Robert M. McCurdy of Pasadena, Calif., has been named chairman of the 11-man Veterans' Advisory Panel by William J. Driver, Administrator of Veterans Affairs. McCurdy is the long-time chairman of The American Legion's National Rehabilitation Commission. Legion Past National Commander L. Eldon James of Hampton, Va., also has been named a member of the panel.

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The newly-appointed Veterans' Advisory Panel has scheduled meetings in May, June and September in eight major cities across the country. The idea behind the sessions is to obtain grass roots points of view on the problems facing veterans and proposed solutions.

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Two girls, both from New England states, are among 12 teen-age orators who remain as contenders in The American Legion's National High School Oratorical Contest. The 12 will compete for Sectional championships in four contests on Monday, April 10, in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.; Atlanta, Ga.; Sioux Falls, S. D.; and Denver, Colo. National Finals will be held at Lincoln, Neb., on Thursday, April 13.

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Domestic criminality and international banditry are today's twin threats to freedom, American Legion National Commander John E. Davis has declared. Both must be dealt with firmly and promptly to insure the preservation of an orderly society at home and the future of freedom throughout the world.

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Alvin M. Owsley, 78, of Dallas, Texas, former diplomat and American Legion National Commander, died in Dallas April 3 after a lingering illness. He was seriously considered for the Democratic nomination for U. S. Vice President in 1924.

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American Legion National Commander John E. Davis on April 6 used the occasion of the 50th anniversary of America's entry into World War I to pledge his organization's continued efforts toward a strong national defense system.

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RADIO PROGRAM DELAY NOTICE

The CBS radio network program, "Is the Cold War Over?," in which American Legion National Commander John E. Davis is a participant, has been postponed indefinitely due to the strike of the American Federation of Radio and Television Artists. CBS will notify the Legion of the rescheduling of the program as soon as it is able to do so. All department headquarters will be notified immediately. The program originally was set for 7:25 p.m., Thursday, April 6.
WASHINGTON--(ALNS)--Robert M. McCurdy of Pasadena, Calif., has been named chairman of a presidentially-inspired study panel composed of national experts on veterans' affairs.

The appointment of McCurdy, who is the long-time chairman of The American Legion's important National Rehabilitation Commission, was announced by William J. Driver, Administrator of Veterans Affairs.

Driver also announced the appointment of Legion Past National Commander L. Eldon James of Hampton, Va., as one of the panel's 11 members.

Designated the Veterans' Advisory Panel, the group will conduct a comprehensive study of the pension, compensation and benefits systems for veterans, their families and their survivors.

Panel meetings are scheduled in May, June and September in eight major cities to obtain grass roots points of view on the problems facing veterans and proposed solutions.

In his historic message to Congress last Jan. 31, President Lyndon B. Johnson asked the VA Administrator to submit recommendations by January, 1968, "to assure that our tax dollars are being utilized most wisely and that our government is meeting fully its responsibilities to all those to whom we owe so much."

Driver then followed through by naming as panel chairman McCurdy, the former assistant city manager of Pasadena. Half the other 10 members are present or past leaders of the nation's best-known veterans' organizations. Four are state officials and one is a retired Army colonel.

Ted C. Connell of Killeen, Texas, a special consultant to the VA, will direct field operations for the panel. He is a VFW former national commander-in-chief.

U. S. Rep. Olin Teague of College Station, Texas, chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, announced that he or members of his committee's staff would attend as many panel meetings as possible. Driver also will attend the sessions, but neither he nor Congressman Teague are panel members.

Other panel members are: Andrew Borg of Superior, Wis., VFW former national commander-in-chief; Claude Callegary of Baltimore, Md., DAV past national commander; Melvin T. Dixon of St. Petersburg, Fla., Florida department of veterans affairs service officer; Ralph E. Hall of Washington, D. C., AMVETS national executive director; and Herbert H. Houston of Chattanooga, Tenn., Veterans of World War I past national commander.

(More)

All day meetings are scheduled in Seattle (Hilton Inn), May 6; Minneapolis (Sheraton-Ritz), May 13; Chicago (Sheraton), May 20; Boston (Sheraton), May 27; Las Vegas (Fabulous Flamingo), June 3; Oklahoma City (Sheraton), Sept. 9; Atlanta (Biltmore), Sept. 16; and Philadelphia (Sheraton), Sept. 23.

All dates are Saturdays and provisions have been made to permit Sunday sessions if necessary. Registration is scheduled the night before the Saturday sessions.

In each area, leading veterans groups, as well as other groups and individuals, have been invited to address the Veterans' Advisory Panel. Others who wish to present statements before the panel are invited to contact the VA Central Office, Special Assistant to the Administrator (003), 810 Vermont Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20420.

After reviewing testimony and statements submitted to the panel, members will prepare a report to VA Administrator Driver who, in turn, will respond to the presidential directive by presenting the Chief Executive his recommendations and proposals.

A LEGIONNAIRE WHO SERVES WELL

Robert M. McCurdy of Pasadena, Calif., who heads the new LBJ-inspired Veterans' Advisory Panel, has never been one to shun a tough job. His new appointment will be a demanding one but he's sure to meet its measure.

Long active in veteran and American Legion affairs, "Chairman Bob," as he is known in Legion circles, has been a member of the Legion's National Rehabilitation Commission since 1942. Most of that time he has been the chairman of that important Legion activity.

A nationally recognized veterans' rehabilitation expert, he was a member of the Legion's special committee which formulated and drafted what stands as a landmark in social and veterans legislation, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (G. I. Bill of Rights).

Retired from the Army as a captain in 1922 (because of a line of duty disability from World War I service), McCurdy in 1931 joined the Pasadena city government. After supervising the construction of the Pasadena Civic Auditorium, he became the auditorium manager. Eventually he became assistant city manager, and during part of 1947 and 1948, he was acting city manager. In 1961, he retired as assistant city manager. Active in civic affairs in his city and state, McCurdy is a past president and life director of the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Association.

This native Hoosier, who adopted the Golden State after World War I, can be said to have an interest in veterans' affairs that goes back more than a century in the nation's history. In a sense this interest is a heritage.

Chairman Bob's father served in the Union Army's Cavalry, and, like his son later, wore a captain's bars. Chairman Bob, after service on the Mexican Border in 1916, won his Regular Army commission and went through the fighting in the Meuse-Argonne offensive and Verdun.
INDIANAPOLIS--(ALNS)--William P. Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, will address American Legion leaders here on Wednesday evening, May 3, according to Legion National Commander John E. Davis of Bismarck, N. D.

The State Department official will discuss "East Asia Today" at the National Commander's annual banquet for members of the Legion's National Executive Committee at the Columbia Club.

Several hundred Legion leaders from throughout the nation will be here for National Committee and Commission meetings being held principally on May 1 and 2 and the NEC meeting on May 3 and 4, Commander Davis added.

President Lyndon B. Johnson named Bundy to his present post on March 16, 1964. He previously had been with the Department of Defense, first as Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs from Jan., 1961, to Nov., 1963, and then as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Affairs until he moved to the State Department.

A practicing attorney in Washington from 1947 to 1951, before joining the Central Intelligence Agency, where he was a member of the Board of National Estimates until 1961. In 1960, he also served as staff director of the President's Commission on National Goals.

The 49-year-old Washington native was graduated from Yale University in 1939 and Harvard University Law School in 1947. He entered the Army as a private in 1941, serving with the Signal Corps until 1946, when he left the service as a major.

-alns-
LINCOLN, NEB.--(ALNS)--The American Legion's 30th annual National High School Oratorical Contest Finals, beginning at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, April 13, at Lincoln North East High School, will be filmed for later showing by KUON-TV (Channel 12, Nebraska Educational Television Network.)

The station plans to show the finals over its network on Sunday, April 16, in addition to having the film available for later showing.

A proclamation welcoming the four finalists to Nebraska's capital city has been issued by Lincoln's Mayor Dean H. Petersen. The mayor's proclamation also pointed out:

"xxxThe American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest has been outstanding as a program of positive Americanism since its beginning in 1938 because it has provided young Americans a better understanding of the Constitution of the United States, the basic instrument of our government of and by free men."

***IMPORTANT NOTICE***

WASHINGTON--(ALNS)--American Legion posts requiring blank ammunition for ceremonial purposes can be assured the best possible service on their requests if they comply with the following instructions:

1. Indicate the type of blank ammunition desired -- 1305-A222 (for cal. .30 rifles), or 1305-A242 (for cal. .30 Krag rifles only). The only quantity now issued is one box containing 1,240 rounds for cal. .30 rifles, and 1,700 rounds for cal. .30 Krag rifles.

2. Enclose a certified check or money order, made payable to the Treasurer of the United States, for the exact amount of cost of handling - $3.04 per box for Code 1305-A222; $6.55 per box for Code 1305-A242. Do not send cash or personal checks.

3. Indicate how shipment should be made -- Railway Express, truck, or personal pickup. Shipments will be made collect from the ammunition depot.

Upon receipt of the above information from a Post, the proper form will be completed in the Legion's Washington Office and forwarded through proper channels for processing. No further correspondence should then be necessary. It takes about 30 days from the time the approved request is received to the date the blank ammunition is shipped.

-alns-
ANNAPOLIS, MD.--(ALNS)--The American Legion National Commander used the occasion of the 50th anniversary of America's entrance into World War I to pledge his organization's continued efforts toward a strong national defense system.

In a press statement released on a visit to this capital city, National Commander John E. Davis also described World War I "as the first of this century's great struggles between the forces of tyranny and the forces of freedom." The text of Commander Davis's statement on April 6 follows:

"As you know, this is a most significant date in American history for it marks the 50th anniversary of America's entry into World War I, the first of this century's great struggles between the forces of tyranny and the forces of freedom.

"Unfortunately, this has evolved into a continuing struggle, and, whether we like it or not, those of us who value our freedoms must continue to pay the price their preservation demands.

"America never has, and we are confident she never will, waver in either her capability or determination to remain free.

"It was out of the ashes of World War I that The American Legion was born, and this organization has gained new strength and vitality as the defenders of freedom from World War II, Korea, and now Vietnam, have joined our ranks.

"We take this significant occasion to pledge anew to our fellow countrymen that we shall never falter in our support of a national defense establishment, capable of countering any threat to the security of these United States.

"I'm most happy to be visiting here in Maryland on this important date and to be paying a visit to the United States Naval Academy which has a proud tradition and a glorious record of providing unexcelled professional leadership to this vital branch of our national defense system."

-alns-

An Idea Man: Bob Hope has done a great deal of entertaining in Vietnam. One day, after several performances, a Marine called to him: "Bob, you look tired. Next time why don't you stay home and send for us?"--The Egyptian Legionnaire

-alns-
INDIANAPOLIS—(ALNS)—Two girls, both from New England states, are among 12 teen-ager orators who remain as contenders in The American Legion's National High School Oratorical Contest.

The 12 will compete for Sectional championships in four contests on Monday, April 10. From that hurdle, Sectional champions move on to the National Finals to compete for $8,000 in cash college scholarships. The four Sectionals and the contestants are:

Sectional A: Performing Arts Center, Wilkes College, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., 7:30 p.m.:
- Lorraine F. Lynch, 17, of 79 Oakes Ave., Dorchester, Mass., senior, St. Gregory High School, Dorchester;
- Judith F. Snyder, 16, of 277 Middle Highway, Barrington, R.I., junior, Barrington High School;

Sectional B: St. Pius X High School, Atlanta, Ga., 10 a.m.:
- John H. Leeper, 17, of 1410 Clearfield Dr., Memphis, Tenn., senior, Frayser High School;
- Terrell R. Raburn, 17, of Alabaster, Ala., junior, Thompson High School, Siluria;
- Alan L. Keyes, 16, of 106 W. Hathaway Dr., San Antonio, Texas, junior, Robert G. Cole High School.

Sectional C: Augustana College, Sioux Falls, S. D., 10 a.m.:
- Glenn R. Deibert, 18, of 9825 Napier St., Northville, Mich., senior, Northville High School;
- Eric A. DeGroff, 17, of 2835 N. 43rd St., Kansas City, Kans., senior, Washington High School;
- Robert J. Feikema, 17, of 333 Galena St., Worthington, Minn., senior, Worthington Senior High School.

Sectional D: West High School, Denver, Colo., 10 a.m.:
- Martin W. Sperry, 18, of 2200 Locust St., Denver, Colo., senior, East Denver High School;
- James T. Rosenbaum, 17, of 4444 S.W. Fairhaven Dr., Portland, Ore., senior, Lincoln High School, Portland;
- Bernd M. Kutzscher, 16, of 15450 Briarwood Dr., Sherman Oaks, Calif., senior, Notre Dame High School, Sherman Oaks.

(More)
Sectional winners will compete for top honors in the National Finals at Lincoln North East High School, Lincoln, Neb., at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, April 13.

This year marks the 30th annual competition which has as its major purpose the development of a deeper knowledge and understanding of the U.S. Constitution. Other objectives of The American Legion contest are to develop leadership, the ability to think and speak clearly as well as intelligently, and the preparation for the acceptance of duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship.

HARTFORD, CONN.--(ALNS)--"Domestic criminality and international banditry are today's twin threats to freedom," American Legion National Commander John E. Davis of Bismarck, N.D., declared in an address here.

"Both (threats) must be dealt with firmly and promptly to insure the preservation of an orderly society at home and the future of freedom throughout the world," the Legion chief emphasized.

"The purpose of the Constitution, the keystone of our democratic society, is spelled out in the few well chosen words that comprise the Preamble of that priceless document, and among those words in this phrase: 'Secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.'"

Commander Davis pointed out that the Legion has had a recent reminder of the significance of this wording from Senate Minority Leader Everett M. Dirksen, who called attention to the wisdom of the founding fathers in that they called for securing those blessings, not for themselves alone, but for posterity.

April 6, marks the 50th anniversary of America's entry into World War I, a war which was fought to save the world from domination by the rule of tyranny. Since that time we have engaged in two other major conflicts, World War II and Korea, for the same purpose, and today we are engaged in still another conflict in Vietnam where we are locked in deadly combat with the forces of tyranny, Commander Davis said.

The beginning of struggle to preserve the priceless principles and ideals of the Constitution, however did not come with World War I, for actually the Constitution was conceived in the midst of strife, and its establishment and perpetuation have demanded the continuing sacrifice of Americans for nearly two centuries, he continued. The fact that it endures today is proof that it has been defended diligently.

"Now, with crime and lawlessness rampant in our streets, our system of government is undergoing the same threat that led to the downfall of most of the great civilizations of history—destruction from within. To successfully counter that threat we call upon all citizens to exercise the highest order of good citizenship. With total citizenship participation, the cause of liberty and justice will prevail," the Legion chief emphasized.

-ALNS-
BOSTON, MASS.--(ALNS)--Plans are beginning to shape up for The American Legion's 49th National Convention to be held here Aug. 25-31.

James V. Demarest of New York, N.Y., National Convention Commission chairman, reported that The American Legion headquarters hotel will be the Sheraton-Boston, with three-day sessions in the War Memorial beginning Tuesday, Aug. 29.

The American Legion Auxiliary and the Eight and Forty headquarters hotel will be the Statler Hilton with sessions in the same hotel.

National Headquarters Office will be opened at 8 a.m., Monday, Aug. 21, with the location to be announced at a later date. The Auxiliary Headquarters Office will open at the same time and date at the Statler Hilton.

The combination Senior and Junior Drum and Bugle Corps Finals will be held at Fenway Park beginning at 7 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 27. The traditional convention parade will be held Monday, Aug. 28, with details regarding the event to be announced later.

The National Commander's Banquet will be held at the Sheraton-Boston hotel Grand Ballroom beginning at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 29. The Auxiliary's States Dinner the Statler Hilton Grand Ballroom beginning at 8 p.m., Wednesday, Aug. 30.

The American Legion National Convention Corporation of Massachusetts has announced the appointment of the J. P. Rojee Decorating Service, Medway, Mass., as the official float builder for the convention.

Departments and posts planning to enter floats in the parade should contact the chairman of the Floats and Decorations Committee for further information regarding procedures and arrangements.

Departments and posts, able to secure local sponsors for their floats, are reminded that commercial advertising is limited to an area not in excess of 1 1/2 by 72 inches. If the commercial message takes an odd shape, then the same number of square inches is allowed. All floats should carry the Legion emblem along with the department or post designation.

Convention Corporation offices are located at the Parker House, 60 School St., Boston, Mass. 02108. (Telephone: Area Code 617-742-6055).

-alns-
DALLAS, TEXAS--(ALNS)--Alvin M. Owsley, 78, of this city, former diplomat and American Legion National Commander, died here April 3 after a lingering illness.

A founder of The American Legion at the famous Paris Caucus of March 15-17, 1919, Mr. Owsley in 1922-23 served as the fourth elected Legion National Commander.

Seriously considered in 1924 for the Democratic nomination for U. S. Vice President, he served successively as minister to Rumania, the Irish Free State and Denmark in the 1930's by appointment of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Born in Denton, Texas, June 11, 1888, he was graduated from the Virginia Military Institute in 1909 as first captain of his class and from the University of Texas in 1912 with a law degree. He served as a member of the Texas Legislature 1912-14, Denton County District Attorney, 1915-17, and as Texas Assistant Attorney General, 1919-20.

Within a month after America's entry into World War I, Mr. Owsley enrolled as a student private in the first officers' training camp at Leon Springs, Texas, Commissioned a major upon graduation from the course, he helped to organize an Infantry battalion in the 36th Infantry Division then being formed at Camp Bowie, Ft. Worth, Texas.

He sailed for France in July, 1918, in advance of his division. While there he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and was named adjutant of his division which participated in the Aisne-Champaigne and Meuse-Argonne offensives.

Active in civic affairs in his state and city, Mr. Owsley was a director of the Ball Bros. Co., Muncie, Ind., and of the Business and Professional Men's Insurance Co., Dallas.

Commander Owsley maintained his active interest in the Legion through the years, and in 1964 was the President of The American Legion Convention Corporation of Texas. That organization was responsible for the planning of the 46th Annual National Convention held in Dallas.

When Mr. Owsley left Bucharest in 1935 as U. S. Minister for the same post in Dublin, he won this tribute from Rumanian Foreign Minister Nicholas Titulescu: "American diplomacy always carries with it an engaging smile, frankness, directness and efficiency which is very refreshing."

Survivors include his widow, the former Miss Lucina Ball; two sons, Alvin M. Jr., and Thomas David; and a daughter, Mrs. Joseph Garrett. Burial was in Hillcrest Cemetery, Dallas.
National Commander John E. Davis has presented American Legion testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee urging retention of the Selective Service Act essentially as is. The Commander specifically stated Legion opposition to the proposal for a lottery system, and for crediting Peace Corps or Poverty Corps service against an individual's military obligation. He also called for retention of local authority and responsibility as now exercised by local boards.

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Alan L. Keyes, 16, of San Antonio, Texas, is the 1967 champion of The American Legion's National High School Oratorical Contest. Winner of a $4,000 scholarship to the College or University of his choice, he is the first negro winner in the 30-year history of the contest. Second place and a $2,500 scholarship went to Joseph Peter McCaffery, of Silver Spring, Md.; Third, and a $1,000 scholarship, to Eric A. DeGroff, of Kansas City, Kansas, and Fourth, and a $500 scholarship to Bernd M. Kutzschler, of Sherman Oaks, Calif.

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National Rehabilitation Director John Corcoran this week presented American Legion testimony on nine important pending pieces of legislation dealing with the Veterans Administration hospitals. He pledged the Legion's backing of adequate appropriations to re-establish the VA Department of Medicine and Surgery as the finest in the country. He also reiterated support of legislation limiting the power of the Bureau of the Budget over the VA. These are Convention-mandated positions.

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"The anti-social behavior of a tiny minority of American young people has the unhappy effect of reflecting upon American youth as a whole, a reflection which is most unfortunate and totally unwarranted," National Commander John E. Davis told New Hampshire Legionnaires. He pointed out that only between two and three per cent of American youth under 18 years of age ever run afoul of the law, but those who do seem to make the headlines, while those who don't are overlooked.

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The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, over the past 12 years, has partially underwritten the cost of sending 79 police officers to the Delinquency Control Institute of the University of Southern California at Los Angeles. This is a long-range portion of the Legion's continuing support for the forces of Law and Order, and an evidence of continuing concern for the nation's youth.

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National Commander John E. Davis will participate in a CBS radio network program, 7:25 to 8:00 p.m., EST, Thursday, April 20, on the subject: "Is The Cold War Over?"
Washington—(ALNS)—American Legion National Commander John E. Davis has presented Legion testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee urging extension of the Selective Service Act essentially as is.

Appearing personally before the Committee on Friday, April 14, Commander Davis noted that the Legion historically has supported adequate armed forces for the United States and "has traditionally taken the position that the privilege and duty of serving in the armed forces should be shared as widely as possible."

Commenting on the many studies which have been made through the years to seek means of improving the methods of selecting personnel for the military services the Commander said: "I seriously question whether there are any new and painless means of providing for the common defense of our nation."

Noting that every four years, when it becomes necessary to re-enact the law it becomes a matter of controversy in both the public and political forum, many old ideas are dusted off and paraded before the public as sure-fire answers to criticisms, he said: "These solutions are not new, nor do they solve the basic needs of the nation."

Commander Davis said: "The simple facts of life concerning the legislation before your committee is that it must be re-enacted. If we are to fulfill our national security obligations, we must maintain armed forces adequate to do the job.

"The American Legion strongly recommends the extension of the induction authority of the Universal Military Training and Service Act, as amended. We also support extension of related laws concerning dependent's assistance, suspension of the permanent active duty strength ceilings of the active forces, the authority for special calls for physicians, dentists and allied specialists, and provisions for extra compensation for such personnel.

"The present law," he continued, "is a broad and flexible statute under which almost any need can be met. An important aspect of that flexibility are those provisions for universal military training. No one can predict that the nation will not find it necessary to put them into effect at almost any time."

(End)
"The most far reaching, and in our view, dangerous proposal concerning the nation's Selective Service System, is that to abandon the time-tested principle of state and community responsibility and authority in the operation of selective service.

"In our judgment, the Selective Service System has successfully fulfilled its mission over the years because of the confidence it has won and retained in the community. The source of that confidence is the principle of decentralized operation and local decision. We believe it would be unwise, and perhaps would jeopardize the capacity of the system to function successfully, to weaken that principle," he continued.

"Another proposal to tamper with our time-proven system is to use some game of chance to determine who should serve and who should not, rather than to rely on judgment and date of birth.

"The Legion is opposed to broadening the opportunities of evading service through more liberal deferments, exemptions, or recognition of any other service as a substitute for military service.

"Of particular concern to The American Legion are the several proposals now pending before the Congress relative to changes in the military draft law suggesting that in addition to drafting American men into the military service that the law be expanded to include the Peace Corps and Poverty Corps and credit such service toward their military obligation.

"Fairness is a desirable goal. If by fairness we mean that there should be a broader sharing of the duty of training and service, the only approach is to use more young men through some form of Universal Military Training if not all are needed on active duty. The Legion supports such an approach. If by fairness we mean to ignore the factors which affect an individuals' availability or the national interest in what he is doing as a civilian, the Legion opposes such an approach." The Commander here reiterated the Legion's belief that the best assurance of fairness rests with the informed judgment of local Selective Service Boards. "Even after entry into the armed forces, by whatever means, there is no equity of service when some serve in the USA and some in Vietnam. The prime consideration must always be the national need."

Rounding out his testimony, the Commander noted that he has traveled thousands of miles, talking with people in all walks of life, including our servicemen at home and abroad. "I am proud of most young Americans, particularly those who do what is expected of them in an unspectacular way. It pains me greatly, as I'm sure it does members of this committee, to witness some young Americans, and some not so young, holding their nation up to ridicule, citing reasons why they feel no moral obligation to do one earthly thing to perpetuate it."

Finally, he recalled the words of George Washington on citizenship responsibility when he said: "It may be laid down as a primary position, and the basis of our system, that every citizen who enjoys the protection of a free government, owes not only a portion of his property, but even of his personal services to the defense of it."
Washington (ALNS)—American Legion testimony on 9 important pieces of legislation dealing with Veterans Administration hospitals was presented this week by National Rehabilitation Director John Corcoran before the Subcommittee on Hospitals of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs.

Corcoran offered strong testimony in support of five measures (HR 1363, 1368, 1369, 1371, and 1372), the intent of each of which is to improve the salary structure of doctors, nurses and other personnel of the VA Department of Medicine and Surgery.

Citing Resolution No. 477, adopted at the 1965 National Convention of The American Legion, in which the Legion called for increased salaries for key professional and administrative personnel, Corcoran said the intent was that these salary schedules be maintained at a level sufficient to attract and to hold outstanding people and to encourage them to make service with the VA their career.

He said the VA salary scale through the years "has not kept pace with that offered by other public and private agencies," with the result the VA has lost many outstanding people and has been handicapped in its efforts to secure competent and qualified new and replacement personnel.

Corcoran supported his testimony with reports from Legion Field Representatives citing specific examples of curtailed services in some VA hospitals because of a lack of adequate staffing, particularly an increasing number of nursing vacancies.

The Director stated American Legion opposition to HR 1385, which would put into law an admission counseling procedure for every veteran (not otherwise exempted) who applies for hospitalization for a non-service connected disability. Corcoran cited this as an apparent attempt to obtain retroactive Congressional sanction for a procedure administratively effected in 1962.

(More)
"We opposed the admission counseling when it was first promulgated by the Veterans Administration," he said, and he referred to resolution No. 5, adopted by the National Executive Committee in the spring of 1964, as the Legion's controlling resolution.

"Generally," Corcoran continued, "as a result of policy established in 1936, The American Legion National Organization takes no position on specific locations of VA hospitals and other medical facilities. The Veterans Administration is in the best position to decide where there is patient demand and where adequate staffing can be obtained. We urge only that there be made available sufficient beds for the service-disabled and for those other veterans who are unable to defray privately the cost of hospital care.

"With respect to appropriations for the renovation and modernization of VA medical facilities, we feel strongly that the VA should make a greater effort to adhere to the plan formulated in 1959. That plan, now comprehending the expenditure of 1.3 billion dollars over a 15-year period, has been deviated from several times in recent years as VA budget requests were reduced. Interruptions in this long-range modernization program, through the denial of necessary funds, tend to defeat the purpose of the program and will make more difficult the goal of providing the finest medical facilities."

The Director again spoke strongly in support of HR 1361, the stated purpose of which is, in part, to limit the authority of the Bureau of the Budget over the VA.

"Our last National Convention adopted Resolution No. 325 calling upon the Congress to curb the power of the Bureau over the Veterans Administration, especially in the hospitalization field. The American Legion believes that Congress should establish national policy in Veterans Affairs and that the Administrator of Veterans Affairs should operate the program. Whenever the Bureau of the Budget interferes with either of those functions, it exceeds its authority," Corcoran declared.

He also called for legislation that would provide treatment in contract hospitals for veterans in Alaska who require hospital treatment for non-service connected illnesses, upon approval of the regional VA jurisdiction, and when the use of a VA or other government hospital is not considered practicable.

Two other bills which were under consideration by the Subcommittee, but on which the Legion has no current, specific mandate, were: HR 1365, which would provide hospitalization to needy widows and orphans of war veterans, and HR 4470, which would provide similar benefits for Gold Star Mothers.

Corcoran suggested these measures might be presented for consideration by the spring meetings of the National Executive Committee.
LEGION PROVIDES LONG RANGE HELP TOWARD BETTER LAW ENFORCEMENT

INDIANAPOLIS—(ALNS)—Emphasis on the important role that law and order must play in our republic has been provided in talks across the nation this year by American Legion National Commander John E. Davis of Bismarck, N. D.

The Legion chief in speaking engagements and in other contacts with the public has sought to alert Americans to the need to combat effectively the destructive influence that crime is having on our nation and society.

But The American Legion is no Johnny-come-lately to this problem. It joined in a long range attack on this problem more than a decade ago. Education was the weapon of attack.

The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation for the past 12 years has been partially underwriting the cost of police officers from every part of the nation to attend the Delinquency Control Institute of the University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

In this period, the total of $21,750 has been expended to assist 76 officers from 29 states to attend the institute, the National Commander announced.

The university offers this 12-week institute three times yearly, with attendance limited to 20 students. Sixteen are selected from among police officers employed either by police or sheriff's departments, while the remaining four may come from parole, probation, district attorney's staffs, attendance officers and social workers.

This specialized training program is designed to prepare law enforcement officers and others to work more effectively with youth who have problems. Since police officers annually contact from five to ten per cent of the juveniles in their communities, it is imperative that these officers receive professional training to do their jobs more competently.
Courses are taught by experienced law enforcement officers, university professors, lawyers, and correctional leaders.

Local civic authorities must agree that an officer sent to the DCI will be assigned to juvenile policework for at least two years before officers are accepted. Estimates have been made that a juvenile police officer will favorably influence at least 1000 juveniles and prevent any further antisocial acts or prevent these children from becoming juvenile delinquents in the first place.

Before a policeman can receive a grant from the Foundation, letters of recommendation are necessary from the Legion post and the department child welfare chairmen. Interested officers must apply to DCI and be accepted before these letters of recommendation are requested.

The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation grant is in the amount of $300 and can be used as the officer sees fit. It might be used for travel or maintenance at school. If there are interested officers in your community, applications can be secured from the Director, Delinquency Control Institute, University of Southern California, 206 South Spring St., Los Angeles, Calif. 90012.

-LACONIA, N. H.-(ALNS)--"The anti-social behavior of a tiny minority of American young people has the unhappy effect of reflecting upon American youth as a whole, a reflection which is most unfortunate and totally unwarranted," American Legion National Commander John E. Davis said in a recent address here.

"There is no question," Commander Davis said, "but that beatniks and youthful law-breakers play a role in the wave of lawlessness that is sweeping the nation and that the problem they create is a serious one. But these conditions do not warrant a blanket indictment of this rising generation of Americans simply because the sensationalism created by the minority generates more news than does the solid citizenship of the vast majority."

The Legion chief, a two-term former governor of North Dakota, who is leading a nationwide program of The American Legion to restore and rekindle a new and deeper respect for the forces of law and order, said it is disturbing to note the reams of publicity given to the "off-beat" element of our young people as compared to the almost total disregard of the good citizenship of the many.

"Reliable statistical surveys made available to our National Child Welfare Commission reveal that of 74-million Americans, 18 years of age and younger, only between two and three per cent have ever been in trouble with the law. Admittedly this is a lot of youngsters, and a lot of trouble, often very serious trouble, and it demands attention. The problem should not, however, be permitted to create a total blackout of the many fine things for which young America stands," he asserted.

Commander Davis reviewed the Americanism projects of the Legion, including Boys State and Boys Nation, National High School Oratorical Contest, American Legion Baseball, Legion sponsorship of the Scouting movement, and other youth participation programs.

"We prefer to believe that the thousands of fine American youngsters such as the participants in these programs, are more representative of the youth of this nation than are the troublemakers, in fact, we know they are," Commander Davis emphasized.

-FOR COMMUNITY PEACE SUPPORT YOUR POLICE-
WASHINGTON--(ALNS)--Expansion of the Veterans Administration program assisting the returning Vietnam serviceman to civilian life took place this month.

Under the pilot program, which began three months ago, with the cooperation of the Department of Defense, two VA representatives went to Long Binh in Vietnam to provide information about veterans' rights and benefits to men who would return soon to civilian life.

Implemented to carry out President Lyndon B. Johnson's wish to help the fighting man make an adjustment to civilian life, the program has proved so successful that it has been expanded to two additional Vietnam cities -- Cam Ranh Bay and Pleiku.

A new team of three men is conducting the advisory and counseling service. Hershel W. Williams, who heads the group, was awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor for heroism as a Marine on Iwo Jima in World War II. He also holds the Purple Heart.

A native of West Virginia, Williams is a warrant officer in the U. S. Marine Corps Reserve. He joined the Veterans Administration in 1946, and is now contact officer at the Huntington, W. Va., regional office.

The other two members of the VA group are also contact representatives with more than 20 years experience with the VA. Woodrow W. Abbenhouse works in Seattle, Wash.; Daniel R. Riggs, in Richmond, Va. Both were Army lieutenants during World War II.

They will replace Richard E. Bush, another Medal of Honor winner, and contact officer at the VA hospital, Downey, Ill., and John P. McFadden, holder of several military honors and a contact representative at the Newark, N. J., VA regional office.

-alns-

William P. Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, will discuss the "Far East Today" at The American Legion National Commander's banquet for the Legion's National Executive Committee members at Indianapolis, Ind., May 3.

-alns-
Washington (ALNS)—A crackerjack 30-girl drill team from Utah State University, "The Sponsor Corps Drill Team," won second place in the National Cherry Blossom Festival drill competition, and great credit for American Legion Post No. 12, of Ogden, Utah, which sponsored the team's trip to Washington for the event.

Post 12 is commanded by Lynn Mortenson, and Department Commander Dr. Edwin L. Peterson also is a member of the sponsoring post which is comprised of members of the faculty of Utah State University.

The drill team was accompanied to Washington by its Director, Major Patrick Louney, (USA) ROTC instructor at the University and a recently returned veteran of the Vietnam fighting for which he was awarded the bronze star.

By virtue of their performance, the drill team marched second in the National Cherry Blossom Festival parade.

-alns-

Washington (ALNS)—American Legion National Commander John E. Davis will present The American Legion's point of view on the subject: "Is The Cold War Over?" on a special CBS radio network program to be aired between 7:25 and 8:00 p.m. EST on Thursday, April 20.

Note that this program has been rescheduled after originally having been set for Thursday, April 6. The postponement was made necessary by the strike of the American Federation of Radio and Television Artists.

Several CBS correspondents based in foreign capitals, and a number of other Prominent Americans, knowledgeable in foreign affairs, will participate.

-alns-

If a motorcycle policeman stops you for speeding and asks you where the fire is, according to law you don't have to tell him.—The Seabag of Naval Post 372 of Chicago, Ill.

-alns-

There's no doubt that a nickel still goes a long way today. You can carry one around all week and never find anything to do with it.—The Seabag of Naval Post 372 of Chicago, Ill.

-alns-
Lincoln, Neb.--(ALNS)--Alan L. Keyes, 16, of San Antonio, Texas, is the 1967 champion of The American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest by virtue of besting three other young speakers in the national finals conducted at Lincoln North East High School here today.

Young Keyes, the first negro winner in the 30-year history of the event, although others have preceded him in the final round of four, is the son of Army Sgt. Major and Mrs. Allison L. Keyes, of 106 W. Hathaway Dr., San Antonio. Sergeant Major Keyes is now serving with Army's 507th Signal Corps Battalion in Da Nang, South Vietnam. With the championship, the youthful speaker won a $4,000 cash scholarship to the college or university of his choice.

In second place, and winner of a $2,500 scholarship, was Joseph Peter McCaffrey, Jr., of 1308 Gresham Road, Silver Spring, Md., also the son of a service family. The parents are Lt. Col. and Mrs. Joseph P. McCaffrey, and Col. McCaffrey is attached to the Army Surgeon General's office, Medical Service Corps, in Washington, D. C.

The fathers of both the first and second place winners are veterans of service with the U. S. armed forces during three wars, including the present Vietnam conflict.

Finishing in third place, and winner of a $1,000 scholarship, was Eric A. DeGroff, 17, son of Mr. and Mrs. Roy A. DeGroff, of 2835 N. 43rd Street, Kansas City, Kansas, and in fourth place, and winning a $500 scholarship, was Bernd M. Kutzscher, son of Dr. and Mrs. E. W. Kutzscher, of 15450 Briarwood Dr., Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Keyes' speech coach, Miss Linda Salinger, who accompanied him to the national finals, reports the youngster didn't start out as a champion. In fact, she said, he (More)
must have had some misgivings about being a speaker at all, for during the very first round of contest in which he competed at the local level, he ran outside and she had to go get him in time to deliver his oration.

The new American Legion oratorical champion was the youngest of the four finalists in this year's event, and would have been the only one eligible to compete in next year's contest had he not won today. The other three boys are all high school seniors, while Alan is a junior at Robert G. Cole High School in San Antonio.

He was born in New York City, and is a member and vice-president of the Student Council at his high school, where he also is president of the Choralairs vocal group and vice-president of the National Honor Society.

He participates in track, the Language Club, debating team, Science Club and Chess Club, and is hoping to attend Harvard and to pursue a career in law and politics.

Alan was sponsored in the contest by Business and Professional Men's Post No. 10, of The American Legion, in San Antonio.

Young Keyes prize winning oration was entitled: "The Blessings of Liberty, The Blessings of Life," and in it he stressed the need for maintenance of an orderly society if the members of that society are to reap its benefits.

"The purposes of government are plain," he said. "It must first provide for order, derived primarily from laws or other regulations meant to limit the activities of those within a society to the performance of those actions which will not harm its other members. But even more than this a government must provide an atmosphere in which the members of a society can go about those pursuits which lead eventually to their betterment......

"What are the blessings of liberty? They are those rights derived from the principle of democracy which insures to the people the right to decide their own destinies, the right to set their own hands to the shaping of those destinies...

"Ours shall be the legacy of the past and the promise of the future, but only if we labor to make it so. Only by action was that legacy formed and preserved, and only by action will that legacy be perpetuated. Thus shall we promulgate the freedom that others worked to transmit to us. Thus shall we insure to ourselves, and through us to all the world, the blessings of liberty."
The "S. S. American Legion," one of the world's fastest and most modern cargo vessels, will be christened at Chester, Pa., by Mrs. John E. Davis of Bismarck, N. D., at 1 p.m., Monday, May 22 (National Maritime Day). Mrs. Davis is the wife of the national commander of The American Legion for which organization the $13-million cargo ship is being named.

** **

The "S. S. American Legion," costing $13-million, is the latest unit in the United States Lines' $400-million-vessel replacement program. At her top speed of 27 knots, the ship will be able to make the New York to France run in 43/4 days.

** **

A $5,000 check from the American Legion Vietnam Relief Fund has been presented to CARE in New York by Legion National Commander John E. Davis. The check brings the sum to approximately $121,000 which has been expended from the fund for use in U. S. servicemen's civic action programs among the needy South Vietnamese.

** **

Harrold L. Card, 69, who with three other American Legionnaires began the first Boys State program in the mid-1930's in Illinois, died in the Jefferson Barracks Hospital at St. Louis, Mo.

** **

Employes with reserve obligations who are members of the National Guard and the Reserve should not be denied retention in employment or promotional opportunities solely because of their participation in those programs. That was the substance of American Legion National Commander John E. Davis' testimony recently before the Senate Armed Services Committee in Washington.

** **

More than 23,000 copies of "The American Legion Story," by Raymond Moley, Jr., have been sold or distributed to the press (for reviews) by the publisher. Have you, Mr. Legionnaire, read this fascinating history of the world's largest veterans' organization?

** **

Alan L. Keyes, 16, of San Antonio, Texas, was rewarded for his talking at the hourly rate of $16,000 when he captured The American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest championship and a $4,000 college cash scholarship in Lincoln, Neb. Keyes' hourly rate is based on the maximum ten-minute prepared oration and the five-minute extemporaneous oration allowed in the contest. That hourly rate breaks down to $266.66 per minute.

** **

"You symbolize the splendid talent and the high aspiration of fine young Americans of varied background who will be leaders in the years ahead in the land we love." Those words were included in Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey's congratulatory telegram to Alan L. Keyes, who won The American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest Finals at Lincoln, Neb.
CHESTER, PA.--(ALNS)--The "S. S. American Legion," one of the world's fastest and most modern cargo vessels, will be christened here by Mrs. John W. Davis of Bismarck, N.D., at 1 p.m., Monday, May 22 (National Maritime Day).

Mrs. Davis is the wife of the national commander of The American Legion for which organization the $13-million cargo ship is being named.

Miss Kathleen Davis, daughter of the Davis' and a student at Mills College, Oakland, Calif., will be maid of honor for the ceremonies to be held at the Sun Shipbuilding and Drydock Co., located here on the Delaware River south of Philadelphia.

National Commander Davis will make a major address at a luncheon to be held following the christening ceremony.

The commander will head a delegation of top-ranking Legionnaires attending the ceremony. Members of the U. S. Congress and the Maritime Administration also are expected to attend.

The "S. S. American Legion," constructed for the United States Lines, will be as fast as many passenger liners. In terms of an Atlantic crossing, the new ship will be able to cover the 3,000-odd miles between New York and France in 5½ days at her 23-knot service speed. At her top speed of 27 knots, she could cut a day from the trip.

What the high speed of the new ship could mean as a national defense factor may be seen in the fact that she could cover the 12,000-mile run from New York to Vietnam in only three weeks at normal cruising speed. Under forced draft she could make the run in 18½ days. This is seven to ten days faster than most of the cargoships plying the Vietnam supply route today.

(More)
Enormous cargo-carrying capacity is another important asset of the new ship. Her six well-ventilated and humidity-controlled holds have a 755,000 cubic foot capacity - the equivalent of a two-mile-long freight train of more than 200 box cars.

In terms of weight the American Legion could carry some 11,500 deadweight tons and travel more than 12,000 miles without stopping for fuel or water. It would take a fleet of 230 large cargo airplanes each carrying 50 tons of cargo to equal the new ship's cargo lift. And it would require another fleet of tanker planes to refuel the original air fleet.

A dual-purpose ship the "S. S. American Legion" can be transformed from a general, break-bulk vessel to a container carrier, replete with cellular guides for secure stacking of containers, at the touch of a button. Fingertip controls also will open and close the hatches, while high speed electric winches will activate cargo booms ranging in lift power up to 70 tons.

Complementing the speed and unique cargo carrying features of the American Legion will be her automation. She will be an electronic marvel. Technological advances will be such that an officer on the navigating bridge will be able to maneuver the vessel if he desires. A simple turn of a small wheel on a bridge console will dictate the speed, fast or slow, ahead or astern.

The bridge console is an extension of a main engineroom console which centralizes control of major operating components and provides remote control of engines, boilers and auxiliary equipment.

The $13-million ship is the latest unit in the United States Lines' $400-million vessel replacement program.

Alexander Purdon, United States Lines president, issued the following statement in announcing the naming of the new ship:

"We feel that it is proper we christen this particular vessel the 'S. S. American Legion' as an indication of our appreciation of the fine cooperation and support the Maritime industry of this nation has received from The American Legion, through its Merchant Marine Committee headed by Henry C. Parke of New York. The Legion long has supported the principle that the United States should maintain not only a strong Merchant Marine, but that we should have the world's finest."

* * *

(Two-column mats and repro proofs of the artist's conception of the "S. S. American Legion" were sent this week to those editors on the ALNS mailing list to receive such material.)

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PREPARED ADDRESSES AVAILABLE

Three new suggested addresses for American Legion speakers are available either through your department adjutant or through the National Public Relations Division, The American Legion, P. O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, Ind. 46206. The prepared speeches are:

No. 174 is for general audiences on Memorial Day, 1967; No. 175 is for Armed Forces Day, 1967; and No. 176 is for high school audiences on Memorial Day, 1967.

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LOOK TO IT

(This brief but forceful speech was delivered by Vice Adm. I. J. Galantin, USN, chief of Navy material, at the commissioning of Mobile Construction Battalion Seventy-One at Davisville, R. I. The words arrange themselves into an editorial for Armed Forces Day, 1967.)

"I have just three points to make.

"Point No. 1 — You are about to become members of MCB SEVENTY-ONE. Remember your heritage. Live up to it. Your predecessors won glory for SEVENTY-ONE, at Bougainville, at Okinawa. Continue that shining record. Add your own luster to it. I know you CAN DO—and will do!

"Point No. 2—You are SEABEES—as was Marvin G. Shields, Construction Mechanic Third Class, United States Navy.

I quote from the citation for his posthumous Medal of Honor, the first Medal of Honor won by any Navy-man in Vietnam:

\'For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty...His heroic initiative and great personal valor in the face of intense enemy fire sustain and enhance the finest traditions of the United States naval service.\'

"Remember his example. Live up to it. I know you CAN DO—and will do!

"Point No. 3--You are builders and fighters, as was Abraham Lincoln, the 'Rail Splitter,' the captain of infantry in the Black Hawk war, the hero and the martyr of the war between the states. Remember that Abraham Lincoln said:'I think the necessity of being ready increases—look to it.'

"Men of SEVENTY-ONE: Be ready—ready to build and fight. Look to it. I know you CAN DO—and will do!"
ST. LOUIS, MO.—(ALNS)— Harrold L. Card, 69, who with three other American Legionnaires began the first Boys State program in the mid-1930's, died in the Jefferson Barracks Hospital here April 12. He had been in ill health for several years.

Mr. Card of Owaneco, Ill., along with Hayes Kennedy, William Mundt and the late Major Grover Sexton, established the first Boys State in the Department of Illinois.

The Illinois program was taken as a model for programs which the Legion operates in all 50 states and for Boys Nation at the nation's capital. The Auxiliary's Girls State and Nation programs also can be traced to the Premier Boys State.

NEW YORK—(ALNS)—A $5,000 check from The American Legion Vietnam Relief Fund was presented to CARE here recently by Legion National Commander John E. Davis of Bismarck, N.D.

The check to the international relief organization brings the sum to approximately $121,000 which has been expended from the fund for use in U.S. servicemen's civic action work among the needy South Vietnamese.

Most of the total contributed from the fund was sent directly to Gen. William Westmoreland, U.S. commander in South Vietnam, while about $45,000 was distributed through CARE facilities.

The fund was instituted during his term of office by the then Legion National Commander L. Eldon James of Hampton, Va. While contributions to the fund came mostly from Legion and Auxiliary members and organizations, others, including some school children contributed to the effort.

Approximately $1,200 remains in the fund at Legion National Headquarters for distribution in South Vietnam, National Commander Davis reported.
WASHINGTON—(ALNS)—Employes with reserve obligations who are members of the National Guard and the Reserves should not be denied retention in employment or promotional opportunities solely because of their participation in those programs.

That was the substance of American Legion National Commander John E. Davis' testimony recently before the Senate Armed Services Committee concerning proposed amendments to Section 9 of the Universal Military Training and Service Act.

Participants in those military training programs should be afforded, the Legion chief declared, all the employment opportunities and benefits enjoyed by those who do not have military training obligations.

Commander Davis pointed out that re-employment rights statutes do not now protect National Guardsmen and Reservists to the same extent that they do inductees and enlistees.

The proposed amendments would add a new section under the re-employment provisions of the Universal Military Training and Service Act which would prevent discharge from employment without cause because of membership in the National Guard or Reserves. Discrimination in such areas as promotion, training opportunities and pay increases also would be outlawed.

Commander Davis said that the present law provides re-employment rights only for those veterans who served four years or less on active duty.

The Legion chief stressed the fact that during the Vietnam crisis several branches of the Armed Forces have found it necessary to request many servicemen to extend their period of active duty because of the critical shortage of trained manpower.

"Those who were patriotically motivated to extend their enlistments beyond the four-year period of service," the commander emphasized, "thereby lose their right to return to their civilian jobs under Federal law."

The proposed amendments would permit the military forces to request voluntary extensions of service during emergencies and would provide re-employment rights protection for an additional one year of active duty, the commander asserted. He added that the military would be provided greater flexibility. The need also would be eliminated to seek new legislation as such emergencies arise in the future.

The Commander made his appeal for the amendments as he also presented the Legion's stand on the draft.

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LINCOLN, NEB.—(ALNS)—No one will ever be able to talk the nation's top youth orator into the idea that talk is always cheap as many like to contend it is.

Alan L. Keyes, 16, of San Antonio, Texas, was rewarded for his talking at the hourly rate of $16,000 when he captured the oratory championship and a $4,000 cash college scholarship in The American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest Finals here recently.

Keyes' hourly rate is based on the maximum ten-minute prepared oration and the five-minute extemporaneous oration allowed in the contest. That hourly rate breaks down to $266.66 per minute.

The first and second place winners in The American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest Finals now outrank their military fathers.

Nebraska Gov. Norbert T. Tiemann, with no intent of destroying family discipline for the two Army fathers involved, appointed the two young orators as "Admirals in the Great Navy of Nebraska."

The Nebraska admirals are Alan L. Keyes, 16, first place winner and son of Sgt. Major and Mrs. Allison L. Keyes of San Antonio, Texas, and Joseph P. McCaffrey, Jr., 17, son of Lt. Col. and Mrs. Joseph P. McCaffrey of Silver Springs, Md. Both fathers are veterans of three wars. Sgt. Keyes is serving in Vietnam; Col. McCaffrey, with the Army Surgeon General's Office in Washington, D. C.

To keep things on an even keel in the contest, Gov. Tiemann also commissioned as admirals Eric A. DeGroff, 17, of Kansas City, Kas., and Bernd M. Kutzscher, 17, of Sherman Oaks, Calif., third and fourth place winners, respectively.

Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, who had just returned from his European goodwill tour for President Johnson, sent each of the four finalists in The American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest a congratulatory telegram.

His Message to the national champion orator, Alan L. Keyes, 16, of San Antonio, follows:

"Dear Alan: I have just heard of your wonderful achievement in winning top honor in the annual American Legion Oratorical Contest. I convey warmest congratulations.

"You, your parents, your teachers in Robert C. Cole High School, your friends back home in San Antonio can be very proud of your triumph.

"You will, I am confident, go on to law school and a fulfilling career. You symbolize the splendid talent and the high aspiration of fine young Americans of varied background who will be leaders in the years ahead in the land we love. I look forward to the pleasure of seeing you here in Washington.

"As you travel throughout our land, American Legionnaires and their families will rightly feel a special glow of pride. Best Wishes."—Hubert H. Humphrey.

-alns-
WASHINGTON—(ALNS)—More than 23,000 copies of "The American Legion Story," by Raymond Moley, Jr., have been sold or distributed to the press (for reviews) by the publisher as of last April 7.

Duell, Sloan & Pearce of New York, the publisher, also reported that the total includes 6,500 copies of the new history sold through book stores across the nation.

The bulk of the sales, of course, has been through The American Legion National Emblem Sales and the various departments.

Ten departments have reached or exceeded their established quotas for the history. The departments are:

Alabama, Arizona, California, Canal Zone, Delaware, District of Columbia, Italy, Maryland, Utah and Wisconsin.

Copies of the new and complete history of The American Legion may be obtained through most departments or through The American Legion National Emblem Sales, P. O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, Ind. 46206. Price of the book by the single copy from the latter source is $4.50, postage paid.

WASHINGTON—(ALNS)—Roger H. C. Donlon has traded his captain's bars for a major's gold oak leaves.

The young Army officer, first to win the Congressional Medal of Honor in South Vietnam and 1966 recipient of The American Legion's Distinguished Service Medal, recently was promoted in ceremonies held at the Pentagon.

The new major leaves in May for assignment with the Eighth U. S. Army in Korea. He has been on temporary duty at the Pentagon.

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American Legion National Adjutant Emil A. (Blackie) Blackmore, 49, died at Indianapolis, Ind., April 21. The Legion's top administrative officer for nearly 11 years, Mr. Blackmore suffered an initial heart attack last Feb. 13 while in Des Moines, Iowa, to attend a Legion function. Hospitalized there for a month before returning to his home to continue his convalescence, he only recently had returned to his Legion duties on a part-time basis.

* * *

The first meeting of a series in the coast-to-coast, on-the-scene study of veterans' problems by the new Veterans' Advisory Commission will open in Seattle, Wash., on Saturday, May 6. American Legion leaders and rehabilitation experts from the states in the Seattle region will move into that city on Friday, May 5, for three days of work in connection with the commission's first session. Similar Legion efforts will mark each commission meeting in the other seven cities.

* * *

Some 402,000 students in the 18 to 22 age bracket will receive $355-million in benefits during the 1967-68 school year under Title II of the Social Security Act, the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare estimates.

* * *

The Lakeside Unit, known as that because of its association with the Lakeside Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio, is credited with being the first U. S. Army outfit to land in France after the declaration of war by the United States. That landing at Rouen, France on May 25, 1917, will be marked at the group's 50th reunion at Atwood Lake Lodge, near Delroy, Ohio, on Thursday, May 25.

* * *

Service flags with a blue star, similar to those used during World War II, are now being made available to American Legion departments and posts by the Department of Pennsylvania. The price is $1.25 for a single flag or $1 each in lots of 50 flags.

* * *

The U. S. Armed Forces has a numerical strength of 3,367,484 based on preliminary reports as of last Feb. 28, the Department of Defense has announced.

* * *

CAN MORE BE SAID?

"I was brought up in a family where there was never any talk about God. But when I became a grown-up person I found that it was impossible to exist without God in one's heart. I came to that conclusion myself, without anybody's help or preaching. But that was a great change because since that moment the main dogmas of Communism lost their significance for me."

—Svetlana Alliluyeva, daughter of Stalin.

-alns-
INDIANAPOLIS--(ALNS)--American Legion National Adjutant Emil A. (Blackie) Blackmore, 49, died here April 21 of a heart attack.

The Legion's top administrative officer for nearly 11 years, Mr. Blackmore suffered an initial heart attack last Feb. 13, while in Des Moines, Iowa, to attend a Legion function. He was hospitalized there for a month before returning to his home here to continue his convalescence.

EMIL A. (BLACKIE) BLACKMORE

"The hearts of all American Legionnaires are saddened with the news of the death of our beloved National Adjutant E. A. (Blackie) Blackmore. We who have had the privilege of being closely associated with him knew him as a devoted and hard working administrator who also took the time to share the concerns of his fellow workers. The American Legion has suffered a great loss, and I have lost a close personal friend in the passing of Mr. Blackmore. On behalf of all American Legionnaires everywhere, we extend our heartfelt sympathies to Mrs. Blackmore and to their children." --American Legion National Commander John E. Davis

Mr. Blackmore only recently had returned to his Legion duties on a part-time basis. He had left his office at about 3 p. m., last Friday, to return to his home at 4961 Seville Dr.

He apparently had stopped to take a walk in Holiday Park before going home, and was found in the park near midnight last Friday. Mrs. Blackmore had become alarmed when he had not returned to his home for dinner, and notified his associates, who in turn notified Indianapolis and Marion County authorities.

The seventh man to serve as Legion National Adjutant, Mr. Blackmore was appointed to that position on July 1, 1956, by then National Commander J. Addington Wagner of Battle Creek, Mich. He had been assistant National Adjutant since Jan. 5, 1953.

(More)
He was appointed service officer for the Legion Department of Wyoming in 1948 after previous service as service officer of Travis Post 5 of The American Legion, Torrington, Wyo. He also served as chairman of the Wyoming Department's Education of Orphans of Veterans and Child Welfare committees prior to joining the Legion national organization. He also had served as a contact officer for the Veterans Administration.

A World War II veteran with service in the Navy, he was born in Rawlins, Wyo., he attended public schools at Baggs, Wyo., and later attended the University of Wyoming at Laramie.

In addition to his long-time service to The American Legion, Mr. Blackmore also was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Sigma Chi fraternity, the Columbia Club, the Indianapolis Athletic Club and the Meridian Hills Country Club.

Mr. Blackmore is survived by his wife, Jean; a son John A., of Chicago; and a daughter, Joanne, a University of Wyoming freshman.

* * *

An estimated 200 persons, many of them American Legion leaders from across the nation, paid their last respects April 25 at Indianapolis to Legion National Adjutant Emil A. (Blackie) Blackmore.

The regular Episcopal burial service from the Book of Common Prayer was conducted by the Rev. G. Ernest Lynch, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, and pastor of the deceased.

The services were conducted at Flanner and Buchanan Fall Creek Mortuary and at the graveside at Washington Park Cemetery North, this city. The funeral procession was more than one mile long.

At the conclusion of the graveside rites, the flag draping the casket was folded and presented to the widow by Legion National Commander John E. Davis.

Legion Past National Commanders who came to pay their last respects are: James F. O'Neil, George N. Craig, J. Addington Wagner, John S. Gleason, Jr., J. Preston Moore, William R. Burke, Charles L. Bacon, James E. Powers, Judge Daniel F. Foley, Donald E. Johnson and L. Eldon James. Legion Past National Adjutant Henry H. Dudley also was present among the honorary pallbearers, and that group also included the Past National Commanders under whom Mr. Blackmore had served and the Legion National Commission directors.
WASHINGTON--(ALNS)--The Veterans Administration has 30 openings for career resident physicians in physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R). Beginning salaries may top $12,873 annually.

Openings are in 25 VA hospitals which are affiliated with medical schools. PM&R residents may prepare for their specialty board certifications during their VA association. Those who remain with the VA as full-time staff physicians after their residencies may earn more than $23,000 annually.

Interested applicants may contact the Chief Medical Director (117), Veterans Administration Central Office, Washington, D.C. 20420.

WASHINGTON--(ALNS)--Over 123,000 applications for G.I. Home Loans have been received from post-Korean War veterans under the 1966 G.I. Bill, the Veterans Administration has reported.

The reports from the VA's field offices across the country, covers the period March 3, 1966 (when the law went into effect) to last Feb. 28.

During the first full year of operation 312,399 post-Korean War Veterans were declared eligible for G.I. Home Loans. Over 89,000 loans were made during that first year.

Under the three G.I. Home Loan programs--World War II, Korean War and the 1966 G.I. Bill--about 7-million G.I. Home loans have been made with a face value of over $64-billion.

The deadline for G.I. Home Loans for World War II veterans is next July 25.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.--(ALNS)--The American Legion's law and order and membership programs got a nice boost recently on the NBC Network's program, "Dragnet."

The television show opened with Jack Webb and his partner attending the annual breakfast of American Legion Police Post 381 in this city. Jack Webb's partner invited him to join the Legion. Webb replied that he was not eligible but wished that he were.
CLEVELAND, OHIO—(ALNS)—A contingent of officers and enlisted men of the U.S. Army Medical Corps and a group of nurses, known as the Lakeside Unit, disembarked from the British Steamer Orduna at Liverpool, England, on May 17, 1917, and eight days later were landed in Rouen, France.

Dr. George W. Crile of Lakeside Hospital, this city, commanded the contingent which was officially recognized as the first U.S. Army unit to land in France after the declaration of war by the United States.

Members of that unit will hold their 50th reunion at Atwood Lake Lodge, near Delroy, Ohio on Thursday, May 25. They have been notified that citations to their unit will be presented by the U.S. Government and the cities of Rouen, France, and Cleveland during the reunion.

HARRISBURG, PA.—(ALNS)—Service flags with a blue star, similar to those used during World War II, are available through the Department of Pennsylvania, The American Legion, 1825 N. Front St., Harrisburg, Pa. 17102. The price is $1.25 for a single flag or $1 each in lots of 50 flags.

The department also has made available to other departments and their posts gold star flags at the same price as the blue star flags, according to Department Adjutant Edward T. Hoak.

WASHINGTON—(ALNS)—The U.S. Armed Forces has a numerical strength of 3,367,484 based on preliminary reports as of last Feb. 28, according to a report released by the Department of Defense recently. This represents an increase of 10,110 over strength reported last Jan. 31.

The breakdown by the services are as follows: Army, 1,433,163; Navy, 752,079; Marine Corps, 279,389; and Air Force, 902,853.
WASHINGTON—(ALNS)—Some 402,000 students in the 18 to 22 age bracket will receive $335-million in benefits during the 1967-68 school year under Title II of the Social Security Act, the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare estimates.

The legislation adopted by the 89th Congress provides for the continuance of benefits for students beyond 18 years under the old-age, Survivors and Disability Insurance while they are attending public or accredited schools, colleges and universities.

This legislation, initiated and supported by The American Legion, provides more funds than all the scholarships available in all the nation's colleges and universities.

For further information, students should contact their guidance counselor or the representative of the Social Security Office serving their community.

Students eligible by states for the 1967-68 school year are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>9,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Samoa</td>
<td>-*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>4,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>1,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>13,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>9,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guam</td>
<td>-*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>600</td>
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<td>Utah</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virgin Islands</td>
<td>-*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>9,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>7,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>5,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>8,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residing abroad</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Less than 50</td>
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-alns-
SEATTLE, WASH.--(ALNS)--The first meeting of a series in the coast-to-coast, on-the-scene study of veterans' problems by the new Veterans' Advisory Commission will open here on Saturday, May 6.

Robert M. McCurdy of Pasadena, Calif., as chairman of the 11-member study commission, will preside at the session to be held at the Hilton Hotel. Long active in veterans' affairs, McCurdy has served for more than 20 years as the chairman of The American Legion National Rehabilitation Commission.

Legion Past National Commander L. Eldon James of Hampton, Va., is one of the members of the commission named by William J. Driver, Administrator of Veterans Affairs. President Johnson requested the study.

In preparation for the study, the commission recently held a two-day session in Washington, D.C. The commission established procedures for the coming meetings and underwent briefings by various VA officials. Driver also presented the 11 commission members their official commission certificates.

Other meetings, in addition to the opening session here are: Minneapolis (Sheraton-Ritz), Saturday, May 13; Chicago (Sheraton), Saturday, May 20; and Boston (Sheraton), Saturday, May 27; Las Vegas (Fabulous Flamingo), Saturday, June 3; Oklahoma City (Sheraton), Friday, Sept. 8; Atlanta (Biltmore), Saturday, Sept. 16; and Philadelphia (Sheraton), Saturday, Sept. 23.

All dates except that for Oklahoma City are the same as announced earlier when the commission was formed. If necessary, the commission will hold additional meetings following the all-day sessions. Other similar meetings may be held later in Washington, D.C.

At the area meetings, veterans' groups and others will be asked to address the commission. Problems covering the wide range of veterans' compensation, pensions and other benefits will be discussed and solutions will be advanced for further study.

(More)
Others wishing to appear before the Commission may contact the Veterans' Advisory Commission Staff, Office of the Special Assistant to the Administrator (003A), Veterans Administration, 810 Vermont Ave., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20420.

The Commission, after reviewing testimony and statements, will prepare a report to Driver. The VA head then will report to President Johnson with recommendations and proposals. This is in accordance with President Johnson's special message to Congress on Jan. 31, 1967, when he asked the VA Administrator to submit recommendations by January, 1968 "to assure that our tax dollars are being utilized most wisely and that our government is meeting fully its responsibilities to all those to whom we owe so much."

Other members of the commission include: Andy Borg, Superior, Wis., former national commander-in-chief, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Claude Callegary, Baltimore, Md., former national commander, Disabled American Veterans; Melvin T. Dixon, St. Petersburg, Fla., state service officer, Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs; Ralph E. Hall, Washington, D. C., national executive director, AMVETS; Herbert M. Houston, Chattanooga, Tenn., past national commander, Veterans of World War I; Melvin L. Jacobsen, Reno, Nev., Nevada commissioner for veterans affairs; William N. Rice, Denver, Colo., director, Colorado department of veterans affairs; Col. Warren A. Robinson, U. S. Army, Ret., San Pedro, Calif.; and Pete Wheeler, Atlanta, Ga., state director, department of veterans service. Ted C. Connell of Killeen, Texas, past commander-in-chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, is director of field operations for the commission. He is a special consultant for the VA.

American Legion leaders and rehabilitation experts from the states in the Seattle region will move into that city on Friday, May 5, for three days of work in connection with the Veterans' Advisory Commission.

Work during the Legionnaires' three days in Seattle will concentrate on the preparation of testimony, appearances before the commission and a final day devoted to evaluating their own and others' testimony before the study group as well as for any carry over of the formal hearings as may be required.

These three-day Legion sessions will be repeated in each of the seven other cities at which commission meetings are to be held. In each city, the Legion effort will begin on the day prior to the commission's meeting.

Legion National Commander John E. Davis, in announcing the Legion's special effort to cooperate with the advisory commission in its goal to get complete information on veterans' problems, pointed out that all the commission's meetings will be open. He emphasized that the assistance and advice from our organization, both at the national and grass roots level, is most urgently requested and needed. He said that it might be well to recall that the commission's overall objectives will be to assess the present day needs of veterans and their dependents and whether current programs are meeting these needs.

"This opportunity to make our views known in a free expression of thoughts and opinions is one that we cannot afford to let pass," Commander Davis stressed. "As in the past, The American Legion will be looked upon to provide leadership. It is hoped, therefore, that these meetings will offer new solutions to old problems, and bring to light those areas where perhaps real need may have been neglected.

"We cannot urge too strongly that all who are able to attend these regional meetings do so since it will be there that the suggestions and ideas will be formulated. Certainly, the conclusions reached by the Veterans' Advisory Commission will influence, and, to a major degree, determine the future programs for veterans and their dependents," Commander Davis pointed out.