PROGRAMMING FOR LEGION LEADERS

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"AL WEEK" - AND HOW YOU CAN PROMOTE IT:-

(A personal message to all Post Commanders
From National Commander Arthur J. Connell)

"We've got to get the business---or we'll get 'the business'!"

That's a direct quote from a veep of a well known brush firm explaining the sales techniques of his outfit.

Arthur J. Connell

It applies to this American Legion of ours, Comrade Post Commander. We've got to get the business (MEMBERSHIP) or we'll get 'the business'. (From the forces which would destroy veterans benefits, Rehabilitation, Child Welfare, National Security, Americanism and all of our 35 year Legion total accomplishment). We don't have to spell this out. It could happen here.

YOU are the most important person in this American Legion, Mr. Post Commander!

We want more people to know that this year. Here's how you can prove it.

Right now The American Legion is asking all 17,450 Post Commanders and their membership-getting teams to "KNOCK ON EVERY DOOR FOR '54"--to invite every eligible veteran of World War I, World War II and the Korean War to join The American Legion.

That's our goal. Getting all active Legionnaires to enroll other veterans from the 20.000.000 potential of the eligibles in these United States.

It can be done. But let's face the facts. If we are going to knock on every door for 1954--there's work to be done.

WORK TO BE DONE - AMERICAN LEGION WEEKS - Nov. 11 to Nov. 26:-

There's a near miracle to be performed. There's enthusiasm to be engendered. There's a definite and highly concentrated promotional job to be done.

We have paved the way for that work by the 1954 American Legion membership material mailed out to date.

"KNOCK ON EVERY DOOR FOR '54" planning booklet, salesbook and "My Name Is Al" are all helpful--plus a publicity kit which is yours for the asking.

We've provided good material and a worthwhile theme.

NOW let's give our all-American team a specific objective.

Let's give them the plans for jet-powered promotion which can be steamed up in ten days or two weeks. Call it "AL WEEK" (American Legion Week) or "AL WEEKS" if it takes you from Nov. 11 to Nov. 26 to get your complete 1954 membership enrollment job done.

Let's start on a day--known to the nation--Nov. 11, and end this campaign on Thanksgiving Day, November 26, which gives you 15 days to have the greatest American Legion Weeks ever!

As your newly elected National Commander I asked for such a nationwide campaign in my acceptance speech at St. Louis, Sept. 3, when I told the delegates:

> "To assure our mutual success in this endeavor we must have the greatest membership in American Legion history and we must have it by December 31, 1953. There is no need nor reasonable excuse of spreading our membership efforts over a twelve month period. We urge, therefore, a determined drive commencing November 11 to enroll every eligible veteran in your community. That date will be the start of "AL WEEK"--AL being the given name to the thousands of devoted American Legion members who will 'Knock On Every Door For '54'.
>
> "I trust you delegates will play an important role in the organization of this campaign in your Post, your District and your Department. It must not fail!"

All Governors should be asked to concur in this proclamation of "AL WEEK". Mayors and city managers should officially point up the importance of this date by local proclamation. (See sample copy on back page)

Ten days to two weeks of advance publicity will pound home the fact that "AL WEEK" is a week to be remembered. National Headquarters will provide brand new "AL WEEK" publicity kits which will spell out the promotion 'til the old hometown is literally shoutin' from the roof-tops. (Would contain news releases, suggested "AL WEEK" editorials, radio spot announcements, etc.)

Make the November 11 to November 26 Dates Red Letter Days on your Legion calendar. You might actually have some calendar cards for the November month printed up, with every day from Nov. 11 to Nov. 26, inclusive, printed in red. This suggestion is illustrated in News Service mailed to all posts by National Public Relations.

Legionnaires might also wear a tag with some simple phrase such as: " I am a Legionnaire. How about you? (Local posts can have the tags made up).

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO AS COMMANDER:-

Appoint an outstanding veteran Legionnaire as chairman of the "AL WEEK" drive committee. Prominent World War I, World War II and Korean veterans might be named as co-chairmen with resultant publicity.

Ask local merchants to sponsor cooperative advertisements promoting "AL WEEK" during the Legion red letter days Nov. 11-Nov.26. A series of mats for this purpose will soon be available.

See to it that advance news releases state membership to date--and announce goal of community-wide "AL WEEK". Provide speakers at every civic and service club function. Create opportunities to emphasize the importance of "AL WEEK".

THIS IS A MUST: Have your membership teams report back every two or three days. Don't let them get out of touch with the progress being made in the campaign. Honor returned Korean veterans, especially honor K-Vets who have been prisoners of war, at "AL WEEKS" kick-off dinner.

ASK THEM TO JOIN: Almost every veteran wants to join The American Legion! It is up to us to give him an opportunity to join.

Ask him in. Make him feel wanted. Part of our job as membership getters is to make our prospects feel: WE WANT YOU to join The American Legion.

Show him what we have to offer. Have him look in our display case at the job The American Legion has done for the community, state and nation.

Let him know that close to 3,000,000 fellows like himself joined in '53.

Tell him we have to build The American Legion to a total strength from among the 20,000,000 eligibles in order to preserve our American way of life.

Ask him: "Are You Going Our Way?"
As an American he will know the Legion always heads in the right direction.

As an American veteran he will want to join our fight against Communism--to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States--to point up positive Americanism and to maintain a strong national program of defense, rehabilitation and child welfare.

"Knock On Every Door For 1954" through every medium of approach. Invite every eligible veteran of World War I, World War II and the Korean War to join with us. If you do, you'll find millions of men and women who have served honorably in time of war--waiting for your personal invitation to join The American Legion.

Almost Every Veteran wants to join. Let's give all eligible veterans the chance to join. And once they join your post--make them a member of the team--give them a job to do in order to let them feel 'they belong'.

American Legion Week is no idle dream. With the proper promotion, our membership horizons are unlimited--as are the promotional possibilities of this suggested program.

"AL WEEK" can be The Week American Legionnaires will actually "Knock On Every Door For '54".

Arthur J. Connell

Arthur J. Connell
National Commander

SAMPLE "AL WEEK" PROCLAMATION:-

Here's a proclamation the mayor and city manager of your hometown might use as a pattern to call attention to American Legion Week.

PROCLAMATION

The American Legion is known throughout the nation for its service to God and Country, since this great veteran organization was conceived in Paris, France, March 15, 1919.

While The American Legion can well claim the title of champion of veterans, it is also well established as a leader in service to the community, state and nation.

The American Legion nationally has assumed great responsibility in the fields of national defense, Americanism, rehabilitation and child welfare. We take pride in its local accomplishments as evidenced by the programs of _____ Post No._____ in our own city of _____.

Believing that the best interests of our beloved country will be served if all eligible veterans of World War I, World War II and the Korean War affiliate with The American Legion, in order to promote a more positive Americanism and to help fight Communism, we hereby declare November 11 to November 26

AMERICAN LEGION WEEKS

We ask all individual citizens, local civic and service groups to help observe these days in honor and appreciation of these veterans of three wars who are our fellow citizens.

_____

Mayor, City of _____

PROGRAMMING FOR LEGION LEADERS
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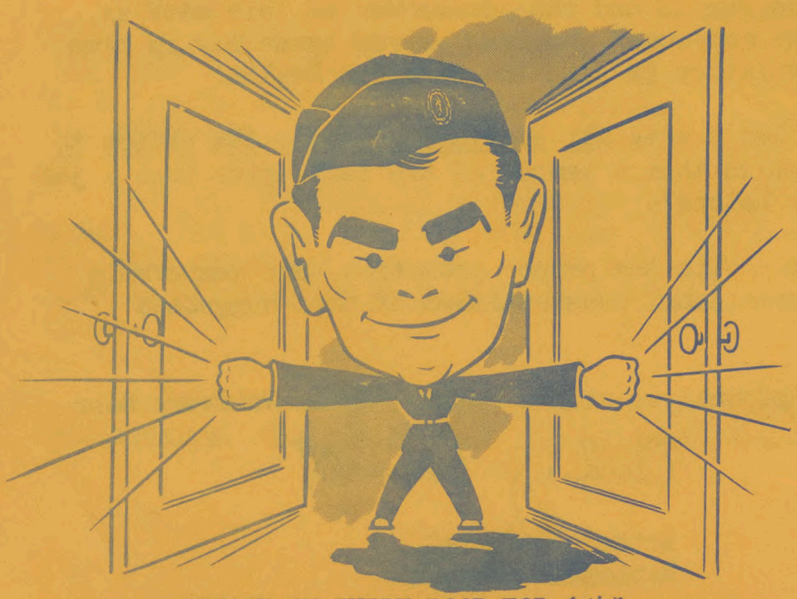

"KNOCK ON EVERY DOOR FOR '54"