

**SEVENTY-EIGHTH NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
SEPTEMBER 3-5, 1996**

Resolution No. 207: *USS Arizona* Military Honor Guard

Origin: Kansas

**Submitted by: Convention Committee on Credentials and Internal Affairs (Section II)
(As amended)**

WHEREAS, On December 7, 1941, a Japanese aircraft dropped a 1,760 pound bomb on the battleship *USS Arizona* that ignited the ship's ammunition and engulfed the ship within nine minutes, killing all aboard; and

WHEREAS, On March 25, 1961, the singer, Elvis Presley staged a benefit concert for the *Arizona* Memorial Building Fund to honor the 1,177 sailors and marines entombed, so that the U.S. Navy would run a free nautical shuttle during the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. for the general public; and

WHEREAS, In 1980 the U.S. Navy turned over the Memorial to the U.S. National Park Service in Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, The *USS Arizona* is still considered to be on active duty, never having been decommissioned; and

WHEREAS, As of today, there are no military personnel aboard the *USS Arizona* to act as honor guard in memory of the 1,177 sailors and marines therein entombed; and

WHEREAS, Inquiries made regarding the institution of a military honor guard aboard the *USS Arizona* to the U.S. Department of the Interior brought response that the U.S. Navy refused to provide an honor guard due to the shortage of personnel; and

WHEREAS, The state of Hawaii has the largest military base in the Pacific Ocean staffed by thousands of military personnel; and

WHEREAS, The National Executive Committee in its Spring 1996 meeting approved Resolution No.13, which is nearly identical to this one, as submitted by the Department of New York; and

WHEREAS, The Department of the Navy has informally responded that, due to the drawdown of personnel throughout the Navy, including the Pacific, that they could not support our request at this time; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion continues to feel strongly that this *USS Arizona* merits an honor guard; and

WHEREAS, The request for the military personnel to act as honor guard was for the period of 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., the hours the *USS Arizona* received visitors, requiring minimum staffing to honor 1,177 honored war dead; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Salt Lake City, Utah, September 3, 4, 5, 1996, That The American Legion seek the cooperation of the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of the Navy in partnership with each other to provide a military honor guard at the *USS Arizona* during its hours of reception of visitors so that proper respect may be shown the 1,177 United States sailors and marines who died as a result of the infamous attack on Pearl Harbor by the government of Japan on December 7, 1941.