

American people. We have never been reluctant to oppose those benefits that were not in the best interest of the Nation. We are proud of the designation "Americans first."

By the same token, we have defended and will continue to defend and support requests for legitimate veterans benefits.

Basically, these programs should include:

(1) The right of a veteran, as a matter of law, to be entitled to be buried in a national cemetery close to his home with an adequate allowance being provided for his burial.

(2) Hospitalization and medical treatment with an eye to future needs in the field of nursing home care and utilization of existing hospital facilities to the fullest by extending medical and hospital benefits to widows and wives and children of 100-percent disabled veterans. AMVETS reiterates its position in support of this concept with supporting legislation.

(3) Adequate compensation payments for those disabled in service and the survivors of those who died as a result of service connected causes, with periodic increases commensurate with cost of living fluctuations.

(4) Adequate opportunity for readjustment to civil life for veterans and recently discharged veterans.

The veteran population has been increasing by about 1 million a year currently with a present veteran population of 26,644,000; this figure includes 8 million post-Korean veterans.

(5) Pensions to nonservice connected veterans in need by virtue of disability and unemployability.

(6) Special assistance, including priorities and preferences in obtaining suitable, gainful employment.

To implement these objectives, AMVETS, based on convention mandates passed in New Orleans, La., at the 24th annual convention, recommended the following:

I. NATIONAL CEMETERIES

In support of the proposition that every deceased veteran be accorded the privilege of a grave site in a national cemetery close to his home and an adequate burial allowance be made available.

AMVETS again reiterates its support of the six recommendations contained in the report of the U.S. Veterans Advisory Commission contained in recommendation No. 26 of that report, that is:

(1) That the entire Federal cemetery function, with exceptions of Department of Interior closed cemeteries, be reassigned to the Veterans' Administration;

(2) That, without delay, the Administrator of Veterans Affairs conduct a study on methods of providing burial grounds for all veterans convenient to their homes;

(3) That the Administrator establish uniform criteria for eligibility for burial in the Federal cemetery system;

(4) That Arlington National Cemetery be reopened to all eligible veterans until it is completely filled;

(5) That the burial allowance for veterans be increased from the current \$250 to \$400; and