From National Public Relations Division, The American Legion, Indianapolis 6, Ind.

Americanism
Holidays
Armistice Day

** * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * **
* Suggested 1950 Armistice Day *
* Address for American Legion *
* speakers. *
** * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * **

MY FELLOW AMERICANS:

Each year we can trace the story of America in our national holidays. On Thanksgiving Day, like the Pilgrims of 320 years ago, we offer our gratitude to God Who has blessed us with such a bountiful land. Our country was discovered, explored, and settled by God-fearing men. May we always be faithful to that religious tradition which, from the very beginning, marked this country as a land dedicated to the Creator. The American Legion has enshrined this ideal in the very first words of the Preamble to its Constitution: "For God and country...."

On the Fourth of July we send rockets into the sky proclaiming American independence....the birth of our nation. All American soldiers,...from Bunker Hill to the 38th Parallel,...have fought, and thousands have died, "to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy."

On Memorial Day and today on Armistice Day, we honor those who died paying the price of that independence. The first Armistice Day was an occasion for celebration because the World War was over. We Americans rejoice in the end of a war because we are a peace-loving people. Now comes Armistice Day, 1950, but there is no real peace.

American boys, who watched Armistice Day parades a year ago today, lie buried in Korea because the battle for justice, freedom and democracy never really ends. We love peace, but we cherish our God-given freedom even more.

Must the price of freedom be so high?

Ever since that first Armistice Day....for 32 years now....The American Legion has insisted on a strong, secure America. The veterans of two World Wars---whose sons and brothers again have taken up arms----know that strength is the only hope for peace.

In the past, nations declared wars and concluded them with armistices and treaties. But in this atomic age, when planes travel virtually at the speed of sound, declarations of war have become as obsolescent as the Model T. Nowadays, an aggressor attacks without any warning whatsoever. Surely, Pearl Harbor and Korea have convinced us that preparedness is the price of peace. We must be strong to defend ourselves in the day which we pray will never come.

Our enemy is the international Communist conspiracy spread throughout the world by Soviet Russia. There can be NO armistice against this evil force. In a Communist country there are no Thanksgiving Days because there is no God.

AMERICAN LEGION LIBRARY
PAMPHLET FILE

In a Communist country there are no Fourth of Julys because there is no freedom. There are no Memorial Days or Armistice Days because Communism...ignoring the dignity of the human person as a son of God....exploits and subjugates him as a pawn of the state.

What must be done to preserve our glorious national holidays and all they stand for? There is only one answer: we must be strong.

First of all, we must be strong spiritually. Our founding fathers wrote the Declaration of Independence, acknowledging that we are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. Among these is freedom of religion.... to pray as we please. We proclaim our freedom of religion, but too few of us go to our churches and synagogues. Thru its Divine Guidance program, The American Legion urges Americans of all creeds to pray for unity and peace.

After asking God's help....after being sure we are on HIS side.... we must be strong physically. The United States did not have enough trained servicemen in 1917. There were not enough trained servicemen in 1941. And there were not enough trained servicemen on June 25, 1950 when a handful of American G-I's fought valiantly to halt the invading Communists in Korea. The United States never will fall because of a shortage of steel, engines, or ships, or any of the other commodities that make ours the greatest industrial nation in the world.

But un-manned guns, planes without pilots, and ships without crews cannot guarantee the security of our nation. Only the trained solider....or trained sailor....or marine....or trained airman....can make these weapons work for victory and peace.

For 31 years now, The American Legion has championed Universal Military Training....the only truly democratic way for all our young men to contribute to the defense of their country. U-M-T is insurance....security insurance for the nation....survival insurance for our young men. Like any form of insurance, it is better to pay the premium and be protected than to risk the danger that threatens.

Specifically, what is U-M-T. Under legislation soon to be considered by Congress, Universal Military Training would require the registration of all young men as they reach their 17th birthday. Sometime between their 18th and 20th birthday, but preferably right after graduation from high school----boys would be given a year's military training. Boys would be called to camp before they acquire dependents and before they are established in a job. In this way, there would be a minimum of disruption in one's personal life.

All would receive the same basic training. Then each trainee would specialize in advanced work to complete, under several options, the remainder of the required year.

U-M-T is not conscription. It is no more regimentation than is compulsory attendance at grammar school. The trainee would be instructed by military personnel, but he himself would have no military status. He would not be a member of the armed forces and would not be required to serve unless Congress and the President declared a national emergency. Upon completion of his training, he would become a reservist.

The trainee would be paid $30.00 a month. During the year, he would receive the best of medical care and moral guidance. He would emerge from U-M-T stronger physically and more mature mentally. He would know the value of citizenship and sense his obligations as a citizen of the United States.

Distinguished Americans....soldiers and statesmen from General George Washington to General George Marshall....have endorsed this democratic way of defending the nation. The father of our country declared: "Had we a trained army in the beginning....we never should have had to retreat." Our present Secretary of Defense says that without U-M-T, the nation will never have a "complete national defense organization."

U-M-T legislation is sure to come before the Congress at its next session. Let your Senators and Congressman know that you want America to be strong. For only strength is respected by aggressors. Strength is our only hope for peace.

Just a few days ago, President Truman renewed his plea for Universal Military Training. The President declared that one of the "most disgraceful things in the history of our country" is that 34 per cent of our young men are physically or mentally unfit for service in the armed forces. President Truman declared he's confident U-M-T would strengthen our young men and in so doing strengthen the nation.

But even spiritual strength and military strength are not enough.

The enemy is within our midst! The Communists have succeeded in infiltrating many vital areas of our national life. They extend their influence in communications: the movies, radio, the theater, and the newspaper world. They place their men in key positions in labor unions, in industry, in our schools and colleges. Their friends and sympathizers hold responsible positions in many of our departments of government. With these there can be no armistice, no truce.

The American Legion --- at its recent 32nd annual national convention in Los Angeles --- overwhelmingly approved outlawing of the Communist Party in the United States and imprisonment of all its members. The American Legion lends its full support to the Communist-control acts recently passed so overwhelmingly over a presidential veto. And it is gratifying, indeed, to see Communists in our midst finally being corraled, branded and ----we hope ----shipped to Soviet Russia where. THEY claim, the pastures are much greener!

No matter what our military strength....our armed forces' mission is to defend and enforce the foreign policy of the United States. That foreign policy can be no stronger than the men of the State Department who conceive and administer it. The American Legion is on record as condemning the failure of the State Department to cope with the advance of Communism throughout the world. We charge that the Secretary of State and other State Department officials through a lack of understanding, or even indifference, have failed to recognize the danger of Communism and have consequently failed to combat it. Hence it is that The American Legion demands that the President reconstitute our State Department which has lost the confidence of the American people.

On this Armistice Day, three million members of the American Legion --- three million men who proudly wore the uniform of their country in time of war --- again stand ready to protect and preserve the nation and the ideals for which they fought. To that end, The American Legion urges a strengthened national defense program with Universal Military Training for our young men.

To protect our families and our homes, we recommend a Civil Defense program under civilian control and with local administration .

The American Legion, always in the front lines in the fight against Communism, demands the outlawing of the Communist Party and internment of its members in this country. To promote a 100-per cent Americanism and to combat Communism, The American Legion helped found the All-American Conference, in which 65 national organizations have joined together in a united front to preserve our way of life.

With the arrival of casualties from Korea, we renew our pledge to continue the important work of veterans' rehabilitation.

During the past year, The American Legion and its affiliated organizations have devoted more than 6-million dollars for child welfare.

Through our Junior Baseball program, through Boys' States and Boys' Nation, and in sponsoring more than four thousand Boy Scout Troops and Cub Packs, The American Legion endeavors to instill the wholesome physical, mental and moral habits and principles that make for good citizens.

And through our "Tide of Toys" program, we bring to the children of foreign lands a share of the joy and happiness that fill the hearts of our own boys and girls.

The American Legion devotes much of its efforts and resources to our children because they are the citizens of tomorrow. The American Legion feels close to our servicemen because they guard the America of today. Already, we have taken the first steps to make Korean veterans eligible to become Legionnaires. The American Legion upholds the rights of our veterans who in the battles of yesterday guaranteed the future of our land.

At the recent American Legion parade in Los Angeles, the most distinguished guests on the reviewing stand were three wounded servicemen from Korea. One young soldier had left part of his leg in that war-torn land. During that seven hour line-of-march, the colors passed by dozens of times. But every time the flag came by, the soldier reached for his crutch, pulled himself to attention, and saluted. He didn't miss once. This boy who fell fighting for his country now stood to salute the "stars and strips."

That spirit is the secret strength of America. Now is the time for ALL of us to stand for our country....to stand up and be counted....to stand strong against those in our midst and beyond the seas who would take the white and blue from our flag and leave only a banner of red. Now is the time.

Remember: those who don't STAND for something usually FALL for anything! Let us stand together beneath that all American rainbow of red, white and blue. Dedicating ourselves and our efforts to God and Country....we shall succeed.

And those comrades whose memory we honor this Armistice Day shall not have died in vain!

- - - - - -

10/27/50