that you have representing your great congressional district. The only trouble with him is he wears the insignia of an elephant instead of a donkey. But we forgive him for that, Mr. Commander. He is a highly respected member of the Congress. He comes from a great State and we are all happy to work with him.

Mr. Commander, I want to say to you that you have presented what I think is a very modest program in behalf of the great organization that you represent. I might say that I have belonged to this organization since its founding, Mr. Commander, so I know of the tremendous work and the good that this organization has done throughout the years. It has been a staunch ally for law and order.

I merely want to say this, Mr. Commander: That it gives you a good feeling sometime, up here in the lonely battles that the members of the Congress must fight and the decisions that they must make—sometimes unpopular; sometimes popular—to know that a great organization of true, dedicated Americans are standing behind the things that have made us as a nation in a short period of time, as far as nations go, the most wealthy and the most powerful nation on the face of the earth.

We have men today, or people today, Mr. Commander—I call them

termites because they come out of the woodwork, so to speak, every time that somebody is dissatisfied about some little thing. Don't make any mistake about what is going on in this country. Those people—those rioters, those people who destroy property, who burn towns—they are trying to destroy this Government of ours.

Mr. Commander, I hope that this Legion in the next few years will use the tremendous power of this organization to maintain law and order in this great country of ours. [Applause.]

Otherwise, Mr. Commander, the things that you and I and the rest of these fine American citizens fought for will be destroyed. Make no mistake about that. Let us uphold and make the local governments, the local law enforcement officers, uphold the laws of this Nation. Let us maintain this Nation as a nation of free men.

Thank you, Mr. Commander. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Next, I want to call on a good friend of ours, a ranking member of this committee, from the great American Legion State of Indiana, Ross Adair.

Mr. ADAIR. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Commander, and your fine Congressmen: As others have already said, it is helpful to have the views of your organization as they are presented to us annually at these affairs.

I would commend you particularly this year. You have a rather brief statement but I think you said the things that needed to be said. You have been able in a few pages of print to give us the information that we need with respect to the position of your organization on various subjects.

I would like to commend through you, Mr. Commander, your representatives here, not only your legislative representatives, some of whom I see here this morning, but your entire staff in Washington. They have been helpful to all of us. They communicate the views of the American Legion but they do it in a fine, objective way.

I just can't pass up this opportunity of paying them a tribute for the work which they do.

In your statement, there are many things upon which comment could be made, but I should just like to mention what you have said about the national cemetery system. The chairman also made reference to it in his remarks.

This is a matter of very deep concern to all of us. This committee has just taken legislative jurisdiction of this program, and, as the chairman indicates, we are planning to hold hearings very soon. There are a number of proposals which need to be studied.

It is our intent, first, to establish some broad, general guidelines and then later fill those in with more specific details.

But, although it means more work for us and, contrary to what some believe, we in the Congress really don't need more work than we now have, I think every member of this committee is pleased that we are taking jurisdiction because we feel that here is where it belongs. We will give it some very careful attention along the lines that you mentioned in your statement.

Thank you and all the other people for being here this morning. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Mr. Commander, the great State of Nevada, as every schoolboy knows, has two U.S. Senators and but one Congressman. So,

I want to present to you the most powerful political figure in Nevada, Mr. Baring.

Mr. BARING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, I want to congratulate you on one of the finest statements I think I have heard here in the last 16 years. Your statement hit true. I think that your words in regard to the American way of life that you put down so well here stand for what you are. I am proud to have you as the commander under whom I am serving.

I am in the American Legion myself. I think it is wonderful to have a commander like you.

I have to state to my chairman here regarding politics, I generally drop the cloak of politics because I am very outspoken.

I will have to go along with my good friend, Jim Haley, on our Americanism today. You have stated it. But to each and every one in this room, my suggestion is to go home and try to clean up this mess we are in. We are in one. These dirty, bewhiskered bums that look like girls, and girls that look like boys, on pot, marihuana, and LSD that are floating around this country are heinous.

It will ruin our American system if we don't put our effort for Americanism where it is supposed to be. That is, with our youth right now. I am afraid of the system that has grown. When you think of girls and boys that would spit on the American flag and burn it, or the boys that would tear up their draft cards, and the American Civil Liberty group, a minority group that goes around trying to defend this sort of thing and say they come within the Constitution, they are trying to interpret the Constitution for Communists.

We have a Supreme Court that says it is all right for Communists to work in our defense plants and that a school board can't fire a Communist that is teaching. We must go into the communities to get rid of this. Watch who you put in the school board and see to it that no Communist teaches your children. If you are parents, speak to your children and guide them along the ways of Americanism. We need it more than we ever did. The way it looks to me, I am very worried.

I had the advantage of working for 4 years back in 1948 to 1952 as a colleague to that great Senator McCarran. He was a great American and the people even in my State didn't realize it. He tried to give us a warning of how communism was walking through our ranks of life. They said he was looking for a bug under every rose petal. He knew what was coming.

We are being subverted in all of our walks of life, from the Council of Churches down into the school buildings. There is a reason for it.

I think we as American Legionnaires who have an Americanism program should individually do it. Write letters. It only takes 20 minutes to a half an hour to sit down and write a letter to your Representatives and Senators and tell them that you want a stoppage of this trend.

The Congress can tell the Supreme Court what their duties are. That isn't to legislate but to interpret laws. Get this country back to where we were.

I appreciate the chairman allowing me a little more time than usual here, folks. But I had to get it off my chest. I think we have got a lot of worries that we have got to clear up. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Thank you.

Mr. Commander, now I want to present to you one of the most faithful and dedicated members of the committee from the great State of New York—we have a number on the committee from New York—but Paul Fino has been one of the most faithful in veterans' legislation and is a friend of the program and, I am sure, of the American Legion.

I want to present to you Paul Fino.

Mr. FINO. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, with that kind of an introduction, I should rest my case, but I shall be brief.

For 16 years, as a member of this committee, Mr. National Commander, I have always entirely agreed with the position taken by your organization on veterans' problems. You have my assurance that I will continue that support.

I, too, want to congratulate you and your organization for its informative and constructive statement here this morning and you have again my assurance of support on your legislative programs.

Thank you.

[Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Mr. Commander, now I want to present to you our great representative from the Volunteer State, known throughout the Nation as a friend of the veteran, "Fats" Everett.

Mr. EVERETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. [Applause.]

It is certainly a pleasure to hear this wonderful statement by our national commander of the American Legion.

Also, I wish to concur in what has been said by our distinguished colleagues thus far and assure you that we will continue to work with you and for you to the best of our ability and to cooperate in every way possible.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Now, Mr. Commander, I somewhat reluctantly, because I never know what John is going to say, but I do want to present to you one of the great members of the committee who is forthright and a warm friend of the Legion, John Saylor. [Applause.]

Mr. SAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Comrade Commander, you have had accolades from the beginning right down to now. Every time we meet, I end up being the gadfly that asks more questions.

I read this statement and it is a Jim-dandy. It says on page 5, the American Legion is "opposed to achieving economy by the destruction of the concept that the veteran is a special citizen because of service in the Armed Forces of the United States during a time of war or national emergency." I say "Amen."

I want to know why our organization says that anybody who has served during the national emergency between January 1, 1955, and August 5, 1964, can't become a member of our organization. It just puzzles me why for that period of years those people who served aren't eligible for a membership.

I am not going to ask you now but this is a matter that you ought to take up at your national convention. Congress still operates under that national emergency. We have got a law on the books that says Congress is supposed to adjourn by the 31st day of July every year.

When you ask the Parliamentarian why we are in session, we learn

that we are still in session because of the national emergency that Harry Truman declared back in Korea. [Applause.]

Mr. SAYLOR. It seems to me if it is good enough to make Congress do it, there isn't any reason why the American Legion which Congress chartered shouldn't make those people who served in the Armed Forces during that time eligible for membership in our organization. [Applause.]

Mr. SAYLOR. Let me ask you, Mr. Commander, what is our membership right now?

Mr. GALBRAITH. As of now, it is about 2,225,000. This is this year, but the membership of last year was 2,600,000.

Mr. SAYLOR. I just got figures from your national office downtown. We boys from Pennsylvania are real proud again to be No. 1 as of the end of last month. [Applause.]

Mr. SAYLOR. That is almost twice as many as any other State so we just take the barbs around here. We still like to come along and prove that we support your organization.

Commander, there is a matter that I think you and your staff should be aware of. Everybody says what a great staff you have—and you do. I don't ask you to agree with me. I disagree with most everybody some time or other. But there is a matter that has come to my attention and I think it is a matter of concern or should be to every member of the American Legion.

Back in the 89th Congress, we passed a law that says that there would be 125,000 beds that the Veterans' Administration should maintain. Believe it or not, the 1969 budget submitted by the President reveals there were only 115,000 operating beds in 1967. That number was reduced to 112,000 in the current fiscal year. According to figures that we have just received, they expect to reduce it by 3,043 beds more.

In view of the expanding veterans population, what has your organization done to get on to this Administration that tells you that they are the great friend of the veteran and then reduces 5,500 beds in 2 years.

The reason I ask this: I asked the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs this question a month ago and I got an acknowledgment that he got my letter. But I don't have any explanation for it. I got a letter from the American Legion and the VFW and the DAV and the AMVETS and all of the rest of them telling that they are awful glad I asked that question but it shouldn't be up to me to ask that question.

That is what veterans' organizations are for. I want to know what kind of support we can expect from the American Legion to make sure we get back up to 125,000 beds.

Mr. GALBRAITH. Mr. Saylor, you have asked a question that has been one of our concern for some time. Each year, through our resolutions committee at our national conventions, this has been one of the points on the rehabilitation that we continued to ask for more beds for our veterans.

Mr. SAYLOR. I want to say that we should get it back up to 125,000. They keep telling me they are taking care of more veterans all the time. It is a little difficult for me to understand this Chinese game of numbers. You have got less beds but you are taking care of more people. I realize that we have made some advances in medicine and all that. But the only thing I can tell you is that it must be that the turnovers are better. I would still like to see 125,000 beds for veterans.

The next thing I would like to ask you about and hope to call attention through you to your service officer: It comes to my attention that a number of veterans, service-connected veterans, when they die suddenly are probably seen not by their family doctor but by some doctor or hospital resident when they are taken in after being picked up off the street.

The doctor looks at them and says, "Well, he must have died of a heart attack."

This is a man that has 100-percent service-connected disability. He has never had a heart condition in his life. A strange doctor signs the death certificate, and says he had a heart attack. The Veterans' Administration then says the man died of a heart attack. That is not service connected. They don't give the widow, children, or family any benefit.

This is a place where I feel that a service officer can render a tremendous service to the families of veterans to see to it that the Veterans' Administration can't hide behind a death certificate issued by a doctor that never saw the patient alive.

Commander, I hope you have a real successful year, that you get more than the 2,600,000. If you came in here next year and your successor said that he had strived to meet your goal that you made 5 million members of the American Legion, we would have the greatest organization on earth and I sure hope that you get that done during your term. [Applause.]

Mr. GALBRAITH. Mr. Congressman, by powers vested in me, I just now placed you on my rehabilitation commission. [Applause.]

Mr. SAYLOR. There is just one thing, Commander. If you determined that with McCurdy, that is all that is necessary. I will accept that, sir; and go back to work. [Applause.]

Mr. SAYLOR. Once more, now that I am a member of the official family, I may be able to get the American Legion to go along with one of my pet gripes. That is that I still think we must have a court of veterans appeals. [Applause.]

Mr. SAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DORN. Thank you, Mr. Saylor.

Mr. Commander, I would like to present to you a good, warm personal friend to all of us who is not coming back next Congress. This is of his own volition—voluntarily not coming back. We do hope he will appear here again in the next few years.

I want to present Horace Kornegay from North Carolina. [Applause.]

Mr. KORNEGAY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, I would like to join with my colleagues in expressing our appreciation to you and to the Legion for being here with us today and for that excellent statement which you made.

I also would like to take the opportunity to commend your Washington staff for the fine and diligent job that it does in representing the Legion and the veterans of this country generally, and tell you of the great assistance that it is to this committee in arriving at what is just and proper in matters of legislation.

I think particular applause should go to Mr. Bob McCurdy, who is the Chairman of the President's Veterans' Advisory Commission, for the dedication, energy, enthusiasm, and just real good common-

sense that he brings to that body and any others of which he is a member. [Applause.]

Mr. KORNEGAY. You know, my good friend, John Saylor, of Pennsylvania, is pretty tough, as are my other senior colleagues on the committee. There is little to be said, I guess, after it gets this far down the line.

But I do want to commend the Legion for the fine program which you have, and reiterate what several of my friends and colleagues have said before me in emphasizing the great importance of your program of Americanism. I can think of no program of any group or any organization in this country that is any more important today than that of Americanism.

You have the membership; you have the technology; you have the enthusiasm; you have the background; you have the dedication and the determination to bring that message to every school child in this country. The challenge is there.

Without repeating what Mr. Baring and Jim Haley and some of the others said, certainly the need is pressing.

If you did that in your administration and emphasized, strengthened and made a real project out of going into every schoolhouse in this country and bringing out the story of America, the dedication of the heroes of the past, the Constitution, and what this country stands for, and the freedoms that we have and the cost of those freedoms that have been paid by those here today as well as by generations that have gone on before us—certainly the justification of our existence would be made.

So, I urge you to do that. I know you will do it. You will strike the greatest blow for liberty that is struck during the coming year.

Thank you very much. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Thank you, Horace.

Mr. Commander, the next member that I am going to present to you gets some of the chairman's mail some time and the chairman gets some of his—but he does have a good name.

I want to present to you Chuck Teague from California.

Mr. TEAGUE of California. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, let me suggest I think it would be a great idea for our good friend, John Saylor, to take us all up to Pennsylvania and show us one of those corpses walking.

Mr. SAYLOR. You would be surprised what we can do in Pennsylvania.

Mr. TEAGUE of California. Mr. Commander, I certainly want to associate myself with all the things that my colleagues have said about you and about the American Legion. I have been a member for a good many years.

I would also certainly like to concur with the statement that we are very proud of Bob Denney. I am proud of the fact that he does have the good judgment to wear an elephant label rather than a donkey label. We are very delighted to have him here. You people showed good judgment in sending him.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome my comrades from California who have come 3,000 miles to be with us. I have represented the Santa Barbara area for a good many years. The California Legislature has just added 1,000 people in my district (they may be my constituents in the next election) from the county of Los Angeles and

from the city of Los Angeles; we are very happy that they are here. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Mr. Commander, I want to present now to you a good friend of the veteran and one who has always been interested in the youth of the country and is very commendatory of the Legion for the fine work you have done for the young people of our country, Henry Helstoski.

Mr. HELSTOSKI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to commend the Commander on his very cogent and timely statement.

The American Legion has consistently proven itself to be a responsible and patriotic organization dedicated to service not only for the veteran but also the community, State, and Nation.

The program he spoke on is modest in nature and emphasizes a most important aspect of the problems facing the veteran—rehabilitation.

Without commenting in detail, let me say that I am pleased to say I wish to support the aims outlined in your program and hope for its early legislative enactment.

It is a pleasure to see you here this morning. Thanks for appearing. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Mr. Commander, I am about running out of things to say about my colleagues up here but I do want each of you to know them because this is a nonpartisan committee. I have never heard, in almost 19 years on this committee any reference to partisanship in considering the veterans of our country.

I might say there are men serving in South Vietnam today of whom you never speak as members of one party or the other, but as Americans.

I want to present to you the greatest artist I think there is in the Congress of the United States, and a good friend of all of you, and of us on the committee, Sy Halpern of New York. [Applause.]

Mr. HALPERN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

He paid me a very nice compliment calling me a so-called great artist. I only wish I had the ability to be able to reflect on canvas the beautiful picture that I see before me today, a picture that reflects a great American spirit, patriotism, determination, dedication, devotion to our great country that no one could convey on a canvas or in any physical sense. It is something you feel. It is a spirit you have.

I, for one, want to extend my enthusiastic compliments and congratulate you, Mr. National Commander, and the great members of the American Legion.

You know, Mr. Chairman, I have always looked forward to this occasion, the appearance of the American Legion's national commander before the Veterans' Affairs Committee. It is one of the great experiences of being a member of this committee.

Today's statement by Commander Galbraith fully fulfills my own expectancy of this occasion and I am sure I can speak for all the other members, most of whom have eloquently presented their own opinion.

I can say without qualification that today's statement was one of the finest presentations ever given before this committee, Mr. National Commander.

I am particularly pleased to be a sponsor of identical legislation as the commander recommended for the development and maintenance

of an adequate system of national cemeteries. I agree 100 percent, too, with your program for increased compensation for disability and and for realistic raises in widows' monthly rate of dependency and increases in indemnity compensation per each child. I have legislation in to that effect to support your goal.

We hear about priorities and appropriations these days, Mr. National Commander. We hear that every day on the floor of the House and in the Nation's press. I think second to defense priorities the next should be for the veterans and for the agency administering the affairs; namely, the Veterans' Administration.

I support the Legion's recommendations for added funds for this agency to carry out its dependable work on behalf of the Nation's veterans. I support these portions of your program as well as all the rest of the American Legion's program 100 percent. Your program is sound; it is realistic; and it is equitable.

Its objectives will not only benefit the Nation's veterans, Mr. National Commander, but, as I see it, and I like to think it is designed to help make this a better America.

I am happy to see and to know that our New York State department commander is here, and I see the Queens County's, my county's delegation here. I would like to let the national commander and this whole national conclave know that the Queens Legionnaires are just about the greatest bunch of dedicated fellows I have ever known.

I would like to congratulate you, Mr. National Commander, for your presentation. I wish you and your fine staff and your excellent staff and your excellent program every success.

I have said it before at this meeting, Mr. Chairman, and I repeat here now, thank God for the American Legion. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Thank you, Sy.

Now I want to present to you, Mr. Commander, one of our most faithful members who has authored some very fine legislation supported by the Legion and which has become law, Jim Hanley of New York.

Mr. HANLEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Commander Galbraith, our colleague from Nebraska, I, too, want to echo the sentiment expressed here this morning.

Speaking as a past post commander and a lifelong member of the American Legion, I, personally, am proud of you as our national commander.

Certainly, the legislative objectives which you have outlined today are really the minimum which this Nation owes those who have served and have been disabled in our Military Establishment.

I heartily endorse the objectives that you have expressed here today. Certainly with respect to the widows and dependents, all we are providing them is the minimum, so far as their ability to meet the standards of living is concerned, which this Nation owes them in respect to the service provided by their husbands and fathers.

With respect to the cemetery aspect, I, too, concur with what you have said. To me, the Department of the Army ruling with respect to the restriction of burials in Arlington Cemetery was appalling. We had a space problem. We recognize that we did have. It was my thought that this program should proceed until the very last space was used, regardless of the rank of the decedent.

Further, I want to comment on your position on our involvement in Southeast Asia. As all of you know, these have been extremely critical days in the history of this Nation. Certainly, the President of this great country—I am not being political at all—but, certainly, he should derive much solace from the support that you have allowed him in this most serious, most complicated, international crisis. So, I salute you for all you have done.

I take great pride in my membership in the American Legion. I am delighted to see so many fellow New Yorkers here today, our Department Commander, and, in particular, the number of boys from Syracuse, my hometown.

Thank you very much. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Mr. Commander, our next member of the committee has served as Department Commander of the great Volunteer State of Tennessee, and it was my honor last year to address a Memorial Day gathering at Mountain Home in Tennessee. That town is not in John's district, but close by. It is in the district of your good friend, Jim Quillen of the Rules Committee. There was manifested there a wonderful spirit, and I think the finest memorial service I have seen, with 10,000 people attending. There were the most beautiful flowers that I have ever seen—peonies—and children by the thousands were there. It was a great ceremony showing respect for those that made the supreme sacrifice in all of our wars.

I want to present to you John Duncan of Tennessee. [Applause.]

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, I, too, want to welcome you and my fellow Legionnaires to this committee.

I would also like to commend your Washington staff, Harold Stringer, and everyone that we are associated with there. They are top-class people, and they are certainly a real help to us in carrying out our daily duties.

I think I would say that you have presented an excellent statement. It is one which I think is very modest. In fact, in some instances, I think it is too modest, particularly in your income limitations sections.

It has always been my opinion that income limitations should be removed for certain World War I veterans, particularly those with incomes, for example, under \$3,300 or \$3,200. They should be able to earn all they can after they reach the age of 70 or 72, on the same basis as a social security recipient is able to earn all he can or all he desires after he has reached that age.

Most people know that the veteran has perhaps given more and received less and suffered more in the recent inflationary years than any other segment of our population. I know that you will be told this year that because of the war in Vietnam and defense appropriations that the Government doesn't have the money. I don't think you should let anyone tell you that because if you will look at the budget requests this year, you will see that the defense expenditure requests are up and health, education, and welfare requests were up 31 percent. Agriculture is up 40 percent. Education is up 22 percent, and the requests for veterans is up 11 percent.

Your proposal on the cemetery problem is certainly timely, and has been of great concern to me. In the 3 years plus that I have served on this committee, we have held some hearings. We have not held hear-

ings this year. But if we were to approve legislation today in many instances in this country, we would be too late to save some of the cemeteries in the communities throughout this country.

So, we must not only hold hearings this year; we must pass legislation to insure that the veteran will still have his identity, that he will certainly have a place of burial.

We thank you again for coming to this committee each year and presenting to us your program. I assure you of my complete cooperation in every request that you have. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Mr. Commander, I do want all of you to know the members of our committee. We just have two or three more.

I notice Mr. Kupferman just came in. He succeeded the Honorable John Lindsay here in the Congress, who is now making a great record as mayor of that great city.

I want to present to you your good friend, Mr. Kupferman, from New York City.

Mr. KUPFERMAN. I thank you.

I was in a meeting in the other committee, Commander.

I did want to get a copy of your statement so I could see your desires.

I want to assure you all of my great interest in the American Legion and my feeling that the veterans of this Nation deserve very well and that we in the Congress are going to make it possible.

Thank you.

Mr. DORN. Mr. Commander, we will have to give these young fellows time here, you know.

Our next member is a young man. One of the finest things I can say about him is that the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee and senior member of his delegation from Arkansas is perhaps the most powerful man in the Western World, certainly more powerful than Harold Wilson, the Prime Minister of England. If you give John time, I am sure he will be as powerful as the senior member of his State delegation.

I want to present John Hammerschmidt of Arkansas.

Mr. HAMMERSCHMIDT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Commander, let me join in expressing thanks to you, already stated so well by my colleague on the committee; and I, too, wish to congratulate you on a fine, consistent statement in behalf of the American veterans and their dependents.

I can't pass up this chance to thank you as a Nebraskan for sending us this outstanding, dedicated Congressman, Bob Denney. I also have had the opportunity of serving with him on the Public Works Committee. I know of his hard work and interest there on that committee, as mentioned earlier by my distinguished colleague, Mr. William Jennings Bryan Dorn, our acting chairman, who is doing such a fine job this morning.

But, I would like to express my regrets, too, that Mr. Teague, our great chairman, can't be with us this morning. I know what his disappointment must be that he can't be here with this group as he has worked with so well through the years.

I would like to say that during my short tenure of service on this committee that I have developed a great admiration for this great man.

"Tiger" Teague, as well as I have for these gentlemen who are my colleagues on this committee.

As Mr. Dorn and others have stated so well, he does this in a non-partisan way. He runs the committee for the benefit of our veterans, which is as it should be.

Again, I thank you for this excellent statement on major goals, I assure you of my support of it. [Applause.]

Mr. DORN. Mr. Commander, the last member of the committee here that I want to present to you this morning might be quite far down the ladder from a seniority standpoint. God forbid, if the atomic bomb ever fell and blew the rest of us up, Mr. Scott would probably be the chairman of the committee.

But I do want to present to you my own Congressman. You know, a lot of us live over in Virginia and other areas around Washington. So, I am not going to say too much about it and give him more time to prove himself. He is certainly doing a great job so far.

My own Congressman, Bill Scott. [Applause.]

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

When you are last but not least, there is not a whole lot you can say after listening to the statements that have been made, except, Comrade Commander, I would like to join in those statements that have been made. I am sure that you will find in the future—as it has been in the past—this committee will be cooperative with the Legion in the interest of veterans.

I don't know how Bob Denney can get all the commendations that he has gotten here today.

Bob, if you will, while I join in it, I would like to learn how this is done, so perhaps I can on the Post Office and Civil Service Committee.

I am disappointed that our national commander has not told the same jokes that he did last night.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DORN. Thank you, Bill.

Mr. Commander, we are delighted, of course, that the Madam President of the National Auxiliary could be with you this morning, and also the charming ladies with her.

Before we adjourn, I do want to present to you the committee staff—and we appreciate and those of us on the committee are grateful to you for your kind comments about the staff of this committee. I think there is no committee in the Congress that has a finer or more dedicated, devoted staff than the staff of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. I am going to ask them to stand, each of them who is here, and present them to you. [Applause.]

Bob, I know you will insert the national commander's address in the Congressional Record today so all of the people throughout the Nation will know the position of the American Legion. We thank you for doing so and thank you for being here.

Mr. DORN. Thank you, Commander.

The committee is adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 11:23 a.m., the committee adjourned.)

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 1968

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met at 10:05 a.m., pursuant to call, in the caucus room, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Olin E. Teague (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. The committee will come to order.

Coming from south Texas, where this snow is not normal, I am certainly surprised and pleased to see so many people here.

Our format this morning will be to introduce Mr. Cooper Holt and let him introduce the members of the VFW he wishes.

There is one thing that stops the airlines, and that's the weather. Congressman Philbin, who represents the home district of the national commander and planned to introduce him to the committee, was stuck in Massachusetts because of the weather. Since he couldn't be here, Congressman Jim Burke will introduce the commander.

I now turn the meeting over to Cooper Holt. I might say I will introduce each member of the committee to everybody in the audience later. Nearly every member up here has anywhere from one to three committee meetings this morning and there will be some going and coming, and that's the reason that this will happen.

Mr. HOLT. You go right ahead.

STATEMENT OF COOPER T. HOLT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON OFFICE, VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

Mr. HOLT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I wish to introduce three wonderful and charming ladies we have with us.

Ruth Bogaez the national president of our ladies auxiliary.

(Applause.)

And the wife of our senior vice commander in chief, Jean Homan. [Applause.]

And the wife of our junior vice commander in chief, Trixie Gallagher. [Applause.]

Now, our senior vice commander in chief, Dick Homan, from West Virginia. [Applause.]

The junior vice commander in chief, Ray Gallagher, from South Dakota. [Applause.]

The adjutant general, Julian Dickenson, from Missouri. [Applause.]

The quartermaster general, J. A. Cheatham, also from Missouri. [Applause.]

The judge advocate general, Theodore H. Little, from the State of Washington. [Applause.]

The surgeon general, Samuel K. Levy, M.D., from New York. [Applause.]

Our national chaplain, Rev. Robert M. Varner, of South Carolina. [Applause.]

The chief of staff, Daniel S. Brady, from New York. [Applause.]

The inspector general, John A. Tynan, from Massachusetts. [Applause.]

Mr. Chairman, I would like to introduce some of our past national commanders, with your permission. We have a large group of them here, as you can see. We will start with the dean of the group as far as the years are concerned.

Paul C. Wolman, from Maryland. [Applause.]

He is not here at the moment. Next we have James E. Van Zandt, from Pennsylvania. [Applause.]

Ray H. Brannaman, from Colorado. [Applause.]

Clyde A. Lewis, from New York. [Applause.]

Charles C. Ralls, from Washington. [Applause.]

Frank C. Hilton of Pennsylvania. [Applause.]

Jimmy Cothran, from South Carolina. [Applause.]

Wayne Richards, from Kansas. [Applause.]

Merton Tice, from South Dakota. [Applause.]

Tim Murphy, from Massachusetts. [Applause.]

The great Richard Roudebush, from Indiana. [Applause.]

John Mahan, from Virginia. [Applause.]

Lou G. Feldmann, from Pennsylvania. [Applause.]

Ted Connell, from Texas. I know Ted is here. [Applause.]

Bob Hansen, from Minnesota. [Applause.]

Joe J. Lombardo, from New York. [Applause.]

Andy Borg, from Wisconsin. [Applause.]

And Les M. Fry, from Nevada. [Applause.]

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. If I might ask Congressman James Burke to stand up. Jim, we're glad to have you.

Will you now introduce the next speaker. [Applause.]

STATEMENT OF JAMES BURKE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

Mr. BURKE. Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee on Veterans Affairs, it is a great privilege and high honor for me to appear before this distinguished committee this morning. In fact, it is a triple honor, first, because I am a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars; second, because I come from the great Commonwealth of Massachusetts; and third, because I'm sitting in the place of one of the great members of our body, the Honorable Philip J. Philbin, who is unable to be here because of the storm in Massachusetts. And it is quite a difficult job to try to fill his shoes.

It is a really happy experience to introduce a valued friend of mine, Commander in Chief Joseph A. Scerra of the Veterans of Foreign

Wars of the United States, who is here today to present the VFW legislative program.

Commander Scerra comes from Gardner, Mass. It is with a great deal of pride that I come before you to tell you about this modest, dedicated friend of the veterans who has earned the hard way the great honors which have come to him from his comrades.

Commander Scerra was elected commander in chief last August after hours, days, months, and years of highly dedicated and everyday hard work for the Veterans of Foreign Wars, work which went far beyond the call of duty, and it can well be said that he earned the high office he now holds by the deep lasting impression of respect, confidence, and admiration that he made upon the rank and file of the VFW all over the Nation.

In the few months he has been in office, Commander Scerra has already established an enviable record as leader of one of our greatest and best veterans organizations.

Truly Commander Scerra has come up the hard way in the VFW ranks, going back to the days of World War II when he joined the Gardner, Mass., Ovile Case Post No. 905 while serving in Europe. In 1945 upon his return home, he was elected the first World War II commander of that post and subsequently, in 1949, he was elected commander of the Worcester County Council.

Early VFW honors were bestowed upon him in 1951 when he was selected as one of the six "Best County Commanders in the United States."

Elected in 1956 to the office of the junior vice commander of the Massachusetts Department of the VFW, Commander Scerra later became the department senior vice commander and department commander. His abilities and hard work were further recognized by the VFW in 1959 when he was designated an All-American Department Commander. The citizens of his home community of Gardner honored him in 1963 as its "Most Outstanding Citizen" for that year.

In 1963-64 Commander Scerra was appointed inspector general of the VFW and elected National Council member from District 2 in 1964.

Let me tell you a bit more, my friends, about this inspiring record of service to the VFW.

Commander-in-Chief Scerra has served as his post service officer continuously since 1945. He served as post quartermaster from 1959 to 1965 and as post blood bank chairman from 1958 to the present time. As chairman of the State VFW Membership Committee, he helped to increase State VFW membership by nearly 50 percent.

At the national level Commander-in-Chief Scerra has served as a member of the National Community Service Committee, a member of the Voice of Democracy Committee, a member of the National Budget and Finance Committee, and a member of the National Convention Corporation. In addition, he has served as vice chairman of the Convention Committee on General Resolutions.

This, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, is the great record of service to the cause of the veteran and/or the organization for which Commander Scerra speaks today. As a dear friend of mine and as a Congressman from Massachusetts, I am greatly honored and very happy, and am truly proud to present to you Commander-in-Chief

Joseph A. Scerra of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. [Standing ovation.]

STATEMENT OF JOSEPH A. SCERRA, COMMANDER IN CHIEF, VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES, ACCOMPANIED BY COOPER HOLT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON OFFICE, AND FRANCIS W. STOVER, NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. SCERRA. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I would first like to express my deep appreciation for the kind remarks in the introduction extended by Congressman Jim Burke. Of course, I would have loved to have had my Congressman Phil Philbin here for whom I have the highest regard and I fully appreciate New England weather keeping him grounded. We have had snow in our part of Massachusetts up until June in years gone by. I hope that at a later date I may be able to extend to Congressman Philbin my deep appreciation for his many kindnesses to me. He has served in the Congress for 25 years and has won the high esteem of all. He is a truly great American.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, again permit me to express my deep appreciation, as well as that of my fellow officers and all the members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States for this opportunity to appear before your committee.

I shall, of course, direct the major portion of my comments to our views on veterans' benefits and our legislative program. But due to the grave significance of the international circumstances in which we find ourselves, it is my hope, Mr. Chairman, that you and your distinguished committee will permit me to digress for a moment, in my initial remarks.

As you know, this is the occasion of our annual conference of national and department officers. I am happy to report a most successful year. Our programs are going forward with dispatch. For the 14th consecutive year we have increased our membership. Our numbers will far exceed 1.4 million when we close our books this summer. My comrades who have filled this room to overflowing and their counterparts throughout the world are, of course, responsible. No commander in chief has ever had a more dedicated staff.

With me also this morning are 54 patriotic young Americans of whom we are very, very proud. They are the current winners of our annual "Voice of Democracy" contest representing each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Korea, Okinawa, and the Canal Zone. Each of these young people has an opportunity to win one of five scholarships totaling \$13,500. The winners will be announced at our congressional banquet tonight.

I would hope you would allow me the privilege of having this group stand to be recognized. [Applause.]

Mr. SCERRA. For the record, I would like this committee to know that this year more than 400,000 boys and girls from over 8,000 public, private and parochial schools took time from the regular activities of their busy lives to think, write, and speak up on "Freedom's Challenge."

Additionally, you should know that the monetary value of scholarships and awards presented to contestants in this country and over-

seas by the Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Ladies Auxiliaries at the post, county, district and State levels amounted to more than \$200,000 this year. The "Voice of Democracy" program is truly one of the largest scholarship award programs available to the youth of our Nation.

Certainly no one could wish more wholeheartedly than the members of this committee, Mr. Chairman, and the members of my own organization, that there might be an end to war. But wishful thinking does not deter the Communist aggressor from his goal of conquest.

Once again we are engaged in armed conflict on foreign soil—an undeclared war it is true, but one which surpasses in its violence, its casualties, its human suffering, and the personnel and equipment committed all but three of the official wars in which this Nation has been engaged. With tongue in cheek, I exclude Korea, for as you know, Mr. Chairman, from your own distinguished military record, and that of your gallant sons, war is war, regardless of the name we give it.

More than half a million young Americans are presently fighting for human freedom in Vietnam, 50,000 stand precarious guard in Korea. A substantial portion of our fleet, and many of our aircraft ply the far reaches of the Pacific, where Red China girds her loins with nuclear power for the ultimate destruction of America.

In the trembling bastion of freedom we call Europe, another 200,000 Americans honor our continuing commitment to NATO. Thus, there does not appear within the preview of history, an honorable end to essential military service for the young men of this Nation. It is, therefore, the hope and the collective purpose of the Veterans of Foreign Wars that certain improvements in veterans' benefits may be effected, and made a permanent right of all veterans of either wars or conflicts in our Nation's cause.

Your committee has done much already to make this hope a reality of law. For this we thank you.

I am sure that you in turn are familiar with the tremendous work being done by the men of our rehabilitation service under the dedicated leadership of committee chairman, Past Commander in Chief Joseph J. Lombardo and Director Norman Jones; of our legislative service under Legislative Committee Chairman James E. Van Zandt, a past commander in chief and a former Member of Congress, and Legislative Director Francis Stover; of the perceptive contributions to national security being made by our distinguished national security committee under the guidance of Committee Chairman General Earl Rudder, president of Texas A. & M. University, and Gen. J. D. Hittle; and the overall competence and intelligence supervision of our Washington office by executive director, Past Commander in Chief Cooper T. Holt.

Again we thank you, for the cooperation you have given them. We are proud of them, and we are equally proud of our long, productive and amicable association with your committee.

It is no secret, Mr. Chairman, that the Veterans of Foreign Wars has steadfastly supported, and will continue to support, the President in our position in Southeast Asia. [Applause.]

We may, on occasion, voice some variant view on military strategy, such as the blockade of North Vietnam, but we stand unflinchingly behind U.S. policy in Vietnam. It is, however, the No. 1 concern of all our members that this conflict be brought to an early and successful conclusion.

We of the VFW will never countenance a substitution of the dove for the eagle as the bird emblematic of this great Nation, and neither will be view with favor an eagle emasculated by indecision and delay. [Applause.]

For this reason, together with the lessons taught by the history we have made, we grow impatient with those who espouse the dogma of appeasement. [Applause.]

We view with scorn the poor, pathetic creatures who wear men's clothing, but refuse to serve their country. [Applause.]

We take unyielding issue with those freeloaders of democracy who aline themselves with draft dodgers, card burners, anti-American demonstrators, and the Communist disciples of "peace at any price." [Applause.]

The creation and security of a strong and independently free nation in South Vietnam, standing as a bulwark against Communist aggression, is of great importance to the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the national security of our country.

It was my great privilege and honor to be selected by the President to serve on the delegation which witnessed the free elections in that troubled land. Neither I nor the organization I represent have any doubt whatever as to the cause for which our young men fight.

Upon my return from Vietnam I called our national legislative and security committees into session here in Washington. As you know, these committees are made up of distinguished Americans. They have carefully analyzed the 300 resolutions which our members adopted at our National Convention in New Orleans. It was their purpose to recommend a priority legislative and security program for 1968, which would be truly representative of our organizational goals to the second session of the 90th Congress.

This they have done, and that program has been officially approved. Each of you has been furnished with a copy. It would be deply appreciated, Mr. Chairman, if a copy of that program, entitled "Top Priority Legislative and Security Goals of the VFW for 1968," together with a digest of our VFW resolutions, might be made a part of my remarks at this time.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Without objection it will be placed in the record.

(The information follows:)

TOP PRIORITY LEGISLATIVE AND SECURITY GOALS FOR 1968

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

Joseph Scerra, Commander in Chief

V.F.W. NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE GOALS, 1967-68

The President's historic message outlining the Nation's responsibilities to veterans and the establishment of a Presidential Study Group to conduct a comprehensive study of compensation, pension and other veterans benefits, makes it possible to advance in giant strides toward the attainment of long-sought goals. Most hopefully these milestones will provide the basis for further assistance to those who have served in the Armed Forces and thereby rendered a special service to the Nation which entitles them or, if deceased, their survivors to special consideration.

Our course of action during the coming year—

To broaden and improve existing programs.

To win acceptance of new veterans concepts.

Creation of a standing Senate Veterans Affairs Committee.

Compensation

The compensation program for service connected death and disability for all veterans or their dependents must be continuously revised to maintain an adequate standard of living, taking into consideration cost of living increases, loss of earnings growth capability and equitable adjustment of payments to widows or eligible dependents to sustain their rights through periods of changing status.

Specifically, the compensation programs must provide—

- (1) Compensation payments set well above the Government standards for other assistance programs.
- (2) An extra measure of compensation for disability due to combat or extra-hazardous service.
- (3) Automatic cost of living increases.
- (4) The vesting of permanent rights of widows
- (5) Special consideration for disability entitlement should be accorded all former prisoners of war.

Pension

The V.F.W. recognizes the principle of pensions for non-service connected disabled veterans in the conviction that they have made sacrifices in the national interest above and beyond that required of citizens who did not serve in the Armed Forces and that such military service performed by such veterans entitles them to financial aid.

Fairness requires substantial increases in income limitations to raise the program above the level of Government standards for other assistance programs, insurance against reduction or loss of pension from increases in Social Security and restructuring of both programs.

Specifically, the pension program requires—

- (1) \$600 to \$1,000 increases in income limitations.
- (2) Permanent protection against reduction or loss of pension from future social security and other retirement increases.
- (3) Restructuring of the pension programs by raising income limitations and pension payments with provision for minimum pension guarantee for those in lower income categories.

Veteran preference

Continued vigilance by V.F.W. to preserve veteran preference in employment.

GI bill

(1) The V.F.W. recommends that the rehabilitation assistance authorized for those who have served in the Armed Forces since January 31, 1955 be broadened to provide assistance commensurate with current economic conditions and provide one and one-half days education and training benefits for each day of military service.

(2) The widows and orphans of veterans who were killed or who were disabled in service should be eligible to receive career-oriented education training.

(3) The veterans GI loan program should be put on a permanent basis with provisions for restoring eligibility upon repayment of previous loans.

Cemeteries

The Executive Branch has run roughshod over the right of veterans to burial in a national cemetery. The Congress and the Administration have a moral responsibility to move ahead with a reasonable and equitable national cemetery program.

Specifically, resolution of the mounting crisis requires—

- (1) Transfer of jurisdiction over national cemeteries to the veterans affairs' committee in the House of Representatives.
- (2) A national cemetery system adequate to provide a national cemetery in every state.

Medical care

Medical care for veterans must be maintained at the finest and highest level possible.

Specifically, the V.A. medical program requires—

- (1) Upgrading of facilities and equipment.
- (2) Training, employment and retention of the finest medical and nursing personnel.

(3) Improve post-hospital care program by providing more nursing care facilities for elderly veterans and VA approved community care for psychiatric patients.

(4) All overseas veterans be entitled to hospitalization as a matter of right without further qualifications.

Senate Veterans Committee

The Senate has approved establishment of a committee on Veterans Affairs as a provision of a Legislative Reorganization Bill (S-355) now pending in the House. House opposition to features of the Bill other than the creation of a Senate Veterans Committee makes passage very doubtful. We believe it necessary, therefore, for the Senate to act independently to:

- (1) Create a standing committee on veterans affairs in the U.S. Senate.

V.F.W. NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS GOALS, 1967-68

Preamble

The V.F.W. believes that morally and strategically the United States has no choice but to take whatever military steps are necessary to achieve victory in South Vietnam. We believe, further that anything short of complete victory will destroy chances for ultimate peace and will undermine the security of the United States.

South Vietnam

- (1) Support whatever action is required to conclude the war with victory.
- (2) Oppose any form of truce, cease-fire, or coalition Government that could impair winning a full victory.
- (3) Oppose recognition of the so-called National Liberation Front.
- (4) Blockade North Vietnam.

Military personnel

- (1) Increase military pay, allowances, and retirement benefits.
- (2) Provide Government or commercial transportation to home for military personnel on leave prior to and upon return from overseas duty, and those on convalescent and emergency leave.
- (3) Support legislation for pay-and-a-half for military personnel while voluntarily serving in Vietnam beyond minimum required tour of duty.
- (4) Free mail for military personnel overseas or hospitalized.

Military policy

- (1) Support full-scale anti-missile defense system for U.S.
- (2) Oppose merger of and retain a strong National Guard and Reserve.
- (3) Support programs for U.S. supremacy in space and in oceanography.
- (4) Support a U.S. built enlarged and modern merchant marine as a vital element of defense.

Foreign policy

- (1) Retain full U.S. control of Okinawa.
- (2) Oppose ratification of proposed Panama Canal treaties.
- (3) Urge U.S. withdrawal from U.N. if Red China is admitted.
- (4) Retain full U.S. control of Guantanamo Bay.

VETERANS OF THE FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES, NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

DIGEST OF RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE 68TH NATIONAL CONVENTION, VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE U.S. AT NEW ORLEANS, LA., AUGUST 20-25, 1967

Americanism and Community Service.

National Security and Foreign Affairs.

Veterans Benefits and Rights Program:

- (a) Compensation.
- (b) Hospital, Medical and Domiciliary Care, and Facilities.
- (c) Pension.
- (d) National Cemeteries, Memorials and Burial Benefits.
- (e) Civil Service and Employment.
- (f) Readjustment Benefits—Education, Insurance and Loans.

Standing Senate Veterans Affairs Committee.
 Active Duty and Retired Military Benefits.
 Veterans Administration Affairs.
 Miscellaneous.

(NOTE.—Resolutions relating to V.F.W. internal affairs are not listed. Information on such resolutions may be obtained from the Adjutant General, Kansas City office.)

AMERICANISM AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

1. Provide Punishment for Willful Desecration of the Flag of the United States (Res. 22).
2. To cooperate with National Organizations to Promote Youth, Safety and Patriotic Programs (Res. 25).
3. Implementing the Enforcement of the Flag Code (Res. 195).
4. Deploing Un-American Activities and Conduct (Res. 196).
5. Solemn Observance of Memorial Day (Res. 198).
6. To Amend the Flag Code (Res. 200).
7. Military's Knowledge of Respect to Flag of the United States and its uses (Res. 203).
8. Proclaim "Operation Vietnam Week" (Res. 204).
9. Condemning Draft Dodgers and Flag Burners (Res. 206).
10. Punish Draft Dodgers (Res. 209).
11. Favoring Loyalty Oath (Res. 210).
12. Providing for Designating June 14 as a National Holiday (Res. 216).
11. Favoring Loyalty Oath (Res. 210).
13. Support of the Dirksen Prayer Amendment (Res. 217).
14. Providing for an Amendment to the United States Constitution to Uphold State School Laws (Res. 218).
15. Condemning Anti-American Demonstrations (Res. 222).
16. Correct U.S. Postal Manual Regarding U.S. Flag Code (Res. 223).
17. To Preserve American Heritage (Res. 224).
18. Continue V.F.W. Patriotic Programs (Res. 225).
19. Use of American Concepts in Combating Communism (Res. 226).
20. Complimenting J. Edgar Hoover (Res. 227).
21. Opposing All Forms of Trade, Commerce and Financial Assistance to Communist Controlled Nations at a Local Level (Res. 264).
22. Urge Respect for Law Officers (Res. 273).
23. Supporting Our Government at all Levels (Res. 275).
24. Protesting Certain Decisions of the Supreme Court (Res. 277).
25. Applications for Citizenship by Defectors (Res. 280).
26. Deny Further Citizenship to Those Who Surrender Citizenship to Avoid Service (Res. 281).
27. Condemn Sedition and Treason (Res. 305).

NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

1. Full Support for South Vietnam (Res. 14).
2. Support Armed Forces Joint Chiefs of Staff (Res. 15).
3. For a Strong National Defense, Adequate Army, Navy, Marine Corps, National Guard, Reserves, Merchant Marines, Manned Bombers, Atomic Weapons, Space Supremacy and ROTC Programs (Res. 16).
4. Oppose all Forms of Communism, Oppose World Government, Support U.S. Foreign Policy, Support Internal Security Act, Communist Control Act, Smith Act, House Un-American Activities Committee, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Oppose Aid to Communist Nations (Res. 17).
5. Resisting Communism and Assisting our Loyal Allies in Restoring Freedom, Support Captive Nations Week, Win in South Vietnam, Support NATO, Support Cuban Patriots, Oppose Trade with Communist Nations, U.S. Control of Okinawa, U.S. Control of Panama Canal, No appeasement in West Berlin, Indian Ocean Fleet, Oppose recognition of Red China and Red Cuba (Res. 20).
6. Resisting Admission of Red China to United Nations, or Aiding Red China (Res. 21).
7. Discontinue All Aid to Countries that Pursue a Policy Hostile to the United States (Res. 163).
8. For a Strong Civil Defense (Res. 165).
9. Strengthen Internal Security Act (Res. 168).

10. National Security Evaluation (Res. 169).
11. Support Selective Service Act (Res. 171).
12. Support U.S. Policy in Southeast Asia (Res. 172).
13. Condemning Unilateral Truce in Vietnam (Res. 173).
14. National Self Preservation (Res. 178).
15. Tactical Air Forces (Res. 179).
16. Strategic War Deterrent Force (Res. 180).
17. Military Mission in Space (Res. 181).
18. Reserve Forces Readiness (Res. 182).
19. Reserve Forces Readiness (Res. 182).
20. Chemical—Biological Warfare (Res. 183).
21. Army Counterinsurgency Activities (Res. 184).
22. To perpetuate the Honorable Traditions and Soldierly Qualities of the Service Academies (Res. 185).
23. Compulsory ROTC Programs in Land Grant Colleges and Universities receiving State or Federal Appropriations (Res. 187).
24. Opposing Territorial Concessions to Communism (Res. 188).
25. Control of Guantanamo Bay Naval Base (Res. 189).
26. Enforce Monroe Doctrine (Res. 190).
27. Support the Construction of Fallout Shelters (Res. 291).
28. Support Home Fallout Protection Survey (Res. 292).
29. Support Shelter Training in Schools (Res. 293).
30. Regret French Withdrawal from NATO (Res. 294).
31. Strong National Guard and Reserves (Res. 295).
32. Oppose Proposed Treaty with Panama (Res. 296).
33. Increase U.S. Power at Sea (Res. 297).
34. Punish U.S. Citizens Assisting North Vietnam (Res. 298).
35. Provide for Free Chinese Troops in Vietnam (Res. 299).
36. U.S. Supremacy in Space (Res. 302).
37. U.S. Supremacy in Oceanography (Res. 303).

VETERANS BENEFITS AND RIGHTS PROGRAMS COMPENSATION

1. Adjustment in Compensation Rates for Service Connected Disabled Veterans (Res. 5).
2. Veterans Administration Compensation Program, Omnibus—increase rates, other Provisions (Res. 41).
3. Dependency Indemnity Compensation for Widows—Increase rates (Res. 44).
4. Dependency Indemnity Compensation for Orphaned Children (Res. 45).
5. Increased Compensation Rates (Res. 51).
6. Increased Statutory Award for Arrested Tuberculosis (Res. 55).
7. Retroactive Payments of Compensation (Res. 81).
8. Higher Monetary Awards for Combat or Extra Hazardous Service Disabilities (Res. 85).
9. Exclusion of Commercial Insurance as a Computable Income Item in Relationship to Death Pension (Res. 86).
10. Dependent Parents—Death Benefits (Res. 87).
11. Payments for In-Service World War II Deaths (Res. 88).
12. Presumptive Period for Poliomyelitis (Res. 90).
13. Total Disability Payments for Hospitalized Veterans (Res. 94).
14. Unemployability Rating for Amputees (Res. 99).
15. Statutory Monthly Compensation Increase (Res. 102).
16. Increasing Below Knee Amputation Rates Minimum of 60% (Res. 103).
17. Statutory Monthly Compensation for Loss of Eye in Combination of Loss of Leg or Arm (Res. 105).
18. Include Lupus Erythematosus as a Chronic Disease (Res. 107).
19. Grant all Rights to Certain Veterans and Widows (Res. 110).
20. Service Connected Compensation Rated for 15 Years Shall Not Be Reduced (Res. 119).
21. Automobile Allowance—Loss of Use of Extremity (Res. 136).
22. Prisoner of War Benefits, Nervous Disorders (Res. 139).
23. Combat Service, Increase Compensation (Res. 140).
24. Psychosis, 3 Year Presumption (Res. 141).
25. Increased DIC Payments to Dependent Parents (Res. 148).
26. Extend Wartime Benefits to Those Serving in Korea (Res. 282).

HOSPITAL, MEDICAL AND DOMICILIARY CARE AND FACILITIES

1. Continue and Expand the VA Hospital System for Veterans (Res. 7).
2. VA Hospital—Phoenix (Res. 30).
3. Add Wing VA Hospital, Grand Junction, Colorado (Res. 42).
4. Addition to Denver Veterans Administration Hospital (Res. 50).
5. Protesting Lack of Psychiatric Hospital Beds in VA Hospital System in Connecticut (Res. 63).
6. Hospital for Daytona Beach, Florida (Res. 71).
7. New Veterans Administration Hospital, Albuquerque (Res. 104).
8. New Hospital Mountain Home, Tennessee (Res. 129).
9. Utilize Marine Public Health Hospital, Memphis, Tennessee (Res. 131).
10. Add Wing to Spokane VA Hospital (Res. 134).
11. Hospitalization for Families of WWII Veterans 30 Per Cent Disabled (Res. 138).
12. Wartime benefits to Those Serving in Korea (Res. 282).

PENSION

1. Veterans Administration Pension Program. Omnibus—Increase Rates, Income Limitation, Other Provisions (Res. 3).
2. Increased Benefits for Widows—Rates and Limitation (Res. 47).
3. Increase Income Limitation Under P.L. 86-211 (Res. 82).
4. Increase Income Limitation Under the Old Pension Law (Res. 83).
5. Right of Election of Benefits Under Pension Laws (Res. 84).
6. Unite for World War I Pension (Res. 108).
7. World War I Pension—Lifetime Pension \$40.00 Monthly (Res. 109).
8. Increase in Social Security Not Considered Income (Res. 111).
9. To change Veterans Administration Pension Regulations (Res. 116).
10. To Liberalize Veterans and Widows Pension Program (Res. 142).
11. President's Veterans Pension Act—Eliminating Annuities as Income (Res. 144).
12. Support World War I Veterans Pensions (Res. 145).
13. Extend Wartime Benefits to Those Still Serving in Korea (Res. 282).

NATIONAL CEMETERIES, MEMORIALS AND BURIAL BENEFITS

1. Require Defense Department to Provide National Cemeteries Authorized by Congress (Res. 12).
2. End Discrimination at Arlington National Cemetery (Res. 13).
3. Memorial Grave Markers for Veterans of the Armed Forces (Res. 118).
4. Jurisdiction over National Cemetery Policies (Res. 151).
5. Providing a National Cemetery in Every State (Res. 152).
6. Opposing Monument to Enemy War Dead (Res. 274).
7. Eternal Light for Graves of Astronauts (Res. 279).
8. Discontinue Veterans Day Participation in Arlington National Cemetery (Res. 285).

CIVIL SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT

1. Veterans Federal Civil Service, Employment and Re-Employment Rights Omnibus—Career Status, Retirement, Federal Employees Compensation (Res. 1).
2. Legislation to Preserve and Extend Veterans Preference in All Agencies (Res. 9).
3. Continue Protective Surveillance of Veterans Preference (Res. 73).
4. Protect Veterans Preference—Civil Service (Res. 96).
5. Suggested Changes in the Operation of the Veterans Employment Service (Res. 125).
6. Preference to Veterans in Referral for Training (Res. 147).
7. Amend P.L. 89-690 to Include "Counseling and Placement Assistance" (Res. 154).
8. Promote National and Statewide Employment for the Handicapped (Res. 155).
9. Employment of Older Workers (Res. 156).
10. Support Legislation to Amend Re-Employment Rights (Res. 157).
11. Support the Office of Veterans Re-Employment Rights (Res. 158).
12. Increase Employment Service Positions (Res. 159).
13. Adequate Funds for Veterans Employment Service (Res. 160).

14. Oppose Abuse of Veterans Preference through Human Resources Development Program (Res. 235).
15. Wartime Benefits to Those Serving in Korea (Res. 282).

READJUSTMENT BENEFITS

1. To Broaden Cold War "GI" Education (Res. 8).
2. Amend the Cold War GI Bill—Training and Retraining (Res. 29).
3. Vocational Rehabilitation and Education—Education for Widows, Increase Allowances (Res. 58).
4. Educational Assistance to Children of Disabled Veterans Rated at 60% or Above (Res. 59).
5. Waive Health Requirement, Total Disability Income Provision (Res. 60).
6. To Fill Gap in Insurance Coverage for Reservists (Res. 80).
7. Make Direct Loans Available in Certain Areas (Res. 91).
8. Total Disability Waiver Insurance (Res. 101).
9. Grant All Readjustment Rights to Certain Veterans and Widows (Res. 110).
10. On the Job Training for Vietnam Veterans (Res. 122).
11. Extend GI Loan Program (Res. 135).
12. Extend Wartime Benefits to Certain Korean Veterans (Res. 282).
13. Educational Benefits to Veterans Widows (Res. 304).

TO CREATE A STANDING COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE

Support S. 355—Legislative Reorganization Bill (Res. 153).

ACTIVE DUTY AND RETIRED MILITARY BENEFITS

1. Armed Forces Claims and Retirement, Omnibus—Equalization of Pay, Military Justice, Discharge and Correction Boards (Res. 11).
2. Air Travel of U.S. Servicemen (Res. 18).
3. Increased Benefits for Armed Forces Personnel (Res. 19).
4. Correct Inequities—Career Compensation Act (Res. 27).
5. Amend P.L. 351 (81st Congress) to Make the Career Compensation Act Retroactive (Res. 34).
6. Commissary Privilege Card for Widows (Res. 46).
7. Increase Insurance Benefit to \$15,000 (Res. 70).
8. Favoring Payment of Month's Wages to Widows of Men Killed in Vietnam (Res. 76).
9. Proper Counsel to Separated Veterans (Res. 115).
10. Civilian Medical Care for Dependent Parents of Retired Military Personnel (Res. 130).
11. Protest Cancellation of Auto Insurance Policies of Inductees (Res. 132).
12. Retired Pay Credit for Inactive Enlisted Reserve Service (Res. 150).
13. Adequate Military Housing (Res. 191).
14. Commissary Privileges Foreign Countries for Retired Military Personnel (Res. 192).
15. Misuse of Personal Effects of American Servicemen (Res. 256).
16. Presentation of Congressional Medal of Honor by the President (Res. 258).
17. Reduce Postal Rates to Servicemen Overseas (Res. 259).
18. Campaign Medals for Korea and Other Areas (Res. 271).
19. Bonus for Extension of Duty in Vietnam (Res. 300).
20. Medical Service for Military Retirees (Res. 301).

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION AFFAIRS

1. Veterans Administration, General—Readjustment Benefit, Insurance, Education (Res. 4).
2. Veterans Administration Department of Medicine and Surgery Program, Omnibus—Increase Beds, Expand Out-Patient Treatment, Eliminate Form 10-P-10, Extend Six month Limitation in Nursing Homes (Res. 6).
3. To Establish a Department of Veterans Affairs (Res. 10).
4. VA Procedures in Alaska—Medical, Loan Programs, Monetary Differential (Res. 28).
5. Interpretation of Term "Willful Misconduct" as Related to Certain Diseases (Res. 31).

6. Increase Travel Expense for Veterans Reporting for Examination or Hospitalization (Res. 36).
7. VA Rating Procedure—Correct Inequities (Res. 39).
8. Opposing Use of VA Hospitals for Non-Veterans (Res. 49).
9. Veterans Administration Department of Medicine and Surgery Program, Omnibus—Provide Priority for Combat Veterans, Provide Eligibility for Campaign Service, Contract Burial (Res. 54).
10. Protesting Loss of Land Under the Jurisdiction of the VA at VA Hospital in Connecticut (Res. 62).
11. Opposing Denial of Organization Credit to Hospital Volunteers (Res. 72).
12. Out-Patient Treatment for Service Connected Veterans (Res. 89).
13. Prisoners of War Presumption of Certain Diseases (Res. 98).
14. Maintain and Strengthen Benefits for Veterans (Res. 143).

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Additional Income Allowances Certain Senior Citizens (Res. 67).
2. Opposing Judicial Reviews of Veterans Appeals (Res. 106).
3. Providing for Time Off Job for Members of a Duly Organized Honor Guard (Res. 127).
4. Recognition and Support to the U.S.A. National Council of the Royal Canadian Legion (Res. 161).
5. Support Shelter Program in Construction of Post Homes (Res. 170).
6. Veterans Organizations on Military Installations (Res. 193).
7. Military Draft Status Classification George Hamilton (Res. 211).
8. Assist in War on Poverty—Economic Opportunity Act (Res. 237).
9. Honoring the Memory of Adm. Leland P. Lovette (Res. 246).
10. Modify Rules for Officers Questioning Suspects (Res. 260).
11. To oppose the Sale of Communist-Made Products in the U.S. (Res. 261).
12. Commemorative Stamp for Gen. MacArthur (Res. 262).
14. Move U.S. Frigate "Constellation" to Permanent Berth (Res. 263).
14. Urge Use of Frozen Japanese Assets (Res. 266).
15. Endorse H.R. 316—Safety Measures, Refrigerators (Res. 268).
16. Opposing Dodd Bill—Restriction of Fire Arms (Res. 272).
17. Opposing Purchase from Foreign Firms, Etc. (Res. 286).

Mr. SCERRA. Thank you, sir.

In addition, to augment those recommendations, I should like to stress a few remaining consideration:

The second message on veterans which President Johnson sent to Congress on January 30 was received with great enthusiasm by our members. We were pleased to note that this message recommended more varied assistance to Vietnam veterans than that enjoyed by the veterans of World War II and Korea. It did not, however, provide for immediate financial assistance upon termination of military service.

We of the Veterans of Foreign Wars strongly favor the inclusion of mustering-out pay, based upon the length of service and overseas duty. This was a benefit enjoyed by the veterans of previous wars, and one which provide extremely helpful upon the initial return to civilian life.

We are hopeful that a third message on veterans will be forthcoming from the President, when he has received the recommendations of his Advisory Commission, through the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs.

You will note that our priority legislative program contains seven basic points: Compensation, pension, veteran preference, GI bill, national cemeteries, medical care, and a Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee comparable, we hope, in its dedication and service to both the veteran and the Nation, to this great committee. [Applause.]

Some of these have already been considered by the President in his message on veterans. Others, I feel certain, are being considered by the Veterans' Advisory Commission.

One program which was not mentioned by the President is compensation for the service-connected disabled, and the dependents of service-connected deceased. Although increases have been granted, the compensation program has not kept pace with the ever-mounting costs of living in the American economy during the past decade. The VFW continues its support for the proposition that this program deserves the highest priority of favorable consideration. We believe that such compensation payments should be well above Government standards for other assistance programs. We believe also that payments for disability should reflect an extra measure of compensation for combat or extra-hazardous service.

We do, however, especially commend your Subcommittee on Compensation and Pensions for the many improvements and the cost-of-living pension increase which it recommended, and which was approved by your full committee, and adopted last year.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Commander, I might tell you that H.R. 12555 passed the Senate without amendment yesterday.

Mr. SCERRA. Thank you. I was just going to comment on that bill. [Applause.]

Again, in keeping with your commitment to prevent disproportionate losses in pension payments because of social security and other income increases, your Pension Subcommittee has recommended a bill, H.R. 12555, to which you just referred, which will restructure the pension program. This bill should provide a solution to the recurring problems created for the veteran by a few dollars increase in retirement pay. We believe this bill represents a giant stride in the right direction.

The VFW has been the leader for many years in the campaign to effect the continuation and expansion of our national cemetery system. We vigorously opposed the policy which closed five national cemeteries and produced the illegal restrictive regulation which now bars the burial of most veterans at Arlington.

We were happy to note that the President took the initial step essential to the reversal of this policy in his message to Congress on January 30, when he said:

Every veteran who wants it—those who risked their lives at Belleau Wood, Iwo Jima, and the DMZ—should have the right to burial in a National Cemetery situated reasonably close to his home. I have asked the Administrator of Veterans Affairs to make certain that the recommendation of the Commission include proposals to assure this right . . . [Applause.]

The VFW is gratefully aware, Mr. Chairman, of the important contribution you have made in this area by your willingness to assume jurisdiction of legislation dealing with national cemeteries. It was your leadership which sparked the reversal of the closure policy, when you went before the Rules Committee last year and convinced them that such legislation is primarily a veterans matter within the province of your own committee. We now look forward with abiding faith that our own mandate of a national cemetery in every State will one day be achieved. [Applause.]

Veterans preference has always been a matter of paramount concern to the Veterans of Foreign Wars. It is one of the most precious rights

of the returning veteran. We are happy to note that now the President has expanded that concept, which heretofore has often been frustrated by the attitudes of certain individuals in high places. Veterans who left high school to join the Armed Forces will be given greater assistance than ever before, provided they demonstrate a desire to improve themselves by attending school on a part-time basis under the GI bill.

Time lost can never be regained, but the programs approved by Congress will go a long way toward returning veterans to civilian life. Our organization rose to challenge the closing of 32 VA facilities in 1965. Congress having shared our concern, 17 of those facilities are still serving the veterans of this Nation.

Despite the continuing increase in the number of veterans, there nevertheless has been a reduction in the number treated on a daily basis in our VA hospitals. There are many reasons for this. There is one, however, with which the VFW particularly takes issue and I refer to the "economic means test," which is a strong deterrent to many veterans who actually need the services of these hospitals.

A year ago the Congress made provision for the use of VA hospitals on a beds-available basis by retired military personnel. These veterans are normally in far better economic circumstances than many civilian soldier veterans. They are not required to meet the "economic means test" nor should they be required to do so. However, the same principle should apply to the civilian veteran, who enjoys none of the benefits of professional military tenure. He also should be freed from the stigma and disability of this test.

We are also alarmed at the increasing evidence that medical care for veterans is not keeping pace with the high standards of university-type hospitals. The VFW recognizes this committee as the guardian of the medical program for veterans, and will be happy to join with it in any suggested effort to upgrade the medical program of the Veterans' Administration, including facilities, equipment, and the appropriation of adequate funds to recruit and retain essential medical personnel.

These, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, are a few of our legislative goals for the current year. May I again express our sincere gratitude and deep appreciation for this opportunity to appear before you. Many of us will be visiting with you individually throughout the day.

And may we hope to return your hospitality in some small measure by playing host to each of you at our annual congressional banquet at the Sheraton-Park Hotel tonight. All Members of the Congress are cordially invited. The dinner will begin promptly at 7, with a somewhat more relaxing interlude commencing at 6. [Laughter.]

Thank you so much. [Standing ovation.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Thank you, Commander.

Mr. Commander, I would like to tell you and tell this whole group that I have been around Congress for a long time and I think I know the committees of Congress fairly well. I think that I have the finest committee that there could possibly be in the Congress of the United States. [Standing ovation.]

There has never been a Republican-Democratic partisanship in this committee. Everything that we do in this committee is done on the basis of being dedicated to the good of veterans. You find a lot of com-

mittees that go to the floor with bills they fight over and argue among themselves. In nearly all cases we sit in this committee room and work out our differences on the basis of what our members think is best for veterans and the country. Bills that go to the floor in most cases are reported unanimously, and I don't believe any other committee could say that, including that of our good friend, Ted Dulski, here who is chairman of the Post Office and Civil Service Committee.

Another thing that I think speaks well for our committee is that most bills we report and which go to the Senate come back without amendment, or in most cases where we do disagree and there is an amendment, it is a case where the Senate just doesn't know what it's talking about. [Laughter and applause.]

Mr. Haley says I'll regret that, and maybe I will. I don't care. [Laughter.]

I would like to recognize the members of my committee for any comments or questions they might want to ask.

Mr. Haley of Florida.

MR. HALEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, first I want to apologize to you. When you visited my great State and my congressional district you invited me to attend one of the affairs that you had in our Sunshine State of Florida, and by the way, it is about 70° down there this morning. [Laughter.]

But like a lot of people, even those from the State of Florida—the old flue bug, I got it from up here somewhere. On the advice of my doctor, I was laid up, but I do want to apologize to you, Mr. Commander, because I understand that you had a very fine meeting and made quite an impression, of course, in my congressional district.

I also want to say, Mr. Commander, that you have submitted a program that is basically what our great organization, the VFW, stands for—what we are interested in and what we have been fighting for for many years.

I also would like to say to you and to the organization that you should be very proud of these 54 young American citizens that you are training to follow in your footsteps. I might say to them—and I don't see a beatnik among them, they are good, clean people. [Applause.] My advice to you young people is this: After all, in just a few years you, some of you, will be sitting in these chairs directing, you might say, the affairs of your Nation. Find out all you can about this great Government of yours and let me assure you, regardless of what some of the hawks and doves and the other kind of birds that we have say [laughter] you still have the finest Government in the world. [Applause.]

Let no one tell you different from that. You also are sponsored by one of the great organizations of this Nation [applause], men who have defended the basic things that in a short space of time, as far as nations have gone, made up the most powerful and the wealthiest Nation on the face of this earth.

Don't lose any of this. Look back and accept guidance and counsel from members of this fine organization. They know the horrors of war, they oppose the wars, yet sometimes it is necessary, and these men have carried the battle flag of this Nation throughout the farflung battlefields of the world victoriously.

Let us always look forward to the American soldier returning home not only safely, as some of them will not, but victorious. Because we must defend the freedoms for not only the people of this Nation, but we must defend the freedoms of the free peoples of the world. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. That was a nice speech, Jim.

Mr. HALEY. I hadn't finished.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Excuse me.

Mr. HALEY. Don't cut me off now. [Laughter.]

And, Mr. Commander, to you and your organization and to the men who follow you in this high office. I say to the VFW: Continue what you have been doing in the past. Come to us individually or as a committee, because I think at this particular time more than at any time in the history of our Nation, we need, we beg, we want the advice of the counsel and the guidance of such fine American citizens.

Thank you very much. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Walter Baring?

Mr. BARING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, I haven't been here as long as my chairman, but for 16 years now I have looked forward to this day every year when we meet with our veterans' groups.

Last year I had the distinct honor of introducing the commander, Leslie Fry, who comes from my hometown, and it was a real honor, and I want to say that is is hard to follow Jim Haley.

Jim and I think alike and vote alike and everything else, so it is hard for me to make any remarks this morning. Last week I told the Legion practically the same things that you did in your wonderful statement today, on patriotism and the youth of our country, and when I looked at this group of 54 young people here today, I am very proud, believe it, as a former schoolteacher myself. I look to the youth of today as our hope of tomorrow and believe it, folks, we have our eyes on you and your contest night will show how you patriotically love your country.

We think this is a great program, Girls State and Boys State programs, as well as the Voice of Democracy. These things count, instead of this little group—and it is a dangerous group—that use the marijuana and junk and pot and LSD and the other people who are trying to tear us down. You are the examples that go forward and show the better side of life, and we are very proud of you.

To the veterans in general, you have a big job across the country, each and every one of you in your own individual way, but I want to say that this is a happy day in my life to see Americans brought together like this, all of one mind, who will go out and carry our program forward in the way we wish it.

Mr. Commander, your speech was excellent and I certainly appreciate it. I couldn't add anything to it. You included everything.

Thank you. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Everett, of Tennessee.

Mr. EVERETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to concur in what has been said by our distinguished colleagues, and what will be said by other members of the committee. I assure you of my fullest cooperation in working on all your programs.

I thank you. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. This former national commander doesn't really deserve to be recognized, but I think the committee would agree with me that we should recognize him. Dick Roudebush. [Applause.]

Mr. ROUDEBUSH. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I first want to express my gratitude to the chairman and my good friend, Olin Teague of Texas, for allowing me to join with the Veterans' Affairs Committee, of which I am not a member, in listening to this testimony today.

I will say to my commander-in-chief I have listened very carefully and diligently to his testimony and I find nothing with which I do not agree. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Dulski, of New York, and Mr. Commander, that's where your veteran preference problem lies—Mr. Dulski's problem.

Mr. DULSKI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, my colleagues, Commander, members of the VFW:

I am very proud to be a member of this committee and, as Mr. Teague says, that this committee is a nonpartisan group, we try to work in the same way in the Post Office and Civil Service. We have disagreements but we have always disagreed agreeably. May I add this, as Mr. Baring has said, it is very difficult to follow the great statesmanship of our good colleague on the committee, Congressman Haley, who brought out very well everything that I had in mind to say.

The only thing I may add is this: First, that I wholeheartedly support the entire program of your committee, and second, I want to commend you on the great dedication of your statement to patriotism which is so essential in this troublesome world. Also, I want to congratulate the young men and women who are here—dedicated as they are in the footsteps of your program.

Again, Commander, it is a privilege and honor to be present here with you and to listen to your testimony.

Thank you very much. [Applause.]

Now if I may be excused, I have a meeting with the Committee on Rules at 11 o'clock, along with Congressman Hanley who serves on my committee, to bring forth the House Joint Resolution 1052, which you so wholeheartedly support. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Jim, since you have to leave, let me recognize you next.

Congressman Jim Hanley, of New York.

Mr. HANLEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Commander.

I, too, want to commend you on your straightforward, your excellent statement this morning, and I can only echo the remarks of those who have preceded me. It was a great statement. I personally completely endorse your legislative objectives.

I take this opportunity to commend your organization on the consistent membership growth which is rather positive evidence of the excellent administration you, the officers, have provided the VFW. I further want to commend all of the participants in the oratorical contest, the Voice of America. I can only say to all of you that we have some great citizens in the making.

I personally want to express my gratitude to the VFW for its consistent support of this Government in our involvement in Southeast

Asia. Personally, I am somewhat unhappy about what is going on over on the other side in the Senate yesterday and today with respect to the interrogation—[applause].

Thank you very much.

With respect to the interrogation of our truly eloquent, loyal, and dedicated Secretary of State, and I say that should he choose to leave the service of this Government, it would indeed be a sorry day for the United States of America. [Applause.]

Again I conclude with an expression of gratitude for your attendance here this morning and the fine statement you have made. Thank you. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Jim, I might tell you that I understood the VFW this morning has sent a telegram to the Secretary of State expressing the support of the VFW of America of his position. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Saylor of Pennsylvania.

Mr. SAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Commander, first, I have been handed a message that Bill Ayres had another meeting, but he says any member of the VFW that wants to find his views—will find his remarks on page E-1722 of March 11's Congressional Record in which he placed in the Congressional Record your VFW legislative goals for this year. [Applause.]

Mr. SAYLOR. Now, Commander, I would like to describe our World War I veteran on this committee, Jim Haley. You heard him say he was worried about the soldiers coming back.

Jim is such an oldtimer around here, he doesn't know we have the sailors that take them over and bring them back. [Laughter and applause.]

He doesn't know that the Marines do all the fighting. [Applause.]

He doesn't know we've got the Air Force all over there, he doesn't know that we have the Coast Guard and the Seabees—these are all branches that came into the service after Jim got out. [Laughter.]

Now, Commander, I was delighted with the testimony that you presented to us and I would like to commend you because whether the rest of the members of this committee realize it or not, today, as of the 12th of March, 1968, you have more members in our organization than at any other time and I hope that you will be able to complete your goal.

I just want to remind some of you folks that are out in the audience that you have a great organization, but if it were not for Pennsylvania, I don't know where you would be. [Applause.]

As of January 1, 1968, Pennsylvania had 113,443 members—the closest runnerup was that outfit out in Illinois which had 72,000; New York, 64,000; Minnesota, 52,000; and Ohio, 48,000.

I didn't even find Massachusetts among the first five. [Laughter and applause.]

Commander, if these Members of Congress and the members of your organization like you as much as their remarks and the applause would indicate, you better tell them I know you have more than 113,000 veterans up in Massachusetts, and tell them to get out and belong to the Veterans of Foreign Wars and sign up other members. [Applause.]

I'm delighted to hear your comments in regard to hospital beds and hospital care. Now, your organization was one of those which sup-

ported legislation which this committee reported and the 89th Congress passed, which told the President we wanted 125,000 beds.

Well, some of the members of this committee dig a little bit and we are not taken in by all of the nice messages that we get from the White House; we follow the words of old Al Smith, we look at the record. And lo and behold, I looked at the record and I have discovered that the Veterans' Administration has closed a good many beds and we don't have 125,000 beds. We've only got about 113,000 beds with 26 million veterans in this country.

Now, this is something that I have called to the attention of your national officers and Smoky Stover has worked very closely with me in trying to get an answer out of the Veterans' Administration as to why they are not operating 125,000 beds.

We have to operate 125,000 beds, because every day we are having more and more men coming back from Vietnam that are hospital cases. They are now in Bethesda, Walter Reed, and some of the other military hospitals. But they are going to be in veterans hospitals and we need a minimum of 125,000 beds and I sure hope that our organization will go forward and insist that the Veterans' Administration operate 125,000 beds 365 days of the year. [Applause.]

You know, Commander, a veteran is the only person I know of that can't get to court with his case. He must live with the fact that the Veterans' Administration is the prosecutor, the defender, and the judge. They decide whether or not you get anything and how much you get. I am one of those that believe that even though we have done a good job and even though we have improved the Board of Veterans' Appeals, we should have a Court of Veterans' Appeals, and I plead with you as the national commander and the members who are here with you to see that the next national convention insists that the Federal Government establish a Court of Veterans' Appeals so that veterans can get into court and not have to be dependent entirely upon the Veterans' Administration.

There are men who are being denied their rights merely because the Veterans' Administration is the sole judge and jury. It is sort of a pet project of mine and I want to see it established. I can tell you this, some of the past national commanders sent me a note up here and said:

Are you going to needle the present Commander the same way you did us?

I say to them:

I don't needle you, I just remind you there are a few things beyond your program that still ought to be done, because we are all interested in taking care of the veteran, his widow, his children.

Commander, I commend you on your statement. I wish you well and I think for the record you ought to have explained that hour before the dinner. You have 50-some young children here, and I don't think they knew what you were talking about. They don't know or understand your whole message.

Maybe you ought to tell them what we do out there before dinner. [Laughter and applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE OF TEXAS. Congressman Charles Teague of California.

Mr. TEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA. My cousin Olin usually says we get mixed up and people get us mixed up. That is true. The other morning I arrived at my office and the FBI was calling. [Laughter.]

I said, "What have I done now?" They said, "Well, we recovered your stolen car." I just left it in the garage 5 minutes before, so I thought that was pretty fast work. It turned out it was Olin's car. Even the FBI can't keep us straight.

I first would like to certainly associate myself with all remarks previously made by my colleagues, and then unless I am getting so old and deaf that I didn't hear properly, it seems to me that by an oversight our good friend, former commander in chief and present poet laureate, Byron Gentry of California was not introduced.

I would like to do so. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of California. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Kornegay.

Mr. Kornegay has announced he will not be a candidate for reelection this year and I would like to tell all of you that Horace Kornegay has been a tower of strength to me and a real friend of the veterans' programs.

Horace?

Mr. KORNEGAY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, I would like to join with my colleagues here this morning and commend you for a very fine statement. I think that your statement on patriotism, on determination, on Americanism, certainly would win you a first-class place in most any contest that I know of.

We are certainly proud of you, proud of the VFW and the record you have made and the influence you have in this Nation.

I would like to also pay tribute to my good friend, or our good friend, who does a tremendous job here in Washington for you, Mr. Francis Stover. I don't know of any national [applause]—I don't know of any national legislative man that is held in any higher regard or who is more welcome in any congressional office than "Smokey" Stover. It is always a pleasure to see him around.

I want to also comment on the fact that you have within the framework of your activities one of the finest programs that I know of, and that is the "Voice of Democracy Contest."

I don't ever go to any meetings here in Washington that I go with such great anticipation, with quite the degree of pride and quite the expectation, as I do the annual meeting of the VFW, to hear these wonderful boys and girls who come from every State and many foreign lands; who speak for democracy.

Certainly you are sowing seeds for the good and seeds that will reap a bountiful harvest, in my opinion, for this Nation.

I, of course, feel this morning, inasmuch as this is the last time that I will have the privilege to sit here and to hear the national commander from the VFW—you are about the last major veterans' group to come before us this year—it is with some degree of sadness that I experience this occasion. But at the same time, Mr. Commander, I feel a great deal of pride that I have for the last 8 years had the privilege of serving on this great committee, and I would like to echo the sentiments expressed by Chairman Teague. There is no finer group in this Congress, nor any group that is any more dedicated to America to our principles and to yours, than those on this committee who have fought the battles for democracy and for freedom down through the years.

So, as I leave the Congress I do leave feeling that it has been a privilege for me to have had a small part, and it has been a relatively

small part, because when you serve with such great men as Olin Teague and the others on this committee, it can only be a small part, but I will always remember it and look back on these 8 years as a time when I certainly tried and hope I did make some small contribution to the welfare of the heroes of this country and to this country itself.

So I congratulate you and the VFW and wish for your continued success and encourage you to carry higher the banner of freedom and courage and integrity that you are doing so well, as your organization has done through the years.

Thank you very much. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Congressman Halpern of New York.

Mr. HALPERN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am always thrilled by these occasions, the most welcome appearance of the VFW national commander in chief before this committee, and today even outshines all the others. I am thrilled and I am awed by what I have heard and seen this morning.

Your presentation, Mr. Commander in Chief, was truly outstanding. Your program is excellent. It is fair, it is reasonable, it is equitable, it benefits not only the veteran but all America.

I agree 100 percent with all of the Veterans of Foreign Wars legislative goals and I am mightily pleased to be a sponsor of many of your recommendations, and I want to say here and now that it has been a real pleasure to work with your national legislative staff, Mr. National Commander, Francis Stover and his staff. Each of his staff has been most cooperative and the most knowledgeable fellows I have ever worked with.

While I have this opportunity, Mr. Commander in Chief, I want to pay a tribute, I want to extend my heartiest compliments to the New York State Department of the Veterans of Foreign Wars; the Empire State has truly the most outstanding department commanders and leaders I have ever observed, many of whom are in this day, including the present department commander. What wonderful fellows they are.

And I also want to welcome the fine delegation here today from my own county of Queens. Our county commander is here and so are many of the other officers and workers in the ranks of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I am sure that the leaders of the Veterans of Foreign Wars are aware of the great job being done by the Queens County Council, the job they are doing to fulfill all the concepts and the objectives of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, as they served in foreign lands to preserve our way of life, so they serve now in the home community to preserve that way of life to which all of you are so dedicated.

That's what I love about the VFW—not only do you fight for better legislation for the veteran, but through your community service programs, through your youth programs, and other activities you help make this a better America and I congratulate you, Mr. National Commander, having come through the ranks to reach the exalted role of commander in chief and I compliment your program and I salute all the patriotic Americans that comprise all of your organizations; enjoy your visit and I will see you all tonight an hour before your dinner. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Congressman Duncan of Tennessee.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Commander in Chief. I do want to welcome you to this committee. I'm sorry that I was late. I and some of my other colleagues had to go to the White House for a bill-signing ceremony. I have glanced briefly at your statement and I am sorry I couldn't hear you present it in person, but the seven points you outline are most worthy. I have always found that the requests of the Veterans of Foreign Wars have been very modest and I can always support your program.

I also wish to compliment you upon the caliber of people that you have working in your Washington office—"Smoky" Stover and Cooper Holt are among the finest people that we have worked with on veterans' affairs. I want to compliment you and thank you again for presenting this program to us today. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Congressman Kupferman of New York.

Mr. KUPFERMAN. Mr. Commander in Chief, I notice you had the snow today to prove you were not fair weather soldiers. I had a conversation with Senator Ed Brooke and told him I was not a hawk or a dove or an owl. I want to assure you and your comrades that opposition to the conduct of the war does not at all mean opposition to the Armed Forces or to the veterans of our country and I want to assure you sometimes I fight with my wife, but I still love her.

I believe that the veterans of this country are entitled to all that we can do for them and I'm happy to be here with the Veterans of Foreign Wars today and to assure you I will do what I can in the best interest of your organization and our country.

Thank you. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Congressman Scott, of Virginia.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thought you were going to call on my friend from Arkansas first and I was going to comment about being last in the hierarchy of the committee and not being able to add to what had been said by the other members.

I do join with the statements that have been made. I would like particularly to commend you on your youth program because I'm sure that we would all agree that the future of our country does rest with our young people and your Voice of Democracy program is something that I would hope you would endeavor to expand and to maintain in the future as a part of your program.

Certainly we see the increase in crime in our country, we see some of the civil disorders, and I think all of us working together should do what we can to minimize and to eliminate this sort of thing. It is nice to be with you today. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Congressman Hammerschmidt of Arkansas.

Mr. HAMMERSCHMIDT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Commander Scerra, I apologize for not being here for your testimony. I assure you I will read it carefully and go over it. I'm sure if it's like the testimony you have brought to this committee in the past, that I will support it. I am sure it is.

I want to say it is a real pleasure always to work with Mr. Holt and Mr. Stover here. There is not much that I can add. I am sure that all my colleagues have spoken and I, like Mr. Duncan and Mr. Dorn and perhaps others, had to be down at the White House this

morning. Otherwise, I am sure none of us would have missed your statement.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. [Applause.]

Mr. SAYLOR. I wanted to tell my friend from New York I heard of a new bird, speaking of "hawks", "doves", "owls". Last night I heard about one that's called the "chicken hawk". He's the one that says, "I'm in favor of continuing the war, but I want someone else to do the fighting." [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Commander, I would like to recognize Mr. Dorn of South Carolina.

Mr. DORN. Mr. Commander, I have had a moment here to glance through your statement to the committee. It is an excellent statement and I would like to mention this to you in the presence of the distinguished members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and of the young people gathered here.

Everywhere I have been in the last 6 weeks people have asked me, "Why Vietnam?" And I have always used as an illustration the Veterans of Foreign Wars, you men who went overseas and kept the tide of war from the United States.

Bombs have fallen on every single major power in the world—on China, Japan, France, Italy, Germany, Russia and England. The only major nation in the world today where bombs haven't fallen on the civilian population is the United States of America and it's due to you men who went overseas and kept this tide of war from reaching the civilian population and women and children of this country, and this is why we are in South Vietnam.

Thank you. [Applause.]

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Commander, I would like to take about a minute and give you a little status report on our legislative situation in the committee.

Before I do that, I would like to also compliment your staff, Cooper Holt and Francis Stover, with whom I deal most of the time. They come to our offices, they know everything we are doing and they know the problems we have, and we do have problems in passing veterans' legislation.

I would also like to say I have the best staff in Congress and I would like for my committee staff to stand up. [Applause.]

Again, there is no politics in our staff. I am not sure, but I think some of them were appointed by Mrs. Rogers when she was chairman, and I don't know who else. But at the time I took over the committee, we did not change staffs. We did not fire anyone.

There has been some staff turnover over the years since I became chairman, but I'm sure Pat Patterson was one of Mrs. Roger's appointees; I am sure George Turner was appointed by Mrs. Rogers. There has been no politics there either, Mr. Commander. It has been a case of trying to do what's best for our veterans programs.

Something that has happened in the last year you may be interested in has been the establishing of V.A. contact offices in Vietnam. We have a number. The Administrator of Veterans' Affairs and I made a couple of trips over there in the interest of these contact offices and at first the military were rather reluctant and rather cool to the idea. Now, more requests are coming in to establish more contact offices.

As many of you, I am sure, know, we prepared a new brochure, a card that can be mailed in to the V.A. asking for information and there is no question that this business of giving the boys a chance to know about the GI bill and to think about it while they are over there, while they do have some time to think, is having a tremendous effect on what happens under the GI bill.

I wonder, Mr. Commander, if the VFW has considered an honorary membership for men returning from Vietnam? It seems to me that would be a very good program, if a boy had an opportunity to go to your meetings. I think the reason most men who come back don't join veterans organizations is that they don't have a good conception of what goes on. So I hope that maybe you would consider an honorary membership for these men when they come back. I think they would continue to be members of the VFW. Have you considered that at all?

Mr. SCERRA. We have considered it, Mr. Chairman. It is under consideration at this time.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Right.

As far as legislation is concerned—

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, may I elaborate on that just a bit?

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Yes, sir.

Mr. HOLT. We have formulated a policy which has been given to the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs for his approval which would carry the furnishing of the listing of the Vietnam returnees down to the local community where we want to welcome these boys home. All it lacks now is the definite approval of our commander in chief, which I know he will give and we are personally going to take this listing down to the local, community level. There VFW members will contact these boys personally, thank them for the job they have done and welcome them back into the community where they belong.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Thank you.

Tomorrow our committee will meet on a housing bill which is rather far reaching and which we hope will rejuvenate and start a veterans housing program going again.

As you know, and I am sure most of you do know, we have been waiting for a report from the President's Veterans Advisory Commission. We have tentatively scheduled a hearing for March 19, and I would hope that that commission will come in here with a program that can be enacted, and that they will work with us and not recommend the world with a fence around it, when they know we cannot enact but a small part of what they recommend.

I would hope they come in here with a priority list, with a cost analysis of what the program's costs are, and I hope it will be of some help our committee in trying to resolve problems. We know the problems, the answers are what are hard to come by.

I think, Mr. Commander, that I can promise you that before August 1 this committee will have passed a compensation bill; that this committee will have passed some legislation on the extension of educational benefits. For example, we have problems of boys who went to school under the War Orphans Act and now they find themselves a veteran of Vietnam themselves, and they aren't eligible to go on to school as other Vietnam veterans are. I don't know what we do about it. There is a precedent for some extension, for updating most of the training.

I also expect before August to pass a bill that will be of some benefit to our widows and orphans.

This will be a very busy year for our committee and I hope that many of the things that you talked about in your statement will be carried out.

Mr. Commander, I would like to ask you about your statement that, "We are also alarmed at the increasing evidence that medical care for veterans is not keeping pace with the high standards of university-type hospitals."

Could you comment on that? Do you really believe that?

Mr. SCERRA. Mr. Chairman, this part of my statement refers to the biennial report by your committee that indicates shortcomings in many VA hospitals. If I am not mistaken, through this questionnaire, to managers of VA hospitals.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Yes, sir.

Mr. SCERRA. Your committee has found the basis for improving the care of veterans. This is what was meant by that part of my statement, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. I wondered if the VFW had gone into this in more detail than the committee has.

Mr. SCERRA. I do know that we have staff people in our Washington office who are familiar with this problem, who are conducting inspections of VA hospitals. Maybe our director of our Washington office, Cooper T. Holt, could give you more information on this matter, if you would care to hear it.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. I would care to hear it.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, we have six men in the field all the time inspecting VA facilities. As a matter of fact, this last month we have armed them with cameras to inspect the hospitals and report back to us on their findings.

These reports are given to the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs every time a report is prepared, usually two or three times a week.

So we have found, Mr. Chairman, much still needs to be done regarding medical treatment of our veterans in our VA hospitals. We can substantiate our position and recommendations, I believe, with the reports our fieldmen give to us every week, which in many instances provides information not already available to you.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Commander, one last thing. I'm sure you know that all national cemeteries that are active cemeteries have been turned over to this committee for supervision. We are going to have very complete hearings from A to Z on cemeteries.

I think from talking to members of my committee that all of them agree completely with what the President said, that any veteran should have a chance to be buried in a national cemetery close to his home. This really is not as simple as it looks. We have been gathering information within the committee ever since this resolution passed the Congress this last year, and the answers are not easy to come by.

It is a very expensive program, much more expensive than I ever thought it was. I personally would hope that we might come up with a reasonable expansion of our present national cemetery system. I would also hope that we could come up with some incentive to a man who did want to be buried in his private plot, as many do. But our

committee will go into this very carefully and we have been in touch with your people.

But I would also hope and expect that this committee will pass some kind of legislation this year expanding the national cemetery program. [Applause.]

Mr. Chairman, it is always a pleasure to be with the VFW and we look forward to seeing you tonight.

I think Mr. Haley wants a 30-second rebuttal to John Saylor.

Mr. HALEY. Mr. Commander, of course, I hope to attend this hour before dinner. I might say to the young people here that I hope that we serve some Florida orange juice and I might say to the other Teague on this committee that it's not unusual probably to overlook somebody from that Far Western State out there, that arid, earthquake-shaking country. So, Mr. Past National Commander in Chief, if you will just come on down to Florida where things are nice and the sun shines all the time, we'll always see that you are recognized. [Laughter and applause.]

Mr. SCERRA. I expect to be with our department of Florida Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, Mr. Haley. I accept your invitation.

Mr. TEAGUE of Texas. Mr. Commander, I would like to express my personal support completely for the VFW policy toward Vietnam. [Applause.]

I don't believe the war will ever end unless we adopt that type of policy. [Applause.]

The committee will be adjourned and we'll meet you tonight at 6 o'clock for Florida orange juice.

(Whereupon, at 11:25 a.m. the committee adjourned.)

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMS

THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 1968

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met at 10 a.m., pursuant to call, in room 362, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. W. J. Bryan Dorn (acting chairman of the committee) presiding.

Mr. DORN. The committee will come to order.

We have with us this morning a very distinguished witness, and I am going to ask Congressman Bill Ayres, who is a truly distinguished and great member of this committee, to present our distinguished visitor and witness to the committee.

Mr. AYRES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, I would like to say that Congressman Adair of Indiana and Mrs. Heckler of Massachusetts have called and regret very much they cannot be here this morning, Mr. Chairman. They have requested that the statements be sent over to their office immediately so they will have the benefit of what I consider one of the finest leaders of veterans' organizations that our country has known.

Mr. Chairman, it has been my privilege to know our distinguished guest this morning for a number of years. This is indeed a proud day for Ohio. Our distinguished guest does not live in my congressional district. He lives in Congressman Bow's district. However, his hometown of Alliance, Ohio, is only 20 miles from my hometown.

The gentleman of whom I speak is none other than Anthony J. Caserta, an Ohio businessman from Alliance, who was elected national commander of AMVETS at the 23d national convention of that organization in Hollywood, Fla., last August.

Our commander is affectionately known to those of us who have had the privilege of being associated with him for quite some time as Tony. He not only has proved himself a dedicated public servant but his work in behalf of the veterans has been second to none.

For the past several years he has served AMVETS as the president of the AMVETS National Service Foundation, which administers all charitable activities of the organization. In 1965 the National AMVETS at their meeting and convention voted him the AMVET Man of the Year Award, the highest honor the organization can bestow on a member.

I am proud this morning to be a member of AMVETS, to be a Member of the Congress, to be a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, but I am equally proud to present to you the national commander of the AMVETS, the Honorable Anthony J. Caserta.

Mr. Commander, you may proceed in any way you see fit.

STATEMENT OF ANTHONY J. CASERTA, NATIONAL COMMANDER, AMVETS; ACCOMPANIED BY RALPH E. HALL, NATIONAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; DON SPAGNOLO, MEMBER, NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE; AND DOMINICK STRADA, CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL SECURITY COMMISSION

Mr. DORN. Commander, if you will, present your distinguished staff with you, those associated with you, to the committee.

Mr. CASERTA. Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Ayres.

Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, we of AMVETS, of course, are most appreciative of this opportunity to continue our close cooperation with your committee by presenting for your review our legislative program for 1968.

Accompanying me this morning are national staff members, national and department AMVET and auxiliary officers, and the distinguished members of the AMVETS National Security Commission, who later this morning will accompany me to the White House for a briefing by the President.

In addition, may I present AMVETS national executive director, past national commander, and a member of the U.S. Veterans Advisory Commission, Mr. Ralph E. Hall; a member of the National Legislative Committee, Past National Commander Don Spagnolo; and past national commander and chairman of AMVETS National Security Commission, Dominick Strada of New Jersey.

We are here not only to witness but to participate in "Democracy in Action." We feel that our legislative recommendations will, if enacted, be another step toward our mutual goal of having the Nation meet its obligations to our millions of veterans.

The contribution of the individual veteran to the building of this Nation during its first two centuries makes clear how important the role of the veteran continues to be in the future existence and growth of our society.

Military service in the Armed Forces of our Nation constitutes the basis for a reciprocal obligation on the part of this Nation to provide reasonable assistance to veterans in accordance with and recognition of the greater sacrifices experienced by them.

In his message of January 30, 1968, President Johnson voiced his thoughts on these commitments when he said:

America holds some of its greatest honors for the men who have stood in its defense, and kept alive its freedoms.

It shows its gratitude not only in memorials which grace city parks across the land * * * but more meaningfully in the programs which * * * "care for him * * * and for his widow and his orphan."

In formulating our legislative program, we have not deviated from our policy that our primary objective as a major veterans organization is to do our share to help perfect a sound, realistic, and enduring structure of veterans' benefits that will enable our veterans not only to live with dignity but also to contribute the maximum of their abilities to the progress and economic growth of the Nation.

AMVETS is cognizant of the fact that our country has, and apparently must continue, as long as there is war—hot or cold—to bear part of the economic and military burden of protecting the freedoms of the free world. AMVETS wholeheartedly supported and continue

to share the feelings expressed by you, Mr. Chairman, in your letter of October 23, 1967, to the national commanders in which you said:

Our country is in a horrible and dirty war in Vietnam. The American fighting men there deserve the full support of the American people. They are not receiving it.

Because of this tremendous cost, we realize that there is a limit to funds that are presently available for veterans' benefits and that the big problem that faced the Veterans Advisory Commission in its recommendations, your committee in its thinking, and the U.S. Congress in its actions is how best to do the most good with the moneys available.

Recognizing this problem, AMVETS feels that prime consideration must be given to the problems of immediate need but that secondary consideration should be focused toward improving the present benefits system in conjunction with establishing overall long-range goals for all veteran programs.

In perhaps what might be considered the order of their importance, we shall review for you the feelings of AMVETS with regard to specific legislation which we believe should be given special consideration in this session of the 90th Congress.

COMPENSATION

In continuation of our beliefs that the service-connected disabled veterans and their dependents deserve top priority, we recommend the following:

1. That the basic compensation rate payable to the service-connected totally disabled veteran be increased by \$100 monthly to a total of \$400.

A recent survey made in connection with the validation of the disability rating schedule confirmed that the average earning capacity of the totally disabled veteran had to be set at zero. This means a complete reliance of the totally disabled veteran on his disability compensation for economic support. The present rate of \$300 a month does not allow a totally disabled veteran to begin to maintain a standard of living comparable to that which he would have enjoyed except for his service-connected disabilities.

2. AMVETS recommends an increase in the compensation rates payable to veterans whose disabilities are evaluated from 10 to 90 percent.

The most recent compensation rate increase was made effective on December 1, 1965. According to the Consumer Price Index, there has been a 5.9-percent increase in the cost of living between that time and October 1, 1967.

We feel that the disabled veterans' compensation rates must be adjusted to protect them from the economic disadvantages which result from constant increases in the cost of living.

3. AMVETS recommends that the payments of disability compensation should be on the same ratio to 100 percent as the degree of disability is to 100 percent—10 percent of \$300 equals \$30.

In keeping with our beliefs that the disabled should receive top priority, and fully realizing the cost involved with this plan, we believe that its importance dictates that we address ourselves to this change now. We believe that regularity of intervals should be restored

as they were prior to the passage of Public Law 356 in 1952, so that any given percentage of disability will be compensated for in an amount equal to that percentage of the rate for total disability.

4. In further support of our recommendations to the U.S. Veterans Advisory Commission, AMVETS would also support favorable action on the following:

(a) Additional \$20 monthly payment be made for each child, to widows receiving dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) regardless of the number of children involved and independently of any other Federal benefits due the widow.

(b) Since no change in the basic rate of DIC has been made since 1963, we recommend that this basic rate be increased from \$120 to \$130 per month while still retaining the 12-percent clause.

(c) AMVETS recognize that the basic purpose of the compensation program is to make up for the loss of a veteran's earning capacity due to service-connected disabilities. To fulfill the intent of the service-connected program, we feel that DIC payments should be established for the survivors of veterans whose total disability has been established for 20 years or more, regardless of whether or not death was due to the service-connected disability.

(d) Considering the fact that for many disabled veterans the statutory award is all the actual compensation they receive, and further allowing for the fact that these awards have been permitted to fall so far out of perspective with the continually rising cost of living, AMVETS recommends the increase in special statutory awards from \$47 to \$55 per month.

PENSIONS

Pension is provided by law for veterans in need who are totally disabled due to causes not related to service in the Armed Forces.

The amount of pension payable, if any, is determined by the amount of other income to which the beneficiary is entitled.

AMVETS are gratified that Congress has passed and the President has signed Public Law 90-275. We believe the key in this new law is the assurance that those receiving pension payments will not suffer a net loss in total income.

When social security payments were last increased, some 29,000 Americans were affected with a net loss of income. Without passage of Public Law 90-275, another 275,000 would have suffered by any further changes in social security benefits.

However, another important byproduct of Public Law 90-275 that has not been publicized is the fact that approximately 1 million people are getting raises in total net income as a result of the new rate and income limitation schedules established by Public Law 90-275. AMVETS commend you, Mr. Chairman, the members of this committee, the Congress, and the President for the liberalization of pension payments.

Providing educational opportunities for as many as possible has become a generally recognized national goal. The economic gain to our Nation as a result of the educating of our returning World War II veterans is a proven fact.

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.

3. Veterans who have committed a crime against the country, although otherwise eligible for burial, be prohibited from being buried in a national cemetery (Rockwell and Thompson).

4. Burial allowances be increased from \$250 to \$400, plus headstone installation and the shipping from site of death to the national cemetery.

5. Consideration should be given to the continuing overhead cost of a closed cemetery when it is filled, as against the cost of purchasing additional land and continuing the burials. We recommend that each national cemetery be considered individually, as costs of additional land acquisitions will vary with locations.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In a recent speech, Mr. William J. Driver, Administrator of Veterans Affairs, made the following observation:

I think it is interesting to note in comparing the three GI bills we have had in the area of education that following World War II just about one-third of those who entered training went into colleges or universities for their entitlement.

After Korea, this figure rose to 50 percent. Of those in training today, some one-half million, nearly 85 percent, are taking college training. This indicates clearly how the educational level has gone up over the years.

I think that this should point out to us how important it is for us to explore every possible avenue available to educate to the fullest as many of our veterans and their widows as is humanly possible.

To this end, AMVETS would recommend the following:

1. Since it is understandable that some disabled veterans have family responsibilities that make it impossible for them to enter vocational rehabilitation on a full-time basis, we feel that they should be allowed to participate in these programs on a part-time basis.

2. Because the national economy has benefited from the additional income-tax revenues derived from college-trained GI's from World War II and Korea, AMVETS feel there should also be an educational assistance program established for widows receiving DIC, thus enabling them to increase their earning capacities. This would especially be true in the cases of the young widows of Vietnam veterans who were married before they had completed their educations or training in a particular skill.

3. Since it is not always possible to rehabilitate a totally disabled veteran economically, a possible alternative would be to also provide a program of educational assistance for the wife of a veteran totally and permanently disabled from service-connected causes.

HEALTH SERVICES

The contribution that the Veterans' Administration has made to the enhancement of medical technology and general medical well-being to our country is tremendous. The Veterans' Administration's ability to make these contributions can be, in part, attributed to their hospital construction and modernization program. In the future, new facilities will be completed at Miami, Fla.; Columbia, Md.; Hines, Ill.; Long Beach, Calif.; and San Juan, P.R.

In addition, plans are now underway for new hospitals in other areas of the country. We realize this is a costly program. However,

every effort should be made to accelerate the Veterans' Administration construction and modernization program.

The shortage of health-service manpower is considered acute today. It is expected to become even more serious in the immediate future. In his 1967 health and education message, President Johnson said: "Within the next decade this Nation will need 1 million more health workers."

We share the President's concern for the Nation over the growing national shortage of health-service manpower. AMVETS recognize the Veterans' Administration's great potential for training health personnel under Public Law 89-785 and urge that the Veterans' Administration continue to use its hospital system to train more personnel for health services, thus serving the Nation and providing the highest quality of medical care to our veteran patients.

The economic profile of veterans of age 65 and over shows that they have an annual income of \$2,700 and less hospital insurance and ready assets than other veteran groups. Medically, the veteran age 65 and over suffers more disabilities and requires more care that results in longer periods of hospitalization. Therefore, AMVETS recommend that veterans who have reached the age of 65, with non-service-connected disabilities, not be required to sign an affidavit stating they are unable to pay the cost of hospital care.

Public Law 88-450 authorizes the Veterans' Administration to operate 4,000 nursing home care beds and to participate in the construction of State homes for furnishing nursing home care. Also, at the present time, there are no veterans hospitals in Alaska and Hawaii. Veterans with non-service-connected disabilities cannot be placed in private hospitals at the Government's expense. The Veterans' Administration does place non-service-connected veterans in other Federal hospitals under a contract arrangement. This does not provide community nursing home care under the present law. Because of our concern and the need for additional nursing home care beds, AMVETS strongly recommend—

1. That the Veterans' Administration be authorized to operate more nursing home care beds in addition to the 4,000 now in operation under Public Law 88-450;
2. That authorization, under Public Law 88-450, providing grants for the construction of State homes to provide nursing home care, be extended beyond the expiration date of June 30, 1969;
3. That authorization be given to the Veterans' Administration for the purpose of operating nursing home care beds in Alaska and Hawaii; and
4. That in the planning for the construction of new hospitals, every consideration be given to including nursing home care beds in the initial plan.

INSURANCE

In 1965 Congress reopened the national service life insurance program on a limited basis. The response indicated there would be little interest in a general reopening to all eligible veterans.

Veterans being separated from service with a serious service-connected disability from World War II and Korea were uninsurable in the eyes of the commercial industry. These men faced problems since

they were therefore limited to coverage in the amount of \$10,000 available to them under NSLI.

AMVETS feel that an added \$10,000 insurance should be made available at standard rates for World War II and Korean veterans who are not otherwise insurable at standard rates because of service-connected disability.

Discharged veterans should be allowed adequate time to make the economic and social adjustments necessary to transfer to civilian life without danger of losing their SGLI coverage before replacing this with an individual policy.

To help cope with this problem, AMVETS recommends that the SGLI be expanded to permit conversion of this coverage for 6 months after separation from service instead of 120 days. Further, we recommend that SGLI coverage be provided for those totally disabled at time of separation and that this coverage be continued for as long as they remain totally disabled and that no additional premium payments would be charged.

HOUSING (H.R. 10477 AND H.R. 11153)

AMVETS is most interested in seeing favorable action taken on H.R. 10477 and H.R. 11153, which embody the same request, to amend title 38 to increase the amount of home loan guarantee entitlement for a veteran from \$7,500 to \$10,000.

While there are no limitations on the total amount of a guaranteed loan, the guarantee itself is limited to 60 percent of the loan amount with a maximum of \$7,500.

In his January 30, 1968, message to Congress, the President of the United States made this his first new legislative proposal. As the President has stated: "For 18 years, the guarantee has remained at \$7,500, adequate for 1950, but no longer so in today's housing market."

When the \$7,500 maximum guarantee was approved in 1950, the average amount of home loans guaranteed was \$7,800 and most home loans were guaranteed for the maximum 60 percent of the loan amount with the ceiling at \$7,500. By 1966, the average loan amount was \$16,500 and the \$7,500 guarantee afforded only 45-percent protection.

In rural areas, small cities, and towns where guaranteed loans are not generally available, the Veterans' Administration is authorized to make direct home loans to supplement the basic loan guarantee program.

The maximum amount of direct loans has been increased four times since the initial \$10,000 maximum was established in 1950, in order to keep pace with the increasing cost of homes. In 1950, the average direct loan amount was \$6,400, but for 1966 it had increased to \$11,800.

In view of these increases in average loan amounts for both guaranteed and direct loans, AMVETS recommend that the maximum guarantee be increased from \$7,500 to \$10,000 and that the maximum direct loan amount be increased to \$20,000 with the provision that the Veterans' Administration be permitted to make larger loans not to exceed \$30,000 in areas where excessive cost levels so require.

Increasing the maximum guarantee should serve to attract more investment capital into the guaranteed-loan field. Such an increase in

the guarantee would reduce the possibilities of veterans being obliged to make substantial downpayments on guaranteed loans or having to become involved in more costly financing or forgo home purchasing entirely.

The increase of the direct loan maximum would place veterans in rural areas on an equal position with urban veterans, in respect to the amount of credit assurance available to them.

Mr. Chairman, I am glad to hear that the House passed last week H.R. 10477, which increased the loan guarantee to \$12,500.

H.R. 14838 AND H.R. 14708

AMVETS would favor positive action on the passage of H.R. 14708 and H.R. 14838, both of which carry the same intent; namely, the removal of requirements with respect to the rate of interest on GI loans.

These bills would authorize the Administrator to adjust the rate of interest on GI loans from time to time with changing loan market demands, without concern for the existing ceiling of 6 percent.

The evidence available indicates that the requirement of payment of points on GI home purchases restricts the availability of homes offered with Veterans' Administration financing.

Although greater flexibility in the upward adjustment of the Veterans' Administration home-loan interest rate is no guarantee of making financing available to all prospective veteran home buyers, it will enable the veteran to compete more effectively for whatever mortgage money is available in a particular area.

However, while a low-interest rate on GI loans is an attractive feature, AMVETS feel that this factor alone has not been the attraction of the GI home-loan program for veterans.

AMVETS is ever mindful of the vigilance and continual effort to protect veterans' interests. We recognize the value of State agencies and veterans' organizations in this cooperative effort. We also believe that the Veterans' Administration is capable of taking on any additional responsibility which may be given to its care in succeeding years. Therefore, we feel the administrative capacity and demonstrated efficiency of the Veterans' Administration makes it the only agency within the Federal Government which should have the responsibility of administering benefits for our veterans.

This concludes the presentation of AMVETS legislative program for 1968. When these proposals are considered by this committee, we shall be glad to testify in detail on each matter.

AMVETS is indebted to you, Mr. Chairman, and to this committee for its untiring efforts to improve and perfect legislation controlling veterans' benefits. The actions and results of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee clearly illustrate that you recognize and accept responsibility for those who serve in defense of their Nation. Thank you.

Mr. DORN. Mr. Commander, our chairman, Mr. Teague, as you know, could not be with us this morning because of the space shot in Florida, and he was there when it went off on schedule this morning, and this is the only reason he is not here to greet you personally; but as you know, he has two important committees, this committee and

the one on science and aeronautics, and this is where he is this morning.

Also, I might say, I wish I personally could be with you Saturday night, but it looks doubtful right now with this committee in its annual program in which you honor great Americans, and I wish I could be with you for Mr. McCormack's presentation; and, of course, if the President gets back, we don't know.

But we are glad to have you and appreciate this splendid statement and are grateful for your fine staff here who are always extremely cooperative.

Again, your program presented here today is a rational one. It is middle of the road and we appreciate it. It is reasonable.

Mr. Pucinski—and may I say this about my good friend here: I do not know of anyone in Congress who has been working harder on the floor and elsewhere to promote peace in this world, but peace through strength and honor. So I am glad to present to you Mr. Pucinski.

Mr. PUCINSKI. That is very kind of you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Commander, I would like to join the chairman in his commendation. I think you spelled out the needs, but more important, I think you have brought up to date the modern needs of the veteran. I think this is important. I think this is the important thing about organizations like yours.

You are down in the field. You see the day-to-day problems that veterans are confronted with. I think it is important for this committee to get this report from you. I certainly would like to associate myself with the deep concern that you show for the veterans.

One question I would like to ask you, and perhaps I am getting into some real controversial territory here, but I have always had a great interest in the VA hospital program, and during the last recess I visited the VA hospitals in Illinois. I took a trip around the State because I wanted to see what was going on in the hospitals and how these people were getting along. I was interested to learn that veterans who exercise their right and are otherwise qualified for care in veterans hospitals who subscribe to either Blue Cross or some other private insurance program do not have their services paid for in the VA hospitals.

I have often wondered, and perhaps somebody can give me an answer, why the Federal Government has to provide this service and not be reimbursed for it. It would seem to me that when a veteran who belongs to a hospital care insurance plan chooses to get his hospital care in a VA hospital because he feels more secure in that hospital he should have that privilege if he wants it, but it also seems to me that since the man has paid into a health insurance plan, that the health insurance company ought to pay the Government just the way they pay any private hospital.

I was wondering if there is any reason why we don't do that.

Mr. CASERTA. Mr. Hall is a member of the U.S. Veterans Advisory Commission and has traveled all over the country, and I am sure this argument has come up many a time.

Mr. HALL. Mr. Pucinski, in answer to your question, it is my understanding that this point was very thoroughly discussed; in fact at one point a few years back there was extensive legislation and quite a lengthy fight to try to get Blue Cross payments into the services

in the VA hospital, and at that time, as I understand it from the testimony we have heard around the country, there was question as to what specifically would happen with funds of that nature—whether they would go back into the general fund of the U.S. Government or specifically what would be the ultimate disposition of these funds.

I don't think it is a question that has not been looked into. I think that it is a case, or it has been a case where, in the past, it just has not been possible to present legislation that could be passed that would satisfy all of the ramifications of that particular program.

Your question is: Why should the VA hospital be treated any differently than Chicago Central Hospital or other hospitals?

Mr. PUCINSKI. My question goes deeper. I am sure we can all agree here, no member of this committee that I know of would ever want to shortchange any veteran whether he is disabled or otherwise. In other words, this committee, I think, under the excellent leadership of Congressman Teague and members of this committee, has been tremendously responsive to the needs of our veterans.

This is as it should be. After all, the country certainly owes a debt of gratitude to the men that risk their lives for our freedom.

As you can see, the cost of these programs is constantly going up. We realize that, too. We are going to have a whole new generation of young fellows from Vietnam and we have a generation already of fellows from Korea, and this country is committed to defend freedom wherever it is necessary, and I don't think we ever, ever want to get ourselves into the posture where we cannot meet our commitments to our veterans.

But having said this, it would then appear to me that the program that you laid out here is an excellent program and one that I can support and would want to support but, you know, there is an end to the line somewhere. We don't have that magic horn of plenty, and so it would seem to me that we and you veterans' organizations ought to address ourselves to the problem of where is the money going to come from? You can help us. You can be a big help to us. I think you ought to reexamine that policy.

Now, if a veteran pays into a Blue Cross program and his employer pays into a Blue Cross program, I cannot understand why that veterans hospital should be treated any differently from any other hospital. It is different if the veteran didn't have Blue Cross. We have no question there. But it just seems to me totally incongruous and illogical that here is a man who is paying into a health protection program and he may be paying it for many years, I don't know, but then he needs medical care and he wants to go to a VA hospital because he feels more secure there, he feels he will get better care there.

That is his privilege, if otherwise qualified, and it seems to me you people could help us raise some of the money that we need for some of these new programs that are being brought in by establishing a greater degree of equity in the distribution of funds, and I would like you to look into this.

Counsel here tells me we have looked into this before but, you know, we are living in a changing world. What might have been impractical 3 years ago may be necessary today. With this generation of Vietnam boys coming in, their needs coming in, we are going to have to look for new sources of money someplace to meet these needs, and I would like

you someday to look into it. I know the insurance companies will howl, but we are used to that.

Mr. HALL. Congressman, I think I might add, in many of the instances of hospitalization of a veteran in a hospital, at least our organizational blanket insurance policy provides payment to that hospitalized veteran while he is in there.

Now, what you are saying should possibly be considered is a step further of paying the hospital for the services rendered to that veteran. I would say that your point is very well taken. I don't think there is any question that this avenue has been explored.

In all probability, if this came to pass, I would think that the AMVETS' position in all probability would be to support this, we would support this as a new avenue of revenue that might be used to supplement the hospital construction or enlargement program.

Mr. PUCINSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DORN. Thank you, Mr. Pucinski.

Mr. Fino.

Mr. FINO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, Mr. National Commander, I want to say I am very happy to see you here before the committee. I want to compliment you on your very comprehensive and very constructive contribution.

Now, in line with what the gentleman from Illinois was saying about the health plans, I think it is a question of contract and if the veteran is willing to sign a health insurance contract which has that proviso—that they will not pay if a known source is paying that hospitalization or medical care—then it is a question of trying to get the insurance companies to modify or correct their contracts.

I don't think there is much that the Government can do in that respect. I recall several years ago this committee being very much concerned about the Federal Government spending the money and the insurance companies having received the premium, not fulfilling their obligations. But this is something else which the Congress should look into.

I was particularly interested in your observations regarding the housing program of the veterans, and I don't know whether you are aware of the fact but last week when we had the veterans bill before the committee I was very strenuously opposed to the bill which would remove the 6-percent ceiling, and I introduced an amendment that Congress would support that, to make sure the ceiling of 6-percent would remain intact and to further expand the direct-loan program to cover metropolitan areas where funds were not generally available for veterans, and, of course, as you know, this is in line with the recommendations made by the President's Advisory Commission.

I think something should be done to make sure our returning veterans or those that have returned and have served our country should get decent housing at the lowest possible cost. I think that the Government owes an obligation to our veterans to see that this is a reality.

More particularly, I am concerned because right before my Subcommittee on Housing of the Banking and Currency Committee, we are considering legislation on an omnibus housing bill which would provide homeownership for people of low and middle income at subsidized interest rates. The proposal made by the administration is to subsidize the interest rate from 1 percent to the fair market rates.

Now, this is a tremendous cost to the Federal Government to people that are not veterans and, if we could be so generous with the non-veteran population, we certainly could afford to extend that generosity to our own veterans.

So I say I have assurance from the chairman of the committee, Mr. Teague, that if the increase in the interest rate as a result of this legislation—which, I am sure, will pass the Senate—will result in less funds being available for the veterans of this country, that the committee, the Veterans' Affairs Committee, will hold hearings to see that we do expand this direct-loan program so we can take care of these veterans and those desirous of owning their own homes.

Again, I want to say I am very happy to have you before the committee. It is always a pleasure to see you, and good luck to your organization.

Mr. DORN. Thank you, Mr. Fino.

The Chair would like to state that we are glad to see two members here on my right, two gentlemen from the great State of New York, and I will ask Mr. Halpern to proceed.

Mr. HALPERN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. National Commander, I too, want to commend your appearance here and particularly compliment you for your fine presentation. In my opinion, your organization is particularly outstanding because it concerns itself not only with the veteran but with legislation for the welfare of all Americans and with a policy that reflects the best national interest.

Looking on my slate, I had other meetings so I didn't have a chance to hear your full presentation here but I intend to evaluate every word and take it with me. I have looked over some of your recommendations. I must say I concur 100 percent.

I, like Congressman Fino, particularly am interested in your position on housing. I might add, Mr. Congressman, I supported you in your amendment.

There is one phase of housing which I think should affect the veteran, if it has not done so already, that was not covered in this bill. I would welcome an expression from you on this, not necessarily officially representing this group but perhaps your personal opinion, in hopes that you might take it into consideration for further action by this committee.

I am particularly anxious to see the housing program extended to cover condominium and cooperative housing. This is a highly desirable form of housing and becoming more and more a part of the American system of homeownership and is a new economic concept of middle-income homeownership. Under the present law, under the bills just passed, and under existing provisions of law, condominiums are not included. Yet there are types of apartments, as well as individual homes, that do come under condominium programs taking place in the country; and it would be of tremendous advantage to have this extension. I have taken particular interest in many of these projects in my own district and also cooperative housing which has now gotten down to individual homes and it seems to me this is homeownership and that the program should be extended to this, and I would welcome a further expression from your organization on that subject.

Do you have any feelings on it?

Mr. HALL. Mr. Halpern, our understanding from our investigation of this was at the present time the Veterans' Administration does have authority to grant financing in cases of multiple dwellings, multiple dwelling units, condominiums, and so forth.

The information we reviewed and studied on it was this program had not been that well sought after in the initial stages of the presentation of legislation covering that. However, of late, it seems to me this is becoming a very popular piece of real estate.

The only question that we have on it is that it would involve the necessity of having to have every member who resides in there be a veteran and that they be on a cooperative basis as far as their liabilities and so forth are concerned, and the information that we reviewed on it indicated that one of the reasons that they did not get into this extensively—GI's did not get into it extensively—was because of the fact that if a nonveteran happened to be involved in that building and he defaulted, that they would not, or the Veterans' Administration would not, have the control over him that they would have over a veteran with regards to protecting the Government on the default on that particular mortgage.

But I would agree with you that in all probability the future trends will be in the direction of more and more of this cooperative housing, because it is becoming, or it is generally accepted in the southern States or in Florida and California, and it seems to be coming in the direction north here toward the large metropolitan areas.

But I think that the problem of complete ownership by veterans and cooperative responsibility by the veterans involved has got to be the avenue that we explore in order to protect the Government in the case of default. But I would agree with what you are saying, that this definitely would be an area that is coming under greater and greater observation by veterans as far as housing facilities.

Mr. HALPERN. I agree with what you said. I believe one of the reasons there has not been more acceptance of this program is the restrictions, all of the restrictions you have cited, that now exist. But I do think there would be a lot more demand if these restrictions were removed and greater clarification of the laws were made. In fact, I think that even in condominiums, the laws should be changed or corrected, because on condominiums in particular there are individual mortgages. It is not a question of cooperative mortgages, so I think the restrictions could be eased and it would be a wonderful thing and there would be much more interest. I think once these hurdles are overcome there would be a tremendous demand for this type of housing.

To get back to commendations, I again want to compliment you, in fact congratulate your national commander, on your fine program and I want to compliment your great organization for exceptional work.

Mr. DORN. Thank you.

Mr. PUCINSKI. May I make an observation? Commander, I would very much like for you and your organization, while in Washington, to get the Congressional Record of last—what date was it? Well, last week the chairman, Mr. Dorn, delivered a speech on the floor of the House in which he put Vietnam in a perspective more effectively than anyone else I have heard in this Congress. It is a classic speech and a historic speech, and I invite you to get a copy of this out of the

Congressional Record. I don't recall the date and I hate to embarrass my colleague by asking.

Mr. DORN. March 27.

Mr. PUCINSKI. Yes, March 27. He made a special speech on Vietnam, and I strongly recommend you get it, because if ever the whole question of Vietnam was put in the proper perspective, we had it then. It was a tremendously impressive speech, and I am sure you will find it as interesting as we all did on the floor of the House when he gave it.

Mr. HALL. Mr. Chairman, I think that problem has been alleviated because Mr. Dorn's speech is being distributed to our national committeemen at our meeting starting tomorrow.

Mr. DORN. Well, thank you; and thank you, Mr. Pucinski.

Mr. PUCINSKI. I am delighted to hear that.

Mr. HALL. I would like to comment on one discussion with regard to the discussion Mr. Fino had. AMVETS position has continually been that the interest rate is a factor and a very important factor in this matter of availability of funds for financing of GI homes, but our position has been that this is only one factor.

We feel that concurrently with that, that there has to be a long-term mortgage payment plan and a minimum or no downpayment tied to the interest rate. If you just increase the interest rate, you are only addressing yourself to one of the factors that would make it attractive to a GI. At least this is our position. We feel that if a man, or if the interest rate were going to be 7 percent, the veteran is not as concerned about it as he is that coupled with it he may have, he may be able to have, say, a 30-year mortgage and no downpayment, because as long as his combined monthly total of payment to the bank is within his limited income, this is the part that makes it an attractive program for the mass of the GI's.

I don't think the GI home-loan guarantee program is directed at the person who can afford 20-percent downpayment, but at the masses of people who cannot make the downpayment and who also need long-term financing in order to get their monthly payments down. This is what the commander was referring to in his remarks on page 12 when he said that the interest rate was only one factor in it.

Mr. FINO. While it is true it is only one factor, it is an important factor.

Mr. HALL. Yes; no question about it.

Mr. FINO. And the concern I had was, once you remove the ceiling, there might be difficulty.

Mr. HALL. You could get in trouble. Right.

Mr. PUCINSKI. May I add one footnote? I want to congratulate you and AMVETS for your huge victory in Madison, Wis., last Tuesday. You were down there, on the firing line, and it is obvious that the people heard you because they voted 57 percent against the proposition, so you fellows ought to be pretty proud of the work you did down there.

Mr. CASERTA. My only trouble, Congressman, I was not standing on hallowed ground when I made that speech.

Mr. PUCINSKI. I understand the Commies want to impeach you.

Mr. CASERTA. No; they have a lawsuit going for half a million dollars but they have to get me back in Wisconsin.

Mr. PUCINSKI. You are not afraid, are you? I can't think of a greater honor to be bestowed upon you than to be sued by that group.

Mr. CASERTA. I asked them to come to Washington so we could subpoena the House Un-American Committee records on these particular individuals, and I understand now the suit is being dropped.

Mr. DORN. I am sure, Commander, a million attorneys in this country would volunteer to defend you. We are proud of you and appreciate your splendid testimony here today. Thank you so much, and the material you have presented to the committee staff will be included in the record at this point, without objection.

(The material referred to follows:)

AMVETS PRESENTATION VA HEARINGS, BOSTON, MASS., MAY 27, 1967

The following represents a recap of the content of letters received from the respective State Governors in response to the March 16, 1967 letter sent to each Governor by AMVETS' National Commander, A. Leo Anderson of Washington, D.C., regarding the present situation affecting the National Cemetery System problem.

The intent of Commander Anderson's letter was to ascertain the position of the various States with respect to the possibility of making available suitable land to be set aside and dedicated for National Cemetery use within the confines of the respective States.

In part Commander Anderson said, "During the course of the June 1966 hearings before the Subcommittee on Hospitals of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, the spokesman for the Department of the Army stated that in 1947, the Army favored a National Cemetery in each State in the Nation. This policy was subsequently changed, apparently because the cost of land acquisition would be prohibitive in nature and they favored a "no expansion" policy for National Cemeteries.

"The pertinent provisions of Section 271a, Chapter 7, Title 24, United States Code (National Cemeteries), 'authorizes the Secretary of the Army to accept land donated by any State for the establishment of a National Cemetery.' This statute indicates that Congress, with foresight, recognized that as the National Cemetery System needed expansion from time to time, such a provision was needed and accordingly was written into the law."

Alabama.—Matter referred to the Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs for his evaluation and recommendation.

Arizona.—The Executive Assistant to the Governor suggests more discussion on proposal.

Arkansas.—Referred suggestion to the State Land Department for their evaluation and recommendations.

Connecticut.—Copies of letter were forwarded to the Chairman of the Senate and House General Assembly's Committees on Military and Veterans Affairs for Committee consideration.

Delaware.—Governor favorably considered proposal and referred matter for thorough and complete examination to the Delaware State Planner.

Georgia.—Governor discussed this matter with Director of State Veterans Services, Mr. Pete Wheeler. Two National Cemeteries in Georgia. It is anticipated that these cemeteries will be filled within the next several years. If available land is not obtainable the Governor indicated he will consider recommending to the Georgia Legislature some measure to cope with this situation.

Hawaii.—Governor indicated that the burial space at the Punch BOWL is estimated as sufficient for almost three decades.

Idaho.—Governor plans feasibility study of suitable tracts of land; will solicit opinions from veterans service organizations; and possibly propose legislation for consideration by the scheduled meeting of the Idaho Legislature in January 1969.

Indiana.—Governor referred letter to State Director of Veterans Affairs, Charles Howell, for his evaluation. General Assembly does not convene until January 1969 and the State veterans organizations will be contacted for their recommendations.

Iowa.—Governor indicates no acute problem in that State.

Kentucky.—State legislature meets January of 1968 and this matter will be referred to the General Assembly through the Governor's Office at that time.

Louisiana.—Governor referred this matter to the Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Mr. Dick Staggs, for his attention and recommendation.

Maine.—Governor has taken steps through the current Session of the Legislature to appropriate \$147,000 to establish the Maine Veterans Memorial Cemetery. In his letter he stated, "In Maine there have been burials in the V. A. Center at Togus since 1960."

Maryland.—Governor indicated that the legislature adjourned March 28 and will not convene until next year, therefore proposal cannot be considered until that time.

Massachusetts.—Governor referred proposal to Commissioner of Veterans' Services, Charles N. Collatos, and his Department is making an inventory of State facilities and State owned land for consideration of this proposal.

Minnesota.—Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, Mr. A. G. Loehr, indicated that of the 470 acres of Fort Snelling National Cemetery, 105 are under development. Therefore, it appears that the problem is not acute in that State.

Mississippi.—Governor indicates possibly that the 1968 Legislature may consider favorable action on this proposal.

Missouri.—Governor indicated deep interest. However, the Missouri General Assembly cutoff date precluded consideration of suggestion at this time.

Nebraska.—Governor indicated no immediate need in that State. However, he pointed out that there is land available along the Platte River which can be purchased and donated to the Department of Defense for future cemetery use when needed.

Nevada.—The Governor pointed out that 86% of the Nevada land area is already owned by the Federal Government at this time and indicated that "there are vast reaches of beautiful desert land here in Nevada which could very well be used for such a purpose."

New Hampshire.—The Governor indicated that in 1966 the New Hampshire Governor and Council offered the Secretary of the Army 80 acres of State owned land for use as a cemetery for veterans throughout the New England area. This was refused by the Secretary of the Army.

North Dakota.—Governor indicates unable to comply with request as State Legislature has adjourned and will not convene until 1969.

Ohio.—Governor indicated that he will give due consideration should the Ohio Legislature take any action in this area.

Oklahoma.—Governor indicated that U.S. Government owned land on the site of Old Fort Reno near El Reno, Oklahoma, would make an excellent site for a new National Cemetery without any expensive land costs to anyone.

Oregon.—Has 201 acres at the Willamette National Cemetery of which 54.1 acres have been developed. Approximately 18 thousand burials have been made with 200 thousand additional gravesites available.

Pennsylvania.—Governor suggests that federally owned land (68 hundred acres) south of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, which was acquired for ammunition storage during World War II, centrally located in Pennsylvania, would be suited for National Cemetery use. The Governor indicated his extreme desire to cope with this problem within the confines of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Rhode Island.—Governor proposes legislation be given due consideration during the next Session of the Rhode Island Legislature.

South Dakota.—Governor indicated the January 1968 Session of the Legislature will consider this suggestion.

Tennessee.—Governor requested Director of Tennessee's Department of Veterans Affairs, Mr. J. F. Hudgens, to investigate the question and recommend appropriate action to take.

Texas.—Governor indicated he will thoroughly review the suggestion and take appropriate action.

Utah.—Governor suggests that a campaign be conducted whereby each veteran be requested to contribute \$1.00 for purchase of land for National Cemeteries. In this manner he felt that the veterans organizations would be contributing something of great value to our States and Nation.

Virginia.—Governor indicated that it was his feeling that National Cemetery expansion should be undertaken by the Federal Government "in whose defense the sacrifices of our military men are made."

Washington.—Governor has directed Mr. William Wearver, Director of Veterans' Rehabilitation, to coordinate and develop through local chapters and other veterans organizations within the State "suitable legislation to be considered that will implement the provisions of Section 271a, Chapter 7, Title 24, United States Code, at the earliest opportunity."

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

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your local commander to contact me here in this office so that I can discuss it with him. I think it would be helpful to explore your proposal in this manner.
Cordially,

C. R. KRIMMINGER,
Executive Assistant.

STATE OF ARKANSAS,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Little Rock, April 6, 1967.

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

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: Thank you for your letter of March 24th inquiring about the availability of state land for a national cemetery.

I have referred your suggestion to the State Land Department for consideration, and I am confident you will hear from them in the near future.

Again, thank you for your interest in such a worthy cause, and with all good wishes,

Sincerely,

WINTHROP ROCKEFELLER, *Governor.*

STATE OF CONNECTICUT,
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS,
Hartford, April 4, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: This is to acknowledge your recent letter concerning the donation of State lands for the establishment of a National Cemetery.

Under the rules of the Connecticut legislature, the deadline for the introduction of bills has passed.

I am, however, forwarding copies of your letter to the Senate and House chairmen of our General Assembly's Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs, Senator David M. Barry and Representative Edward W. Siry, so they may consider whether it would be advisable to raise in the committee such legislation as you have proposed.

Sincerely,

JOHN DEMPSEY, *Governor.*

STATE OF DELAWARE,
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Dover, Del., April 7, 1967.

Mr. A. LEO ANDERSON,
*National Commander, Amvets,
National Headquarters, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: Thank you very much for writing to me on March 24, 1967, concerning the lack of available burial sites in the National Cemeteries throughout the United States.

In that you have requested my support in having introduced into our General Assembly legislation which would donate to the Secretary of the Army land in Delaware for National Cemetery use, I would like to give your proposal a thorough and complete examination. I intend to have our State Planner look into the matter insofar as availability of land is concerned. I shall be very pleased to give every favorable consideration to your request insofar as the availability of land permits.

I shall do all I can, as Governor, to assist the veterans of this Country, and especially those from the State of Delaware, who have given so much for us through their faithful and dedicated service to the Nation.

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Thank you again for bringing this serious situation to my attention, and I sincerely hope that we, in Delaware, will be able to assist the veterans in this way.

Sincerely yours,

CHARLES L. TERRY, Jr., *Governor.*

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Atlanta, Ga., April 14, 1967.

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

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: Thank you for your letter of recent date and your proposal concerning national cemeteries.

I have discussed this matter with Mr. Pete Wheeler, Director of the State Veterans Service. At the present time there are two national cemeteries in this state. One is in Marietta and the other in Andersonville. The Andersonville Cemetery has ample space for the next several years, but the one in Marietta is almost full.

I have learned that the U.S. Department of the Interior owns a tract of some 200 acres near the Marietta Cemetery which would lend itself very well to this purpose. It could also be maintained by the present cemetery work force without undue additional expense.

This would seem to me the most practical and workable solution. However, if this land cannot be used, I will then consider recommending some measure to the Georgia Legislature that would offer relief in this situation.

With kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely,

LESTER MADDOX, *Governor.*

STATE OF HAWAII,
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS,
Honolulu, March 29, 1967.

Mr. A. LEO ANDERSON,
*National Commander,
Amvets National Headquarters,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: Thank you for your letter of March 24, 1967, calling my attention to the general danger of depletion in National Cemeteries and suggesting that land be set aside for future satisfying of this want.

While I realize the problem is acute in some other states, I am advised that space in the National War Memorial of the Pacific at Punchbowl is estimated as sufficient for almost three decades. If in the future it appears that an undue shortage of space exists, we will surely consider such action as you suggest.

Warm personal regards. May the Almighty be with you and yours always.

Sincerely,

JOHN A. BURNS.

STATE OF IDAHO,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Boise, April 27, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: In reference to your letter concerning a National Cemetery in our State, I wish to say your proposed solution to this complex problem has merit.

Since the Idaho Legislature for this year has adjourned and is not scheduled to meet again until January, 1969, it is doubtful we can give you a final determination until that time. However, in the meantime, I plan to have a study of suitable tracts of land to include opinions from veterans service organizations and proposals for consideration by the next Legislature.

You can be assured of my cooperation to assist the Federal Government in the solution of this pressing national problem.

Sincerely,

DON SAMUELSON, *Governor.*

STATE OF INDIANA,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Indianapolis, April 4, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: This will acknowledge your letter concerning the Department of Defense burial policy as it applies to Arlington National Cemetery.

I have taken the liberty of referring your letter to the State Service Director of Veterans' Affairs Charles Howell who will review the matter and advise you.
Sincerely,

ROGER D. BRANIGIN,
Governor of Indiana.

STATE OF INDIANA,
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS,
Indianapolis, April 7, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: Your letter to Governor Roger D. Branigin, concerning donation of land for the establishment of a National Cemetery System, has been referred to this office for consideration.

We certainly recognize the importance of this matter, however, we feel the final decision would have to be made by our State Legislature. Our General Assembly just recently completed the 1967 session, and does not convene again in regular session until January 1969.

In the meantime, as a study will be made to determine whether the State presently owns any suitable land that could be made available for such purpose.

We shall also discuss this matter with our State Veterans' Service Organizations and obtain their view points.

Yours truly,

CHARLES A. HOWELL, *Director.*

STATE OF IOWA,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Des Moines, April 18, 1967,

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

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: Governor Hughes has received your recent letter concerning the acquisition of property in the State of Iowa for use as burial property for military veterans.

We have discussed this matter with Adjutant General, Major General Junior F. Miller, who has informed us that at the present time we have more than enough property in the State of Iowa to take care of military burials for some time. He further stated that the majority of our military burials in Iowa are made in local cemeteries, so it would seem that this problem is not so acute in Iowa.

I trust this information will be of some assistance to you.

Very truly yours,

EDWARD L. CAMPBELL,
Administrative Assistant.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Frankfort, Ky., March 30, 1967.

COMMANDER A. LEO ANDERSON,
*AMVETS National Headquarters,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: I have read with interest and concern the situation outlined in your March 22 letter with regard to burial sites on our national cemeteries. Certainly this is a matter that deserves the careful attention of every state.

Our Legislature does not meet again until January 1968, at which time I will no longer be in office. As much as I should like to be instrumental in carrying

the ball for a project of this nature, I am frank to admit that it is too late in my administration to be helpful. Kentucky's new governor will be inaugurated the middle of December of this year, and our General Assembly will convene three weeks later. I am going to suggest that you forward a similar letter to the newly-elected governor immediately upon his taking office so that the matter can receive necessary attention prior to the convening of the Legislature.

I join with you in hoping that Kentucky will make a contribution to this great cause.

Sincerely,

EDWARD T. BREATHITT.

STATE OF LOUISIANA,
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Baton Rouge, March 28, 1967.

Mr. AL LEO ANDERSON,
National Commander, AMVETS,
National Headquarters,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: This will acknowledge and thank you for your letter of recent date.

I have forwarded your letter to Mr. Dick Staggs, Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs for his attention and consideration. I am certain that you will be hearing from Mr. Staggs in the near future.

Again, thank you for writing and with every good wish, I remain

Yours sincerely,

JOHN J. McKEITHEN,
Governor of Louisiana.

STATE OF MAINE,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Augusta, Maine, April 11, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: I wish to thank you for your recent letter expressing interest in effectuating a positive program with respect to the National Cemetery System.

There are no national cemeteries in New England. In Maine there have been no burials in the VA Center at Togus since 1960. There were a number of attempts by the Maine veterans through our Congressional Delegation to have a National Cemetery established here in Maine but these efforts were to no avail. As a result, the veterans' organizations in Maine sponsored a movement to have the Legislature establish the Maine Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

I have therefore recommended to our current session of the Legislature an appropriation of \$147,000 for this purpose. We believe that with the provision of this amount it will be possible to make the proposed cemetery operational. As you know, there are no Federal funds presently available for such projects. I would not like to see anything at this time that would jeopardize the status of our proposed veterans cemetery here in Maine. Therefore, I do not feel that the time is appropriate to request the Legislature to authorize the purchase of land to be donated to the Secretary of the Army for the purpose of establishing a National Cemetery. However, if we are successful in establishing this veterans cemetery strictly as a State of Maine project, it is possible that at some future date, if and when the National Cemetery situation is favorably resolved, that we might consider some form of affiliation with the federal system.

Sincerely,

KENNETH M. CURTIS, Governor.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Annapolis, Md., March 29, 1967.

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

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: Governor Agnew has asked me to acknowledge and thank you for your letter of March 21.

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The legislature adjourned on March 28 and will not convene again in regular session until next year. Under these circumstances, it was not possible to fully consider your proposal before the legislature adjourned.

Sincerely yours,

C. STANLEY BLAIR,
Secretary of State.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
State House, Boston, May 1, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER: On April 3rd, my Legislative Secretary, Mr. Hays, wrote you with reference to your inquiring regarding possible donation of state land to the Federal government for the establishment of national cemeteries. I believe that Mr. Hays advised you that I had asked him to take the matter up with the Commissioner of Veterans' Services.

I have learned from the Commissioner, as well as other departments, that we are presently making an inventory of state facilities and state owned land. Until that is completed and we are able to pinpoint any land that would be available for cemetery purposes, I would not be able to take any definite action with respect to your suggestion. When we have completed the inventory we will advise you as to what Massachusetts will be able to do.

Sincerely,

JOHN A. VOLPE, *Governor.*

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Boston, April 3, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER: This will acknowledge your recent letter to the Governor raising the question as to whether each state should donate land to the Federal government for the establishment of national cemeteries.

Your suggestion certainly merits careful consideration and for this reason the Governor has requested I forward your letter to our Commissioner of Veterans' Services for his information and recommendation.

Sincerely yours,

WILLIAM E. HAYS,
Legislative Secretary to the Governor.

APRIL 5, 1967.

Mr. WILLIAM E. HAYS,
*Legislative Secretary to the Governor,
Governor's Office,
State House,
Boston, Mass.*

DEAR MR. HAYS: This will acknowledge your letter of April 3rd, concerning a letter you received from A. Leo Anderson, National Commander of the AMVETS, with reference to the Governor raising the question as to whether each state should donate land to the Federal government for the establishment of national cemeteries.

For many years the veterans of Massachusetts have advocated and initiated action, with the primary thought in mind of establishing a national cemetery for our veterans.

National Commander Anderson's suggestion is an excellent one, and I am sure that if you were to request the agencies who might have land available, to advise you; and if such land can be set aside for a national cemetery, we can then further discuss legislation to make this possible.

Sincerely,

CHARLES N. COLLATOS, *Commissioner.*

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STATE OF MINNESOTA,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
St. Paul, April 14, 1967.

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

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: Thank you for your letter of March 23 regarding burial sites for veterans.

I have investigated the facilities here and am informed by Mr. Al G. Loehr, Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, that the total acreage of Fort Snelling National Cemetery since dedication in July of 1939 is 470 and to date only 105 of these acres are under development, and there is considerable space left in the developed portion. At the present rates of projection, the 365 undeveloped acres which remain will be more than adequate for some time. It would appear that the need is not apparent for other action at this time.

I appreciate your interest and concern.

Sincerely,

HAROLD LEVANDER, Governor.

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI,
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Jackson, April 3, 1968.

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

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: Although the need for additional land for National Cemetery use is recognized by me as a critical area. I will not be able to present such a matter to the Mississippi Legislation this year.

Our Legislature will not have a regular session during 1967, but it is conceivable that the 1968 session may consider such land acquisition favorably. You are aware, of course, that Mississippi contains National Cemeteries now.

Sincerely yours,

PAUL B. JOHNSON, Governor.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, Jefferson City, Mo., March 23, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: This is to acknowledge your letter of March 20th relative to the depletion of available burial sites in the National Cemeteries throughout the Nation.

I certainly appreciate having your advice in this matter; however, I wish that I had heard from you sooner as we have already passed the cut-off date for introduction of bills in the Missouri General Assembly.

Knowing you will understand and with kindest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

WARREN E. HEARNES.

STATE OF NEBRASKA,
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS,
May 16, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: Your letter dated 24 March 1967 addressed to Governor Tiemann was forwarded to this office for reply. We are sorry for the long delay and want to explain that it has taken this long to receive the information we requested from Fort McPherson National Cemetery at Maxwell, Nebraska.

I want to assure you that I agree with the AMVETS and other veterans organizations that the new burial policy of the Department of Defense is arbitrary and discriminatory. However, I feel this fight belongs in the hands of the veterans organizations and urge you to continue as you have been doing.

Nebraska is fortunate in having a national cemetery. As of this date there are 5,650 graves at Fort McPherson with 7,010 available grave sites. The burial rate has averaged 75 per year for the past two years. We are also fortunate that the cemetery is located in the country near Maxwell, Nebraska along the Platte river, and that there is plenty of land available that can be purchased and donated to the Department of Defense for future cemetery use, when needed.

Trusting this is the information desired, I remain,

Very truly yours,

JAMES C. SMITH, *Director.*

THE STATE OF NEVADA,
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,
Carson City, Nev., April 5, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: I have your letter of March 28th which was concerned with the establishment in Nevada of a suitable tract of Nevada land for use as a National Cemetery.

Your suggestion has considerable merit. There are vast reaches of beautiful desert land here in Nevada which could very well be used for such a purpose.

However, I should point out to you that 86% of the Nevada land area is owned by the Federal government at this time. There has been considerable agitation here for the release of some of this land to the state for local uses.

I will be very happy to cooperate with you on this project in any way that I can.

Sincerely,

PAUL LAXALT,
Governor of Nevada.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE,
Concord, March 27, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: Thank you for your letter of March 23rd. For your information, in 1966 the New Hampshire Governor and Council offered to the Secretary of the Army an eighty acre tract of state-owned land in New Hampshire for use as a cemetery for veterans throughout the New England area. The Secretary of the Army did not accept the offer stating that no cemetery expansion were being contemplated at this time.

In the meanwhile, Congressman Louis C. Wyman and James C. Cleveland, both of New Hampshire, have introduced legislation calling for the location of a cemetery in the State of New Hampshire to serve New England.

Sincerely,

JOHN W. KING.

STATE OF NEW YORK,
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,
Albany, June 27, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: Thank you for your recent letter concerning the availability of space in our national cemeteries.

I have, over the years, manifested my deep concern for the welfare of veterans and servicemen by supporting new benefits programs and continuing and expanding existing programs making available educational opportunities, real property and income tax exemptions, civil service preferences, annuities for blind veterans, vocational and rehabilitation services for veterans, and care and burial of veterans and members of their families.

With respect to the specific points raised in your letter concerning national cemeteries, there are presently three national cemeteries located in New York State, only one of which, Cypress Hills in Brooklyn, has been depleted. I am advised by the State Division of Veterans' Affairs that the others, Woodlawn

National Cemetery in Elmira, and Pinelawn National Cemetery in Farmingdale, still have a substantial number of plots available for future use.

I appreciate your interest in writing and express to you my best wishes for a successful term as National Commander of AMVETS.

Sincerely,

NELSON A. ROCKEFELLER.

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA,
EXECUTIVE OFFICE,
Bismarck, March 28, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: Thank you for your letter of March 23 suggesting that a measure be introduced in our State Legislature recommending donation to the Secretary of the Army of a suitable tract of land to be set aside and dedicated for National Cemetery use within North Dakota.

I certainly appreciate your concern for a most noble purpose. However, our Legislature has adjourned and will not again be in regular session until January of 1969. For that reason, I am very sorry that it will not be possible for us to comply with your request at this time.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM L. GUY, Governor.

STATE OF OHIO,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Columbus, March 24, 1967.

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

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: I am in receipt of your recent letter and wish to thank you for your comments regarding our Nation's National Cemetery Program. You may be assured that I will give due consideration to your sentiments should our Ohio legislature take any action in this area.

With very kind regards,

Sincerely,

JAMES A. RHODES, Governor.

STATE OF OKLAHOMA,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Oklahoma City, April 5, 1967.

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

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: Thank you for your letter of March 28.

I certainly concur with your feeling that an emergency problem will soon exist with the available burial sites in the National Cemeteries. In your letter, you requested that the State of Oklahoma donate land to establish a National Cemetery. The U.S. Government now owns a large tract of land on the site of old Fort Reno near El Reno, Oklahoma. Part of this land was originally used as a cemetery. It is my feeling that this land certainly would make an excellent site for a new cemetery without additional cost to anyone. This is located near the center of Oklahoma on U.S. Highway 66 with good access from all directions.

I feel that this would be a better solution to the problem, rather than donating new land.

Sincerely,

DEWEY F. BARTLETT, Governor.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
STATE CAPITOL,
Salem, April 10, 1967.

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

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: Thank you for your remarks relative to National cemeteries for our veterans of the Armed Forces.

You might like to know that Oregon is the site of the 201 acre Williamette National Cemetery of which 54.1 acres have been developed. There had been 18,179 burials by the first day of April. The potential is in excess of 200,000 additional grave sites.

Sincerely,

Tom McCall, Governor.

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL,
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS,
ANNVILLE, PA., April 5, 1967.

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

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: Governor Shafer has asked me to reply to your letter addressed to him on March 17, 1967.

As you well know, Governor Shafer is aware of the difficulties that veterans are experiencing in Pennsylvania in obtaining appropriate places for burial. In addition to being sympathetic to those veterans, he is most anxious to help in any program that would lead to a prompt solution.

For your possible consideration, there is a substantial tract of land, in excess of 6,800 acres, now owned by the Federal Government, which has not been used for some years and my best information is that there is no planned use for any of this ground by the Federal Government. It is just south of Williamsport, Pennsylvania. I know of no use planned for this ground by any of the local communities. It is largely unimproved and without any permanent structures as the land was acquired for ammunition storage during World War II.

This area is centrally located in Pennsylvania, is served by a good road net and might be suited for use by the Federal Government as a national cemetery. At least you and others who may be interested may think this suggestion has sufficient merit to warrant some study by the appropriate authorities.

In the meantime, you may be sure that the Governor, and more particularly this office, will continue to have this problem in mind and investigate the availability of other possible sites within the Commonwealth.

Sincerely yours,

THOMAS R. WHITE, Jr.,
Major General, AGC, PARNG,
The Adjutant General.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND & PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS,
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,
Providence, April 7, 1967.

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

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: Thank you for your letter regarding the acquisition of a suitable tract of land to be set aside and dedicated for a National Cemetery within the confines of our State.

Although it is too late in this session to recommend the legislation which you suggested, I am confident that next year such legislation will be given due consideration by this administration.

With very best wishes.

Sincerely,

JOHN H. CHAFEE, Governor.

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Pierre, April 8, 1967.

A. LEO ANDERSON,
National Commander, AMVETS,
1710 Rhode Island Avenue NW.,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter of March 28.

You may be assured of the fullest cooperation on the part of South Dakota to consider fully your program of acquiring in each state sufficient land for National Cemetery purposes.

I might advise that we already in the state of South Dakota have such facilities of this character.

Our legislative session for the year 1967 has concluded but a new session will convene in January 1968 at which time, I am sure, your request will be given the fullest attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

NILS A. BOE, *Governor.*

TENNESSEE EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,
Nashville, March 28, 1967.

Commander A. LEO ANDERSON,
*National Headquarters, AMVETS,
1710 Rhode Island Avenue NW.,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR COMMANDER ANDERSON: Thank you for your letter of March 23, concerning available burial sites in our National Cemeteries and the distressing reduction and depletion of such sites.

As you know, our General Assembly is meeting at the present time, and I note your suggestion that legislation be introduced to provide land for a National Cemetery within Tennessee.

Your suggestion appears to be quite well considered, and I am referring your letter to Mr. J. F. Hudgens, Director of the Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs. I am asking Mr. Hudgens to investigate this question and recommend appropriate action to me.

Very truly yours,

BUFORD ELLINGTON.

THE STATE OF TEXAS,
April 4, 1967.

Mr. LEO ANDERSON,
National Commander, American Veterans of World War II, National Headquarters, 1710 Rhode Island Avenue NW., Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: I received and read with much interest your letter of March 22, 1967.

While I am not familiar with all the details of this situation, I certainly will review it thoroughly and take appropriate action. Thanks for bringing this to my attention.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

JOHN CONNALLY, *Governor.*

STATE OF UTAH,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Salt Lake City, April 3, 1967.

Mr. A. LEO ANDERSON,
National Commander, AMVETS National Headquarters, 1710 Rhode Island Avenue NW., Washington, D.C.

DEAR NATIONAL COMMANDER ANDERSON: Your letter regarding the need for additional burial sites in the National Cemeteries of our nation was of interest to me.

Since your letter states that AMVETS represents about 27 million veterans, may I make this suggestion. Conduct a campaign requesting one dollar from each of the veterans that AMVETS represents and utilize this income to purchase land for National Cemeteries. If this money-raising campaign is run each year, I am sure that the income received would be sufficient to buy and maintain a great many more National Cemeteries. Thus, rather than asking our nation or state for a donation, the veteran's organizations would be contributing something of great value to our states and nation.

Cordially,

CALVIN L. RAMPTON, *Governor.*

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA,
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE,
Richmond, March 22, 1967.

Mr. A. LEO ANDERSON,
National Commander,
AMVETS,
1710 Rhode Island Avenue NW.,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: I have before me your letter of March twentieth suggesting that Virginia's General Assembly provide a tract of land for national cemetery use in Virginia.

As you know, the present Arlington National Cemetery is a part of one of Virginia's historic mansions, also named Arlington, the home of George Washington Parke Custis, grandson of Martha Custis Washington and father-in-law of Robert E. Lee. General Lee was married here and lived in the house briefly.

Virginia is proud that the grounds could serve as a final resting place for those who have given their lives in the service of their country, but since this is a National Cemetery, I am inclined to feel that its expansion should be undertaken by the government of the nation, in whose defense the sacrifices of our military men are made.

With kind regards, I am
Sincerely,

MILLS E. GODWIN, Jr.

STATE OF WASHINGTON,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Olympia, April 11, 1967.

Mr. A. LEO ANDERSON,
National Commander,
AMVETS,
1710 Rhode Island Avenue NW.,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR COMMANDER: Thank you for your letter regarding burial sites in the National Cemeteries throughout the Nation. The problem you have called to my attention is quite manifest in the Pacific Northwest. I have made the practice in recent months of extending my personal condolences to the next of kin in this area and have become increasingly aware of the growth of this problem, particularly, to the number of people in this State affected by present and past national military service.

While our 40th Legislative Session has now passed the point of considering this action in the current biennium; I have directed Mr. William Weaver, Director, Veterans Rehabilitation, to coordinate and develop through your own local chapters and the other Veterans organizations, within the State, suitable legislation to be considered that will implement the provisions of Section 271a, Chapter 7, Title 24, United States Code, at the earliest opportunity.

Your excellent suggestion is appreciated and will be acted upon.
Sincerely yours,

DANIEL J. EVANS, *Governor.*

WYOMING EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Cheyenne, April 3, 1967.

Mr. A. LEO ANDERSON,
National Commander, AMVETS, 1710 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W., Wash-
ington, D.C.

DEAR MR. ANDERSON: Thank you for your recent letter on the subject of land donations for the purpose of establishing a National Cemetery in each of the states. I am in sympathy with this approach to the expansion of the National Cemetery system.

Since the Wyoming Legislature convenes biennially, the earliest opportunity to present this proposal to the Legislature will not come until January, 1969.

With all best wishes,
Sincerely,

STAN HATHAWAY, *Governor.*

STATEMENT OF LESLIE P. BURGHOFF, JR., PRESIDENT, ACCOMPANIED BY HAROLD BENNETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; HARRY SWIGERT, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT; AND ARTHUR HAYNES, MEMBER OF THE CAPITAL AREA CHAPTER, PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA

Mr. DORN. We now have with us Mr. Leslie P. Burghoff, Jr., president of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, and we are glad to have you. You may proceed in any way you care to. If you want to summarize you may or if you want to read your full statement you may do it, but I want you to know you are most welcome and we are pleased to have you here, and I regret that the time is beginning to run out on us, but we are mighty glad to have you.

Mr. BURGHOFF. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Accompanying me today, on my right, is Mr. Harold Bennett, executive director of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, from our national office; Mr. Harry Swigert, administrative assistant at my right, and in back of the room, Mr. Arthur Haynes, member of our Capital area chapter.

Mr. Chairman and members of this esteemed committee, the Paralyzed Veterans of America is truly appreciative for the opportunity to present its legislative program which we submit for your consideration.

PVA and its 22 member chapters are intimately aware of the laudatory record of dedication and service held by this committee in its continuing effort to insure the well-being of this country's veterans. We respectfully commend you for it.

I will take this opportunity to express to you our deep-felt gratitude for your successful work in providing Public Law 90-77 which directly and specifically aides our members—those veterans in receipt of aid and attendance benefits. Many of our problem areas concerning medical supplies, prosthetics, drugs, and equal overall benefits for those who served in Vietnam have been favorably resolved legislatively, by the passage of Public Law 90-77.

The educational and vocational provisions of this law, together with the recent steps taken by the President, are indeed notable advances in aiding our returning servicemen to become a contributing factor in our American society.

MEDICAL CARE

We have noted, in each of our previous presentations to this distinguished committee, our very serious concern with the program of medical care and rehabilitation in the Veterans' Administration hospitals for veterans afflicted with spinal cord disorders.

This holds our highest priority. We have called attention to the growing shortages of professional and nonprofessional personnel on the paraplegic wards. During the past 2 years these shortages have been glaringly revealed by the influx of many veterans of the war in Vietnam who have suffered spinal cord injuries directly attributable to their active duty in service to our country.

During these past few months we have seen indications of an effort to correct these deficiencies. We are specifically pleased with the

appointment of Doctor Emanuele Mannarino as Director of Spinal Cord Injury Services. The new director has taken steps to develop a program of medical care and rehabilitation, for the veteran with a spinal cord injury, which will again reach the high level of care which was truly "second to none" immediately after World War II.

As he continues development of such a program, we urge this committee to support adequate appropriations for its fulfillment. These costs can truly be considered as continuing costs of war. I am sure we are all aware of the valid reasons for the strong support of such a program for those who have suffered such a catastrophic disability in the service of their country.

I can assure you in the matter of treatment and care for veterans afflicted with spinal cord disorder, a positive program by the Veterans' Administration will receive our full support.

COMPENSATION

The Paralyzed Veterans of America concur with the Veterans' Advisory Commission in the need for an increase in the compensation rate payable to the service-connected disabled veteran. The pilot study conducted indicated that most totally disabled veterans do not have the capacity to earn a living.

We strongly urge an adequate increase in the compensation rates, including the statutory award payable to the totally and permanently disabled veteran.

The rising wage rates coupled with the shortage of people who are willing to serve as attendants for the totally and permanently disabled veteran clearly indicates the need for a substantial increase in the aid and attendance allowance.

From the military crises which have occurred during the past year, and it appears there may be no end in the near future, our military forces are ever exposed to extra-hazardous service. It is becoming more obvious that the differentiation of wartime and peacetime compensation is archaic and obsolete.

We urge that this prejudicial treatment of some of our veterans be corrected by the enactment of legislation which will bring parity to veterans' compensation and pension benefits.

There is vital need for legislation on behalf of the newly injured in the field of compensation for his seriously disabling condition. During the years which our organization has administered a service program, we have handled several heartbreaking cases. They involved the newly injured veteran who was transferred from a military hospital.

Because it takes so much time to get his discharge from the military, and his eligibility established by the Veterans' Administration, many months may expire before he can receive any income. This lapse in income is extremely critical to the young family man who has no other means of income to support his family. Surely there must be some means of overcoming this problem administratively or legislatively.

AUTO GRANT

In 1946, \$1,600 would buy a new Ford and all the imaginable extras a dealer could put on the car in order to have the sale price match

the value of the check from Uncle Sam. Today it is impossible to buy a stripped down car for \$1,600. The paraplegic requires a trustworthy and durable two-door car with certain additional safety features.

He must have special transmission, and he must have hand controls adapted to the car. At today's list price the same car would cost more than twice as much. Therefore, we recommend that the automobile grant be increased from the present \$1,600 to a more realistic \$3,500. We also recommend that hand controls be considered a prosthetic appliance by the Veterans' Administration.

AID AND ATTENDANCE

Each member of this committee is aware of the increasing need of bedspace in our Veterans' Administration hospitals. This critical hospital problem is compounded by the serious personnel shortage and skyrocketing medical costs.

We are just as aware and perhaps more concerned when there may be a considerable number of the spinal cord injured in hospitals and nursing homes today who could be home if it were financially feasible.

During these years we have urged that more incentive be applied to those seriously disabled who could leave the hospital if they could adequately support themselves in the outside world. Sadly, we recognize that there are a number of paraplegic veterans who for some personal reason or another are unable to leave the hospital.

But there are many, especially among the young ones, who would leave—and at great savings to our Government. With these facts in mind we wish to make the following proposals in order to assure these veterans livable income outside the hospital.

(1) Increased aid and attendance allowance for the service-connected spinal cord injured veteran;

(2) That veterans eligible for compensation and aid and attendance be furnished any type of therapeutic or rehabilitative device and medical care for non-service-connected ailments on the same basis as the veteran who is eligible for pension and aid and attendance;

(3) Enactment of legislation which would authorize a paraplegic rehabilitation allowance of \$100 per month, in addition to other benefits payable, for the non-service-connected spinal cord injured veteran;

(4) Administration of pension benefits, on a basis similar to veterans under the old protected pension law, to those receiving benefits under Public Law 86-211 when hospitalized;

(5) Exclusion of social security disability benefits in the computation of annual income;

(6) Exclusion, in the computation of annual income, of all costs for medicine and drugs, medical care, supplies, and prosthetic equipment which is not provided by the Veterans Administration;

(7) Exclusion, in the computation of annual income, of transportation and other costs incurred from voluntary service to any non-profit hospital or clinic, or other program in which the Federal Government has a vested interest;

(8) Recognition of service in the Women's Auxiliary Corps for the purpose of veterans benefits.

SURVIVORS BENEFITS

In an earlier paragraph, I stated our concern over the welfare of those who will survive us.

Mr. Chairman, because of the extent of our disabilities, the greatest majority of us cannot obtain life insurance. For the same reason we cannot obtain mortgage insurance on our homes. Unless we pay off these mortgages in our lifetimes, which most of us cannot do, our survivors are saddled with these debts.

Upon death, the tangible income of the family is immediately reduced by almost 80 percent. For this reason, we urge your most serious consideration of a substantial increase in dependency and indemnity compensation.

The spinal cord injury is not merely a broken bone or a severed spinal cord. It is not merely sensory or motor loss. It is a whole succession of events including metabolic changes, bowel and bladder dysfunction, atrophy, pain, spasm, decubiti, contractures—to mention only a few. Death can be caused by one or several interrelated conditions.

We question how medical pathology can accurately determine the actual cause of death where spinal cord injury is concerned. And we question how, among all these concurrent factors one can be singled out and determined to be not related to the original injury.

For this reason, Mr. Chairman, we believe that the death of any veteran who suffered spinal cord injury or disease as a result of his military service should be considered to be of service-connected origin.

DUAL BENEFITS

We most strongly oppose all bills such as H.R. 13643 whose intent is to eliminate certain duplicate benefits received from different departments of the Federal Government. For the same reason we reject the practice of considering social security as income, in the computation of annual income for veterans pension we must oppose the moves that have been made to restrict the payment of the lump-sum death benefit to either the Veterans' Administration or the Social Security Administration, but not both.

We stand on record as opposing any prohibition against the payment of other benefits due the veteran from more than one agency of the Federal Government.

HOUSING

In February of this year we recorded with the Subcommittee on Housing, of this committee, several recommendations on this subject. For the sake of time we shall only list them briefly here.

(1) We fully support the recommendations of the President that the guaranteed portion of a G.I. loan should be increased from \$7,500 to \$10,000 and commend this committee for its favorable action taken on this matter.

(2) For the same reason that request was made, we urge the increase of the special grant for wheelchair housing under Public Law 702 from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

(3) For those who cannot obtain home loans from the normal channels, for the financing of the other portion of the cost of their

wheelchair homes, we recommend legislation which would make these seriously disabled eligible for the direct loan privilege of the Veterans' Administration which is now available to veterans in rural communities only.

(4) We urge consideration of a plan whereby financial assistance might be given those veterans who require specially adapted wheelchair housing, but are not eligible for the special Veterans' Administration grant, and do not have the financial means to alter an existing home or apartment to which they can move after hospitalization.

Mr. Chairman, those members of our organization who are married and have children are particularly concerned about the economical crisis which our wives and children become heir to upon our demise, which is, more often than not, very sudden. Any check that is received after the veteran's death must be returned.

Several months may pass before the proper paperwork is completed enabling the widow to receive dependency and indemnity compensation. We have a thought for some relief of the economical plight of these survivors. As we have said, veterans with our disabilities cannot get life insurance, and we cannot get mortgage insurance on our homes.

Would it prove too costly to establish some program whereby the Veterans' Administration, or some other branch or department of the Federal Government, could provide such mortgage insurance? It would indeed be a great service in time of extreme need. In many cases, it would actually save the home of these survivors.

CABINET RANK FOR VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION

We strongly support the establishment of cabinet rank for the Veterans' Administration. This department solely represents a large segment of the population and administers an annual budget greater than the majority of departments now of Cabinet rank.

It operates the largest single medical program in the country, if not the world, and is the third largest employer among our Federal agencies. We believe that the inclusion of the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs among the President's closest advisers, will add strength, integrity, and sagacity to that already esteemed group.

SUMMARY

The other legislative interests of our organization, Mr. Chairman, have been individually recorded with the appropriate subcommittees of your whole committee.

Mr. Chairman, we are gratified by the attention this committee affords the programs for the paralyzed veteran. We are humble but pleased and honored that the U.S. House of Representatives has recognized our organization's service to and responsibility for the spinal cord injured veteran by passing H.R. 11131, a bill to grant a Federal charter to the Paralyzed Veterans of America.

We pledge our continued efforts to better serve our members and to support our country in the cause of freedom wherever or whenever it may be challenged.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DORN. Thank you, Mr. President, for a very excellent statement. Mr. Pucinski.

Mr. PUCINSKI. Mr. Burghoff, I think you raised some extremely interesting points here. I could only repeat to you what I said earlier, it is important for organizations like yours to testify before this committee. You live with these problems. You see these problems day-in and day-out.

I think it is very important for us in Congress to know your thinking and your statement certainly raises many of the problems confronting the paralyzed veterans. I want to congratulate you for it.

Thank you very much.

Mr. DORN. Thank you.

Mr. Fino.

Mr. FINO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the president of the PVA for appearing before the committee. We certainly appreciate your statement. I was particularly interested in your statement on page 4 where you speak of the time between the discharge of a veteran from the hospital and eligibility for an income from the VA. I think, in line with this problem, the Veterans' Administration, which as I understand is pretty efficient, will work as fast as possible to make sure the veteran will be given his income as soon as possible.

The real problem lies with the military getting the record and forwarding it directly to the Veterans' Administration. I think it is a matter that should be brought to the attention of the Armed Services Committee to get them to push a little harder for these people over at the Pentagon and work a little faster.

Mr. DORN. Mr. Halpern.

Mr. HALPERN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to express my enthusiastic commendation for your fine presentation and for the soundness and equity in your proposal. I think all of these fellows deserve this and I want to associate myself with your views and express my fullest assurance of support.

I was particularly pleased to note your recommendation to give cabinet rank to the Veterans Administration. This has long been an objective of mine, in fact, ever since I came to the Congress and ever since I became a member of this committee, and in fact, at a State legislature session I introduced a resolution in regard to Congress taking this action, so I am glad to see that the U.S. Veterans' Advisory Commission came out so strongly for this recommendation.

This agency touches directly on the lives of a vast majority of the American people and has reached a point now, where for the many reasons you have stated, it should be given a Cabinet rating. Particularly, I should say an agency so vital to American lives should be given and enjoy agency status.

This agency should be heard at the highest council of our Government at the Cabinet level and I am glad for this recommendation and extend my best to your fine organization and wish to commend you for the work you have done.

Mr. DORN. Thank you, Mr. Halpern, and thank you, Mr. President.

Now, if your group would remain, we have one more witness from the Veterans of World War I, and the Chair would appreciate this, because we are running a little behind here.

STATEMENT OF W. ED HUDSON, NATIONAL QUARTERMASTER OF THE VETERANS OF WORLD WAR I OF THE U.S.A.

Mr. DORN. The Chair would like to state that our next witness, National Commander Philip O'Brien, of the Veterans of World War I, has been called out of the city and could not be with us this morning. Also, the national legislative director recently, I believe, had a heart attack and he is not with us and we wish for him a very quick and speedy recovery, but we are happy to have with us this morning Mr. W. Ed Hudson, national quartermaster of the Veterans of World War I, and we are certainly glad to have you and you have a statement, I see, which is rather brief, and you may proceed in any manner you wish.

Mr. HUDSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of this distinguished committee. Four of the five points in our legislative program have been recommended by the President's Veterans' Advisory Commission. We definitely feel, considering the very low income of our group of veterans of World War I, that social security or public and private retirement plans should not be counted as income against the veteran for pension purposes.

We fully realize that this could change drastically in connection with the veterans of World War II or veterans from later wars in the sense that social security and other incomes could be considerably increased from what they are at the present time, and most of the veterans of World War II will not reach the age of 65 for approximately 20 years.

We are particularly concerned at the present time with the law that says that the veterans shall fill out an income questionnaire once a year. This has become a terrific burden on the aging veteran of World War I. In thousands of cases, these veterans are not able to drive a car, nor are they able to use other modes of transportation available to consult the county service officer with regard to filling out these income questionnaires.

With H.R. 12555 becoming a law January 1, 1969, these veterans are going to be more confused than ever, and many of them will have their pensions stopped simply because they do not know how to compute their income with the addition of the increase in social security.

There is no justification in the national commander's mind or in the minds of the Veterans of World War I for such a program to be continued. It is not reasonable to expect that a veteran of 72, after filing an income questionnaire for 2 years previous, would have any source of revenue that would increase his income for pension purposes.

It is a known fact that the World War I pensioner is faced with the increased cost of drugs and medicines which has eaten into his pension, in some cases, 25 percent, so we request that after the age of 72, if he has been on the pension rolls for 2 years, his income questionnaire be eliminated.

The administration of the income questionnaire is estimated to cost the Government \$5 million a year. We would like to refer you to a bill that has just recently been introduced by Hon. William C. Wampler, of Virginia, H.R. 16141, which covers this provision.

We also feel very definitely, and we feel very strongly, that the pauper's oath has no place in any veteran's program. In the Veterans'

Advisory Commission's report, it states the veteran should not be considered in the same class as those on public welfare, and again, we feel very definitely and have always felt very definitely, that this clause should be eliminated from any and all pension programs.

These two points in our legislative program we feel should be removed from the law, and it should be done this year. Of course, we feel that our entire legislative program—and again, let me repeat that four of our legislative points have been recommended by the Veterans' Advisory Commission—is a reasonable program to fit the current needs of the Veterans of World War I, and we certainly hope that the Veterans' Affairs Committee will give this legislative program their serious consideration, particularly, and let us put particular emphasis on these two points in our program that have caused quite a bit of concern in our veterans' group.

We sincerely appreciate this opportunity to appear before this distinguished committee to present the legislative program of the Veterans of World War I.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM OF THE VETERANS OF WORLD WAR I, USA, INC.

1. We propose the elimination of social security and other retirement programs to which the veteran has contributed for consideration as income for the purpose of qualifying for pension.

(a) The corpus of estate should not be counted for pension purposes.

(b) We believe the present law pertaining to spouses' income where income about \$1,200 is counted as income against the veteran is unrealistic and we propose this amount be raised to \$2,000.

(c) We believe that income limitations should be set at \$2,400 if single for veteran and widow, and \$3,600 for married with dependents.

(d) An escalation clause for compensation and pensions according to the cost-of-living index.

(e) A cost-of-living increase for all veterans and widows under the law in effect as of June 30, 1960, should be granted.

(f) Eliminate the annual financial report when veteran reaches age 67.

2. Increase in the basic rate of compensation payments for service-connected veterans, and statutory awards.

3. Elimination of the so-called pauper's oath for purpose of entering Veterans' Administration hospitals.

VETERANS OF WORLD WAR I OF THE U.S.A., INC.,
Washington, D.C., April 19, 1968.

HON. OLIN E. TEAGUE, M.C.,
Chairman, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, 2311 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR CHAIRMAN TEAGUE: We are deeply appreciative of the Organization's opportunity to appear before your Committee on April 4, to present our Legislative Program. We would like to call to your attention, Mr. Chairman, as well as all the distinguished Members of your Veterans' Affairs Committee, two points in our program which we feel are of vital importance to the older veterans.

1. The income questionnaire that is sent out from the Veterans' Administration every year inquiring as to the annual income of the veterans who are on the pension rolls.

We feel very definitely that, after a veteran has reached the age of 72 and has been on the pension rolls for two years or more, that his income has become static. Many of the older veterans on pension have their pension stopped every year, at least temporarily, because they are confused and do not fill out the income

questionnaire properly. These veterans, in some cases, live from 10-15-20 miles away from the County Service Officer. It has come to our attention that in the Metropolitan area of Washington, alone 2600 veterans or widows are in this category at the present time. We feel that this is an injustice to the older, often confused veteran of 72. It would not entail any increase in expense; on the other hand, it would reduce the expenses of administering this program.

2. The so-called "Pauper's Oath" for admittance into a Veterans' Administration Hospital.

Many of our older veterans, although entitled to this service in the Veterans' Administration Hospital, are fearful of taking advantage of it, even though their income is not sufficient for them to go into a private hospital.

We feel that these two points in our program should be taken care of at this session of Congress, as our veterans are passing away so rapidly that time is of the essence. These recommendations have been endorsed by all Veterans' Organizations, as well as the Veterans' Advisory Commission, and we would hope that on these two points, action would be taken before adjournment of the 90th Congress.

Respectfully yours,

PHILIP F. O'BRIEN, *National Commander.*

4. Outpatient care and medicines for veterans and widows over 65.

(a) Nursing home care under the VA to be expanded to 8,000 beds in addition to an increase in contract nursing home beds. Eliminate 6 months clause in nursing home care.

5. National cemeteries should be established in Alaska and other areas. National cemeteries should be enlarged, and new ones should be established where the need is greatest according to veteran population.

(a) In view of modern cost of living, burial allowance of \$250 is unrealistic, and we believe this should be established in the amount of \$350.

(b) We vigorously protest the discrimination in effect with regard to Arlington National Cemetery and recommend that burial space be made available to all veterans without restrictions until filled, after which it should become a national shrine. All national cemeteries should be turned over to, and handled by, the Veterans' Administration.

And representing the organization of the Veterans of World War I, I and our national adjutant and our secretary, Mrs. Iversen, give to you our sincere thanks for this opportunity to appear.

Mr. DORN. We want to thank you and this good lady back here, too, for this fine statement and the rest of it will appear in the record without any objection from the committee, along with any other material you might care to submit.

Mr. Pucinski.

Mr. PUCINSKI. I would like to join the chairman in commending you for your excellent statement. You might like to know in my district, Jefferson Barracks is the most vocal and hard-working veterans group in the district, with all due respect to the others. Some of these fellows out there are always working very hard for veterans' causes.

I will be happy to send them your testimony today.

Mr. HUDSON. Thank you, Mr. Congressman.

Mr. DORN. Mr. Fino.

Mr. FINO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, too, want to join the Congressman in complimenting you for appearing before the committee and want to say your budget request this morning is very reasonable and I think it is a fair and equitable

request to make of the committee. I am sure the committee will endeavor to see that it is carried out.

Mr. DORN. Mr. Halpern.

Mr. HALPERN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I must say, looking at the representative who has testified here this morning, that he looks more like a veteran of World War II. I certainly agree with your views on these things and I want to commend you for a fine statement.

Mr. DORN. Thank you, and again I want to compliment all of you gentlemen for having such a charming lady to assist you, and the committee appreciates her work also.

If there is nothing further, the committee will stand adjourned until further call of the Chair.

(Whereupon, at 11:45 a.m., the committee adjourned, subject to the call of the Chair.)



