AMERICAN LEGION NEWS BRIEFS
FOR WEEK ENDING 9-2-77

Newly-elected American Legion National Commander Robert Charles Smith, of Springhill, La., appeared on the ABC-TV network's nationally televised program, "Issues and Answers," on Sun., Aug. 28.

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William F. Hauck, of Indiana, was reappointed National Adjutant of The American Legion for the 1977-78 American Legion year on recommendation of newly-elected National Commander Robert Charles Smith and with concurrence of the National Executive Committee in post-Convention session.

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New Hampshire Governor Meldrim Thomson called on Legionnaires at the 59th Annual National Convention to send an "emphatic and reverbrative NO to the giveaway of our Panama Canal" to the Congress.

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The Departments of Minnesota, New Jersey and Florida were awarded special recognition for the respective efforts in veterans affairs and rehabilitation, working with the Boy Scouts and honoring educational efforts at this year's Annual National Convention.

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DENVER, COLO.--(ALNS)--Harry L. Foster, of San Diego, Calif., was elected president of the Society of American Legion Founders at the organization's annual business meeting held in conjunction with the 59th Annual National Convention of The American Legion here.

He succeeded the late Bruno Zingrone, of Oak Lawn, Ill., who passed away just before the 1977 National Convention.

Other officers named by the Society are: Charles Titus, of St. Petersburg, Fla., president-elect; E. C. Sammons, of Portland, Ore., vice-president; Charles Maisel, Odessa, Texas, secretary-treasurer; Angelo Cangemi, of St. Petersburg, Fla., sergeant-at-arms, and Jerome L. Duggan, of St. Louis, Mo., historian.

In addition to the death of Zingrone, who had attended the Paris Caucus and had long been active in the affairs of the Department of Illinois and the Society of Founders, it has also been learned that Marcus E. Madden, of Brighton, Mass., who attended the St. Louis Caucus, has passed away. Madden, a retired police detective, had long been active in Watertown Post 99.

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WASHINGTON—(ALNS)—Newly-elected American Legion National Commander Robert Charles Smith, of Springhill, La., appeared on the ABC-TV network's nationally televised program, "Issues and Answers," on Sun., Aug. 28.

Appearing with Dr. John Wasylik, newly-elected National Commander-in-Chief of the VFW, the leaders of the two major veterans organizations pledged their respective organizations would take the lead in opposing ratification of proposed new treaties that would, in effect, give away the Panama Canal at the end of the century.

Other subjects of discussion during the half-hour program covered were veterans' preference in public hiring, a program now under fire by the Administration but defended by the veterans organizations as one method of compensation for citizens who may have given several years of their lives in service to their country while members of their peer group who did not serve were improving themselves both economically and from the standpoint of continuing education; the status of the nation's defenses, and maintaining the Veterans Administration hospital-medical program as a service for veterans only.

DENVER, COLO.—(ALNS)—William F. Hauck, of Indiana, was reappointed National Adjutant of The American Legion for the 1977-78 American Legion year on recommendation of newly-elected National Commander Robert Charles Smith and with concurrence of the National Executive Committee in post-Convention session.

Also reappointed by the same process were: National Judge Advocate Bertram G. Davis, of New York, and National Treasurer W. Francis Polen, of Indiana.

As previously reported, the post-Convention NEC meeting also confirmed the recommended appointments of the Rev. Walter D. Power, of Cambridge, Md., as National Chaplain; Arnold Stockstad, of West Fargo, N.D., as National Historian, and Norman Conn, of Los Angeles, Calif., as National Sergeant-at-Arms. At the same time, C. Howard Larsen, of Baldwin, N.Y., was named Sergeant-at-Arms Emeritus.

DENVER, COLO.—(ALNS)—Dr. Howard A. Rusk, recipient of the Legion's Distinguished Service Medal for 1977, showed the delegates to this year's Annual National Convention held here how the voice-controlled wheelchair, developed under his auspices, and in cooperation with many associates in specialized fields, could greatly expand the mobility and horizons of quadriplegic patients.

The chair operates only upon voice command of the patient for whom it is designed. The patient programs the chair through a tape device hooked to a mini-computer that analyzes the commands. Dr. Rusk, one of the preeminent people in the field of rehabilitation medicine, also showed the delegates voice-controlled appliances that allow totally paralyzed persons to live as much as possible by themselves. The appliances included the telephone, a bookpage turner, television and radio.
DENVER, COLO.—(ALNS)—"If we mean to remain a land of the free then we must immediately regain the initiative from the communist forces of the world.

"We can do this best by making our stand at the Big Ditch," New Hampshire Governor Meldrim Thomson, Jr., told delegates and guests to the 59th Annual National Convention of The American Legion, meeting here.

Gov. Thomson told the assembled Legionnaires that the United States had accommodated or retreated before Communism since World War II. It is time, he said, to forget about world opinion and start to think about America for Americans.

He called on the Legionnaires to send an "emphatic and reverbrative NO to the giveaway of our Panama Canal" to the Congress.

Thomson asked, "Dare we leave such an important transportation link in our economy to a dictatorial communist-leaning regime that has so poorly managed its internal affairs that it now must pay forty per cent of its annual budget to debt services?"

He said, "The Canal is important to America's economic growth and vital to our national security."

"The testing issue of America's future has become the Canal," Gov. Thomson said.

"Will America continue her flight from greatness or will we, in the spirit of our Founding Fathers, draw the line of reckoning at the Big Ditch and there stand firm against the rising tide of Communism in the Caribbean," he continued, and added, "Have we become so spineless, so cowardly that we jump when any tiny foreign power, bent upon blackmail, snaps its corrupt fingers?"

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DENVER, COLO.—(ALNS)—The National Service Trophy, awarded annually to the department that excels in welfare and rehabilitation work for war veterans and their dependents was presented to the Department of Minnesota at the Annual National Convention held here. Minnesota last won the award in 1930.

The Department of New Jersey was presented the Frank N. Belgrano, Jr., Trophy at the National Convention. The annual award honors the department that renders the most outstanding service to the programs of the Boy Scouts of America.

Educational efforts were recognized at the Convention through the Ralph T. O'Neil Education Trophy. This year's winner was the Department of Florida.

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DENVER, COLO.-(ALNS)--The commandant of the United States Marine Corps told delegates to the Annual National Convention of The American Legion meeting here that he supported President Carter's moves to seek a new treaty with Panama.

Gen. Louis H. Wilson said, "...I am convinced that the principles of agreement do not jeopardize the nation's defense posture."

His comments were greeted with silence by the more than six thousand people gathered in Denver's Auditorium Arena.

The General said that while he was aware of the Legion's position toward the proposed treaties, that after careful examination of the major elements by himself and the other members of the Joint Chiefs, "we do not believe that it jeopardizes our national security, for which we have responsibility to advise the President."

Earlier in his address Gen. Wilson told the Legionnaires that no nation on earth could match, on an overall basis, our technological progress, which enables the U.S. to yield the most potent military force in the entire world.

He said the jury was still out on the all-volunteer armed forces, but added, "...today it is working -- particularly for the Marine Corps...."

The Marine Corps commandant concluded his speech by praising the Legion, saying, "The American Legion has been at the vanguard of this nation's unceasing quest for a reliable, responsive, competent defense establishment. You have been instrumental in shaping positive, forwardminded defense policies, and you have kept the public keenly aware of vital security issues."

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DENVER, COLO.--(ALNS)--At the Annual Breakfast Meeting of the Foreign and Outlying Departments and Posts of The American Legion (FODPAL) held during the 59th Annual National Convention of The American Legion, Frank C. Bottiglieri, NECman of the Department of Italy, was elected president of FODPAL for the 1977-78 year.

Other officers elected included: first vice president, Gordon A. Ballantyne, of Mexico; second vice president, Robert McGuinness, of Panama; treasurer, Grandin Drake, of Panama; chaplain, C. Alvin Hoffman, of Mexico; historian, Dr. Robert J. Hitesman, of Canada; judge advocate, William Feliciano, of Puerto Rico, and sergeant-at-arms, Ernesto P. Golez, of the Philippines.

Past National Commander John Geiger, of Illinois, served as installing officer. In addition to the elections, the following appointments were made by President Bottiglieri: Mrs. Mary B. Howard, of Georgia, as recording secretary, and Albert Troiani, of Italy, as assistant sergeant-at-arms.

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DENVER, COLO.--(ALNS)--At the Annual Luncheon Meeting of the National Association of Department Historians of The American Legion held in conjunction with the Legion's Annual National Convention, Mrs. Herberta T. Stark, of New Hampshire, was elected president of the Association for the 1977-78 year, succeeding Arnold J. Stockstad, of North Dakota.

In addition to the election of LaReine Maxey, of California, as executive vice president, the following were elected area vice presidents: Area I, Ralph Morgan, Maine; Area II, Mary B. Howard, Georgia; Area III, Minne Belle Hickman, District of Columbia; Area IV, E. Willis Bjorge, North Dakota and Area V, Florence Land, California. The newly elected secretary-treasurer of the Association is Hazel Carlson, of Minnesota.

The following appointments were made by President Stark: chaplain, Gertrude Hill, Florida; assistant chaplain, Sylvia Hendry, California; judge advocate, Dr. Harry H. Kretzler, Washington; historian, Tom Hull, Indiana; sergeant-at-arms, Ernest Morgan, Montana; editor of newsletter, Ethel M. Matuschka, Wisconsin; and advisory committee, G. Greer McCallister, Ohio, Howard Swinney, Kentucky, and Alton H. Carpenter, New York.

An address was given at the luncheon by Past National Commander Donald E. Johnson, of Iowa, concerning the Herbert Hoover Library at West Branch, Iowa, and the historical data on file.

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DENVER, COLO.--(ALNS)--At the Annual Bivouac of the 20/4 (Honor Society of Women Legionnaires) held in conjunction with the 59th Annual National Convention, Geraldine Hinman, Connecticut, was elected National Director VIP of the 20/4 for the 1977-78 year, succeeding Dorothie M. Raymond of California.

Other national officers elected were: senior vice director, Olive Louise Reynolds, Illinois; junior vice director, Elizabeth Wilson, California; sky pilot, Pauline Baldwin, California; CQ, Barbara Burns, Arizona and assistant CQ, Margaret Brown, District of Columbia.

National Director VIP Hinman made the following appointments: aide, Ruth Congdon, Connecticut; judge advocate, Lucy Mae Knox, Florida; log director, Fay Macgruder, Washington, and disbursing director, Ruth Schroeder, Illinois.

At the Annual Banquet of the 20/4, held at the Denver Hilton Hotel on Fri., Aug. 19, 1977, Dr. Sam Zakhem, a member of the House of Representatives of Colorado, delivered an address on Americanism and patriotism.

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American Legion News Briefs
For Week Ending 9-9-77

South Bend Post 50 of South Bend, Ind., is the 1977 Champion of American Legion Baseball. The Hoosiers defeated Hattiesburg, Miss., Post 783, 3 to 1, at Gill Stadium in Manchester, N.H., Mon., Sept. 5, to bring the first National Championship in the 52-year history of the youth baseball program to the home state of the Legion National Headquarters, located in Indianapolis. South Bend finished the season with a 33 and 6 record.

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National Commander Robert Charles Smith told an Indianapolis news conference that The American Legion "will continue, and intensify if that is possible, our efforts to prevent the giveaway of the Panama Canal."

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Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn told a capacity crowd of over seven hundred attending the Legion Baseball World Series Banquet in Manchester, N.H., that the American Legion Baseball program "is one of the greatest programs we have in baseball...."

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Manchester, N.H.--(ALNS)--National Commander Robert Charles Smith said here that "the cut-and-dried Panama Canal agreement" is being "shoved down our throats."

In an interview with New Hampshire Sunday News reporter Maurice McQuillen, the Legion chief said that "the public doesn't realize and has been kept ignorant deliberately of Panama Dictator Omar Torrijos' close ties with Fidel Castro."

The National Commander was in Manchester for the American Legion Baseball World Series.

Commander Smith pointed out that even though President Carter is determined to make a big production of a ceremonial signing, the Legion will continue to wage an all out war against any change in the Panama Canal status as it has done since 1960.

"It is the American people who will have the final say--through their elected U.S. senators and representatives. I don't think they will buy the Panama 'deal' as they become informed," the Legion chief said. "It will be after the first of the year before the final showdown."

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"Your American Legion -- It's Great To Know You Belong"
MANCHESTER, N.H.--(ALNS)-- South Bend Post No. 50, of South Bend, Ind., is the 1977 Champion of American Legion Baseball. The Hoosiers defeated Hattiesburg, Miss., Post 78, 3 to 1 here at Gill Stadium, Mon., Sept. 5, to bring the first National Championship in the 52-year history of the youth baseball program to the home state of the Legion National Headquarters, located in Indianapolis. South Bend finished the season with a 33 and 6 record.

Post 50 jumped off to a 1 to 0 lead in the top of the second inning on singles by Mike Clarke and Greg Heyde; Jeff Kowatch bunted the two runners ahead before a wild pitch scored Clarke.

Mississippi tied the game in the bottom of the second with a single by Randy Thomley, a stolen base, and a double by Chris Cavataio.

South Bend regained the lead it never relinquished in the top of the third with two runs on one hit by Bill Schell. Schell hit a triple to deep right center field to open the inning. Jeff Coker drew a walk with one out and stole second without drawing a throw. Will Shepherd hit a bouncer to third that was bobbled, allowing Schell to score, with the second run for Post 50.

After advancing to third, Coker scored the final South Bend run on a throwing error by Mississippi catcher Gary Pickering.

William Schell, South Bend shortstop, was selected as the 1977 American Legion Baseball Player of the Year. Schell also won the Louisville Slugger Award as the top batter in the World Series, having fifteen hits in 34 times at bat for a .441 average. The young Hoosier had twenty total bases and four RBIs.

Doug Roberson, West Palm Beach, Fla., won the Rawlings Big Stick Award with thirty total bases and Clifton Wenzel of Santa Monica, Calif., had nine RBIs for the Dr. Irvin L. (Click) Cowger Memorial RBI Award.

Scott Benedict, West Palm Beach catcher, won the James F. Daniel, Jr., Memorial Sportsmanship Award.

The championship game was delayed for about twenty minutes during the bottom of the sixth by rain showers.

Total attendance for the five day, fourteen-game double elimination World Series of American Legion Baseball was 29,212 fans.

Following is the game-by-game progress of the tourney:

Game No. 1, Post 22, Rapid City, S.D. -----------------3
Post 13, Lewiston, Idaho (10 innings) -----------------2

Game No. 2, Post 78, Hattiesburg, Miss. -----------------9
Post 12, West Palm Beach, Fla. -----------------5

(more)
Game No. 3, Post 50, South Bend, Ind.  Post 471, Boyertown, Pa.  
5

Game No. 4, Post 122, Santa Monica, Calif. Posts 141, Trumbull, Conn.  
6

Game No. 5, Florida 7, Idaho 5 (Idaho out)  

Game No. 6, Connecticut 1, Pennsylvania 0 (Pennsylvania out)  

Game No. 7, Mississippi 5, South Dakota 2  

Game No. 8, Indiana 7, California 1  

Game No. 9, Connecticut 8, South Dakota 2 (South Dakota out)  

Game No. 10, Florida 4, California 2 (California, 1976 defending champs, out)  

Game No. 11, Indiana 8, Mississippi 1  

Game No. 12, Florida 10, Connecticut 5 (Connecticut out)  

Game No. 13, Mississippi 8, Florida 6 (Florida out)  

Game No. 14, Indiana 3, Mississippi 1 (South Bend Post 50, new Legion champs, won four tourney games, lost none)

For release 9-9-77

INDIANAPOLIS—(ALNS)—National Commander Robert Charles Smith told an Indianapolis news conference this week that The American Legion "will continue, and intensify if that is possible, our efforts to prevent the giveaway of the Panama Canal."

The new Legion Commander's statement was made on the day President Carter and General Torrijos signed copies of the treaty that must be ratified by the U.S. Congress and the Panamanian people.

Commander Smith went on to say that "the Canal is vital to the security needs of our nation. Without U.S. operation and control we do not believe the Canal will continue to operate for all the nations of the world."

The new Legion leader said the present Administration in Washington is "exhibiting a callousness toward its citizens who, during a time of national emergency, have answered its call." He detailed efforts to bring veterans benefit programs under the control of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the call of the Civil Service commissioner to do away with veterans' preference in federal hiring as well as the report of the National Academy of Sciences which recommended doing away with the VA hospital-medical system as a part of the VA.

The American Legion's response to the energy crisis was discussed in some detail with newsmen also. Commander Smith pointed out that the Legion's interest in promoting public awareness of the problem was rooted in the desire to continue our standard of living at the present or increased rates in order to provide jobs and security for veterans and their dependents and the possibility that reduced supplies could seriously affect the defense capabilities of the United States.
MANCHESTER, N.H.—(ALNS)—Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn says he believes that economics is currently professional baseball's no. 1 problem.

Kuhn, speaking at a press conference at the Sheraton-Wayfarer here during the 52nd American Legion Baseball World Series, said that the economic picture looks good now but the escalation of player salaries is making it increasingly difficult for some of the financially troubled teams to operate.

The commissioner also defended the selection of major league all-star teams by the fans. He said that the system "is working well," and that he isn't about to back any move to return the vote to the players and managers.

Following his press conference, the commissioner addressed the annual Coca-Cola American Legion Baseball World Series Banquet.

Speaking to a capacity crowd of over seven hundred, including the eight regional champions, Commissioner Kuhn told the players that the American Legion Baseball program "is one of the greatest programs we have in baseball...."

During the commissioner's stay in Manchester, he also made the announcement that he had appointed a five-man committee to review the rules for election to baseball's Hall of Fame.

The board of directors of the Hall of Fame had requested Kuhn on August 7 to review the entire structure of the rules relating to election, and asked for a report from the five-man committee by the end of September.

Currently, elections are held each year in the offseason and are conducted by the Baseball Writers' Association of America.

Charles Feeney, president of the National League; Lee McPhail and Joe Cronin, president and chairman of the board of the American League; Paul Kerr, former president of the Hall of Fame, and Joe Reichler, special assistant to the commissioner, make up the committee.

Ken Smith, director of the Baseball Hall of Fame, has worked closely with the Legion's Baseball World Series and always attends the tournament.

ST. PAUL, MINN.—(ALNS)—A two-day Government Life Insurance Training Conference is scheduled on Oct. 5 and 6, at the Veterans Administration Center here. The agenda is planned so that it will be of interest to county service officers and those at the state level interested in veterans' affairs. The program will present an overview of the Government Life Insurance Program.
INDIANAPOLIS--(ALNS)--The American Legion, its Auxiliary and the Eight and Forty service organization of the Auxiliary spent more than fourteen million dollars during the last fiscal year (June 1 through May 31) on Children and Youth Activities, it was announced by Legion National Commander Robert Charles Smith, of Springhill, La.

Commander Smith noted that this year's total figure of $14,658,794 brings the total contributed over the past 52 years to $340,285,657. This is a new record for a single year's giving. The previous high of 14.1 million dollars had been contributed in 1975-76.

The more than sixteen thousand local posts of The American Legion and the state organizations reported expenditures of $11,934,105 to Legion National Headquarters here. The American Legion Auxiliary's fourteen thousand local units contributed another $2,477,133. An additional $162,707 was expended by the Eight and Forty, while $30,955 was given to families in need through our Temporary Financial Assistance program. Earlier this year, The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation announced grants of $53,849 which is also included in the report prepared by the Children & Youth Division that will be included in The American Legion's Annual Report to the Congress of the United States.

"Once again, The American Legion has shown that it cares about this nation's youth, the future of America," Commander Smith said when he released the report.

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INDIANAPOLIS--(ALNS)--Word has been received at Headquarters, The American Legion, of the death of two prominent Legion leaders--Thomas E. Whelan of St. Thomas, N.D., and Howard E. Lohman, Moorhead, Minn.

Whelan, a former U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua, was the long-time chairman of the Legion's Foreign Relations Commission and at the time of his death was chairman emeritus of that commission. A veteran of World War I, he was also a director of the National American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation from 1966 until his death.

Lohman, a veteran of W.W.II, served as National Vice Commander in 1968-69, and at the time of his death served as a consultant to the National Internal Affairs Commission. Prior to his election as a National Vice Commander he had served as Vice chairman of the National Publications Commission. In 1963-65 he was Minnesota department commander.

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"YOUR AMERICAN LEGION -- IT'S GREAT TO KNOW YOU BELONG"
Tennessee Congressman Robin Beard will be the featured speaker for American Legion National Commander Robert Charles Smith's banquet for the Legion's National Executive Committee at 7 p.m., Oct. 5, at the Indianapolis Athletic Club.

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To focus attention on the employment of the handicapped, especially disabled war veterans, The American Legion's National Economic Commission has announced its 31st annual observance of "National Employ the Handicapped Week" scheduled Oct. 2-8, 1977, in conjunction with the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped.

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Immediate Past National Commander William J. Rogers, of Kennebunk, Maine, appeared before the House Committee on International Relations, chaired by Clement J. Zablocki, of Wisconsin, on Sept. 15, to offer American Legion testimony on the proposed new Panama Canal treaties.

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INDIANAPOLIS—(ALNS)—The homecoming for The American Legion's new National Commander, Robert Charles Smith of Springhill, La., has been set for Sept. 30-Oct. 1, at the Sheraton Inn, Bossier City, La.

A champagne reception and Louisiana hayride barbecue is planned for the homecoming guests on Sat., Oct. 1, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Springhill. Saturday night, the homecoming banquet honoring Commander Smith is scheduled to kick-off with cocktails at 6:30. The banquet will be held in the Shreveport Convention Center, Shreveport, La.

For additional information, it is suggested that Legionnaires planning to attend the homecoming contact John C. Bailey, department adjutant of Louisiana, at P. O. Box 1431, Baton Rouge, La. 70821.

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GREENVILLE, S.C.—(ALNS)—The South Carolina State Agency of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Advisory Board of the Greenville Vocational Rehabilitation Center will conduct dedication ceremonies for the E. Roy Stone, Jr., Building, Greenville Vocational Rehabilitation Center, here on Mon., Sept. 19, on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department. The building is named in honor of South Carolina Legion National Executive Committeeman E. Roy Stone. Legionnaire Stone also serves on the National Commander's Advisory Committee and is chairman of the NEC Sub-committee on Resolutions. Mr. Stone is chairman of the South Carolina Agency for Vocational Rehabilitation.

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INDIANAPOLIS--(ALNS)--Tennessee Congressman Robin Beard will be the featured speaker for American Legion National Commander Robert Charles Smith's banquet for the Legion's National Executive Committee at 7 p.m., Oct. 5, at the Indianapolis Athletic Club.

Beard, a member of the powerful House Armed Services Committee, is the ranking minority member of the Investigations Subcommittee. He is also a member of the Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control and is a member of the Executive Committee of the Republican Study Committee, a research and policy-making body.

As a congressman, he has distinguished himself through his efforts on behalf of anti-busing legislation and fiscal responsibility in government. He recently attached an amendment, the "Beard Amendment," to the HUD-Independent Agencies Appropriations Bill to deny the use of any of these funds for veterans' benefits to those individuals whose less-than-honorable discharges were administratively upgraded by President Carter's pardon program.

Beard has established himself as an enthusiastic, hard-working conservative, an outspoken proponent of a strong national defense and a harsh critic of federal interference in private enterprise and local government.

A native of Knoxville, he served four years in the Marine Corps, where he was Marine Corps officer-in-charge of the Gemini IV offshore recovery mission.

The National Commander's banquet will be the highlight of the annual Fall Meetings of The American Legion here.

Climaxing the event will be the meetings of the National Executive Committee, the organization's policy-making body between National Conventions, to be conducted Wed. and Thurs., Oct. 5 and 6, at Legion Headquarters. These sessions will be presided over by National Commander Robert Charles Smith.

Major National Commission and Committee meetings will be in progress at National Headquarters on Mon. and Tues., Oct. 3 and 4, at the same time as the annual meeting of Commanders and Adjutants will be taking place in the Headquarters' NEC room.

The first of the Legion's planning sessions will be the 17th Annual National Conference on American Legion Baseball which takes place the weekend of Sept. 17-18, here. The object of the Baseball Conference is to evaluate the 1977 season, to discuss proposed rule changes for 1978, and to make recommendations as the chairman feel necessary, to the National Americanism Commission, for the improvement and expansion of the program.

On Sept. 24 and 25, the Eighth Annual National Oratorical Conference of Department Chairmen will be held at National Headquarters, and on Oct. 1 and 2, the National Boys State Conference will be in session.

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WASHINGTON--(ALNS)--To focus attention on the employment of the handicapped, especially disabled war veterans, The American Legion's National Economic Commission has announced its 31st annual observance of "National Employ the Handicapped Week" scheduled Oct. 2-8, 1977, in conjunction with the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped.

This employment program is culminated with National Legion recognition bestowed upon employers whose personnel policies favor the employment and retention of handicapped workers.

The Legion's National Economic Commission is making a special appeal to all Legion departments to participate and recognize employers by the presentation of the Legion's National Handicapped Citation Award.

-ALNS-

WASHINGTON--(ALNS)--Immediate Past National Commander William J. Rogers, of Kennebunk, Maine, appeared before the House Committee on International Relations, chaired by Clement J. Zablocki, of Wisconsin, on Sept. 15 to offer American Legion testimony on the proposed new Panama Canal treaties.

Rogers was representing National Commander Robert Charles Smith of Springhill, La., at the request of the new National Commander whose activities early in his term of office presented conflicts with other commitments. Dr. Robert P. Foster, of Missouri, chairman of The American Legion's National Foreign Relations Commission, accompanied Past Commander Rogers in the appearance before the Congressional committee.

Further details regarding the testimony will be carried in next week's ALNS.

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REVISED BOOKLET FOR VETERANS PUBLISHED

INDIANAPOLIS--(ALNS)--The Labor Department has updated its booklet, "Out of the Service and Looking for a Job? Here's Help!"

The booklet was prepared by the Department's Employment and Training Administration. It outlines veterans' rights, tells veterans where they may obtain assistance in obtaining jobs or job training, and gives a timetable for applying for various benefits.

The pamphlet is available free on request to the Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, Colo. 81009.

-ALNS-
INDIANAPOLIS—(ALNS)—The National Public Relations Division, in cooperation with the American Chess Foundation, is in the process of distributing to departments in quantities sufficient for further distribution to all posts, pamphlets supplied by the Chess Foundation containing basic instructions for playing chess and a flyer containing suggestions as to how to organize and promote chess tourneys, both for the benefit of Legionnaires, and as a new facet of post community service.

There are two very basic flyers, one entitled, "Chess Made Easy to Play," and the other entitled "Legionnaire, It's Your Move: Here's How." The first pamphlet is self explanatory. The latter is a comprehensive set of instructions as to how to go about organizing community chess programs at the local American Legion post.

The second pamphlet tells how and where assistance may be obtained in establishing a program, and the implementation of this project is authorized by the National Organization through Resolution No. 7, "Armed Forces Chess," approved at the Spring 1976 Meetings of the National Executive Committee.

Mailing of the literature from National Headquarters to departments will start immediately, and local posts may request copies of same through department headquarters. As outlined on the pamphlet, "It's Your Move," the benefits a post could realize from a well-planned and administered chess program are many and varied.

Look into the possibilities of organizing such a program in your own posts at the earliest possible moment.

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CRIME RESISTANCE

A CONTINUING SERIES IN COOPERATION
WITH THE FBI'S CRIME RESISTANCE PROGRAM

Think about the shock, the heartbreak and the anger that you would experience if you came home one evening and found that your residence had been burglarized. Think about your valuables -- including momentos that you've collected and cherished over the years -- being stolen or wantonly destroyed. Think about the possibility of walking in on a burglar while he was ransacking your home at night!

Most burglars won't take a second look at a house or apartment that appears to be occupied. To discourage these criminals from selecting your residence as a target, consider using the following antiburglary procedures to help create the impression that someone's home when you're out during the day or evening.

1. Don't leave messages on the door or mailbox indicating your absence.
2. Use electric timers to turn house lights and a radio on and off during evening hours.
3. Enlist the help of neighbors to keep mail, newspapers and ads from collecting while you are away.

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4. Remember that unattended yards and unmowed lawns over an extended period of time are signs that the residents might be away.
5. Consider also that when empty trash cans or when no trash cans are set out on collection day, it is an indication that the residents might not be home.
6. Advise your local police, as well as a reliable neighbor, when your home will be unoccupied for any length of time and where you can be reached.

In addition to these crime resistance tips, your local police may have other useful antiburglary suggestions.
"One must question the wisdom of appeasing and making further concessions to a government whose recent history is pockmarked with deliberate violations of the current Panama treaty," immediate Past National Commander William J. Rogers told the House Committee on International Relations here.

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The American Legion has once again gone on record as opposing legislation designed to afford veterans status and benefits to those who served in the Women's Air Forces Service Pilots (WASPS) during World War II.

* * *

The American Legion opposes enactment of S. 364, a bill designed to provide for judicial review of decisions rendered by the administrator of Veterans Affairs.

* * *

Two American Legion Departments, Maine and Illinois, have announced participation in special job programs for veterans. The Maine American Legion is working with the Disabled Veterans Outreach and Public Information Program, and the Illinois Legion is participating in a veterans employment and training project, Jobs for Veterans, Inc.

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HIGHLAND POST 201 EXCEEDS A HALF MILLION DOLLARS IN COMMUNITY SERVICE EFFORT

LOUISVILLE, KY.--(ALNS)--Highland American Legion Post 201, Louisville, Ky., has presented a record high check of $50,110.34 to the Louisville and Jefferson County Council for Retarded Citizens.

The check was made possible from the net proceeds of the post's 25th annual Child Welfare Carnival, and is the largest contribution the post has given the council.

Post 201, over the past 25 years, has given the council a sum in excess of $520,000.

"Our Vietnam-era and disabled veterans of all wars are in fact our country's newest minority. This minority is largely made up of economically and socially disadvantaged veterans, black, Hispanic and native American veterans, disabled veterans of all wars, and a number of young women veterans.... The plight of our unemployed veterans is my cause. I intend to be their advocate."--Roland R. Mora, in his remarks on the occasion of his swearing in ceremony as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans Employment.
WASHINGTON—-(ALNS)—"One must question the wisdom of appeasing and making further concessions to a government whose recent history is pockmarked with deliberate violations of the current Panama treaty," immediate Past National Commander William J. Rogers told the House Committee on International Relations here.

Rogers, who was representing National Commander Robert Charles Smith, pointed out that Panama had violated the present Canal treaty at least eleven times during the past two years.

"If our current treaty with Panama is being violated on a routine basis, where is the logic that such attitudes and behavior will improve between 1977 and 1999, the magic year when Torrijos is supposed to get everything, lock, stock and barrel," the former Legion chief asked.

Rogers noted that the violations included such militant acts as the Panamanian National Guard taking up position in December 1975 within the U.S. Zone; attempting to arrest and actually shooting a citizen in the U.S. Zone in January 1976; setting off bombs and explosions in the U.S. Zone in October 1976, and capturing a vessel, the Sea Wolf, which was operating inside Canal Zone waters, and burning and desecrating our United States flag.

Turning to the question of U.S. sovereignty, Rogers noted that many of the arguments for the switch in sovereignty stem from "ignorance or distortion" of the manner in which the Panama Canal territory was acquired by the United States and of the wording of the original 1903 treaty.

"Contrary to these assertions from public officials who should know better, we did not steal the Canal, nor does Panama have residual, titular, or any other kind of sovereignty over it. The United States bought the Canal -- a strip across the Isthmus of Panama some fifty miles long and ten miles wide -- at a cost to the American taxpayer that far exceeded the cost of the Louisiana Purchase, the Mexican cession, the Florida Purchase, the purchase of Alaska, or any other territorial acquisition," he continued.

Rogers said that the United States has, and will retain, sovereignty over the Canal until Congress decides otherwise.

The former Legion National Commander also pointed out that he had strong reservations and objections to the Neutrality Treaty and that "U.S. military and national security losses are sufficient to reject the treaty."

In closing, the former Legion chief said: "If this treaty is basically good for the United States, why does the Administration have to make such an effort to prove to Americans that it is in our national interest? Those of you in the House who return to your districts every two years know what the people back home are thinking. You know the Legion posts and grassroots opinion runs about eighty per cent against the giveaway."

-alns-
WASHINGTON--(ALNS)--The American Legion has once again gone on record as opposing legislation designed to afford veterans status and benefits to those who served in the Women's Air Forces Service Pilots (WASPS) during World War II.

In an appearance before the Select Subcommittee of the House Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs hearing testimony on the proposed bill (H.R. 3277) on Sept. 20, 1977, John F. Sommer, Jr., the Legion's chief of Claims Service, said, "The American Legion cannot support this bill. Its enactment would, in our judgement, jeopardize the entire concept upon which the program of veterans benefits has been constructed."

Sommer added, "The American Legion is very much aware of the notable contribution to the war effort that was made by the Women's Air Force Service Pilots in World War II." He pointed out that their service was recognized when it was performed and that the WASPS have been honored in the years ensuing since the War.

The crux of the Legion objection to provide veterans' status to the WASPS, according to Sommer, evolves from the fact that the House of Representatives rejected a proposal to militarize the WASPS in 1944, and the completed record of their service shows they functioned in a civilian capacity.

It is the Legion position that the term "veteran" means a person who served in the active military, naval or air service and was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable. The definition is spelled out in section 101, Title 38, U.S. Code, and the term "active" service excludes WASPS from veterans' status, according to the Sommer testimony.

WASHINGTON--(ALNS)--The American Legion opposes enactment of S. 364, a bill designed to provide for judicial review of decisions rendered by the administrator of Veterans Affairs.

Testifying before the Committee on Veterans Affairs of the U.S. Senate on Sept. 21, 1977, Edward Golembieski, consultant to the Legion's National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission, cited Resolution 11 of the National Executive Committee's 1977 Spring Meeting, as the basis for the objection.

Golembieski pointed out that judicial review would probably lead to administrative review by the General Accounting Office, or other review agency, adding that the intent of the law authorizing the administrator of Veterans Affairs to render final decisions in the matter of veterans benefits was to protect veterans and to insure that the Veterans Administration would be unhampered in its mission.

He cited a number of additional drawbacks to the judicial review proposals. These included the fact that few of the appeals involve points of law and the proposed procedure would cause many thousands of additional appeals, increasing already overloaded court dockets.
WATERVILLE, MAINE—(ALNS)—The Maine American Legion became the first state organization of any veteran group in the nation to receive a federal grant for special job programs affecting disabled veterans in the Pine Tree State, according to Daniel E. Lambert, Maine Department adjutant.

Lambert said that the Maine American Legion had been selected to receive a $198,540 federal grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to establish a Disabled Veterans Outreach and Public Information program (DVOPIP) in the state.

The federal grant, signed by Lambert on behalf of the Maine American Legion and the regional office of the United States Department of Labor at Boston, is part of Title I discretionary funding to provide for federal jobs for veterans in Maine. The grant allows $66,180 for the remaining months of 1977 with the balance of the funding to be granted in 1978.

The program will be administered by the office of the Maine Legion adjutant and consultation will be held with all the major veterans groups in Maine through the state service officers, commanders and adjutants.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.—(ALNS)—Illinois Governor James R. Thompson has announced that a federal grant of $115,950 has been awarded to place three thousand veterans in jobs during the next year.

The funds will be administered by Jobs for Veterans, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation consisting of the Illinois American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Paralyzed Veterans of America and AMVETS.

An estimated 7,500 job and training opportunities will be developed for unemployed veterans through the volunteer services of the more than three thousand local posts and chapters of the five major veterans organizations in the state.

"This project is unique in the nation," Gov. Thompson said, "because for the first time it pulls together the resources of state agencies and local veterans organizations to combat high unemployment among a deserving group — Illinois veterans."

State coordinator of the project is Herb Roth, an Army veteran serving as program director for Illinois Veterans Organization — Jobs for Veterans, Inc.

The U.S. Department of Labor funds were awarded under a CETA grant from the Governor's Office of Manpower and Human Development.
INDIANAPOLIS—(ALNS)—Albert V. LaBiche, chairman of The American Legion Life Insurance and Trust Committee, has announced that benefits paid from Jan. 1, 1977, through Aug. 31, 1977, totaled $1,813,298.13.

LaBiche also noted that the basic units now in force in the Life Insurance Plan number 184,146.5. A total of 3,360 new applications have been approved since Jan. 1, 1977.

Benefits paid since the inception of the Plan in April of 1958, total $24,193,270.13.

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INDIANAPOLIS—(ALNS)—John Sherrard of Valinda, Calif., was elected National Commander of the Sons of The American Legion at the recent sixth annual National SAL Convention in Denver, Colo.


-ALNS-

INDIANAPOLIS—(ALNS)—Following are the dates and sites for the 1977-78 Legion Children & Youth Area Conferences:

Oct. 27-29, Ramada Inn Roadside Hotel, Midland, Mich. (Midwestern Area)
Nov. 17-19, Albuquerque Inn, Albuquerque, N.M. (Western Area)
Dec. 8-10, Hilton Inn West, Oklahoma City, Okla. (Southern Area)
Jan. 12-14, Highpoint Motor Inn, Chicopee, Mass. (New England Area)
Jan. 26-28, Holiday Inn of Newark, Newark, N.J. (Middle Atlantic Area)

-ALNS-

WASHINGTON, D.C.—(ALNS)—Word has been received by National Headquarters of the death of James Zulick, 73, who passed away Sept. 13 at his home in Paris, France, following a heart attack.

Zulick had long been active in the work of The American Legion, Department of France, and had served as NECman from France from 1968 to 1974. He was a retired employee of NATO where he had served as a supply specialist. A native of Pennsylvania, his survivors include the widow, Alice, and a son, James, of Laurel, Md.
In an appearance before the Committee on Veterans Affairs of the House of Representatives, the National Commander of The American Legion, Robert Charles Smith, of Springhill, La., outlined the legislative goals of his organization for the coming year in the area of veterans affairs.

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The American Legion does not believe that the proposed new Panama Canal treaties by the Carter administration will, in the long run, be in the best interests of the United States, National Commander Robert Charles Smith informed Legion Auxiliary presidents and secretaries at their annual conference banquet in Indianapolis.

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The American Legion of Massachusetts co-sponsored a successful Veterans Employment Seminar which was conducted by Boston Jobs for Veterans manager Jim Greene at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Brockton, Mass.

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Robert Charles Smith, National Commander of The American Legion, has praised the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee for their legislative response to President Carter's Special Discharge Review Program.

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Congress has approved a bill which would, if signed by the President, provide a 6.6 per cent cost-of-living increase for disabled veterans in basic compensation rates and in the rates payable for more serious disabilities.

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THE PANAMA CANAL ISSUE
First of a Continuing ALNS Series

DOES THE PUBLIC REALLY SUPPORT PRESIDENT CARTER'S PANAMA CANAL TREATIES?

The Carter administration received another setback when a recent Associated Press poll indicated that the public majority opposes President Carter's two treaties turning over U.S. control of the Panama Canal to the Panamanian government. The opposition cut across party lines with Republicans opposed 61 to 26 per cent, Democrats by 44 to 34, and independents by 54 to 25. In the total AP survey, fifty per cent opposed the Carter treaty, compared with 29 per cent in favor and 21 per cent with no opinion.
WASHINGTON--(ALNS)--In an appearance before the Committee on Veterans Affairs of the House of Representatives, the National Commander of The American Legion, Robert Charles Smith, of Springhill, La., outlined the legislative goals of his organization for the coming year in the area of veterans affairs.

The detailed statement of the National Commander touched on the Veterans Administration budget for 1978; the controversial report on the VA medical system developed by the National Academy of Sciences; National Health Insurance; increased rates of compensation for education and training as well as death and disability pension benefits; the proposed transfer of the Veterans Home Loan Program out of the Veterans Administration to another agency and inclusion of veterans pensions under welfare reform.

Smith said his organization supports the 1978 budget for the Veterans Administration, noting that funding is provided for construction of two of the eight new VA hospitals the Legion considers essential.

On the subject of the report of the National Academy of Sciences with respect to the VA health care system, Smith charged the Academy with exceeding the constraints of its charter by recommending ultimate transfer of the VA medical facilities to local communities. He pointed out that PL 93-82, authorizing the study, asked only for a review of personnel, and other resource requirements to determine a basis for optimum numbers and categories of personnel and resources required to provide high quality veterans care.

Smith reiterated long standing Legion opposition to inclusion of the VA medical system in any proposals for National Health Insurance, adding that his organization has no objection to such proposals as long as the VA medical system continues to be reserved for veterans exclusively.

The Legion Commander asked for a restructuring of the death and disability pension program to attach compensation to the cost of living index, and announced the support of his organization for legislation in progress to increase rates of compensation and allowances for veterans undergoing education and training programs.

He voiced the strong opposition of The American Legion to proposals for changing veterans preference in civil service employment, and to proposals for transferring the VA Home Loan Program to another agency.

Smith thanked the Congress for their legislative response to the Special Discharge Review Program of the Administration, adding the view of his organization that the program "was not well conceived." He expressed strong opposition to the inclusion of VA compensation and pensions in a welfare reform package. Noting that this effort was "quickly abandoned," he added, "compensation and pension are not, and never have been, welfare and they were never intended as such by Congress."

(more)
The National Commander concluded his testimony by voicing the deep concern of The American Legion over recent developments indicating the possibility that "there are those in positions of influence and responsibility who believe veterans programs should be modified -- perhaps diminished." He added, "If a challenge is now to be presented to the continued maintenance of veterans programs as we now have them, then it is to Congress that The American Legion will turn in the full trust and confidence that Congress, representing as it does the will of the American people, will not turn its back in peacetime on those to whom the nation turned in time of war."

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For release 9-30-77

INDIANAPOLIS--(ALNS)--The American Legion does not believe that the proposed new Panama Canal treaties by the Carter administration will, in the long run, be in the best interests of the United States, National Commander Robert Charles Smith informed Legion Auxiliary presidents and secretaries at their annual conference banquet here, and he asked the Auxiliary to give active support to Legion efforts to block ratification of the treaties.

"If this isn't a giveaway of United States property, the only thing that could prevent it from being labeled as such is the fact that we want to pay Panama to take it," the Legion chief added.

The National Commander told the Auxiliary members that there will not be any new treaty until the "pieces of paper" signed by President Carter and General Torrijos are ratified by the Senate. "Your job and mine," Commander Smith said, "is to muster a strong enough 'no' vote in the Senate to defeat the ratification attempt."

The Legion chief pointed out that four former chiefs of Naval Operations continue to say that loss of the Panama Canal would be a serious setback in war and would contribute to the encirclement of the U.S. by hostile naval forces and threaten our ability to survive.

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BROCKTON, MASS.--(ALNS)--The American Legion of Massachusetts co-sponsored a successful Veterans Employment Seminar which was conducted by Boston Jobs for Veterans manager Jim Greene at the Veterans Administration Hospital here.

The Legion and the other co-sponsor, the Greater Brockton Chamber of Commerce, donated a luncheon to the more than one hundred attendees.

Special emphasis was placed on the HIPE Program by Providence JFV manager John Sampson.

Paul Kendrigan, chairman of The American Legion Employment Committee for Massachusetts, said that he was so enthusiastic about the VESP that he asked Jim Greene to schedule seven more such seminars under their sponsorship before the end of the year.

- alns -
WASHINGTON—(ALNS)—Robert Charles Smith, National Commander of The American Legion, has praised the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee for their legislative response to President Carter's Special Discharge Review Program. The Legion chief appeared before both Committees recently.

The legislative proposal, approved by Congress and sent to the President, covered eligibility for veterans' benefits relating to upgraded discharges of certain former service members who received less than honorable discharges.

The provisions of the bill, among other things, would create an entitlement to veterans' benefits only if the upgrading was based on a case-by-case review of all the evidence and factors in the case under the uniform standards and procedures that applied prior to the President's Special Discharge Review Program.

Additionally, the discharge-review standards must, for purpose of veterans' benefits, be historically consistent with criteria for determining honorable service and may not (as did the Carter and Ford Special Review Programs) include any standard for automatically granting or denying an upgrading.

Commander Smith said that the bill, S. 1307, satisfies the Legion's position with reference to President Carter's Special Discharge Review Program.

SHREVEPORT, LA.—(ALNS)—United States Senator J. Bennett Johnston, Jr., of Shreveport; Congressman Joe D. Waggoner, Jr., and Louisiana Lieutenant Governor Jimmy Fitzsimmons will be among dignitaries gathering here and in Bossier City, La., Fri. and Sat., Sept. 30-Oct. 1, for the homecoming of American Legion National Commander Robert Charles Smith, of Springhill, La.

Percy Lemoine, of Baton Rouge, director, Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs, will represent Governor Edwin W. Edwards, of Louisiana, who is unable to attend because of prior commitments.

The government officials will be joined by some five hundred Legion leaders from throughout the nation meeting here to honor the newly elected Legion chief, who appeared before the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee recently and outlined the Legion's legislative goals for the coming year.

A champagne reception and a Louisiana hayride barbeque are planned for the homecoming guests on Sat., Oct. 1, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Springhill. Saturday night, the homecoming banquet honoring Commander Smith is scheduled to kick-off with cocktails at 6:30. The banquet will be held in the Shreveport Convention Center, Shreveport, La.
WASHINGTON—(ALNS)—Congress has approved a bill which would, if signed by the President, provide a 6.6 per cent cost-of-living increase for disabled veterans in basic compensation rates and in the rates payable for more serious disabilities.

Other principal provisions of the Veterans Disability Compensation and Survivor Benefits Act of 1977 (H.R. 1862) are as follows:

(1) Provide a 6.6 per cent increase in the additional allowances for spouses, children, and dependent parents paid to veterans rated fifty per cent disabled or more; (2) provide a 6.6 per cent increase in dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) benefits payable to surviving spouses of veterans whose deaths were service-connected, including the additional allowances payable for dependent children and to those in need of aid and attendance; (3) provide a 6.6 per cent increase in benefits payable to the children of veterans whose deaths were service-connected, when there is no surviving spouse; (4) provide a 6.6 per cent increase in benefits payable to surviving children who have become permanently incapable of self-support prior to the age of 18; (5) increase (by 6.6 per cent) from $190 to $203, the annual clothing allowance paid to certain seriously disabled veterans whose disability tends to tear or wear out their clothing; (6) extend to Feb. 28, 1979, the date for submission to Congress of the study mandated by Public Law 94-433 on the relationship between amputation and cardiovascular disorders, and clarify other provisions of the study; (7) extend eligibility for specially adapted housing grants to permanently and totally service-connected veterans with certain severe disabilities; (8) authorize the VA to cooperate with the Department of the Treasury so that benefit payments would be automatically deposited in a recipient's account if the recipient elects payments in this manner; and (9) require, for any month in which the first of the month falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal public holiday, the VA to mail or otherwise transmit benefit payments so that they arrive, to the maximum extent practicable, on the Friday immediately preceding such Saturday or Sunday, or in the case of a legal holiday, on the weekday (other than Saturday) immediately preceding the holiday.

Another measure which cleared Congress and has been submitted to the President is H.R. 6502, a bill developed to provide an automobile assistance allowance and adaptive equipment to certain veterans of World War I.

The bill covers not only the veteran who served during World War I but also those who served before then and those who served since then, prior to 1940.

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INDIANAPOLIS—(ALNS)—The annual National Conference of Department Chaplains is scheduled for Nov. 15-16. National Chaplain Rev. Walter D. Power of Maryland will preside over the Conference. The Conference will be held at National Headquarters in Indianapolis.

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