

From: Raughter, John B.
Sent: Thursday, July 09, 2015 3:16:05 PM
To: All Legion Leadership
Cc:
Subject: Legion to Congress, White House: 'Army Cuts are lunacy'

Legion to Congress, White House: 'Army Cuts are lunacy'

WASHINGTON (July 9, 2015) – “Absolute lunacy,” is how the leader of the nation’s largest veterans service organization characterized plans to reduce the U.S. Army by another 40,000 troops.

“After the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, politicians often accused one another of having a ‘pre-9/11 mentality,’” American Legion National Commander Michael D. Helm said today. “Yet now we are cutting our military to pre-World War II levels. This is not just absolute lunacy, it’s a complete disregard of the constitutionally-mandated responsibilities that our elected leaders in both parties have sworn to uphold. Just last month, ISIS inspired terrorist attacks on three different continents on a single day. Many in Congress and the Obama administration have routinely condemned the meat cleaver approach to cutting our defense, yet sequestration has been in effect since 2013. Will some of our elected officials please show some leadership here?”

Helm’s concern is echoed by veterans across the United States. During its national convention last August, American Legion delegates unanimously passed Resolution No. 225, which urges Congress “to oppose the pending budget cuts in military spending by the Department of Defense,” and to “not allow our military forces to reach a weakened state in these uncertain and perilous times.”

Helm pointed out that in addition to ISIS, nations such as Russia, China, North Korea and Iran have all engaged in provocative and threatening actions. “As national commander, I have been visiting U.S. military bases around the world. Just last month a three-star general asked me, ‘what is it going to take for people to wake-up, Paris burning?’ Election season is starting to pick up steam, both at the presidential and local levels. I call on all Americans and members of the media to demand plans and answers from those running for office. Every time we had military drawdowns, this nation later regretted it. Let’s do the responsible thing and field a military worthy of our great country before it is too late.”

With a current membership of 2.3-million wartime veterans, The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of a strong national security, veterans affairs, Americanism, and youth programs. Legionnaires work for the betterment of their communities through nearly 14,000 posts across the nation.

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