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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
WASHINGTON OFFICE

*Amer  
Legion*

September 7, 1982

Mr. Morton C. Blackwell  
Special Assistant  
Office of Public Liaison  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Morton:

Enclosed is a photo and biography of the newly elected National Commander of The American Legion.

Mr. Al Keller is from Kankakee, Illinois and I thought it would be useful for you to have this information available in your files.

I would appreciate visiting with you in the near future about setting a date for our Commander to pay a courtesy call upon the President of the United States.

Sincerely,

Mylio S. Kraja  
Executive Director

Enclosure



*Chase*  
WASHINGTON D.C.



AL KELLER JR.  
NATIONAL COMMANDER  
THE AMERICAN LEGION  
(Biographical Sketch)

Al Keller Jr., 57, Kankakee, Ill., has been elected the American Legion's new national commander for 1982-83.

As the chief executive officer of the 2.6-million member American Legion--the nation's largest veterans organization--Keller will visit nearly every state in the union and several foreign countries during the year.

He was a gunner on a B-24 in the European Theater with the Army Air Force and flew 16 combat missions in World War II. He was a prisoner of war for a few weeks prior to the end of the war.

Born in Peoria, Ill., he enrolled in agriculture courses at the University of Illinois.

His professional career includes being a cost accountant for a major corporation and an office manager and accountant for a construction company.

He began a civil service career as administrative assistant for the Kankakee County Board, an accountant for the American Red Cross, and returned to local government as chief deputy county clerk. Presently, he is administrative assistant for Kankakee County.

Keller has been an active Legionnaire for 28 years beginning with Post No. 85, Kankakee, which he served as post commander and adjutant. He also served as post service officer. For a number of years, he has been involved in American Legion Baseball.

He also served the Legion's Illinois Department as district commander, department vice commander and department commander. He also served on the department's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission for several years.

He was a member of the Legion's national Americanism commission until his election to national commander.

Keller is a member of the Kankakee Elks Lodge and the Disabled American Veterans and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Keller and his wife, Genevieve, have two sons.

(end)



*For God and Country*



**THE  
AMERICAN  
LEGION**

# NEWS RELEASE

NEWS HOTLINE (800) 428-2686  
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CONTACT: MIKE ALEXANDER--CHICAGO

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Date of Origin: Aug. 26, 1982

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHICAGO--Al Keller Jr., Kankakee, Ill., has been elected the American Legion's national commander for 1982-83. He succeeds Jack W. Flynt, Dimmitt, Tex.

As the chief executive officer of the 2.6-million member American Legion--the nation's largest veterans organization--Keller will visit nearly every state in the union and several foreign countries during the year.

He was a gunner on a B-24 with the Army Air Force and flew 16 combat missions in World War II. He was a prisoner of war.

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He began a civil service career as administrative assistant for the Kankakee County Board, an accountant for the American Red Cross, and returned to local government as chief deputy county clerk. Presently, he is administrative assistant for Kankakee County.

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(more)

Al Keller Jr. -- 2

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Keller is a member of the Kankakee Elks Lodge and the Disabled American Veterans and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Keller and his wife, Genevieve, have two sons.

# The American Legion



DATE 2/10

TO Maiselle

FROM Mylio Kraja

Remarks:

Please Answer
Please Discuss With
For Approval
For Attention
For Information
Note and Forward to File
Note and Return to Sender

*Per your telephone request (grouped by program division)*

For Comment
For Your Recommendation
For Investigation
Please Give Me Facts so I can Answer
For Your Signature
Please Prepare Reply for My Signature



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

*file  
Am  
Legion*

RESOLUTION: No. 43

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: URGE THE VA TO PLAN AND DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE PROGRAM AND RELATED SERVICES FOR THE AGING VETERAN

WHEREAS, the veteran population in the United States is rapidly approaching 30 million, the average age of the WW I Veteran is approaching 85, and the average age of the 12.5 million WW II veterans is approximately 60; and

WHEREAS, by the year 2000 the number of veterans over age 65 will triple; and

WHEREAS, at that time those over 65 years of age will represent 51 percent of all males in that age group; and

WHEREAS, such veterans who no longer need to worry about financing their own education or finding a job, will have reached a new phase with different concerns and priorities; and

WHEREAS, within the next 10 years the Veterans Administration will have to change its configuration of services to be able to counsel and assist this large number of aging veterans; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is acutely aware of the need for these new services that will have to be developed, and that every effort must be made to assist these aging veterans, thus helping them to live out their remaining years in comfort and dignity; now, therefore be, it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion urge the Veterans Administration to prepare and submit to the Congress a comprehensive plan that would detail its proposals to deliver health care and related services to the aging veteran.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 54

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: OPPOSE THOSE REORGANIZATION PLANS THAT WOULD TRANSFER FROM  
THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION SOLE JURISDICTION OF ANY VETERANS  
BENEFITS AND SERVICE PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the Veterans Administration was especially created for or concerned in the administration of all laws relating to the relief and other benefits provided by the law for veterans, their dependents, and their beneficiaries; and

WHEREAS, from time to time, legislative or administrative reorganization plans are presented to merge jurisdiction and administration of veterans programs with those provided for non-veterans and under the administration of another Federal agency; and

WHEREAS, it is the consensus of The American Legion that the Veterans Administration must be continued as the one independent agency in the Executive Branch of the Federal Government for the administration and execution of veterans benefits and service programs provided by law for veterans, their dependents, and their survivors; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion shall continue to exert every effort, influence, and resource to assure rejection of those reorganization plans that would transfer from the Veterans Administration sole jurisdiction of any veterans benefits and service programs; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that The American Legion shall support continuation of the Veterans Administration as the sole independent agency in the Executive Branch of the Federal Government responsible for the administration and execution of benefits and service programs provided by law for veterans, their dependents, and survivors.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 56

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: OPPOSE ANY PROPOSAL THAT WOULD CONSOLIDATE OR CENTRALIZE THE OPERATIONS OF THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION REGIONAL OFFICES

WHEREAS, it has been proposed to consolidate the majority of the operations of the Veterans Administration Regional Offices into one or a maximum of three centralized locations; and

WHEREAS, such a proposal is neither reasonable nor practical; and

WHEREAS, if any such proposal becomes a reality, it will seriously effect the role that veteran organizations play in the daily operation of the Veterans Administration Regional Offices; and

WHEREAS, any such action would eliminate the individual and personal representation in the presentation of claims in behalf of claimants before the Veterans Administration; and

WHEREAS, any such proposal is unnecessary because it would not improve the service capability of the Veterans Administration; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion believes that any such centralization of the Regional Offices would involve large expenditures of Federal funds and is not cost-effective; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion oppose any proposal, from whatever source, that would consolidate or centralize the operations of the Veterans Administration Regional Offices.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 112

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: URGE CONGRESS TO ADEQUATELY FUND THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION  
HEALTH CARE SYSTEM CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Veterans Administration construction appropriation provides for renovation and replacement, as needed, of the physical plant of the VA health care delivery system; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Administration health care system is comprised of 172 hospitals, 226 outpatient clinics, 92 nursing home care units, and 16 domiciliaries; and

WHEREAS, within this VA health care system there are aging facilities that need replacement, renovation, modernization, reconfiguration and improvements relating to fire, safety and privacy standards, to make them suitable for the practice of modern medicine; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion urges the Congress, in its annual appropriations to provide funds to enable the Veterans Administration to carry out a planned program of maintaining an up-to-date system of health care facilities, and one suited to its mission of providing medical services for the nation's veterans.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 119

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: OPPOSE LEGISLATION PROVIDING FOR THIRD PARTY REIMBURSEMENT OF COST OF MEDICAL CARE PROVIDED BY THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION TO VETERANS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR AND APPLY FOR SUCH CARE

WHEREAS, the term "third party reimbursement," as it is used in veterans affairs refers to a proposed right of the United States to recover the costs of hospital, nursing home, our outpatient medical care furnished by the Veterans Administration to veterans for nonservice-connected disabilities to the extent that they have health insurance or similar contracts or rights with respect to such care; and

WHEREAS, legislation to establish third party reimbursement would require the rewriting of every private health insurance contract that is now held by any veteran, because such contracts universally include a clause exempting the carrier from reimbursing the cost of medical care delivered by a Federal institution; and

WHEREAS, the health insurance industry may be expected to challenge the constitutionality of any third party reimbursement legislation as an unwarranted Federal interference in contractual arrangements between private parties; and

WHEREAS, in connection with any third party reimbursement legislation there will be further dispute concerning any cost formulas for VA health care, which the government may develop on which to base claims for reimbursement from third party insurers; and

WHEREAS, complicated problems involving cost formulas, quality controls and distribution of services would have to be resolved before third party reimbursement legislation could be implemented; and

WHEREAS, the resolution of such problems could involve the Public Health Service of the Department of Health and Human Services; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has consistently opposed the involvement of the Department of Health and Human Services in any aspect of the veterans medical care program, perceiving such involvement as posing a real danger to the integrity of the veterans medical care program as one

(Res. 119- continued)

to be maintained and operated by the Veterans Administration, exclusively for the nation's veterans; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion continues to adhere to the position that the veterans medical care program operated by VA is a benefit, freely and justifiably provided by a grateful nation to its war veterans, and such program, therefore, should not be associated with contributory health care programs or insurance, funded and operated from the private sector, for profit; and

WHEREAS, overall, The American Legion perceives any proposal of third party reimbursement as posing a direct threat to the integrity of the veterans medical care program now operated by VA; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion opposes the enactment of legislation providing for third party reimbursement of the cost of medical care provided by the Veterans Administration to veterans who are eligible for and apply for such care.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 126

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: URGE THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE CONGRESS TO  
PROVIDE FULL FUNDING FOR ALL VETERANS PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the Act of July 3, 1930, authorized the establishment of the Veterans Administration as an independent agency in the Executive Branch of the Government; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Administration was especially created to coordinate and consolidate Federal activities in the administration of laws providing benefits for veterans; and

WHEREAS, the laws administered by the Veterans Administration authorizing benefits for former members of the Armed Forces, for their dependents and for beneficiaries of deceased former members of such forces are classified into the following general categories:

- Compensation for service-connected disabilities and death
- Pensions for income maintenance of veterans and survivors
- Educational and training assistance and loans
- Servicemen's Life Insurance-Veterans Life Insurance
- Hospital and medical care services
- Nursing Home and domiciliary care, including State Veterans Home construction funds
- Health manpower training
- Medical and prosthetic research
- Burial benefits; and

WHEREAS, for several years the Office of Management and Budget of the Executive Branch has engaged in systematic attempts to reduce appropriations for Veterans Administration General Operating Expenses, Medical and Hospital Care, Medical and Prosthetic Research, Medical and Miscellaneous Operating Expenses, and construction of major and minor facilities; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Administration compiled and projected statistics indicated that 30 million veterans have potential eligibility for benefits of one type or another, and counting dependents and survivors that about 44 percent of the total population of the United States are potential recipients of benefits and associated services administered by the Veterans Administration; and

(Res.126-continued)

WHEREAS, any reduction in appropriations and outlays for the Veterans Administration recommended by the Office of Management and Budget may be effected only by cutting service to eligible veterans in the areas associated with medical care, medical administration, medical and prosthetic research, general operating expenses (the fund account providing administrative and operating expenses of the Adjudication services), and delay needed modification, modernization, and construction of hospital and nursing bed care facilities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion call to the attention of the President of the United States, and of Congress, that the benefits provided by law to veterans, their dependents and beneficiaries, are in fulfillment of a sacred obligation of the nation to its defenders, and are not to be sacrificed on the altar of fiscal austerity; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that The American Legion make known to all officers of government that it stands for full funding for veterans programs; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, that The American Legion urge the President of the United States and the Congress to assign the highest budgetary priority to the provisions of funds for the administration and delivery of veterans benefits, and all activities appertaining thereto.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 141

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: OPPOSE LEGISLATION WHICH WOULD AUTHORIZE JUDICIAL REVIEW OF  
THE DECISIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, The American Legion is committed to the interests and the well-being of all veterans, their dependents and survivors who seek benefits from the Veterans Administration; and

WHEREAS, from the time of its founding, The American Legion has provided direct assistance to veterans, their dependents and survivors in filing, developing and presenting claims for benefits from the VA without cost to the veteran, and without regard to membership in The American Legion; and

WHEREAS, the experience of The American Legion in more than sixty years of claims work has demonstrated that the present system of claims that is administered by VA works to the best advantage of the claimants in that it does not involve cost to the veteran, is not an adversary proceeding and permits the informal presentation of evidence that operates to the advantage of the claimant; and

WHEREAS, there has been introduced in the Congress, legislation that would permit claimants for benefits from VA to institute litigation in the Federal courts, in furtherance of their claims; and

WHEREAS, such litigation is presently not permitted by reason of the provisions of Section 211(a) of Title 38, United States Code, which provisions modify existing law; and

WHEREAS, all claimants seeking benefits from VA have the right, as do all citizens, to seek judicial relief in matters involving their constitutional rights; and

WHEREAS, the principal reason advanced in support of judicial review of veterans claims is to insure the claimant's access to due process; and

WHEREAS, on the basis of its long experience in claims work, The American Legion is convinced that claimants presently receive more consideration under due process within the VA system of adjudication of

(Res.141-continued)

claims than would be provided by judicial review, given the facts that judicial review would place the claimant in an adversary relationship with the government, and would require the claimant to adhere to the rules of evidence in support of the claim, which is not presently the case within the VA adjudication system; and

WHEREAS, under the doctrine of "res judicata" a court decision would preclude a reopening of the claim on the veteran's part, as contrasted by the VA's rules and practices which permit almost unlimited reconsiderations; and

WHEREAS, the prospect of the claimant paying in any fashion to obtain benefits due him from the Government of the United States as would have to be done in the instance of litigation, is abhorrent to The American Legion; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion shall continue to oppose the enactment of any measure that would amend 38 USC 211 (a), so as to authorize judicial review of the decisions of the Administrator of Veterans Affairs except as presently authorized in 38 USC 755 and 784, and Chapter 37 of such title.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 181

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: OPPOSE ANY ATTEMPT TO ELIMINATE OR DELAY RENOVATION OR  
REPLACEMENT PROJECTS AT VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL  
CENTERS

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WHEREAS, the Administrator of Veterans Affairs has suspended the ongoing construction program for Veterans Administration medical facilities commencing with FY 1984, pending re-examination of each project as to its perceived need and justification; and

WHEREAS, this action as reportedly taken by the Administrator as the result of his feelings that the VA medical construction program is based to a large degree on local politics; and

WHEREAS, the VA medical facility system is a multi-billion dollar capital investment on the Federal Government; and

WHEREAS, many of the facilities are old, deteriorating, outdated or not suited to the practice of modern medicine; and the system is in need of constant renovation and replacement; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Medicine and Surgery maintains a five year plan for renovation and replacement of VA medical care facilities; and

WHEREAS, said five year plan undergoes stringent Congressional oversight before funds are appropriated for the purpose of construction; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion monitors the VA construction program as it pertains to medical care facilities through site visits by Field Representatives and input provided by Department Service Officers and other American Legion officials; and

WHEREAS, further delay in planned construction projects will only lead to increases in costs, reductions in the size of the projects, or both; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion believes that in order to protect the capital investment of the Federal Government, and to continue the provision of modern high quality medical care to veterans, the renovation and replacement of antiquated and outmoded facilities must continue as planned; now, therefore, be it



(Res.181-continued)

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion continues to support the ongoing renovation and replacement program of the Department of Medicine and Surgery of the Veterans Administration, as an essential program to maintain the viability of the VA's medical care program for sick and disabled veterans; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that The American Legion urges the Administrator of Veterans Affairs to proceed without delay to authorize and seek funding for the renovation, replacement, expansion when necessary, and improvement of the medical facilities of the VA, as these have been verified through the Department of Medicine and Surgery five year plan and the oversight of Congress.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 284

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: SUPPORT LEGISLATION SO AS TO MAKE THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION  
AN EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

WHEREAS, the Veterans Administration is an independent agency in the Executive Branch of the Government, especially created for the administration of laws relating to the benefits provided veterans, their dependents, and survivors at the cost of \$25 billion per year; and

WHEREAS, the Administrator of Veterans Affairs is the head of the Veterans Administration and is appointed by the President, by and with the advice of the Senate; and

WHEREAS, the Administrator under the direction of the President, is responsible for the proper execution and administration of all laws administered by the Veterans Administration and for control, direction, and management of the Veterans Administration; and

WHEREAS, the Administrator serves as the advisor on veterans affairs to the President of the United States; and

WHEREAS, there is a veteran population in civilian life of more than thirty million; and

WHEREAS, veterans and their dependents and the survivors of deceased veterans bring the potential beneficiary population up to about 45 percent of the population of the United States; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for consistency and common purpose between the many benefits and rights established by the Congress of the United States for veterans of service in the Armed Forces and for their dependents and for the survivors of deceased former members; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion believes there should be a clear cut channel by which the Administrator of Veterans Affairs can regularly supply facts and counsel to the President and, in turn, receive the President's guidance and support; now, therefore, be it

(Res. 284- continued)

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion support legislation to amend 38 USC so as to make to Veterans Administration an Executive Department.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 394

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: SPONSOR AND SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO RESTORE THE PAYMENT OF  
BURIAL ALLOWANCE FOR VETERANS TO \$400 PLUS THE \$150 PLOT  
ALLOWANCE

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WHEREAS, the authorization for payment of burial allowance upon the death of a nonservice-connected veteran originated with the enactment of the "World War Veterans Act of 1924," Public Law 242, 68th Congress; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of such allowance is to enable the survivors or next of kin of the deceased veteran to arrange a funeral and burial consistent with the dignity and esteem in which war veterans are held; and

WHEREAS, burial allowance has been payable regardless of the income or social standing of the veteran at the time of death, consistent with The American Legion's philosophy of equal benefits for equal service; and

WHEREAS, Congress has adopted and the President has signed legislation to eliminate this benefit for most beneficiaries; and

WHEREAS, funeral expenses have increased considerably since the payment of burial allowance was increased from \$150 to \$300 as authorized by Congress; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion rejects the proposition that the burial allowance provided to veterans through the Veterans Administration duplicates the Social Security Burial Allowance, because the Social Security burial allowance is an earned benefit to which the beneficiary has contributed through Social Security taxes, whereas the veterans burial allowance is a benefit provided in recognition of honorable service performed in the Armed Forces of the United States; and

WHEREAS, many families of veterans are in poor financial circumstances, having little or no means to provide a decent and respectable funeral for the veterans to which they are justly entitled; now, therefore, be it

(Res. 394- continued)

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion sponsor and support legislation to amend Title 38, United States Code, to restore the payment of burial allowance for all veterans who have served honorably in time of war or national emergency; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that The American Legion oppose any effort to associate with or substitute the veterans burial allowance with the Social Security burial allowance; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, that The American Legion sponsor and support legislation to increase the burial allowance for veterans to \$400 plus the \$150 plot allowance.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 396

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: URGE CONGRESS TO AUTHORIZE ADEQUATE BUDGET FUNDING FOR THE  
VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, appropriations for Veterans Administration medical research provides support for health service research projects at VA hospitals and clinics for improving the effectiveness and economy of delivery of health services and improving the accessibility of services to veterans; and

WHEREAS, objectives of the medical research programs are directed toward their important impact upon the Veterans Administration hospital patient care and teaching programs; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Administration medical research programs contribute materially to the health care of veterans and the nation as a whole by generating new knowledge; and

WHEREAS, the excellence of the Veterans Administration medical research programs is attested to by the recognition of VA researchers on a national and international scale; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is concerned that the proposed budget for medical research in the VA for the current fiscal year submitted by the President would do great harm to the high quality of VA medical research; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion shall urge the Congress to authorize adequate budget funding in the current fiscal year and in the future years of the Veterans Administration medical research programs.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 409

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: THE AMERICAN LEGION POLICY ON RADIATION EXPOSURE CASES

WHEREAS, during the period 1945-1962, according to the Department of Energy, there were approximately 200 atmospheric nuclear weapon tests in the U.S. and the Pacific, which involved approximately 347,000 persons, most being active duty service personnel; and

WHEREAS, it has come to public attention that a significant number of veterans who were present at these tests have subsequently developed leukemia and other similar diseases which might be linked to their exposure to radiation in service; and

WHEREAS, several agencies, including the Department of Energy, Department of Defense, and a civilian contractor funded by the Federal Government, have access to information, records, and dosimetry files pertaining to the nuclear weapon tests, including individual exposure histories of participants; and

WHEREAS, heretofore it has been virtually impossible to properly develop radiation related claims as a result of the reluctance of some agencies to relinquish information to individual claimants and accredited representatives, and the fact that VA regional office personnel have not been adequately instructed in the preparation of these cases; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Benefits, VA Central Office, is hesitant to demonstrate any degree of flexibility when considering the evidence of record in radiation claims, which lends even more significance to the importance of proper development; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is actively involved in locating veterans who participated in any atomic tests while on active duty, assisting such veterans in the filing and development of appropriate claims for benefits under laws administered by the Veterans Administration, and advising them of possible eligibility for treatment at Veterans Administration medical care facilities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion urge the Executive Branch, including the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary



(Res. 409- continued)

of Energy to ensure the cooperation of their respective agencies in making available all existing records and information pertaining to atmospheric nuclear weapon tests to the Veterans Administration; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that The American Legion urge the Administrator of Veterans Affairs to promulgate regulations and issue additional specific guidelines and instructions to all regional offices necessary for the proper development and adjudication of claims involving disabilities resulting from exposure to radiation.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 410

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: THE AMERICAN LEGION POLICY ON AGENT ORANGE

WHEREAS, the chemical herbicide commonly known as Agent Orange was sprayed throughout Vietnam during the years 1962-1971, to defoliate jungle and rice paddies; and

WHEREAS, the total long-range toxic effects of the defoliant, of which in excess of 10.6 million gallons were reportedly expended by American military forces, remain virtually unknown; and

WHEREAS, the chemical mixture of 2, 4-D, and 2,4,5-T, which contains a certain amount of the chemical dioxin, has been subjected to partial bans by the Environmental Protection Agency following reports of spontaneous abortion and stillbirth in areas where heavily used in the United States; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of service personnel serving in Vietnam were exposed to these toxic chemicals and have subsequently developed cancer, neurological disorders, liver dysfunction, severe depression, and other life-threatening diseases; and

WHEREAS, these veterans are now seeking benefits from the VA, to which they believe they are justly entitled, by reason of disease and disability incurred through exposure to Agent Orange; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is seriously concerned about the effect of Agent Orange on those veterans who served in Vietnam during the time it was used as a defoliant; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is strongly supportive of the studies and research being conducted by the Air Force, the Center for Disease Control, the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, the Veterans Administration, etc., on Agent Orange, and has urged the Administrator of Veterans Affairs, the VA Advisory Committee on Health-Related Effects of Herbicides, and the VA Central Office Ad Hoc Committee on the Toxic Effects of Herbicides to proceed without delay using all resources available, to ascertain with scientific validity the effects of Agent Orange on veterans who were exposed to it during their active military service; and

(Res. 410- continued)

WHEREAS, Section 307 of the Veterans Health Programs Extension and Improvement Act of 1979 (Public Law 96-151) mandated the Veterans Administration to undertake a scientific study of the effect of dioxin exposure on veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Administration negotiated a contract with the UCLA School of Public Health on May 1, 1981, for the design of the protocol of the Agent Orange study mandated by Public Law 96-151; and

WHEREAS, the protocol has been designed, has undergone peer review and was revised as a result thereof, and preliminary steps are being taken to proceed with a pilot study; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion feels strongly that the study itself should be conducted by an independent scientific entity rather than by the Veterans Administration as the results thereof would be more readily acceptable by the Vietnam veterans who were exposed, their families, and the scientific community; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is aggressively assisting and counseling veterans in the filing and development of claims for benefits provided under title 38, United States Code, and referring those individuals claiming exposure to the persons responsible for the Agent Orange examination program at the nearest VA medical center or outpatient clinic for an appropriate examination; and

WHEREAS, because of the fact that very few claims for service connection have been granted, The American Legion has continually called upon the Administrator of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Veterans Benefits to take a more objective approach in the adjudication of claims for benefits for disease and disabilities resulting from exposure to Agent Orange, until such time that conclusive scientific evidence is available, and to resolve all reasonable doubt in favor of veterans, their dependents and survivors, in claims for benefits based on exposure to Agent Orange, but such urging has been to little or no avail; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of Vietnam veterans have expressed displeasure with the manner in which they were attended to during their Agent Orange examination at a VA medical facility; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion sponsor and support legislation in the Congress of the United States to amend section 307 of Public Law 96-151 by assigning the responsibility of



(Res. 410- continued)

conducting the epidemiological study of Vietnam veterans who were exposed to any of the class of chemicals know as "the dioxins" produced during the manufacture of the various phenoxy herbicides, including Agent Orange, to an independent scientific agency; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that The American Legion support legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a mechanism for presumption of service connection for certain disabilities traced to Agent Orange exposure once such presumption is justified by conclusive scientific evidence; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the American Legion closely monitor the development of all ongoing research of the long-term health effects of Agent Orange exposure and point out to the proper officials any perceived deficiencies or discrepancies in these projects; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that The American Legion disseminate the most current responsible information on Agent Orange to Legionnaires, Vietnam veterans and their families, and the public through all resources available to transmit such information; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, that The American Legion continue to make careful observation of the Veterans Administration's Agent Orange examination program to determine whether or not Vietnam veterans reporting to VA medical care facilities claiming exposure are being appropriately examine, and that the examining physicians demonstrate both compassion and thoroughness in the way they receive, examine and treat all Vietnam veterans who present themselves alleing dioxin exposure.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 411

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: OPPOSE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY CONTRACTING OUT OF SERVICES DEEMED ESSENTIAL FOR DELIVERY OF INTEGRATED QUALITY MEDICAL CARE TO ELIGIBLE VETERANS

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WHEREAS, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-76, dated March 29, 1979, as revised, established for Federal agencies "Policies for acquiring commercial or industrial products and services needed by the Government"; and

WHEREAS, the present Administration has instructed all Departments and Agencies to proceed with implementation of Circular A-76; and

WHEREAS, it became clear the Circular A-76 would impact seriously on the Veterans Administration Department of Medicine and Surgery; and

WHEREAS, the Congress responded to the critical situation that was developing in connection with the implementation of the OMB policy by passing legislation that was enacted into law which prohibits use of funds appropriated for VA medical care to carry out cost comparison studies for Circular A-76; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Management and Budget is circumventing the intent of Congress by continuing its efforts to impose contracting out on the Department of Medicine and Surgery; and

WHEREAS, it is the judgement of The American Legion that the commercial contracting out of services provided to veterans by VA Department of Medicine and Surgery will adversely affect the quality and timeliness of care delivered to sick and disabled veterans; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has opposed and continues to oppose those efforts of the Office of Management and Budget that tend to fractionate the Veterans Administration as the sole Federal agency responsible for the delivery of quality hospital and medical services to the nation's veterans; now, therefore, be it

(Res.411 -continued)

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion shall vigorously oppose Veterans Administration contracting out of those services or activities deemed essential for retention in Veterans Administration medical care facilities in order to insure the timely delivery of quality health care to the nation's eligible veterans.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION: No. 489

COMMITTEE: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation

SUBJECT: SPONSOR AND SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO AMEND TITLE 38, USC,  
CHAPTER 15, TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE DISABILITY AND DEATH  
PENSION PROGRAM FOR VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS

WHEREAS, Public Law 95-588, the Veterans and Survivors Pension Improvement Act of 1978, effective January 1, 1979, did provide major changes in the pension program for veterans of World War I, World War II, the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and for their surviving spouses and children; and

WHEREAS, these pension improvement provisions did establish a guaranteed annual income level for veterans as well as for spouses and children; and

WHEREAS, after extensive study, The American Legion concludes that there are inequities in the improved program that require amendments; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that The American Legion support legislation to accomplish the following amendments to Chapter 15, title 38, United States Code:

1. (a) Amend section 541(b) to provide as follows: "If no child of the veteran is in custody of the surviving spouse, pension shall be paid to the surviving spouse at the annual rate of \$4,795 reduced by the amount of the surviving spouse's annual income." (b) Amend section 541(c) to provide as follows: "If there is a child of the veteran in the custody of the surviving spouse, pension shall be paid to the surviving spouse at the annual rate of \$6,182 reduced by the amount of the surviving spouse's annual income." (c) Amend section 541(d) (1) to provide as follows: "If a surviving spouse who is entitled to pension under subsection (b) of this section is in need of regular aid and attendance, the annual rate of pension payable to such surviving spouse shall be \$7,672 reduced by the amount of the surviving spouse's annual income." (d) Amend section 541(d) (2) to provide as follows: "If a surviving spouse who is entitled to pension under subsection (c) of this section is in need of regular aid and attendance, the annual rate of pension payable to the surviving spouse shall be \$9,159 reduced by the amount of the surviving spouse's annual income." (e) Amend section

(Res.489 -continued)

541 (e) to provide as follows: "If the surviving spouse is permanently housebound, but does not qualify for pension at the aid and attendance rate provided by subsection (d) of this section, the annual rate of pension payable to such surviving spouse under subsection (b) of this section shall be \$5,862 and the annual rate of pension payable to such surviving spouse under subsection (c) of this section shall be \$7,349 reduced by the amount of the surviving spouse's annual income."

2. Amend section 542 to provide as follows: (a) "Whenever there is no surviving spouse entitled to pension under section 541, pension shall be paid monthly to each child at the annual rate of \$4,459 reduced by the child's annual income."

3. Amend section 543 by deleting under subsection (b) the following: "the income of any person with who such child is residing who is legally responsible for such child's support, and the corpus of the estate of such person."

4. Amend section 521 (f) (1) through (5) to provide as follows: "if two veterans are married to one another and each meet the disability and service requirements prescribed in subsections (a) and (j) respectively, of this section, the rate of pension payable to each such veteran shall be at the annual rate of \$5,328 reduced by the amount of each such veteran's annual income. If either such veteran is in need of regular aid and attendance, the rate of pension payable to each such veteran at a rate of \$5,328 and \$8,524 respectively, reduced by the amount of such veteran's annual income. If either such veteran would be entitled to pension at the rate provided by subsection (e) of this section, the rate of pension payable to each such veteran shall be \$5,328 and \$6,513 respectively, and if both such veterans would be entitled to the rate provided by subsection (e) of this section, each shall be paid at the annual rate of \$6,513 reduced by the amount of each such veteran's annual income. If one such veteran is in need of regular aid and attendance, and the other would be entitled to the rate provided for under subsection (e) of this, section, the annual rate provided by paragraph (1) of this section, the annual rate provided by paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be \$8,165 and \$6,513 respectively."

(5) Amend section 503 to exclude in the determination of annual income, payments under policies of Servicemen's Group Life Insurance, United States Government Life or National Service Life Insurance, and payments of Servicemen's Indemnity.

(6) Amend section 3012 (b) (4) to read as follows: "(4) By reason of change in income or corpus of estate shall be the last day of the calendar year in which the change occurred;".



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 3

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: CIVIL DEFENSE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Soviet Union and its Communist Party have vowed that their aim to overthrow us and force communism on us has not changed; and

WHEREAS, since 1962, the Soviet Union has multiplied the strength of its military might to a greater extent than did Nazi Germany in preparation for geographic expansion or war; and

WHEREAS, nuclear parity and disparity exists between the Soviet Union and the United States: parity in nuclear weapons and active defenses, and disparity in active air defenses and passive defense to include civil defense; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. public recognizes that the MAD (Mutual Assured Destruction) policy is as sick a policy as the holocaust during World War II; and

WHEREAS, the Soviet Union unilaterally commenced a mutual assured survival system (MASS) program that was easily reconstructed from their need for and use of same during their heroic resistance to the Nazi invasion during World War II; and

WHEREAS, the Soviet Union and Communist Party recognize people as the most valued resource of their nation and give undivided attention to the task of protecting the population under conditions of modern warfare and recognize civil defense as a vital part of military strategy; and

WHEREAS, outside the Soviet Union their officials "advise" Americans and others that civil defense, which they develop assiduously at home, is useless; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we strongly urge the President, Congress and the Department of Defense of the United States to:

1) Recognize that civil defense in this nuclear age is as important as the weapons of war and that failure of the United States to have a credible civil defense program could lead to a miscalculation by any potential adversary.

(Res. 3 - continued)

2) Give increased funds, support and assistance to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

3) Take advantage of the current over-abundance of grain by stocking/restocking shelters and warehouses with survival food and plan to rotate those stocks when responding to requests for assistance to natural disasters around the world.

4) Reinitiate public and private work programs that will provide jobs while providing civilian protection to include underground and in-mountain facilities.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 4

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM FUNDING

WHEREAS, for over 40 years, The United States has sponsored a Latin American Regional Training Program in Panama that primarily is embodied in the U.S. Army School of the Americas, the Inter-American Air Forces Academy, and the U.S. Navy's Small Craft Instruction and Training Team; and

WHEREAS, these schools have provided training for some 60,000 students, significantly improving their military skills and making it possible for lifelong friendships among military and political leaders as well as heads of Latin American nations to be acquired through this training and in the United States-Latin American school environment; and

WHEREAS, the three Service schools in Panama now have an annual allocation of approximately \$4.5 million, which covers 55 Latin American guest instructors, U.S. staff, facilities, and teaching equipment materials; and

WHEREAS, this unique and lucrative program will require a substantial increase in annual budget to respond to urgent regional training needs and to preclude being weakened by cut-backs in staff and other essential resources; and

WHEREAS, to counter increased threats to this Hemisphere, the Secretary of State has proposed a 1983 budget of \$5.5 million for these three schools; and

WHEREAS, the Caribbean Basin and other Latin American nations are singularly important to the immediate, as well as to the strategic, interests of the United States; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that the U.S. Congress fund this Latin American Regional Training Program at least at a \$5.5 million level to allow it to continue to bring significant dividends to our country in the crucial decade of the 1980s and beyond.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 32

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: SPACE BASED BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM

WHEREAS, The American Legion has urged the Administration and the Congress to conduct a comprehensive review of the defense program of the United States and develop and implement a program with significant real annual budget increases to assure the security of the nation and the support of its foreign policy; and

WHEREAS, the President has announced a comprehensive plan for the modernization of U.S. strategic weapons, making clear what the United States will do to strengthen its strategic posture if fair and equitable agreements for arms reduction cannot be reached; and

WHEREAS, the comprehensive plan includes a commitment to upgrade our electronic command and control systems and to accelerate research and development aimed at devising an effective anti-ballistic missile defense system; and

WHEREAS, it has been reported that the Soviet Union may be prepared to deploy laser beam type weapons in space in this decade and to have a large, permanent, manned orbital space complex capable of attacking land, sea and air targets operational in the next decade; and

WHEREAS, the United States currently has a technological lead over the Soviet Union, especially in space as demonstrated by the Space Shuttle, and should be making much greater use of the opportunities open to us for peaceful scientific, industrial and commercial applications of space as well as harnessing its military potential; and

WHEREAS, it may not be possible for the U.S. to continue to budget unlimited amounts in an effort to match the enemy's capabilities in all types of forces and weapons, and because there is a growing popular demand for a reduction in strategic nuclear weapons; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we urge the President and Congress to adopt a new military strategy which would take advantage of available and developing space technology, assure that the United States maintains the lead in such technology and would provide for developing a space-based ballistic missile defense system.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 34

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: MODERNIZE THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

WHEREAS, the United States Coast Guard is the oldest continuous sea service in America, beginning as the Revenue Cutter Service under Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, and participating in all of America's military crises from the Revolution through Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, the United States Coast Guard is internationally recognized and respected as a humanitarian, law enforcement agency, conducting numerous search and rescue missions, saving thousands of lives and millions of dollars of property at sea each year; and

WHEREAS, the United States Coast Guard provides a major deterrent to the importation of illegal drugs into America by intercepting over a billion dollars worth annually; and

WHEREAS, the United States Coast Guard, unlike the other members of the armed forces community, is suffering rapid deterioration of its vessels, aircraft and physical plants due to a series of grossly inadequate budgets and continued increases in missions which have produced severe strains on equipment and over-worked personnel; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by the American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we call upon the President and Congress to recognize the contributions of the United States Coast Guard and to provide the full funding necessary to allow the Coast Guard to refurbish its vessels, aircraft and physical plants, and continue to provide the full range of its services to the United States of America.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 64

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: CRIME

WHEREAS, both the rate of violent crime and recidivism in the United States have increased significantly in the past decade; and

WHEREAS, violent crime has created a reign of terror imperiling the security of the nation and her people; and

WHEREAS, this situation has created a crisis in the life of the Republic; and

WHEREAS, it appears that the administration of justice, at both the trial and appellate levels, has become imbalanced favoring the criminal element; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we urge both the Congress of the United States and the legislative bodies of the respective states to undertake a review of the judicial system and the schedule of penalties imposed for violent crime for the purpose of establishing a deterrent thereto.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 74

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: MODIFICATION OF THE FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
AGENCY (EPA) RULES CONCERNING THE DREDGING OF AND  
DISPOSAL OF HARBOR AND CHANNEL SPOILS

WHEREAS, Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rules concerning the dredging of and disposal of harbor and channel spoils have caused the suspension and cancellation of dredging operations in a number of navigable rivers, channels and harbors; and

WHEREAS, free access to port facilities across the United States is imperative for a strong economy and a strong national defense; and

WHEREAS, there have been reported no conclusive studies linking human illness or death to the presence of harmful materials in dredged material; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that the Environmental Protection Agency be urged to re-examine its rules and regulations and take positive steps to work with the Army Corps of Engineers in a cooperative effort to work within existing laws or to draft amendments to present laws which will enable dredging projects to proceed as long as the environment is not damaged.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 147

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: SUPPORT TOTAL FORCE POLICY

WHEREAS, the Reserve component accounts for more than 40% of the Army's total military strength; the Army's National Guard provided one-third of the total number of the Army's combat divisions while two-thirds of the Army's combat service support capability is found in the Army Reserve; and

WHEREAS, today's Reserve components are an integral and essential part of the Total Force and must be capable of performing wartime missions from the outset of hostilities; and

WHEREAS, the ultimate goal is to have sufficient personnel to man Reserve and National Guard and sufficient equipment for these units at authorized wartime levels; and

WHEREAS, the DOD Reserve Forces Policy Board has issued a report entitled "The Reserve Forces in the 1990s" which concluded that equipment needs in the Reserve and National Guard are serious and that if the Reserve and National Guard are to continue as a viable part of the Total Force, ready for early deployment in both the combat and support roles, then the concept of unitary equipment buys including sufficient spares, mirror image organization and identical equipage must be expanded and accelerated; and

WHEREAS, the National Guard and Reserve strength during the 1980-1990s is predicted to increase the force to authorized levels; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we support the policy of the Total Force and urge the U.S. Congress to authorize and fund the National Guard and Reserve Forces to provide sufficient recruiting incentives so as to man units at authorized wartime levels; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that The American Legion believes the equipment available to the Guard/Reserve component of the Total Force must be increased in numbers, capability and compatibility with Active Force, if the Guard/Reserve is to be expected to fulfill its assigned mission as a full partner of the Total Force; therefore, we urge the Congress to authorize and fund the Guard/Reserve so that they may fully accomplish their mission in the event of war.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 148

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: SOVIET SPACE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Soviet military program dwarfs that of the United States in a numerical sense in that the Soviet launch rate is about five times that of the United States and the military payload weight placed in orbit is about 10 times that of this country; and

WHEREAS, military R&D experiments are performed on board Soviet manned spaced stations and the Soviets continue to develop and test an ASAT anti-satellite co-orbital interceptor, and there is evidence that a new improved ASAT is in development; and

WHEREAS, there is other evidence that the Soviets are developing a large space booster which, according to Pentagon analysts, could have six to seven times the launch weight capability of the U.S. space shuttle. The projected new booster could be capable of putting very large, permanently manned space station in orbit; and

WHEREAS, according to Pentagon experts, the Soviet goal is support of both defensive and offensive space weapons with a man in the loop for target selection, repair, adjustments and positive command and control; and

WHEREAS, according to an article written by Lt. Gen. Daniel Graham and published in The American Legion Magazine, there is sufficient on-shelf technology to counteract the Soviet space efforts and lessen the Soviet ICBM threat; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we strongly recommend that the United States proceed forthwith to counter-act the Soviet threat in space against our defensive satellites as well as the ICBM nuclear threat against our country.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 149

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: CHEMICAL WARFARE DEFENSE

WHEREAS, Soviet military doctrine envisages the use of chemical weapons, and acknowledges their value, particularly when used in massive quantities and in surprise attacks, they also possess a wide variety of lethal and incapacitation chemical agents and the means to deliver them. Also, they have invested heavily in individual and collective protection and decontamination equipment, and they train with actual chemical agents; and

WHEREAS, in contrast with the Soviet Union during most of the 1970s, the U.S. allowed its retaliatory capability to decline and has done little to improve defense against the use of chemicals in wartime; and

WHEREAS, the ultimate goal in the area of chemical warfare is complete and verifiable ban on the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, until such a ban can be obtained, the U.S. objective should be consistent with existing treaties and international law, to deter the use of chemical weapons; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we call upon the Congress to authorize and appropriate the necessary funds to support the U.S. Army's efforts, as the DOD executive agent in matters of chemical warfare defense, to embark on a realistic research, development and acquisition program to deter the Soviet Union's use of chemical weapons; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that we believe this program, which has at its core the production of binary munitions, will improve our chemical defensive ability while providing an incentive for meaningful arms control efforts.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 150

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: STRATEGIC MOBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

WHEREAS, the U.S. strategic mobility forces are currently unable to meet NATO reinforcement objectives or to project credible United States forces to areas where our national interests may be threatened; and

WHEREAS, the Army's prepositioned equipment and war reserve stocks are inadequate for many contingencies; therefore, mobility forces, both air and sea, must be increased to provide flexible power projection; and

WHEREAS, the planned conversion of eight Navy SL-7 container ships to roll-on, roll-off (RO/RO) configuration is essential and a high priority must be given to research and development programs for surface effect ships, which will project forces rapidly and complement air-lifted forces in the future; and

WHEREAS, prepositioning material configured to unit set (POMCUS) remains a key part of the strategic mobility picture, critical shortages still exist in this area; and

WHEREAS, the development of two intermediate staging sites in the Persian Gulf region is essential to improve the infrastructure for the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force because no combat force can perform its mission if it is not at the right place, at the right time, with the right material; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we strongly urge the Congress to authorize and appropriate sufficient funds to provide the U.S. Army strategic mobility improvements.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 205

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: CRIME

WHEREAS, The American Legion recognizes that the prevention of crime, maintenance of order and the creation of a safe environment are the foremost responsibilities of American law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion and local governmental bodies are concerned about the "Guardian Angels" and other citizen crime prevention groups proper credibility; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion maintains that successful crime efforts are founded on citizen participation; and

WHEREAS, citizen participation in crime prevention programs must be in support of existing, structured law enforcement efforts; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement supported and sponsored citizen participation programs must carry with them the appropriate accountability for the actions of all involved; and

WHEREAS, citizen participation programs with no fixed accountability cannot be condoned or supported by law enforcement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we continue to support citizen participation in crime prevention programs which operate under the guidance and direction of the appropriate local law enforcement agency with proper accountability for the actions of citizens and police officers alike.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 234

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: ENACT LEGISLATION MAKING ANY DISCRIMINATION AGAINST  
EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WHO ARE OR BECOME MEMBERS OF  
NATIONAL GUARD OR RESERVE UNITS ILLEGAL

WHEREAS, citizen soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen and women participate in military training for the purpose of protecting the community and nation; and

WHEREAS, the safety of America's interests at home and abroad depend upon a strong, willing and committed Guard and Reserve component; and

WHEREAS, most members of Guard and Reserve organizations are veterans; and

WHEREAS, employers and supervisors in industry and government must remain aware of the importance of the Guard and Reserve in maintaining a strong national defense posture and overcoming local disasters; and

WHEREAS, some employers systematically refuse to employ persons who indicate that they have Guard or Reserve obligations for active duty for training; and

WHEREAS, such discrimination by a minority of employers causes some Guardsmen and Reservists to withdraw from service when eligible, or to avoid revealing to their employers their obligations for Guard or Reserve service; and

WHEREAS, the interests of national defense will be best served by ending all such discrimination by employers against those with continuing Reserve and Guard obligations; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we go on record urging the Congress of the United States to enact legislation making any discrimination against persons who are or become a member of a Guard or Reserve unit illegal.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 259

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: ARMED FORCES APPRECIATION DAY

WHEREAS, the third Saturday of May is observed as Armed Forces Day to carry out a program designed to point up the role of the Armed Forces of the nation; and

WHEREAS, there is a great need to carry out a program designed to show the appreciation of the citizens of the nation to the members of the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, the current Armed Forces Day program tends to depict the role of the Armed Forces and fails to show appreciation to those who serve in the defense of the nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we request the Congress of the United States and the Department of Defense to take action to change Armed Forces Day to Armed Forces Appreciation Day; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that a program be developed and carried out which would allow the citizens of the nation to show full appreciation to those who serve in the defense of the nation.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 264

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: MILITARY RETIREES

WHEREAS, when a person joins the Armed Forces of the United States, it involves a contract wherein he agrees to serve for a specified length of time; and

WHEREAS, during the period of service, he gives up many of his civil rights and places himself under military regulations; and

WHEREAS, the pay scales, on the average, are lower than those in civilian life for occupations of similar difficulty; and

WHEREAS, the serviceman is subject to many hazards and dangers as evidenced by preclusion from regular life insurance policies even during peacetime service; and

WHEREAS, he also is subject to many dehumanizing experiences in time of war which can change his personality structure to the positive or negative side; and

WHEREAS, after completing 20 or more years of service, he is given a pension according to the pay grade and time served; and

WHEREAS, after all this sacrifice he is now being asked to relinquish his pension if after discharge he obtains Federal employment and begins a second career of a civilian nature; and

WHEREAS, after all this sacrifice and expenditure of career time, the military retiree with a Federal job is called a "double dipper" which is a deliberate, distainful phrase intended to lower his esteem in the public eye by portraying him as filled with greed; and

WHEREAS, the average retirement pay is close to \$750 per month, with some above and some below this amount; and

WHEREAS, there is a total disregard for all of the sacrifices the military retiree has endured in his contractual employment with the government; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26 1982, that we request the Appropriations Committees in both the House and Senate to permit military retirees to retain dual compensation if they hold a federal job after their discharge from the Armed Forces.

THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 269

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: MODERNIZATION OF U.S. AIRFORCE

WHEREAS, every major conflict since World War I has demonstrated the need for air superiority in order to conduct successful ground combat against an armed hostile force; and

WHEREAS, the Soviet Union now possesses the requisite number of aircraft to potentially deny air superiority to the United States in an armed conflict involving those two nations; and

WHEREAS, Soviet use of air power has allowed them to challenge U.S. influence in areas of the world most critical to the security of the United States; and

WHEREAS, our national survival and the security of our allies depend on the ability of the U.S. to maintain air superiority in order to foster the strategic airlift capability, the close air support capability, and the strategic combat capability of the U.S. Air Force; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we urge the Administration and the Congress to act immediately to provide the necessary funding to modernize the U.S. Air Force in order to maintain the most up-to-date equipment available for close air support capability, strategic airlift and air superiority roles assigned as the Air Force mission.



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
64th NATIONAL CONVENTION  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
AUGUST 24-26, 1982

RESOLUTION 272

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: AERIAL REFUELING CAPABILITY/KC-135 TANKER AIRCRAFT

WHEREAS, various Air Force analyses show that additional aerial refueling capability is needed for optimum bomber penetration routes to support the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP); and

WHEREAS, the requirement for tanker support will increase when the B-52Gs begin to carry Air Launched Cruise Missiles (ALCMs) externally; and

WHEREAS, this strategic planning problem is compounded by the requirement to refuel airlift and tactical aircraft for contingency operations; i.e., NATO, Mid-East; and

WHEREAS, present aerial refueling requirements for combined SIOP and contingency missions exceed the current capabilities to such an extent that during simultaneous operations these missions would be seriously degraded due to tanker deficiencies; and

WHEREAS, there are various operational and environmental problems with the KC-135 as currently engined, including limited thrust and fuel offload capabilities, excessive engine noise, chronic take-off thrust problems and gaseous emissions; and

WHEREAS, recent evidence also shows water requirements would be a problem for those KC-135s involved with operations in scarce water areas, such as the Mid-East; and

WHEREAS, re-engining the KC-135 with the CFM-56 engine will increase fuel offload capabilities at the all refueling ranges, improve engine thrust, reduce basing constraints, and save 180,000 gallons of fuel per aircraft per year; and

WHEREAS, the re-engined KC-135 is six times quieter and substantially less polluting than the current KC-135A; and

WHEREAS, the Air Force objective is to provide an acceptable level of refueling support to strategic bombers, tactical fighters and long-range strategic transports across a range of possible scenarios, and, in view of political realities and uncertainties, plans must be made to provide this refueling support without enroute basing; and



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(Res. 272-continued)

our air refueling force must be able to respond to Administration concerns for a global response capability and the ability to support a protracted conflict; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that we urge the Administration and Congress to support the Air Force program to re-engine its KC-135 tanker force with new, quieter, fuel efficient engines which will provide the capability in the years ahead to meet the refueling requirements of our strategic, tactical and airlift forces.

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RESOLUTION 274

COMMITTEE: National Security

SUBJECT: M-X MISSILE

WHEREAS, the land-based Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) is a cornerstone of our national strategic deterrent; and

WHEREAS, under the provisions of the interim SALT agreement, Soviet strategic forces are numerically superior to those of the United States and the Soviets deploy three times the missile throw-weight of comparable U.S. forces; and

WHEREAS, the Soviet Union has initiated new ICBM programs representing a massive effort in the form of new missiles, new bus-type dispensing systems, new Multiple Independent Targetable Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) payloads, new guidance systems, new type silos, new launch techniques and probably new warheads; and

WHEREAS, all available evidence suggests that targeting our ICBM silos continues to be high priority for the Soviet ICBM force; and

WHEREAS, in first strike capability by the Soviet Union would destroy the balance of strategic weapons between us; and

WHEREAS, a Secretary of Defense has stated that "reducing the vulnerability of the land-based ICBM force is the highest priority strategic initiative in the Department of Defense five-year program;" and

WHEREAS, the Air Force has undertaken programs to improve the accuracy yield and survivability of its Minuteman missiles including improved guidance and propulsion, Mark 12A increase the warhead yield and hardening of the silos; and

WHEREAS, in the long run, the M-X missile provides the most promising ICBM initiative for preserving essential equivalence; and

WHEREAS, survivability is a dominant concern in the update of our Intercontinental Ballistic Missile program; now, therefore, be it



(Res. 274-continued)

RESOLVED, by the American Legion in National Convention assembled in Chicago, Illinois, August 24-26, 1982, that the Administration and the Department of Defense arrive at an early date on basing mode offering the greatest possibility of survival; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Administration and the Congress be urged to provide full support to Defense Department efforts to develop and deploy the M-X missile as expeditiously as possible to insure that the U.S. does not allow the Soviet Union to achieve a position of strategic superiority inimicable to our national security interests.