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NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

THE AMERICAN LEGION
AND
AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Graduate School
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the degree
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

BY

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Evanston, Illinois

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THE AMERICAN LEGION AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

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THE AMERICAN LEGION AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this dissertation is to study the organization, procedure and program of the American Legion as a pressure group in reference to foreign policy.

Following its incorporation in the year 1919, the American Legion has exercised a considerable influence upon both the domestic and foreign policy of the United States. Legion activities regarding both domestic and foreign policy have importance. But this study, which is centered solely upon the Legion's foreign program, is offered as a part of the broad investigation of American pressure groups which attempt to guide public policy in external affairs.

After a survey of the organization, procedure and techniques of the American Legion, this dissertation will examine six of the leading foreign policy programs of the Legion. Each policy will be explored in regard to the following aspects: (1) origin and development of the Legion policy, (2) support of the policy by the Legion as a pressure group, and (3) achievement or failure of the Legion program. No attempt is made in this dissertation to defend or criticize the Legion policies. This thesis is not an apology for the American Legion nor is it an attack upon this ~~particular~~ organization. It is simply

an analysis of its foreign program and an attempt to appraise the influence of this society upon the foreign policy of the United States.

Already considerable literature upon the American Legion has appeared. Two excellent and detailed accounts of the founding and early history of the Legion have been published, one in George S. Wheat's The Story of the American Legion (1919), and one in Marquis James' A History of the American Legion (1923). Marcus Duffield's King Legion, published in 1931, is a study of the Legion in politics, particularly as a lobbying organization operating in Washington. George Gellerman's The American Legion As Educator, published by Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, in 1946, examines the Legion's educational program. The author exhibits a strong bias against the tactics and program of the Legion. Richard Seelye Jones' The History of the American Legion, published in 1946, offers a general history of the American Legion. Justin Gray's The Inside Story of the Legion, published in 1948, attempts to contrast the internal organism of the Legion to that of an idealized democracy, needless to say, not to the credit of the Legion.

In contrast to these books, the present dissertation limits its attention to the activities of the American Legion as a pressure group which seeks to influence the conduct of American external politics. The chief sources

of the study are primary, including the various Legion publications, such as Reports to the Annual National Convention of the American Legion, Summary of Proceedings (of the) Annual National Convention of the American Legion and Digest of Minutes National Executive Committee Meeting which carry the texts of the resolutions of the annual conventions, executive committee meetings and statements of policy. The Legion has published many pamphlets and booklets setting forth in detail its programs and giving the organization's arguments for adopting these programs. Twice is Too Often is a pamphlet explaining the Legion's proposals for amending the Charter of the United Nations to make it a more effective peace organization and preventing World War III. U. M. T. (Universal Military Training) is a pamphlet giving the Legion's plan for strengthening the United States militarily in order to make the United States more effective in international affairs particularly in preventing war. These pamphlets and many others have been used. The American Legion Weekly, The American Legion Monthly, The National Legionnaire and The American Legion Magazine contain "official" information regarding the Legion's various activities and interests. Obviously, a great amount of material reflecting public opinion toward the American Legion is to be found in newspapers and magazines. The author has drawn upon this material as evidence of the reaction of public opinion to Legion tactics and

programs. Not to be neglected, in this respect, are the hearings before various committees of Congress and the verbatim records of speeches in Congress and other materials contained in the appendix of the Congressional Record.

Chapter I

THE AMERICAN LEGION AS A PRESSURE GROUP

A study of the specific policies of the American Legion should be preceded by an account of the origin and purpose of this great pressure group as well as its internal organization and techniques. Accordingly, the present chapter will offer a short history of the Legion, together with an account of its purposes, its government and its general conduct and propaganda.

Origin of the Legion

Men who have shared together a great experience are prone to congregate in yearly or occasional reunions in order to relive or celebrate their vivid adventure. When the possibilities of fraternal and political advantages are added to the gregarious instinct, every motive is present for the promotion of a permanent organization dedicated to the promotion of the interests of the individual founders and subsequent members.¹

Thus it was with the rise of the American Legion. In its issue of the December 20, 1918, The Stars and Stripes, a weekly newspaper published by the American Expeditionary Forces in France, under the auspices of General Headquarters,

1. Compare "The Birth of the Legion" in The American Legion Weekly, November 21, 1919, p. 12.

took notice of several proposals to establish a fraternity of ex-service men. Although several organizations of ex-service men had been launched in the United States, Stars and Stripes declared that it was not proper to form any such organization on American soil until a sufficient number of men from the American Expeditionary forces had returned to the United States to make possible the organization of a "truly representative" group of ex-service men.

After the Armistice there was a serious decline of the morale of the A. E. F.² The war was over. Two million Americans on European territory had performed the task for which they had been sent to France. They were tired of discipline, tired of regulations, tired of being away from home, and full of animal spirits and curiosity. Members went "Absent without Leave." The A. W. O. L's and some men and officers not on the loose got into a considerable amount of mischief. General Pershing and his officers were worried. Every unit could not be sent home at once. Accordingly, twenty officers, national guardsmen and reserve, were ordered to Paris to meet with some regulars, some military intelligence officers and others, and consider steps to be taken for improving the contentment of the Army, bettering

2. "The American Legion--An Outline of the Origin, Development, the Aims and Ideals of the Great American Organization" in The American Legion Weekly, July 4, 1919, pp. 16-18 and 27.

its conditions and promoting its morale. This meeting was held on the 17th of February, 1919. Among the officers present were Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., Major Eric Wood, Lieutenant-Colonel Bennet Clark, Major Ralph Cole, Lieutenant-Colonel Franklin D'Olier, Colonel William J. Donovan and Captain Ogden Mills. Roosevelt was elected temporary chairman and Wood temporary secretary.³

No one individual invented the idea that became the American Legion. Roosevelt, more than any other, contributed enthusiasm, hard work and persuasive inspiration to make it a reality. At the dinner in Paris, Roosevelt summarized the thought and discussion he had already given to a veterans' society. The other officers were enthusiastic. They had a variety of reasons and proposals, but agreed that it was time to start organizing the postwar fraternity of veterans. Their reasons were interesting. Some of them believed the returning soldiers should unite to wield political power in the republic, as their fathers or grandfathers had done through the Grand Army of the Republic or the United Confederate Veterans, or the United Spanish War Veterans. Some of them placed first importance on the future of national defense, and

3. "Incorporation of the Legion" in The American Legion Weekly, July 11, 1919, p. 9; Congressional Record, Vol. 58, part 4, 66th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 4062-4084.

wanted an organization that would campaign for a universal military training law. America, they felt, must never again find herself unprepared for war. Some wanted to see the army organization modified and revitalized with more attention to the citizen-soldiers. National guardsmen and Reservists thought they had been badly treated by the regular establishment and the General Staff.

Among some of the leaders in the A. E. F. there was a general concern about the postwar attitude of the average soldier toward extreme political radicalism. The revolution in 1917 had taken Russia out of the war by surrender to the Germans in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and a million enemy troops had been released from the eastern front to hurl themselves against the Allies on the west. The Bolshevik revolution meant to the A. E. F. the desertion of an ally under fire. Rumors and reports came from America of radical, communistic movements, the formation of soldiers' and sailors' councils among men who had been quickly discharged from service after the Armistice. There had been an uprising in Winnipeg, Canada, a strike here or a demonstration there promoted by radical labor propagandists such as the Industrial Workers of the World. Communism had taken control of Hungary and was rampant in Berlin. Even the restless lack of perfect discipline in the A. E. F. itself was vaguely attributed by some to Soviet Ideas. All of these matters were roughly grouped in A. E. F. discussions

under the name of Bolshevism. Nerves the world over were on edge. Bolshevism was the bogey. Disgruntled soldiers had provided the manpower for the cataclysm in Russia, and the surface of the earth was pretty well covered with soldiers who had little to do but think of their troubles.

A sane organization of veterans might be the best insurance against spread of Bolshevist propaganda. This concern about a condition then generally covered by the term Bolshevism was to be voiced frequently during the formative period of the Legion.⁴

All of this and many other questions and opinions came out at the meeting. Out of the talk came the agreement that a veterans' organization should be started, that it must be all-inclusive of those who served in the American uniform, at home as well as overseas, that it must be a civilian and not a military organization and must be composed of man-to-man membership, devoid of rank. Also it could not have any principles laid down for it, either by the twenty officers there assembled or by any other group. It must formulate principles of its own. It must be democratic in form. The service of the dinner-table group could be only to make possible a representative

4. Ole Hansen, "Bolshevism" in The American Legion Weekly, July 11, 1919, pp. 13-14 and 18; "The Red Autocracy" and "Seeds of Discontent" p. 10; "Americanism" July 18, 1919, pp. 29-30.

gathering from all arms and units at which the men could start a veterans' organization of their own.⁵

It was agreed that at least two organization meetings be arranged, one in France for the A. E. F., one in the United States for the forces which had not gone overseas. Nobody knew to what extent, if any, General Pershing and the high command would co-operate with these proposals. It would be necessary for someone to proceed quickly to the United States to undertake preliminary steps toward the assembling of a meeting there. Roosevelt was the man in best position to seek relief from duty for that purpose, and this task he tentatively accepted. The second meeting in Paris was set for March 17, and a caucus was set for St. Louis on May 8, 1919, where the organization was finally consummated. It was granted a charter by Congress and in the preamble to its constitution it states, reading as follows:

For God and country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: to uphold and defend the constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred per cent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our association in the Great War (amended in 1944 to include World War II veterans by stating "association in the Great Wars"); to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the

5. "The American Legion--An Outline of the Origin Development, the Aims and Ideals of the Great American Organization" in The American Legion Weekly, July 4, 1919, pp. 16-18 and 27.

master of might; to promote peace and good-will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.⁶

Purposes of the Legion

The problem of the disabled veteran is humanitarian, economic and political. When a soldier is wounded on the field of battle he becomes an immediate problem of pain and suffering to himself, a subsequent problem of support to himself and to his family, and in time a problem of cost to the taxpayer of his country. Eventually he becomes an item in a column of government statistics. His problem status lasts throughout his lifetime and that of his dependent relatives, the widows and the orphans. The natural spokesman for the disabled veteran is his veterans' organization. The Legion has never been hesitant in saying that its first purpose is to gain benefits for veterans, and particularly for disabled veterans.⁷

After every major war the United States has fought, veterans have been paid off in land or in other ways. The Legion has sought such benefits as the bonus, pensions and hospitalization for injured, crippled and disabled veterans and their wives and children and other dependents.

6. 41 U. S. Statutes at Large, 284; Congressional Record, Vol. 58, part 5, p. 4992.

7. Compare Jones, A History of the American Legion, pp. 122-123.

Veterans' preference in the civil service was another form of benefit. When the Taft-Ellender-Wagner housing program was presented in the 80th Congress, the Legion at first opposed it, but later came out for it.⁸ The veterans' education program, known as the G. I. Bill, after World War II was originated by the Legion and adopted by Congress. Veterans' loans for buying homes or for going into business also was a Legion idea that was adopted.

The second most important purpose of the Legion has been to get Congress and the country to adopt a national defense program commensurate with the position of the United States in international affairs and to the needs for national security. This part of the program of the Legion will be considered elsewhere.

Another purpose of the Legion is to achieve world peace. In the words of National Commander James A. Drain, in an interview, this purpose was stated in the matter as follows: "We were in the military forces during the war to protect our country and help make this a better world. We are in the American Legion for the same reasons."⁹ The fourth purpose of the Legion is fraternal--organizing comrades-in-arms "to preserve the memories and incidents

8. New York Times, October 31, 1947, p. 34.

9. Independent, Vol. 113, November 29, 1924, pp. 443-445.

of our associations in the Great Wars."

Other purposes of the Legion include the opposition to further immigration, to tighten up the naturalization procedures, to foster patriotic observances and memorials, to spearhead the opposition to Communism and to foster the kind of education to the youth of the United States that will preserve and extend the American heritage.¹⁰

Growth of the Legion

Of all the organizations in the United States, next to a political party, there is none with a wider spread of its membership, composing in its ranks every race, class and creed in a composite America, reaching into every church, service club, union and stratum of society. Every type of character and mentality from every social and occupational plane is to be found on Legion membership rolls.¹¹

From the small group meeting in Paris in 1919 to form this organization has grown a well-organized society of 11,000 posts and a little over one million members just

10. Internal Organization of the Legion (pamphlet), p. 27.

11. See also "As the Legion Grows" in The American Legion Weekly, August, 1919, p. 10; Sylvanus Cook, "The Real American Legion" in The Nation, Vol. 125, September 7, 1927, pp. 224-225. Reports to the Seventeenth Annual National Convention of the American Legion, 1935, pp. 55-56. Hereafter cited as Annual Reports.

before World War II. When Congress amended the charter of the Legion in 1942 to permit World War II veterans, the organization has grown to over 17,000 posts and containing over three million members.¹² Its national headquarters is located in Indianapolis and the value of its properties amount to around \$100,000,000. At the national headquarters are the executive offices, the Legion library, museum, newspaper, magazine and other agencies of the organization.

Membership in the American Legion

Year	Number	Year	Number
1920	843,013	1935	842,855
1921	795,799	1936	956,273
1922	745,203	1937	973,841
1923	643,837	1938	974,637
1924	638,501	1939	1,032,989
1925	609,407	1940	1,078,119
1926	688,412	1941	1,107,075
1927	719,852	1942	1,136,148
1928	760,052	1943	1,172,499
1929	794,219	1944	1,425,923
1930	887,754	1945	1,667,742
1931	1,053,909	1946	3,326,556
1932	931,373	1947	3,272,060
1933	769,551	1948	3,087,044
1934	831,681	1949	

Organization

At the top of the pyramid of the Legion organization is the national convention. It is made up of around 1500

12. New Strength for the American Legion (pamphlet)
pp. 10-12.

delegates and the same number of alternates selected by the forty-eight state organizations, called departments, and ten territories of the United States and foreign countries which have been granted admission to the American Legion. Delegates are selected on the basis of the number of members the state or foreign country has. In all there are fifty-eight departments. There are 16 committees selected to carry on the work of the convention, but this number may vary. These committees are made up of one member each from the fifty-eight departments.

Next in the hierarchy is the National Executive Committee made up of one member and one alternate from each department, the National Commander who is chairman, the Vice Commanders, the National Chaplain and the National Adjutant, who is secretary. Past national commanders are non-voting members of the National Executive Committee. This is the permanent part of the American Legion. It is authorized to make decisions between annual meetings of the national conventions. The National Commander is the spokesman to explain and carry out the mandates of the national convention. There are a number of standing committees which vary in number and purpose from convention to convention and which work on special activities of the Legion.

The third rung in the hierarchy is the fifty-eight departments, domestic and foreign. The forty-eight state

organizations and ten territorial and foreign country organizations are modeled after the national organization. There are state and post commanders whose titles and duties correspond to the national commander and other officers in the national organization. Likewise the committee system is modeled after the national organization and the activities on all levels are carried on cooperatively.

Then finally, at the bottom of the pyramid is to be found over 17,000 Legion posts with a membership of over 3,000,000. Any community which has twenty eligible veterans or more may have a post. Any veteran who has an honorable discharge certificate from any branch of the military service is eligible to become a member. Every post and department has a constitution modeled after the national constitution and must be approved by the national organization.¹³

The national organization has a legislative representative in Washington and an observer of the United Nations at Lake Success, New York. State organizations have their legislative representatives at the forty-eight state capitals and local posts have representatives at city councils or other local government units.

13. The Internal Organization of the American Legion (pamphlet), p. 72.

The Annual Convention

Beginning in 1919 when the Legion was organized, an annual national convention has been held. This annual meeting is for the purpose of carrying on business of the Legion, determining policies and selecting a new national commander and other officers.

In addition to the 3,000 official delegates and alternates making up the convention proper, it is not unusual for many thousands of veterans to go along to the convention city in the search of excitement and adventure. It is the "40 and 8" organization, La Societe des 40 Hommes et 8 Chevaux, the organization designed as the playground honor society of the Legion. The 40 and 8 started as a fun-making body of Legion members, who wanted to amuse themselves in a less dignified fashion than comported with the ritual of a post meeting. The officers took French titles, the chef de gare, after the boss of a French railroad station, being the headman of the 40 and 8 "voiture." All discourse at a voiture meeting was supposed to be in French. The initiations were conducted by a "wrecking crew." It was a secret society, and for a short time had a considerable vogue in the United States.¹⁴ Generally the public forms its opinion of the

14. See Jones, A History of the American Legion, p. 299; Annual Reports, 1926, pp. 222-223; The Internal Organization of the American Legion (Pamphlet) pp. 105-111.

entire Legion upon the basis of the antics of this organization at conventions. With a few notable exceptions, these conventions are more famous for their carnival spirit than for any serious business they may have accomplished. "Legion week has been described as being like Mardi Gras week . . . the Fourth of July, and New Year's Eve merged into one." The Legion described these annual conventions as "the most representative pageant of America." And furthermore, "many people cannot think of a Legion convention except in terms of fun, boxcars, crowds and comedy."¹⁵

The convention proper carries on the official business of the Legion. It operates much as any business, professional or political group in conducting its affairs. Generally there are speakers of national and international importance who are invited to speak on subjects of current interest. Cabinet members, United States Senators, Governors of states and occasionally the President of the United States address the conventions.

The sixteen committees of the convention hold meetings at convenient times to discuss and prepare resolutions or other matters for the convention to adopt or reject much as a platform is formulated and adopted in a political

15. Dota, Margaret De F., "The Legion on a Spree" in Forum, Vol. 86, June 1931, p. 333; The National Legionnaire, October, 1942, p. 8.

nominating convention. Resolutions are offered and a program is adopted on questions of domestic and international interest.

There is one constitutional restraint the Legion exercises--it is non-political. By that is meant that the posts, state departments and national conventions and organization are not to endorse any candidate for political office nor are any of these organizations to be used to further the election ambition of any candidate for political office nor are any of these organizations to be used to further the election ambition of any candidate. No officer in the Legion may commit the organization to any political party. The individual members of the Legion are permitted and encouraged to take part in the selection of candidates whom they may choose. The Legion maintains that it is not only non-partisan, it is not military and not militaristic.

In 1927, and again in 1937, the Legion held conventions in Paris, France. One was scheduled for 1947 but was called off because of a lack of transportation facilities.

Techniques as a Pressure Group

Pressure groups exert influence partly in proportion to the effective use they make of the channels of communications. Propaganda on a wide scale is expensive. Some pressure groups are curtailed in this activity by finances. This is not the case with the Legion. It makes use

of the various channels of communications to publicize its particular programs.

First of all, it publishes its own national newspaper and magazine to inform its members on the variety of issues on which it takes a stand. Not only this, quite often officers of the Legion prepare articles for publication in other newspapers and magazines. Its activities are so varied that the general newspapers carry reports of most of these activities.

In addition to the newspapers and magazines, the Legion makes wide use of movies to carry on its propaganda. The Legion has had almost from its origin a film library containing a number of one and two-reel subjects which are supplied to the posts at a nominal rental or without charge.¹⁶ Not only does it produce its own movies-- the Legion also cooperates and collaborates with movie companies in Hollywood to produce certain movies which the Legion is interested in.¹⁷

Another technique used by the Legion is having the National Commander act as spokesman in advancing its program. He is both salesman and executive. He speaks before Legion groups in the forty-eight states and before other interested groups when subjects of current interest

16. Annual Reports, 1924, pp. 20-21.

17. The National Legionnaire, January, 1940, p. 2 and February, 1940, p. 5.

require a representative of the Legion to speak. Besides these appearances on formal occasions, Legion representatives will discuss, debate or answer public figures on controversial subjects in the Legion program. The official spokesman for the Legion is the National Commander.

Another technique is fostering patriotic observances and memorials. These appeal to the patriotic emotions. Here the Legion has a great advantage over most other organized groups in the use of this particular technique.

The national convention which is held annually serves as a sounding-board for Legion policies. In these conventions, programs and policies are adopted with much fanfare and reports of these activities are carried in newsreels, magazines and newspapers. Prohibition repeal, the soldiers' bonus and lend-lease were issues that gained momentum in Legion conventions that made their ultimate acceptance politically feasible.

A final technique used by the Legion is that of the legislative representative or lobbyist. This organization learned very early that things cannot be accomplished by merely resolving. Senators and representatives will not vote for legislation that is favored unless pressure is brought to bear from local organizations.¹⁸

Greatest understanding of this technique of the

18. Duffield, Marcus, "The American Legion in Politics" in Forum, Vol. 85, May, 1931, p. 258.

Legion can be obtained by centering attention on Colonel John Thomas Taylor, the legislative representative in Washington. He had been legislative representative since 1921. He is a lawyer by profession. "It must be recognized," he has said, "that Congress does not take the lead in settling questions of public, political or economic policy . . . Legislation is literally made outside the halls of Congress by groups or persons interested in legislation, mainly with economic motives, and the deliberating process within Congress constitutes a sort of formal ratification."¹⁹

Taylor usually drafts the bills which the Legion desires Congress to pass. In the period, 1921-1931, he claims to have written between 1500 and 2000 bills. After the bill is drafted, the next step is to have the bill introduced in Congress. A "key man" is selected for this purpose. It is not difficult to find such members. Taylor reported December 16, 1946, that in the 80th Congress there were "202 veterans in the House of Representatives and 45 in the Senate These veterans comprise almost 50 per cent of each body and nearly 50 per cent of the membership of all congressional committees (would) be veterans." At the beginning of the 80th Congress Taylor sent a copy of the Legion program to each member of Congress asking his or her support. Then he stated that the

19. Ibid., p. 259.

"major responsibility (would) rest on the departments and posts to advise their congressmen to support the Legion's program."²⁰

The "key man" who is a legionnaire or sympathizer will introduce the bills, see them through committees and on to the floor. More often than not, Taylor will appear as a witness before the committees and provide lists of witnesses who should be called for testimony on particular questions. At the beginning of the 80th Congress Taylor presented a petition signed by thousands of veterans to the committee considering universal military service as a part of the Legion's national defense program.

If a bill is held in committee and is not reported to the floor and Taylor's personal contacts are not sufficiently influential in causing the bill to be reported, then Taylor will send telegrams to the forty-eight state commanders who will in turn send the message along to post commanders for the members to telephone, send cards, letters and telegrams to obstructing members of the committee of Congress. The secret of the success of the Legion's legislative efforts is "organization, alert efficiency, and pressure skillfully applied."²¹

20. Chicago Herald-American, December 16, 1946, p. 12.

21. Jones, Richard S., A History of the American Legion, pp. 64-65; Duffield, Marcus, "The American Legion in Politics" in Forum, Vol. 85, May, 1931, p. 259.

Fitting into the picture of Legion techniques and coordinating their various activities is the Public Relations Division which was created in 1944 for the purpose of "telling the story of the American Legion and its activities to the American public and to the swiftly increasing membership of the national organization."²² There are publicity offices in New York, Washington and Los Angeles.

At National Headquarters in Indianapolis there is a radio branch. It is the agency for handling radio programs of national scope for the Legion. This office arranges network and special broadcasts and works with the New York office in executing them. These radio broadcasts include dramatic presentations, talks of national importance commemoration of national holidays and guest appearances on nationally-known programs.

There is also a press branch which is located in Indianapolis. It is the central agency for the production of American Legion press material. Among its principal functions is the editing of the American Legion news clip sheet which goes out to 1,614 daily newspapers, 9,912 weekly newspapers, 275 labor publications, 1,207 college publications, 309 motion picture publications, 189 radio news commentators and to various other publications. The press

22. The Internal Organization of the American Legion (pamphlet) pp. 63-69.

branch also distributes spot news stories through the AP, UP, INS and Trans-Radio Press, and has a picture coverage including a mat service to Legion publications of the various state departments and to post publications.²³

The Legion co-operates with other organizations to further mutual interests. On questions such as immigration and the fight against Communism, the Legion and the American Federation of Labor work side by side. Other organizations come into the picture as mutual interests dictate.

Publications

To carry general news of the national organization and to promote its educational program the Legion published The National Legionnaire and The American Legion Magazine, both having a national circulation and published monthly. During World War II The American Legion Magazine was published in miniature for personnel in the military services overseas. Each state organization publishes a paper containing news of interest to the legionnaires of that state. And generally, each post publishes a small paper, either mimeographed or printed, with items of special local interest mainly.

In addition to the newspapers published by the various

23. The Internal Organization of the American Legion (pamphlet) pp. 63-78.

organizations and posts of the Legion, many pamphlets and booklets and books are published by the national organization. For the most part these publications deal with some problem or issue that the Legion is concerned about. In 1936 a book was published on Isms which was a review of revolutionary communism and its active sympathizers in the United States.²⁴ The purpose of the book was to point out the dangers of Communism in its attempt to destroy the systems of government and economy of the United States. In 1947 also, when the Soviets had made quite a reputation with a general obstruction program and especially in their use of the veto in the Security Council of the United Nations, the Legion published a pamphlet, Twice is too Often!, setting forth a plan for revising the Charter of the United Nations. Two other pamphlets were published in 1947, entitled, How to Spot a Communist and Slick Tricks of the Commies. In 1943 when the government of the United States was confronted with the problem of counteracting Axis influence in Latin American countries, the Legion was asked to co-operate with the Co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs, especially in acquainting Americans with Latin

24. Isms: A Review of Revolutionary Communism And Its Active Sympathizers in the United States, prepared by the National Americanism Commission. See also Benjamin Gitlow, The Whole of Their Lives, pp. 99-136; Louis F. Budenz, Men Without Faces, The Communist Conspiracy in the U. S. A.

American history, culture and traditions. The Legion published a pamphlet entitled, Proposed Program of Inter-American Affairs, which contained suggestions to be followed in the various centers of the United States in futhering this program. The Legion published a pamphlet each month, beginning April 1, 1948, and was mailed to about 10,000,000 Americans for twelve months as a campaign against Communism, showing the advantages pictorially of the systems of government and business in the United States over that of Soviet Russia. There is very little time that the Legion is not engaged in some campaign carrying out a program that, as the organization sees it, is the best for the United States.

Conclusions

The American Legion came into being as an organization partly as an attempt to solve a problem of discipline in the American Expeditionary Forces in France in World War I, partly to promote the economic condition of its members when they would become civilians again, partly to combat Communism and partly to promote fraternal relations. The Legion's organizational structure is basically simple. The individual legionnaire is the basic unit. He joins with other individuals to form a post, or local unit. Posts within each state, or territory, or foreign country, form a department. Departments form the national organization,

the American Legion.

Where other pressure groups are limited to areas or sections or interests, the Legion is organized in all the states, territories, possessions and a few foreign countries. In addition to being the most widely organized, it is probably the most effectively organized. Where other groups appeal mainly to some economic or professional interest, the Legion appeals to the patriotic emotions. In its attempt to get acceptance and favorable action on its programs the Legion uses the radio, press and movies quite extensively; it exerts pressure in the legislative halls of Congress, the various state legislatures and the local units of government. The Legion co-operates with other organizations whose sympathies are similar to its own, with the Legion goal of making the United States strong internally and externally.

Chapter II

PRESERVATION OF THE AMERICAN HERITAGE

Perhaps four out of every five members of the American Legion assume that Legionnaires, by virtue of their military service, have a special interest and a little better claim than other citizens to be the custodians of the nation's heritage. The philosophy of the legionnaire in this role of national guardian is to be found partly in the statement of George Washington, inscribed in the amphitheater in Arlington Cemetery at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, reading: "When we assumed the soldier we did not lay aside the citizen."

It is not the purpose of the author either to defend or to refute the prevailing legionnaire opinion on the subject of his self-appointed guardianship. But, in any case, it is well to recall the fact that men who have defended their country on the battlefield are usually inclined to believe, with some justification, that they have unusual rights of participation in the defense of the traditional way of life of their country in the forum of public opinion. The purpose of this chapter will be simply to indicate the Legion concept of the American way of life, its attitude toward the threats made upon American institutions, and the Legion's proposals of methods to meet these dangers.

Dangers to the American Heritage

In the ideology of the American Legion, American participation in the First World War had been an attempt to preserve the American heritage from external aggression. There were other dangers that the Legion was aware of which would require continued effort in peace time on the part of legionnaires and their organizations.¹ In the view of the Legion there were three main dangers, the first of which was internal and the other two chiefly external.

The first of these dangers was the ignorance and indifference of Americans who, in the words of the Legion, do not "appreciate the genius of our system of constitutional democracy and the consequent individual responsibility to the community, state and nation." It has been the legionnaire's belief that the United States possesses the best system of government in the world. But all too often the average citizen takes too much for granted and will assume that the governmental system of the United States will continue without any particular effort being exerted to preserve or extend it. The Legion considers this lack of interest and civic irresponsibility as requiring a pro-

1. "Selfish or Unselfish Heroes; Policy of the American Legion" in World's Work, Vol. 39, April, 1920, pp. 538-539; "American Legion Serves the Community" in American City, Vol. 25, December, 1921, p. 505; "Americanizing Americans as the Legion Does It" in Literary Digest, Vol. 76, January 13, 1923, pp. 42-44.

gram of Americanism to call attention to, and offer experiences in, effective democracy. If citizens do not have an aroused interest in the American system, this great heritage is in danger of being lost from disuse.

This attitude toward the American heritage and the program of Americanism does not, of course, enter directly into foreign policy, but indirectly it has considerable effect on external policy. Any attitude or feelings that people of any nation have about themselves and their own culture influences peoples of other nations favorably or unfavorably. Patriots of every country tend to regard their traditions, peoples and institutions superior to those of other countries. Regardless of what the basis of the myth is supposed to be, stereotypes are influential between peoples of different nations just as they are with peoples of any given country. The Legion's program to preserve the heritage of the United States, commonly called the program of Americanism, will be considered in this chapter.

The second danger, as viewed by the Legion, is that of the alien and the immigrant living in the United States. These people have been considered by the Legion as being in general sound citizens, but also possibly containing enemies--borers from within--and they would have to be dealt with through deportations, immigration laws and a

program to assimilate and Americanize the desirable ones.²

This phase of Legion policy does enter directly into foreign policy considerations. Any policy toward aliens, immigrants and deportations presupposes a decision as to the desirability of peoples of other countries. Under the Immigration Act of 1924 quotas from different countries were set and Oriental peoples were not allowed any quota at all for immigration purposes. To peoples where "race" is all-important, diplomatic relations are bound to be affected. Questions involving immigration policy will be considered in Chapter III.

Finally, there was the spectre of Russian Communism with its plans for promoting civil war and world revolution through cells planted in every country and dictated to by Moscow, in accordance with plans agreed upon at the Third International which met in Moscow March 2-5, 1919. At this meeting it was decided that bourgeois capitalism and its accompanying government must be destroyed and replaced by governments of the proletariat all dictated by the Soviet Government.³ There were other aspects of the dan-

2. Archibald Roosevelt, "The Enemy Within the Gate" in New Outlook, Vol. 161, October, 1932, p. 7; "Legislative Aims of the Legion" in Congressional Digest, Vol. 11, November, 1932, p. 266; "Labor, the Legion, and the Reds" in Literary Digest, Vol. 120, October 19, 1935, p. 5.

3. See Documents seized by the Justice Department, January 3-5, 1920, in the Appendix, p. 108.

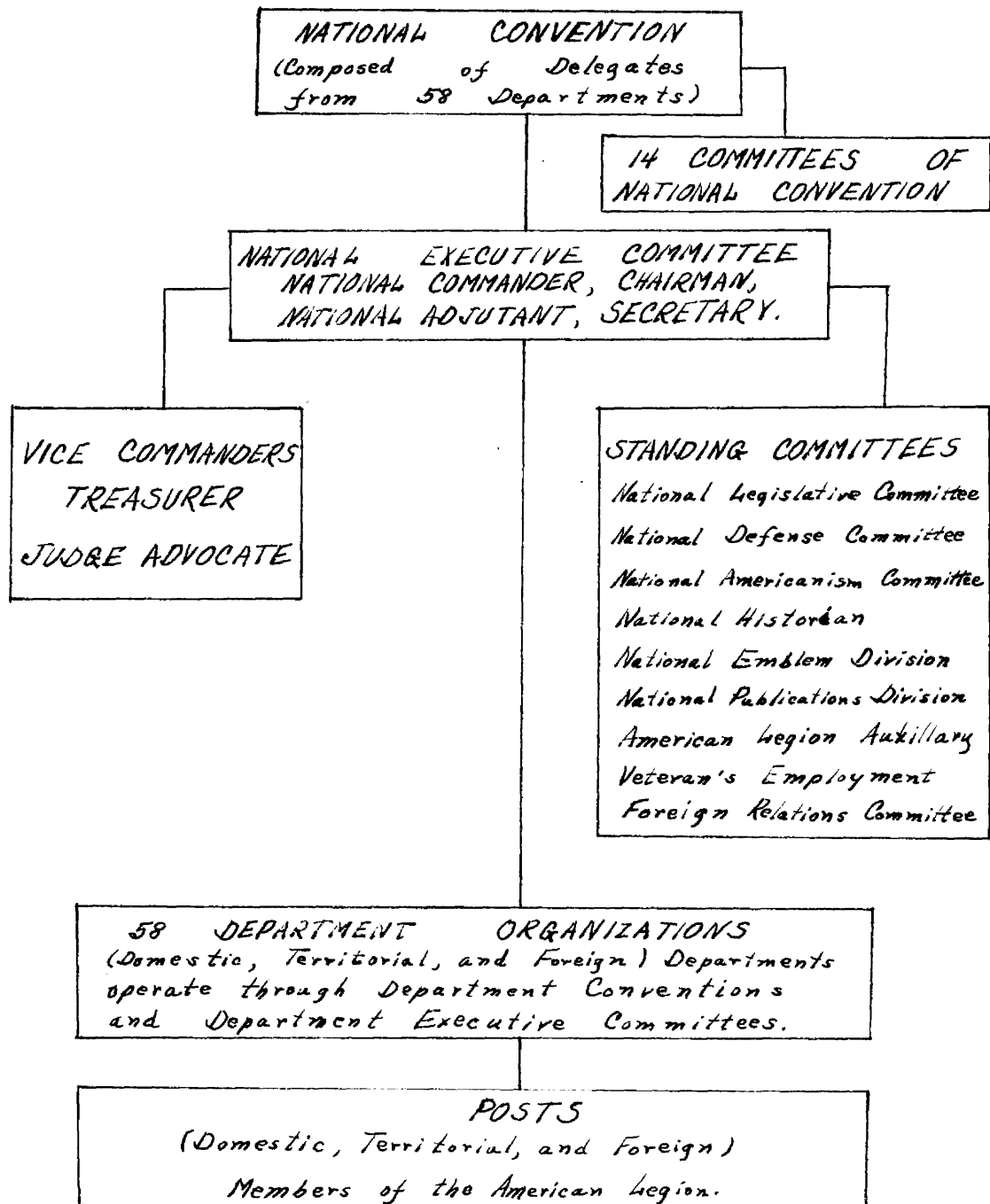
gers from Moscow. Not only was the surrender of the Russian armies to Germany on the eastern front in 1917 considered to be an act of treachery in permitting a million German soldiers to be turned against Allied soldiers on the western front, the very concepts and practices of this new ideology were contradictory and dangerous to those of the United States. Had not the raids by the Justice Department in early January, 1920, uncovered Communist plots to overthrow the state and federal governments through force and violence and replace them with Communist regimes?

This is definitely in the field of foreign policy and it has been an important factor in the diplomatic and other relations with Russia and her satellites. The Legion's policies in regard to the questions revolving around Communism and Russia are considered in Chapter IV.

The Legion Concept of the American Heritage

The concept of Americanism and the American heritage mean many things to many people. No person or group of persons can rightfully claim a monopoly on these terms. The adequacy of any definitions and principles advanced by various persons and groups obviously must depend upon their inner integrity and consistency with historical events. One of the earliest ideas of Americanism expressed by the Legion is to be found in the Act of Congress, Section 3, incorporating the American Legion in 1919, which reads in part as

ORGANIZATION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION¹



¹ Clark, Bennett C., "Building the American Legion" in THE AMERICAN LEGION WEEKLY, July 11, 1919, pp. 16-17; Cutler, Robert, "Visualizing the Legion," in THE AMERICAN LEGION WEEKLY, October 10, 1949, pp. 24-25; THE INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, 1947 Edition, p. 55.

follows:

That the purpose of this corporation shall be: to promote peace and good will among the peoples of the United States and all the nations of the earth; to preserve the memories and incidents of the Great War of 1917-1918; to cement the ties of love and comradeship born of service; and to consecrate the efforts of its members to mutual helpfulness and service to their country.⁴

The preamble of the constitution of the Legion as adopted at the Minneapolis convention in 1919 was more specific. It employed the following language:

For God and country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred per cent Americanism; to preserve the memories and the incidents of our associations in the Great War; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

So important did the Minneapolis convention in 1919 consider the subject of Americanism that it authorized the establishment of a National Americanism Commission.⁵ It was not actually set up until the year 1924. But in the meantime legionnaires were highly vocal on the subject,

4. Congressional Record, Vol. 58, Part 5, 66th Congress, 1st Session, p. 5109; 41 United States Statutes at Large 285.

5. "Birth of the American Legion" in Outlook, Vol. 122, May 21, 1919, pp. 104-105; "American Legion: Its Convention and Its New Commander" in Outlook, Vol. 123, November 26, 1919, pp. 348-349.

while the local posts in all parts of the country began activities in this direction.

The Legion concept of patriotism was influenced from the beginning by dislike or fear of foreign elements transported to American shores, and particularly of Bolshevik aliens who advocated overthrow of constitutional government by force. The Legion's fear of what the ultimate effect of immigration might be on the United States was put in this manner:

Whence come all these faces?
Whither are they going?
Will uncontrolled arrivals of alien races
Ultimately prove America's undoing?⁶

The Minneapolis convention had called upon the Federal Government to change the Department of Justice "from a passive-evidence collecting organization to a militant and active group of workers whose findings shall be forcefully acted upon by this our American Government." All of this was encouraging to Attorney-General A. Mitchell Palmer who was already planning his campaign against the followers of the Lenin-Trotsky doctrine of terrorism.

On January 3, 1920, the Attorney-General directed Justice Department agents to raid Communist headquarters,

6. Study of Problems Relating to Immigration and Deportation and Other Matters. Hearings Before Subcommittee No. I of the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, House of Representatives, 79th Congress, 1st Session, Pursuant to H. Res. 52, Part 4 (August 24 and 25, 1945), p. 349.

homes and meeting places in thirty-three cities from coast to coast in the United States. The raids began on Saturday night and continued through the week end. Over 5,000 aliens were arrested of the 60,000 names included in Justice Department files. These aliens were to be deported or turned over to the courts for prosecution. Attorney-General Palmer's statement on this action follows:

Agents of the Department of Justice took into custody several hundred members of the Communist Party and the Communist Labor party of this country, on the charge that these organizations advocate and teach the overthrow of the United States Government by force and violence. The only difference between the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party is one of leadership. Both of these parties, since their organization last September (1919), have been endeavoring to bring about the establishment of a Soviet form of government in this country similar to that which now obtains in Russia.⁷

From time to time in succeeding months, Attorney-General Palmer announced the continued rounding up of Red Agents, each time submitting documents of the Communist organizations showing their plans to wreck the American government by force.⁸

In 1919, strikes and labor troubles in steel mills, coal mines and the stock yards led Congress to investigate the Red menace as a contributing cause. On January 5, 1920,

7. New York Times, January 3, 1920, pp. 1-2; Benjamin Gitlow, The Whole of Their Lives, pp. 61-62.

8. New York Times, January 4, 1920, p. 1; January 5, 1920, p. 2; January 12, 1920, p. 3.

while reports of the arrests of Reds and the seizure of their literature were daily occurrences, Congressman George S. Graham, of Pennsylvania, introduced a sedition bill in the House of Representatives. The bill provided for the death penalty for treason and also for the death of an innocent person in a riot attending a movement to overthrow the government, or to prevent the carrying out of the laws of Congress or decrees of the courts. It prohibited the publication of articles intended to encourage forcible resistance to or destruction of the government of the United States and made it a misdemeanor to exhibit in a public place a Red flag or any other emblems which tend to incite or to indicate a purpose to overthrow the government.⁹

The excitement spread even to the Ohio Society of New York which was holding its meeting in the Waldorf in New York City on January 6, 1920, when the meeting was planned to hear potential candidates for the Republican Presidential nomination. Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University, Senator Warren G. Harding of Ohio and Major Leonard Wood were the speakers. Senator Harding declared that while the Reds were a small group,

9. New York Times, January 6, 1920, p. 1; Congressional Record, Vol. 59, Part 2, 66th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 1964-1965.

they were effectively organized. The danger from within was not alone from the Reds but from the indifference of the American people. It was the duty of American citizens to impress upon all aliens in the country that "true liberty is found within the law, and not outside it."¹⁰ President Butler denounced the attempts of organized groups who seek by striking at some vital point of the industrial situation "to paralyze the nation and thus coerce the government."¹¹ Major Leonard Wood, who was detained, but sent a statement on the Red menace which among other things said: "The time has come to wake up and demonstrate that this country is going to be run by Americans, under the Constitution, without fear or favor to any class or group."¹²

The publications of the American Legion began a systematic denunciation not only of Bolshevists and Communists but also of aliens in the United States.¹³ The American Legion Weekly opposed the "Reds" because they were the

10. New York Times, January 6, 1920, p. 3.

11. New York Times, January 6, 1920, p. 1.

12. New York Times, January 6, 1920, pp. 1 and 3.

13. Charles D. Kelley, "A Starting Point for Slacker Drives" in The American Legion Weekly, October 24, 1919, pp. 8-9; Innis Brown, "Gas--The First Alarm" p. 23; "Post the Slackers," October 31, 1919, p. 12; "Slackers Call for Help," November 7, 1919, p. 12.

antithesis of Americanism. As the enemies of freedom they were to be given a return trip from American shores. The Reds were a menace. A typical editorial would run somewhat as follows: "Blast the crop. Stamp out the fires which are already being lighted. Run the Reds out from the land whose flag they sully. Cleanse the country of the skulkers whose insane ambition is to wreck it."¹⁴

The idea that alienism is opposed to Americanism is further expressed in the program of National Commander Owsley in 1922 when he recommended that immigration be halted to the United States for five years to give America time to educate her aliens in the true spirit of Americanism. "Those here now soon will send back to the radicals in Europe that America has no room for disloyalists."¹⁵

The National Americanism Commission

If these ideas seem to express a negative Americanism, that situation was not always to remain. In 1924, when the National Americanism Commission was set up, as provided for in the Minneapolis convention of 1919, a more positive expression of Americanism was given. The Americanism Commission was composed of sixteen members representing all

14. "Give them a Sea Voyage" in The American Legion Weekly, November 14, 1919, p. 12.

15. "Commander Owsley of the Legion" in Literary Digest, Vol. 75, November 18, 1922, pp. 50-54.

parts of the United States. They were Richard F. Beirne (Virginia), E. K. Bixby (Oklahoma), William C. Hicks (Washington), Frank L. Sich (South Dakota), Silas H. Whaley (Wisconsin), Peyton H. Hoge, Jr., (Kentucky), Augustus H. Gansser (Michigan), John J. Tigert (District of Columbia), Dwight F. Davis (Idaho), George W. Nilsson (Arizona), Alex Guerry (Tennessee), Charles M. Herlihy (Massachusetts), and T. Thomas Busha (Montana). Garland W. Powell of Maryland was the National Director.¹⁶

The Americanism Commission holds at least two meetings each year, one in Indianapolis and the other at the convention city. There may be special meetings whenever the National Director or a majority of the members think such special meetings are necessary. Members of the Commission are assigned special phases of the program of Americanism.

In its first report, in 1924, the Americanism Commission identified Americanism as nationalism, patriotism and devotion to the United States. On this subject the report said:

Americanism is nationalism and patriotism Americanism means another thing--the undying devotion and belief in the United States of America. It has been this spirit that has made our nation progress, in a very short period of time, from a few small colonies to the greatest government in the world today. It is the same spirit which has led us to victory in all of our wars. It is that same spirit that the Communists, the Bolsheviks, the I. W. W's, the Revolutionary radicals and the extreme pacifists are attempting to undermine today. Besides the evil influences which have been mentioned above, the spirit of America is

16. Annual Reports, 1924, p. 60.

threatened by ignorance and illiteracy, which condition can be corrected by faithful work and service to those American ideals and principles fostered by the Legion.¹⁷

By 1925, Americanism was identified as being synonymous with good citizenship and the Commission insisted that its catechism was to be found in the preamble to the Legion's constitution. In its annual report the Americanism Commission expressed this concept of Americanism as follows:

Americanism is a term of vast significance. In its larger conception, it embraces every phase of an individual's relation to the community, state and nation. Primarily it begins in the home. No man can be simultaneously a good citizen of the nation and a poor citizen of the state, or community; nor can he fully discharge his obligations as a citizen unless he preserves the ideals and traditions of American home life at his own fireside The National Americanism Commission urges a thoughtful consideration of every statement in the preamble to our constitution of the American Legion upon every member of the organization, for herein is found the catechism of our work.

Americanism demands vigilance. We must be ever alert to the influences which teach false doctrine and constantly seek the overthrow of organized government Americanism demands an open mind, but not a readiness to run amuck with the ideas of a revolutionary age.¹⁸

The Americanism Commission recommended that Americanism continue to be a matter of good citizenship and legionnaires in 1926 were to be guided by the pledges in the preamble to the Legion constitution. As legionnaires increased in age and experience they were becoming more aware of the significance of these pledges, the commission stated. "To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and

17. Annual Reports, 1924, p. 62.

18. Annual Reports, 1925, part II, p. 2.

nation" was a part of the Americanism program, and the only part of the Legion program which could provide an activity for every post and every individual member.¹⁹

By 1929, The Americanism Commission again defined Americanism in terms of patriotism, and, at the same time indicated how it was to be preserved. It said:

The Americanism Commission believes thoroughly with President Hoover that devotion to our home, to our town, to our state, to our country and to our national ideals are the springs of patriotism, and that patriotism which is the most inspiring of all human emotions is the indispensable cohesive force of democracy. For this reason we have given a great deal of our time and spent a great deal of our money to reach the youth of our country, the youth which is always the bearer of progress and upon whom we must depend for the perpetuation of American institutions, which have done so much not only to make our nation great, but in reality to establish equality of opportunity among men.²⁰

By 1930 an added apprehension appeared, namely, that the Great Depression would promote un-American activities. Business depression was followed by curtailment of industrial enterprise and increasing unemployment. By 1930, the estimates of the unemployed ranged between 2,500,000 and 8,000,000 in the United States. Ultimately it reached 13,000,000 in 1933.²¹ Men out of work are always a prey to radical agitators. The Americanism Commission fully cognizant of the contemporary scene, held that only by understanding, appreciating and showing willingness to preserve

19. Annual Reports, 1926, p. 28.

20. Annual Reports, 1929, p. 38.

21. World's Almanac, 1931, p. 165.

the ideals and traditions of American home life will the individual be discharging fully his obligations as a citizen. As a people, the citizens of the United States are usually willing to sacrifice for the sake of their ideals in an emergency. The Commission asked for their best vigilance at that time. If the United States is to continue long, the people must be awakened to the menace of the deterioration by insidious softening within. According to the Commission, the United States was facing the danger which every successful people have faced. The Commission warned that the people of the United States were apt to lose sight of the very things upon which their success is built. They are apt to think that the physical things about them are the real things that count and overlook the invisible guiding force which have brought these things to them.²²

When the Great Depression was at its worst in 1931 the Americanism Commission expressed concern, if not alarm, as to the possibilities of perpetuation of the American traditions and ideals. Its apprehensions are disclosed in this statement:

America as never before has been and is now undergoing a drastic social and economic revolution, which gives us peacetime problems of such gigantic proportions and gravity as to demand the interest of every worthwhile citizen. These conditions have created a tremendous unem-

22. Annual Reports, 1930, p. 70.

ployment problem and the subsequent hunger and suffering among men, women and children. We are face to face with the most critical problem of all time--which even threatens our national existence. America can not remain asleep to this menace

With these rapidly changing conditions, we face the task of perpetuating our American traditions and ideals. No quicker way to our country's downfall could be found than to permit the national character to weaken and our ideals to disintegrate.²³

The presidential election year of 1932 came in one of the most critical periods of the depression. President Hoover, in seeking re-election made himself the champion of the laissez faire philosophy in allowing the normal, natural processes to bring about recovery in the economic life of the nation, while the Democratic candidate, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, offered "action and action now." Roosevelt was elected by a popular vote of 22,800,000 and 472 electoral votes to 15,000,000 popular votes and 59 electoral votes for President Hoover. The Roosevelt victory made a profound impression upon the American Legion. Immediately there was less emphasis upon preservation of the traditions of the founding fathers and more emphasis upon building a better America. It was the work of Americanism to build a better America; to build an undying faith and devotion to the nation and its ideals. The nation-wide depression provided a fertile field for un-American propaganda and developed situations demanding more emphatic, effective and

23. Annual Reports, 1931, p. 309.

militant Americanism activities.²⁴

For its work in 1934 the Americanism Commission considered arousing of the people of the United States to a realization of the dangers of foreign propaganda was of greatest importance.²⁵ In 1935 Americanism took on a more spiritual or subjective character in that it was considered as being the soul of America. "If the soul is lost, all else worth while is gone." It was the purpose of the Americanism Commission to drive the alien "isms" and subversive influences from the United States. There is even self-denial and self-restraint in Americanism, elements lacking in its chief detractor, Communism. Since there is no desire on the part of the people of the United States to interfere with the peoples and governments of other nations, likewise, "we do not want their political doctrines forced upon the United States." The statement continued as follows:

We are neither the proprietors nor the overlords of this mighty republic; we are but temporary stewards of its safe custody. We have inherited, in trust, the privileges and advantages of American citizenship, under our American form of government. It is ours to enjoy and love; ours to foster and protect--to the end that we shall deliver it to our children, stronger and more firmly rooted in the principles of its origin, that its ideals may continue to light the paths of civilization down through the generations.²⁶

Emphasis on rights, privileges and duties of citizenship were again emphasized in the program of the American-

24. Annual Reports, 1933, p. 105.

25. Annual Reports, 1934, p. 205.

26. Annual Reports, 1935, pp. 55-56.

ism Commission in 1936. It was the work of Americanism to develop a true appreciation of the rights and privileges of citizenship in the United States, "the greatest self-governing nation of recorded history." Their efforts were directed mainly against the forces of ignorance, to include those who can not and those who will not, appreciate the genius of the American system of constitutional democracy. The people of the United States must also be made to see their individual responsibilities in the community, state and nation, according to the Americanism Commission.²⁷

While the reports of the Americanism Commission constantly exhibited a slight tone of self-righteousness there was never the spirit of complacency nor the certainty of absolute accomplishment. The Commission always realized that in dealing with the intangible concepts associated with Americanism, measurements cannot be applied. Uncertainties have beset the Legion since its inception and vigilance and concern are evident in these reports. In 1938, the aims and purposes of the Commission were re-stated as follows:

We have continuously sought to carry out the spirit which gave this Commission birth, that is, to so contribute of our life and experience that not alone will our children have the appreciation of America which we have, but that all of our citizens will be imbued with a love of country, and respect for its institutions and will have a militant desire to preserve in these United States the spirit of freedom which was given to us as a priceless heritage by our forefathers. We have respected the thought that it is not our privilege to impose our will upon any

27. Annual Reports, 1936, p. 65.

man or group of men, but at the same time we have accepted it as our duty to put before men our common thoughts as based upon our common experience to the end that all people may approach the problems of government and of society peaceably, rationally and with the general welfare rather than selfish position as the goal to be obtained.²⁸

Like other pressure groups in the United States, the Legion was not guided merely by events within the United States. In 1924, Adolph Hitler emerged from his prison, and soon had succeeded in organizing the Nazi Party which ultimately in 1933 grasped the political power of Germany. Hitler's principal agents in the United States were to be found in the German-American Bund.²⁹ Its subversive activities were extensive. In 1939, in opposition to the Bund, the Commission reported as follows:

It is our purpose to re-inspire and, if necessary, dramatize the traditional initiative of the American people and the will to preserve our constitutional form of democracy so capably conceived and proudly hailed by our forefathers. We are returning to the traditional American way although it has been difficult to retain a mental stability in these hysterical times Let us be prepared to preserve our traditions within the walls of our country, and to resist the enemies from without.³⁰

The Americanism Commission at headquarters was not engaged in a single-handed task of spreading Americanism. Indeed, the whole Legion organization had contributions to

28. Annual Reports, 1938, p. 71.

29. Arthur Deranian, The Plotters, 1946; Under Cover, 1943.

30. Annual Reports, 1939, p. 18.

make. Quite often, reports in the official publication of the organization, The National Legionnaire, reflected ideas of Americanism as when it stated:

America with its form of government constitutes a crowning accomplishment in the century-old struggle of the Anglo-Saxon races for the establishment of the rights of men. While these rights are the inalienable rights of man given to him inherently by his Creator, they have only been won and preserved by the sacrifice of the blood of men in arms. Vigilance eternal is necessary to their perpetuation.³¹

The Effect of the Outbreak of the Second World War

World War II began in September, 1939, when Hitler invaded Poland, and when Britain and France decided at long last to give military resistance. During the winter months there was little activity on the military fronts. It became the "phoney war." In a New Year's message to all legionnaires in 1940, the National Commander, Raymond J. Kelly, addressed them through The National Legionnaire along the line of Americanism. It had been their work to expose and oppose the alien "isms" and to support those "principles which were unknown to the civilized world until a great people crystallized their ideals in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution." The problems that had to be solved were founded on questions that bring many threats to the well-being of the United States. The problem that faced the legionnaires then had been caught many years ago in the poet's vision, which he quoted as follows:

31. The National Legionnaire, August, 1939, p. 4.

Long, too long, America,
 Traveling roads all even and peaceful you learn'd from
 joys and prosperity only,
 But now, ah now, to learn from crises of anguish, advancing,
 grappling with direct fate and recoiling not,
 And now to conceive and show to the world what your
 children en masse really are.

He believed the Legionnaire's individual acceptance of his obligations would not leave any doubt to the world "about the quality of America's children en masse."³²

In September, 1941, at its Milwaukee Convention the Legion voted to support the Roosevelt administration in sending Lend-Lease to Russia.³³ Many legionnaires wanted to get into the war and many felt that the United States would be in a "shooting war" very soon whether it wanted to be or not. In an Armistice Day address November 11, 1941, Lynn U. Stambaugh, National Commander, defined Americanism in terms of the American people and their accomplishments when he said:

The spirit of our Americanism is not gentle, tame or docile. It is a fighting spirit and a working spirit which has built the great industries, the great transportation systems, the great cities, the great dams and reservoirs, canals and locks and power houses out of the inspiration of men's dreams and the perspiration of men's bodies. Americans have done these things because they were free to do them, free to build and to own for themselves that which their hands had made. In these things is to be found the only answer to the question as to what created the superiority of American manhood in peace and war. The citizen of a free competitive social order is a

32. The National Legionnaire, January, 1940, pp. 1-3.

33. The Milwaukee Journal, September 17, 1941, pp. 1-3.

better man than the citizen of a fixed and regimented social order.³⁴

When the going on the home front during World War II seemed tough the Americanism Commission pointed out that there was some inspiration to be gained from Americanism for every emergency that the people might be forced into. During the war it meant sacrifice, self-denial and hard work. Those on the home front had a job to do and nothing mattered but to get the "stuff" needed by the soldiers and sailors. Everyone must be completely subordinated to the war effort. If everyone contributed his share as was hoped, this would be "wartime Americanism at its best."³⁵

In its Omaha convention in 1943 the Legion took action to meet the challenges facing postwar America when it provided for a \$10,000,000 Americanism Endowment Fund. This was later raised to \$15,000,000. The Legion considers it has special and particular responsibilities with respect to the nation's heritage, its pattern and its institutions. In this role the Legion recognizes certain obligations relating to maintaining a plan of life that "has resulted in more security and comfort for more people for longer periods" than has any other system of government or enterprise. After World War II this part of the Legion program

34. The National Legionnaire, November, 1941, pp. 1-3.

35. Annual Reports, 1943, p. 18.

has been expanded. By 1945 the Americanism Commission was looking forward to this expanding program "to inspire patriotism in the hearts of the boys and girls of this country to teach them the tasks before them in the carrying on of representative democracy and to bring before them the recognition of their rich American heritage."³⁶

The fighting aspect of World War II ended in 1945 and peace was expected to be established, but there was no peace. Soviet tactics in the occupied countries, in the United Nations, and her general lack of cooperation in establishing peace treaties with the defeated nations made many people apprehensive as to Russia's real intentions. Her agents in other countries of the world, including the United States, were particularly obnoxious. The Americanism Commission appraised the situation and looked upon its work as being determined mainly by the subversive groups in this country when it stated:

There are radical revolutionaries spearheaded by Communists, fascists, followers of Nazi believers and other groups actively at work in this country who would overthrow our government by force or violence. Included in such groups are dangerous advocates of pacifism, dreary-eyed crackpots and numerous visionaries who are fronts for crafty foreign agents. These various groups have a common technique of operation--propaganda and infiltration. They seek to invade our schools, our government, our veterans' organizations, our youth groups and all other types of our well-established American institutions. It is our

36. Annual Reports, 1945, p. 27.

duty to expose and counteract them.³⁷

The final statement given by the Americanism Commission to be presented here is in terms still of its recognition of the dangers of dangers of foreign "isms" and the proper procedure to combat them. This statement runs as follows:

The real essence of our work is the work of character building, inquiry, and exposition and education which goes on constantly, for we feel that the character of today's youth tomorrow, the fidelity of future and prospective citizens of the United States, and the abiding faith of all our countrymen are the reinforcing mortar which will insure the continued American way of life.³⁸

Several expressions as to what Americanism means, or is, are published by the Legion in booklets for use in the American Legion Institute where prospective leaders of the Legion are trained to carry on instructions in the various posts throughout the country. One of these is put out in poster form and has been widely distributed throughout the country. It runs as follows:

Americanism
Is an unflinching love of country;
Loyalty to its institutions and ideals;
Eagerness to defend it against all enemies;
Undivided allegiance to the flag;
And a desire to secure the blessings
Of liberty to ourselves and posterity.³⁹

Most of these statements on Americanism indicate the desired loyalties of the citizen of the United States to

37. Annual Reports, 1946, pp. 30-31.

38. Annual Reports, 1947, p. 172.

39. The Americanism Program (pamphlet) p. 15.

its heritage and the things that the people are to appreciate if the nation is to be kept a going concern. One statement would include participation by the people of the United States in world affairs "as set forth in the various resolutions of the Atlantic Charter" as being good Americanism. The people of the United States would have to be strong in character, strong in the belief that the American heritage will have to be defended in a hostile world, even against hostile elements at home, until the United Nations has proved its capacity to carry out its designed programs.

This study of the Legion's concept of Americanism embraces the period, 1919 to 1949. In this period there was no noticeable change in the Legion's concept of Americanism as formulated at the end of the First World War, other than the refinement of expression of the concept of Americanism. The Legion now defines Americanism as absolute loyalty to American ideals, American traditions and the good American way of life.

Activities to Promote Americanism

The most extensive program of the Legion includes its activities to promote Americanism. Through legislation, it is the goal of the Legion to secure the nation's strength and security in its external relations. Through its Americanism program the country is to be made strong and secure by proper understanding, appreciation and indoctrination

THE NATIONAL AMERICANISM PROGRAM ¹		
EDUCATION	YOUTH ACTIVITIES	COMMUNITY SERVICE
American Education Week	Boys' State	Clean-Up Campaigns
American Legion School Award	Boys' Forum of National Government	Community Service Council
Bill of Rights Day		Conservation Activities
Citizenship Schools for Foreign Born	Boy Scouts	Elimination of Fire Hazards
Constitution Week		Emergency Relief Units
Cooperation with Parent-Teacher Associations	Junior Baseball	Films and Motion Pictures
Cooperation with Schools in Observing Patriotic Holidays	Boys' Clubs	Inter-American Affairs
Department Essay Contests	ROTC	Legionnaire Schoolmaster Clubs
Flag Education	4-H Clubs	Living Memorials
I Am an American Day		Other Activities Designed for Community Betterment
Immigration and Naturalization	Junior Rifle Clubs	Playgrounds and Recreation
National Constitution Week	Boys' and Girls' Week	Postwar Planning
National High School Oratorical Contest	Boys' and Girls' Drum and Bugle Corps	Public Health Programs
Public School Health Education		Safety-First Program
Text Books	Girl Scouts and Girl Reserves	Swimming Pools

¹ "The Americanism Program" (Pamphlet), 1947. P. 16.

of the people in the principles and ideals that have made the United States a great country.

The Legion's interest in Americanism began with its first convention in Minneapolis in 1919. There it was recommended that a National Americanism Commission be established whose duty should be the endeavor to realize in the United States the basic ideal of the Legion of 100 per cent Americanism through the planning, establishment and conduct of a continuous, constructive educational system designed to:

- (1) Combat all anti-American tendencies, activities and propaganda;
- (2) Work for the education of immigrants, prospective American citizens and alien residents in the principles of Americanism;
- (3) Inculcate the ideals of Americanism in the citizen population, particularly the basic American principles that the interests of all the people are above those of any special interest or any so-called class or section of the people;
- (4) Spread throughout the people of the nation the information as to the real nature and principles of American government;
- (5) Foster the teaching of Americanism in all schools.⁴⁰

The Commission was not created until 1924, but the posts and individual members carried on programs of Americanism suitable to the particular problems of each community. After 1924, the program was directed from national headquarters. Drives for funds have been conducted from time to time and many patriotic Americans have contributed

40. The Americanism Program (pamphlet), p. 11; Annual Reports, 1924, pp. 64-80.

large sums to carry on this work. In its Omaha Convention in 1943, the Legion took steps to set up an endowment fund of not less than ten million dollars as a charitable trust, later raised to fifteen million dollars, intended to accomplish these purposes;

To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States; to foster the realization and to develop and promote the appreciation of the value of the American way of life; to promote a liberal and practical education of the people of the United States at large of the privileges, obligations and responsibilities of citizenship in the United States; and to aid and conduct broad educational programs for the purposes above outlined under the direction of the American Legion; all to the end that we must safeguard the continuance of this government under the Constitution as a representative democracy within a republic, and preserve our democratic institutions to ourselves and our posterity.⁴¹

In order to have trained leaders to carry on the Americanism program, the American Legion Extension Institute is held annually in Indianapolis for a training period of five weeks for those selected to take the training. Then the trainees are sent about the country to give instruction in Americanism at Legion posts to help those who are conducting the activities program.⁴²

The National Americanism program of the Legion is divided into three main activities--Education, Youth Activities and Community Service.

1. Education. Under the division of Education there are

41. Annual Reports, 1944, pp. 29-30.

42. The Internal Organization of the American Legion (pamphlet), p. 9.

fifteen activities calculated to achieve the goals set forth. These activities include citizenship schools for foreign born, cooperation with schools in observing patriotic holidays, national high school oratorical contests, public school health education, text-books, cooperation with parent-teacher associations, flag education, American Education Week, American Legion school award, Bill of Rights Day, Constitution Week, department essay contests and others.

The Legion has set up 2,000 citizenship schools to prepare immigrant petitioners for American citizenship. Since there are immigrants in nearly every community the Legion post is urged to search out these people and give them assistance in carrying out the naturalization processes.⁴³

The national high school oratorical contest was inaugurated in 1938 for the purpose of developing a keener knowledge and understanding of the Constitution on the part of high school students. Eleven states participated in this first contest, twenty states in 1939, forty states in 1940, forty-six in 1941, forty-six in 1942, forty-two in 1943, forty-six in 1944, forty-two in 1945 and forty-three in 1946. Four thousand high school boys and girls

43. The Americanism Program of the American Legion, p. 26.

participated in the first one and 160,000 participated in the 1946 contest. Scholarships of \$4,000, \$2,500, \$1,000 and \$500 are awarded to the four best orators selected from those participating.⁴⁴

The public school health program is an attempt to bring more adequate health education in communities where there are either no local health services at all or where such services are provided only by inexperienced, part-time health officials. There are 40,000,000 people in the country who live in such communities, according to Legion studies.⁴⁵

The section on textbooks is an attempt to remove all un-American and subversive textbooks from the public schools of the nation. Particular criticism is leveled at the Harold O. Rugg Social Science Series of junior high school textbooks. Particular statements selected from these books which the Legion considered a subversive influence because they advanced "social, economic, and political reform without absolute neglect of history and geography content" are quoted as follows:

The success Doctrine means nothing more than Win at your neighbor's expense;
Take and keep and exploit for your own private gain has been the guiding slogan;

44. Ibid., p. 28.

45. Ibid., p. 31.

The inevitable outcome is a widespread culture of vicious hypocrisy;

A considerable percentage of youth in urban America are at this moment potential racketeers;

The outcome of such a pernicious philosophy is a widespread adoption of young people of the "getting something for nothing" attitude;

Our whole task is nothing short of questioning a whole philosophy of living--the philosophy of private capitalism and laissez faire.⁴⁶

Constitution Week has the twin purpose of furthering observance of the anniversary of the completion of the Constitution and to encourage an adequate appreciation of its importance. National Constitution Week is observed annually during the week of September 17. It is a cooperative plan between the Americanism Commission and the American Bar Association. If the program suggested is carried out fully, a member, or members of the Bar Association, speak to student bodies on the Constitution or the machinery or problems of American government.⁴⁷

It is recommended that Legion posts in every community assist in the celebration of at least one patriotic holiday each month of the year. The celebrations of the

46. Annual Reports, 1942, p. 18; The National Legionnaire, April, 1941, p. 11; The Americanism Program of the American Legion, pp. 31-32; Hearings Before the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, 80th Congress, 1st Session, on H. R. 1884 and H. R. 2122 (March 24-28, 1947), pp. 20-38.

47. The Americanism Program of the American Legion, p. 28.

birthday anniversaries of Washington and Lincoln, Arbor Day, Independence Day, Navy Day, and Army Day are all familiar affairs. The Legion Cooperates in the celebration of these and others, to the extent of sending out addresses for general use by American Legion speakers in observing holidays. It sends also general addresses on such subjects as Americanism, Universal Military Training, Subversive Activities, American Legion accomplishments and many others.⁴⁸

In accordance with Legion instructions Army Day on April 6 is observed because of the opportunity to build public support for the Legion's proposal for universal service in time of war and for an adequate system of national defense. "This is the month that anti-war demonstrations are staged by radical pacifists, particularly on school campuses."⁴⁹

2. Youth Activities. In this division of the National Americanism program eleven activities make up the schedule. Such activities as Boys' State, Boys' Forum of National Government, Boy Scouts, Junior Baseball, Boys' Clubs, ROTC, 4-H Clubs, Junior Rifle Clubs, Boys' and Girls'

48. The Internal Organization of the American Legion, pp. 76-77.

49. The National Legionnaire, January, 1940, p. 5.

Week, Boys' and Girls' Drum and Bugle Corps, Girl Scouts and Girl Reserves are designed for "Youth development, educational growth and wide range community service in a changing world These programs strive to build the physical, mental, and moral faculties in the future citizens of America upon whose shoulders fall the mantle of the preservation of our country."⁵⁰

Boys' State was inaugurated by the state of Illinois in 1935. In 1940 and 1941, thirty-four states had Boys' State and in 1946 there were thirty-three states in the program. The Legion sponsors the program but in many of the states, civic, religious, educational, patriotic and fraternal organizations serve as co-sponsors with Legion posts in sending boys to Boys' State. The Legion has also inaugurated a Girls' State program similar to that of Boys' State with practically the same program and objectives.⁵¹

Juniors in high school are usually selected for Boys' State with the help of the school principal or dean. Boys' State is a combination of school and functioning government. There are classes in elections, courts, municipal government, legislative procedures, county administration,

50. The National Americanism Program, p. 35.

51. The Denver Post, June 15, 1950, p. 49; The Albuquerque Journal, June 18, 1950, p. 2.

public safety, health and others.⁵²

In addition to the class work in Boys and Girls' State, these young people themselves set up replicas of their own city and state governments in each of the state capitol cities or other selected cities. They elect their own state, county and municipal officers from governor to justice of the peace. Their city councils pass ordinances and their legislatures enact laws. Their judges sit with boy lawyers prosecuting and defending in the cases that arise while Boys and Girls' State is a functioning body. Each boy learns about his government while actually participating in it.

The Boys' State Creed reads as follows:

American citizenship is my most priceless possession. I believe in the constitutional form of government of the United States of America--which guarantees me the right to worship God as I choose, and, as a citizen, equal opportunity and equal educational rights.

It is my obligation to participate in and contribute my effort to the civic and political welfare of my community, state and nation.

I resolve to learn and understand government and the civic needs of my community and I hereby dedicate myself to the task of arousing and maintaining a like interest in my fellow citizens.

Therefore may the experience of Boys' State be ever with me as a reminder of my obligations to my country.⁵³

52. See in the Appendix for the report of the experiences of a participant in Boys' State, pp. 397-402.

53. The National Americanism Program, p. 35.

Ten other activities in this group seek to promote social responsibility for civic participation and leadership.

3. Community Service. The third and final group of activities of the Americanism program consists of such things as clean-up campaigns, community service council, conservation activities, elimination of fire hazards, emergency relief units, films and motion pictures, Inter-American Affairs, Legionnaire Schoolmaster Clubs, living memorials, playgrounds and recreation, postwar planning, public health programs, safety-first program, swimming pools and other activities designed for community betterment. Here the work seems to be so obvious that description of it seems unnecessary, except for Inter-American Affairs, which will be considered in Chapter VII.

Achievement of Program

The great mass of people of the United States go along with the Legion concepts of the American heritage, for the essence of American history as taught in the public schools is patriotism. It is the Legion's plan to re-echo and spotlight salient points in American history. The Americanism program is a continuing process and it is not possible to get a statistical evaluation of it since the effect upon the participants involves value judgments of a subjective nature.

However, statistical data is available showing the number of participants in various programs. Over 500,000 high school boys take part in Junior Legion baseball each summer. More than 200,000 high school students participate in Legion-sponsored oratorical contests each year. These contests are usually on patriotic subjects. At least 50,000 young men and women of high school age attend Boy's State and Girl's State each year with two outstanding boys and girls from each state participating in a national forum of government in Washington, D. C.⁵⁴ Over 3,000 Boy Scout troops are sponsored by American Legion posts.⁵⁵ More than 16,000 School award medals are presented annually to outstanding students in both grade and high schools. The Legion spends annually over \$62,000,000 to assist in the care of 7,000,000 children who are underprivileged.⁵⁶

Connie Mack, Manager of the Philadelphia Athletics Baseball team, praised highly the work of the Junior Legion Baseball program when he said:

My baseball career has brought me into intimate contact and relationship with many national movements for civic and social betterment. One of the most important of these movements, in my estimation, is the American

54. The American Legion Magazine, September, 1949, p. 32.

55. The American Legion Magazine, August, 1949, p. 34.

56. Membership Promotion Manual, 1947, pp. 18-19.

Legion.

Our American Legionnaires and the members of all our veterans associations have helped to make our national game an exemplification of the true American spirit.

The American Legion is engaged in a program for molding the future of our American youth by utilizing baseball as a powerful factor in the social, moral, and economic development of the younger generation.

Inaugurating a campaign for good citizenship, the Legion has organized more than one-half million boys into baseball clubs. The work of the American Legion has been so successful that 255 of its boys had graduated to the payrolls of the big leagues in 1949, and 3,672 more were with the minor leagues

Thousands of boys have learned the American way in sportsmanship and citizenship by playing on American Legion baseball teams

This partnership between the American Legion and baseball has lasted more than a score of years. Boys who have played on the teams have learned more than baseball--they have learned the essentials of manhood

The American Legion is assisting our youth up the ladder of success in towns and cities throughout our country. Two hundred and fifty-four players in our major leagues in 1949 came from Junior baseball teams. I had fourteen of these boys with my Philadelphia Athletics.⁵⁷

So important do the major baseball leagues consider the Legion baseball program that since 1928 they have contributed up to \$50,000 annually to it.⁵⁸

It is the Legion's goal to have some 40,000,000 of the nation's boys and girls to participate in its various programs to inculcate Americanism.

Because much of the program is so new, its effects can be noticed in another generation when the participants will

57. Connie Mack, My 66 Years in the Big Leagues, quoted in The Denver Post, April 21, 1950, p. 30.

58. The American Legion Magazine, February, 1950, p. 31.

be controlling the destinies of the nation. In terms of the functioning of the family of nations the Legion's plan is to have the United States play a leading role. This can be done if its citizens are conditioned properly in body and mind, if they study and appreciate the American heritage and build upon it. This has significance in foreign policy. If the people in the local, state and national communities can cooperate to solve their problems, the necessary experiences and procedures are available for functioning in international affairs.

Conclusions

Most Legionnaires, by virtue of their military service, assume that they have a special interest and a little better claim than other citizens to be the custodians of the nation's heritage. This role of custodian of the nation's heritage is made necessary, according to the Legion, because of three dangers to the American way of life-- ignorance and indifference of Americans who do not "appreciate the genius of our system of constitutional democracy and the consequent individual responsibility to the community, state and nation," the alien and the immigrant living in the United States and the spectre of Russian Communism with its plans for promoting civil war and revolution through cells planted in every country and dictated to by Moscow.

The Legion's concept of Americanism is made up of nationalism, patriotism and devotion to the United States. Good citizenship is strongly emphasized. To bring about a proper understanding and appreciation of the American heritage an Americanism Commission was established early in the career of the Legion. It would be the purpose of the Americanism Commission to indoctrinate American citizens in their historical ideals and traditions, to give training to desirable aliens and immigrants in the United States so they would become good citizens and to counteract alien "isms" and propaganda calculated to undermine and destroy the American way of life.

The Great Depression with the consequent unemployment and relief rolls was influential in causing the Legion to give greater attention to economic matters both in building a better America and to prevent the spread of Alien "isms" in the United States. World War II was seen by the Legion as an external threat to the American heritage and would have to be met with an Americanism that was "not gentle, tame or docile," but was a fighting and working spirit. Even after World War II, due to Soviet tactics in the occupied countries, in the United Nations and in her general lack of cooperation in establishing peace treaties, the Legion continues its vigilance against the further spread of its most-hated ism, Communism.

The National Americanism program of the Legion is divided into three main activities--Education, Youth Activities and Community Service. All the programs in these activities are designed and calculated to give what the Legion considers a good understanding of, and desirable experiences in, American democracy.

Building sound minds and bodies in the citizenry of the United States is considered by the Legion to be of prime importance if the United States is to play a leading role in international affairs. Its Americanism program, the Legion hopes, will make an important contribution to this goal.

CHAPTER III

THE ALIEN, IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION POLICY

The first of the dangers to the American heritage, envisioned by the American Legion, namely, the indifference of the American people, has been described in Chapter II. The second of the Legion's category of dangers, namely, the alleged menace of increasing alien elements in the United States, will be the subject for investigation in this chapter. The alien and immigration policies of the United States have been considered by the American Legion as both foreign and domestic problems. These policies were a domestic problem, in the view of the Legion, in that the presence of aliens already in the United States would require Americanization of desirable persons and deportation of the undesirable. These policies were a foreign issue in that, according to the Legion opinion, many nations were actively seeking "to dump their criminals, agitators, mental defectives, moral degenerates and other undesirable classes" in the United States.¹

As frequently indicated in the present study, Legion opinion upon public issues must not be confused with general public opinion. The members of the American Legion, numbering over 300,000 in 1920 and over a million in 1930,

1. Annual Reports, 1926, p. 105.

constituted only a fraction of the adult citizenship of the United States, which numbered approximately sixty millions in the latter year. The members of the Legion, however, were largely American in their origin, and their attitudes corresponded in many ways to those of a cross-section of the American people. This observation especially applies to the question of immigration after World War I. Still further, it has generally been assumed that the wives, daughters and sons of Legionnaires tended to follow Legion opinion on political problems.

During the First World War, national feeling and the desire for unity in the United States were greatly stimulated. Animosities lingering from the Civil War were repressed as sons from the South served with sons from the North under the same flag on the battlefields of France. At the same time, the arrests of spies, the spreading of atrocity stories and actual sabotage in war industries in the United States made all aliens suspect, especially the more recent arrivals. More than this, public opinion actually differentiated between aliens of different national and racial origin. Aliens from certain countries were to be favored over other countries. Inasmuch as a certain degree of racial unity was viewed as necessary for the stability of a great state, public opinion began to insist not only upon a reduction of all alien immigration but also upon a more drastic reduction of the immigration of aliens from

racial stocks not closely identified with American civilization. Such public opinion finally found legal expression in the national origins system of the Immigration Act of 1924, which limited the total number of immigrants to 357,803 per year, and provided for a quota arrangement apportioned to the various states from which immigrants come on the basis of three per cent as many immigrants as there were persons of these respective nationalities residing in the United States in the Year 1910.

Legionnaire Resentment Toward the Alien

It is a common occurrence for men who have made sacrifices for their country, especially in military service, to resent the exemption of other men from such sacrifices. In 1917, there were 7,000,000 aliens in the United States, of whom 2,000,000 were men and youths of military age. The total number of aliens in the United States in 1920 was 13,920,692.² Of this number, only 155,000 aliens became naturalized citizens by virtue of their service in the military forces. Toward all other alien men who had escaped military service, Legionnaires tended to feel a strong disapproval if not bitter contempt and resentment.

2. U. S. Bureau of Census. Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920: Population: 1920. Washington, D. C. Government Printing Office, 1922, Vol. II, p. 779.

This disapproval was easily transferred from the alien exempted from military service to all aliens, both male and female, young and adult.

An economic motive also entered into Legion antipathy toward the alien. Many soldiers had returned from France to find their jobs taken by aliens who had not served in the war. Other ex-soldiers who found their employment curtailed by industrial strikes frequently blamed alien agitators for the strikes. In the post-war period, industries, particularly steel and coal, which were not under the necessity of reconversion were unusually subject to strikes which were alleged to be instigated by alien labor leaders. As Commander Owsley was inducted as head of the Legion, he stated the issue in these words: "During the war many aliens claimed exemption from military service because of their foreign birth. Now they claim their right to force foreign ideas upon Americans because they are still here."³

Whatever else may have given the members of the Legion an anti-alien, anti-immigrant, and anti-foreign bias, resentment at the escape of aliens from military service was perhaps the strongest motive. The Legion regarded military service as the universal requirement of all able-bodied

3. Literary Digest, Vol. 75, November 18, 1922, p. 52.

persons who enjoy good wages and the highest standard of living, and under what the Legion considers to be the best government in the world.⁴

It was against this background of sound sentiment and emotional bias that the Legion's first national convention was held in Minneapolis in 1919. This initial convention actually set the pattern of Legion policy which was to be followed for a decade and more. Actions taken include the acceptance of resolutions calling on Congress to "pass laws for the deportation of all first-paper aliens who have renounced their intention of becoming citizens, and to make it impossible for first-paper aliens who surrendered their papers to evade military service even to acquire citizenship," cut off all immigration for five years and section one of the Fourteenth Amendment to be amended to the effect "that no child born in the United States of foreign parentage shall be eligible to citizenship unless both parents are eligible."⁵ Other actions taken by this convention called for the deportation of Victor L. Berger,⁶ Congressman elected by the Socialist Party in Wisconsin, and the abrogation of the "gentlemen's agreement" with Japan and

4. Irving T. Bush, "America Still Spells Opportunity" in The American Legion Weekly, May 6, 1921, pp. 3-4.

5. Outlook, Vol. 123, November 26, 1919, pp. 348-349.

6. "Suppressing a Traitor" in The American Legion Weekly, February 6, 1920, p. 10.

the exclusion of the Japanese from the United States on the same principles as those adopted in the case of other Orientals.

The Immigration Act of 1924

Congress passed the first quota law in 1921. It was a temporary measure. But in it were the germs of the Immigration Act of 1924. For the ten years immediately preceding the World War, the stream of immigrants to America had increased to an average of more than 1,000,000 a year.⁷ During the war, immigration was temporarily halted. In the view of the Legion the United States was faced with a serious situation with 14,000,000 foreign-born residents within its borders, many of whom could not speak English, and one-half of whom had not been naturalized. Accordingly, the Legion asked Congress to suspend all immigration for a period of five years.⁸

In the early part of 1921 reports of American consuls in European countries indicated that that fiscal year would show the entry of almost 1,000,000 immigrants.⁹ The

7. Progress and Process of Naturalization. Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization 67th Congress, First Session, Serial 10, October and November, 1921.

8. "One Million Aliens" in The American Legion Weekly, December 12, 1919, p. 12; Mrs. Percy V. Pennybacker, "Making Citizens by the Rubber Stamp" in The American Legion Weekly, June 17, 1921, pp. 6 and 19.

9. Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization House of Representatives 67th Congress First Session on H. J. Res. 79, Serial 6, May-June, 1921.

fiscal year of 1922 promised the entry of 2,000,000 more. Congress, therefore, as an emergency measure, and with Legion backing, passed the three per cent act of May, 1921, as the first restrictive immigration law in the United States.¹⁰ In May, 1922, this act was extended by joint resolution for a term of two additional years. At that time the Legion called on Congress to give the immigration situation careful study, with a view toward the enactment of a permanent restrictive immigration law to replace the temporary restrictive legislation then in existence.

Congress in its investigations in 1923 and 1924 found that 10,000,000 aliens were awaiting the opportunity to come to the United States. After World War I nearly every country of Europe had the problem of war refugees. Many of these refugees were seeking a haven in the United States. Malnutrition and disease were very common. To allow these people to come to the United States en masse would be to impose a tremendous burden on the country. The Commissioner General of Immigration and Naturalization of the United States made an extensive trip to Europe and reported on the situation and prospects as to immigration. His findings and the reports of United States Consuls in European countries served to point up the European side

10. Congressional Record, 66th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 60, Part 3, (February 16, 1921), pp. 3464; 3936-3937.

of the immigration problem to the United States Congress. Interested organizations and groups in the United States presented their views at the hearings of the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization. In the studies of this committee, figures were given to show the number of aliens in the United States in the hundred-year period, 1820-1920. The average for the one-hundred year period was 6.3 immigrants per 1000 population.¹¹ In the debates of the House, Congressman Jacobstein was interested in showing the advantages of immigration to the United States when he stated, quoted as follows:

Through the 60-year period from Lincoln to Harding, this country has achieved an unprecedented material progress in manufacturing, farming, mining, transportation, telephone, telegraph and radio. It passed victoriously through three wars, with the Nation more unified than ever. What justification is there, then, for saying that we have too many foreigners?¹²

After much debate both House and Senate passed bills to limit immigrants to the United States and a conference committee was appointed to compromise the differences in the two bills.¹³ This act received the endorsement and approval of the Legion.¹⁴

11. Congressional Record, 68th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 65, part 6, (April 8, 1924), pp. 5858-5859; Abstract of 14th Census of the United States, (1920), p. 97.

12. Congressional Record, 68th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 65, part 6, (April 8, 1924), p. 5858.

13. Congressional Record, 68th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 65, part 9, (May 15, 1924), pp. 8568-8589; 8626-8652; 8 United Statutes at Large, 201.

14. Annual Reports, 1926, p. 105.

The Act of 1921 limited the immigration in any one year to three per cent of the foreign-born population in the United States in 1910, or to 357,803, and that from any particular country living in the country in 1910. Persons who lived three years in any of the countries of North, South or Central America were excluded from the quota.

The total admissable in any year under the Act of 1921 from southern and eastern Europe was 159,008, or 43 per cent of the total quota immigration allowed by the act. In 1920 the percentage of European immigration admitted from southern and eastern Europe was 64 per cent and in 1921, although one month was subject to the quota act of 1921, it was 78 per cent.

The Act of 1924, like the Act of 1921, divided immigrants into two classes, quota and non-quota. Immigration of persons born in Mexico, Canada, Central and South America could come into the United States without limit of numbers, subject only to individual examination as to health, sanity, pauperism, crimes, and anarchistic beliefs. All other immigration is quota immigration. It fixed the limit of quota immigration at two per cent of the foreign-born from quota countries living in the United States in 1890.

When the Act to Limit the Immigration of Aliens of 1924 was under consideration in Congress, the Legion officials sent a memorial to Congress favoring prohibition of

immigration for a period of five years.¹⁵ Congress was not willing to go that far. When the Act of 1924 was passed, the Legion claimed victory in excluding all aliens ineligible for citizenship and for cutting down from three per cent based on the 1910 census to two per cent based on the 1890 census.¹⁶ Although the Act to Limit the Immigration of Aliens was not as stringent as the Legion desired, the organization endorsed it and upheld its provisions for four reasons: that the people of the United States must be the judge of the peoples coming in as immigrants; that the numbers coming to the United States must be on a quota basis; that it is a fair basis and that the countries sending persons whom the Legion referred to as "slackers" would not send additional immigrants.

The smuggling of aliens across borders of the United States became a concern of the Legion in the middle 1920's. At its convention in St. Paul in 1924 the Legion called on Congress to establish a border patrol in order to stop the "bootlegging" of aliens across the border. Such a patrol was established in 1925 and in the same year the Legion reported that the "patrol prevented the entry of 14,711 aliens, and in addition captured 4,641 aliens who had been

15. Congressional Record, Vol. 65, Part I, 68th Congress, 1st Session, 1924, p. 580.

16. Annual Reports, 1924, p. 82.

smuggled into this country."¹⁷ The Legion was aroused by the "illegal smuggling of aliens across our borders" to the extent that it "is jeopardizing the purpose of the immigration act." The Legion was insistent that the immigration act of 1924 "merits the approbation of the people of this country and the loyal support of the American Legion."

When there was agitation for liberalizing the quota laws, the Legion asked Congress to retain and "if necessary, strengthen the immigration act, and defeat any measure which might tend to weaken the act in this respect," and further, "that the President and Congress take appropriate action to stop the pernicious smuggling of aliens and that necessary diplomatic pressure should be brought to bear upon our neighboring governments to secure their cooperation in this regard."¹⁸

The national origins quotas of the Immigration Act of 1924 were to become effective on July 1, 1927 under the law as originally passed. However, because of the difficulty in determining these quotas with reasonable accuracy, their operation was postponed until July 1, 1928, and a subsequent

17. Annual Reports, 1926, p. 106.

18. Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization House of Representatives, 69th Congress, First Session, March 25, 26, April 13, 1926: Statements with Appendices and Supplemental Statements on H. R. 344, H. R. 3774 (Proposed Deportation Act of 1926), Hearing No. 69. 1. 11, p. 175.

postponement for the same reason set the effective date as July 1, 1929.¹⁹ Just before the law went into effect in 1929, there was a last minute attempt in Congress to change the law, but the Legion's legislative representative in Washington, Mr. Taylor, brought the full force of the organization against any change. Referring again to the 2,000,000 aliens who claimed exemption under the draft in the first World War as "slackers" and claiming that "we are to be the judge of whether we shall allow people to come here from foreign countries to make their home with us," Taylor asserted vigorously, "The issue can be brought squarely between patriotism and slackerism. Shall slackerism be represented in selecting our immigrants over patriotism?"²⁰ During the debates in the Senate when the Legion was attacked, the charge being made that this organization supported immigration restrictions blindly, Senator Reed of Pennsylvania defended the Legion position on immigration restriction.²¹

Except for minor amendments to permit the reunion of members of alien families, the Immigration Act of 1924 went into effect July 1, 1929. Immigration on the quota

19. Annual Reports, 1928, p. 109; 1929, pp. 127.

20. Congressional Record, 70th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 70, part 4, 1928, pp. 3438-3439.

21. Congressional Record, 71st Congress, Vol. 71, part 3, 1929, pp. 2423-2427.

basis became a settled policy of the United States. Only when some emergency arose was there any demand for revision or repeal of provisions determining quotas for different countries. One such emergency was the Great Depression of the early 1930's. When there were several millions unemployed in the United States, demands for more restrictive legislation on immigration became greater. The Legion was among those advocating restricting immigration and the deportation aliens as being necessary to protect American life, "American institutions, aims and ideals." When Thomas Nixon Carver, Professor Emeritus of Harvard University, made a statement as to the effect of immigration on unemployment in the United States, the Legion used it because Legion views were expressed in it. Professor Carver was quoted as follows:

No form of economic planning can help much until we stop importing poverty. We can't employ our own people until we stop giving jobs to the unemployed whom other countries send us. Having been guilty of all these stupidities, we now have the effrontery to pretend that we don't know why there are so many unemployed.²²

The Legion, more so than other pressure groups in the United States constantly evaluates the world situation in terms of the policies it pursues. Taking stock of the nervous tensions that were mounting in the world in 1936 and after, due to Hitler's rise in Germany, it was con-

22. Annual Reports, 1937, pp. 79-80.

cerned about these tensions in the United States. Greater activity, particularly of the Communists and German-American Bundists, caused special concern. These activities influenced the Legion to call for closing immigration for ten years, for registration and fingerprinting of all aliens in the United States, for deporting all destitute aliens, all illegal entrants and all alien-born members of societies advocating the overthrow of the government by force and violence.²³

The German-American Bundists were particularly active and annoying in the United States in 1937-1938. There seemed to be no end to their embarrassing actions. Hitler and the Nazis regarded Germans everywhere as belonging to the Third Reich, and a great many of these Germans even though they had become citizens of the United States, were prominent in the meetings where pictures of Hitler, the Nazi flag and boosting Nazi ideology played a big part in ceremonies. Displaying pictures of Hitler and the Nazi flag, coupled with other activities, were questionable performances within the jurisdiction of a friendly nation. The Legion took the lead in having these actions exposed and stopped. But when the German Embassy in Washington,

23. Congressional Record, 74th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 80, part 3, March 4, 1936, p. 3212; Annual Reports, 1936, p. 224. Compare Arthur Deranian (John Ray Carlson, pseudonym) Under Cover and The Plotters.

on April 2, 1938, announced the registration of German citizens at German consulates throughout the country, the Legion became alarmed. Whether or not the Legion was aware that what it demanded was in violation of International Law, nevertheless it demanded that Congress take "appropriate action to procure for the records of the United States Government copies of all such consulate registrations of all (German) aliens now in the United States." Congress was asked further to "take appropriate action to have the names, addresses, fingerprint records and occupations of all such aliens registered, placed in the public registry in their respective communities."²⁴ Since consulates and their properties and records enjoy diplomatic immunity, no action was taken by Congress.

The Legion officials however did not stop with a demand for a record of the consular registrations. In a letter from the Legion lobbyist, John Thomas Taylor, to Congressman Martin Dies, he urged enactment of House Resolution 282 to investigate un-American activities in the United States, condemned and opposed "all alien organizations which in our country promote loyalty to some other government or system" and urged Congress to "investigate and make public its findings on organizations in the United States

24. Annual Reports, 1939, pp. 293-294; The National Legionnaire, November, 1938, p. 2.

which are militantly serving Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain or any other alien power or system." Congressional action was not to be limited to aliens. Taylor went further and urged "national legislation that will punish American citizens who advocate the overthrow of our government by force, fraud, or violence, and deport all aliens who so advocate such overthrow."²⁵

Another issue showing the Legion's position regarding aliens coming into the United States was the Wagner-Rogers Bill to admit 20,000 refugee children from Germany. Appearing before a joint committee of the House and Senate, the Legion lobbyist, John Thomas Taylor again voiced Legion opposition. He objected to German refugee children being brought into the United States because "we had our own problem of children being cared for, because Chinese children could be brought in also and because, if these German children could be brought in, when they grow up, they could bring in their parents and these parents then could bring in other children."²⁶ He suggested instead that the German

25. Congressional Record, 75th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 83, part 7, May 26, 1938, p. 7571.

26. Joint Hearings Before a Subcommittee on Immigration United States Senate and a Subcommittee of Immigration and Naturalization House of Representatives, 76th Congress, 1st Session on S. J. Res. 64 and H. J. Res. 168 (April 20, 21, 22 and 24, 1939), pp. 194-197.

quota of immigrants be used in admitting the refugee children. This suggestion was not followed by the committee. It reported the bill favorably and Taylor issued a call to the 58 departments and 11,580 posts of the Legion "to rally their full strength immediately to defeat these measures" through members sending letters, cards and telegrams to their Congressmen, for admission of these child refugees "would be the first breach in American immigration restriction and would tear down the whole structure of alien influx."²⁷

When World War II began in 1939, the attitude of the Legion toward aliens, immigration and naturalization shifted from concern about aliens and immigrants on the American heritage to concern about their possible effect on, or threat to, the national defense and national security. Legislation tightening up the laws on sabotage, deportation, subversive activity and more stringent penalties for those advocating disloyalty in the armed forces formed the bulk of the changes made. The Legion supported all this legislation.

In order to boost the morale of the Chinese in World War II in their defense against the Japanese, action was started in 1943 to permit the Chinese to come into the

27. The National Legionnaire, May, 1939, pp. 1-2.

United States under the quota laws. When hearings were held, the Legion position was given by L. S. Ray, who had taken the place of John Thomas Taylor while he was on active duty in the war. Even though only 107 Chinese would be eligible under the quota laws, Ray objected to the bars being lowered to admit them on the ground that they "would compete with American service personnel for jobs after the war, and that other groups would be seeking admission under the quota laws." He stated further that "naturalization and immigration rights granted the Chinese . . . would be used as an opening wedge toward following through with similar rights for other groups."²⁸ Nevertheless, Congress enacted the necessary legislation putting Chinese on a quota basis.²⁹

Looking to the end of the war the Legion in 1943 began passing resolutions dealing with different phases of immigration as well as other legislation limiting the action of aliens within the country. In these resolutions the Legion called for treaties to be amended to deport naturalized citizens whose citizenship was revoked due to subversive activities, for alien enemies not to become citizens of the

28. Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, 78th Congress, 1st Session, on H. R. 1882 and H. R. 2309, Bills to Repeal the Chinese Exclusion Acts, To Put the Chinese on a Quota Basis, and to Permit Their Naturalization, May 19, 20, 26, 27, and June 2 and 3, 1943, pp. 168-175.

29. Annual Reports, 1943, p. 230.

United States, for prohibiting aliens from using radio broadcasts on behalf of or under auspices of any political party, or for or against any candidate for public office, for navigation laws to be amended to prohibit any alien from owning or operating any vessel in the coasting and fishing trade of the United States, for the deportation of those aliens who refused to fight and forever forbid their re-entry or residence in the United States, for amending naturalization laws to provide that any aliens who had resided in the United States for a period of five years without filing an intention to apply for citizenship, to prevent their making application for citizenship and for legislation to standardize and strengthen the educational requirements for naturalization.³⁰ At its Chicago convention in 1944 the Legion went on record as advocating that all immigrants be barred from the United States from the date of cessation of hostilities of the war until such time as unemployment in the United States shall be dropped to less than 1,000,000, all veterans shall have been afforded the opportunity of gainful employment, and that "all so-called members of imported foreign labor battalions, refugees, war prisoners and/or those who have been given temporary sanctuary, employment, or haven during the present state of war, shall have been returned to the lands

30. Congressional Record, 79th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 91, part 11, Appendix, 1945, p. 1836.

of their origin." However, the Legion did not favor "the barring of foreign-born wives, husbands and children of American members of the armed forces and of the war establishment, who may prefer to reside in this country."³¹

Another resolution called for the deportation of any Japanese, alien and American born, at the conclusion of the war if found by competent authority:

(a) to have given aid and comfort to any enemy of the United States in time of war; (b) to have advocated or taught the overthrow by force or violence of the government of the United States; (c) knowingly and intentionally expressed by deed or word, either orally or in writing, loyalty to any foreign state.³²

The question of immigration from another enemy nation, namely, Germany, arose in 1945 when it was determined that 27,000 Germans were entitled under the quota law to enter the United States. Congress passed a resolution to hold hearings on the disposition of these would-be German immigrants. In these hearings the committee was trying to resolve two problems that had arisen during the war due to subversive activity by alien groups. These problems were as to whether there should be a statute of limitation as to deportation incurred by reason of technical violations and whether there should be some discretion under the so-called criminal cases which were mandatory. When Elliodor

31. Annual Reports, 1944, p. 258.

32. The National Legionnaire, October, 1943, p. 2; Annual Reports, 1944, p. 258.

Libonati of the American Legion gave testimony before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization he urged that the "immigration laws be amended and treaties be concluded, to provide for immediate deportation of all naturalized citizens whose citizenship has been or may be revoked due to subversive activities." As far as any cases of aliens serving in the military forces of World War II, he recommended leniency and consideration of them and their immediate families as regards deportation and naturalization.³³

Immediately after the end of the war Legion policy on immigration took a different emphasis from that of national security during the war. The general welfare became the basis for immigration and naturalization policies. James F. O'Neil, former National Commander of the Legion, and then Vice Chairman of the National Americanism Commission of the Legion, stressed two main points in achieving what he considered the general welfare. In the first place, the main objective of Legion policy was the welfare and rehabilitation of the veterans of both wars. The second point was patriotic in that the Legion was convinced that most labor difficulties in the United States occurred

33. Hearings Before Subcommittee I of the Committee On Immigration and Naturalization, House of Representatives 79th Congress, 1st Session, Pursuant to H. Res. 52, A Resolution Authorizing Study of Immigration and Naturalization Laws, Part 3, August 20, 21, and 22, 1945. pp. 250-254; 272-273.

"most often in areas where the foreign element was largest." To achieve these goals he suggested that "immigration should be made truly selective and confined to the present quota or such reduced quotas as may hereafter be established, and that only such persons shall be admitted from any country who may be found to be assimilable and well disposed to the basic principles of our American form of government and way of life."³⁴ In the same vein, the Vice Commander of the Legion, Jeremiah J. Twomey, objected to admitting Fascists, Nazis or Communists for "those persons had been indoctrinated with theories of government that are fallacious according to our theories, and might be more of a threat to the well being of this country than even those other excludable classes of persons."³⁵ In addition to keeping out certain classes of immigrants, the Legion went further and called for the barring of all quota immigration until January 1, 1948 and opposed modification of the Nationality Act of 1940 unless "the standards were

34. Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, House of Representatives, 79th Congress, 2nd Session, on H. R. 3663, part 1, February 21, 27, 28, March 6, 1946, pp. 4-7.

35. Ibid., pp. 7-17.

to be raised upwards."³⁶

Two developments in 1947 indicate Legion policy toward the question of immigration. The first of these concerned the admission to the United States of 400,000 displaced persons from Europe. The second concerned the amending of the Nationality Act of 1940.

In the first of these, Legion representatives, Messrs. Taylor, Twomey and Green, gave five reasons in their testimony before the committee why there was Legion objection to the admission of 400,000 displaced persons. These reasons were that their admission would not be in accord with controlled selective immigration which was for the best interest of the United States; that there was a lack of housing for veterans and for the people of the United States generally; that immigrants would be in competition for jobs with veterans and other unemployed people in the United States; that these would-be immigrants were needed worse for the reconstruction of Europe, and that many of them have been indoctrinated with hatreds and prejudices

36. The National Legionnaire, October 20, 1946, p. 2; Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, House of Representatives, 79th Congress, 2nd Session, on H. R. 3663, A Bill to Amend the Immigration and Naturalization Laws to Deny Admission to the United States of Certain Aliens Who Have Served in the Armed Forces of Countries of War With the United States, Also Members of Certain Parties and Organizations, and To Deny Naturalization to Such Persons, and to Reduce Immigration Quotas, part 2, March 20, 27, May 8, 1946, pp. 128-144.

of the Communists, Fascists and Nazis and would not be assimilable nor would they be racial, social, economic or political assets to the United States. These three representatives of the Legion stated further that "It is not any desire to contribute to our national economy that motivates their desire to come here to America, but just that conditions are so bad at home they believe they would be better off anywhere else, and naturally most of them would choose America as the country of greater promise. We have enough surplus labor, radicalism, and other objectionable conditions which this proposed bill would only intensify and make worse."³⁷

When the Displaced Persons Bill was before the House, Congressman Sabath of Illinois circulated a report to the effect that all religious and veterans' organizations had recommended favorable action on this bill. The Legion lobbyist, John Thomas Taylor, in a letter to Sabath denied this statement, asserting that the American Legion had never urged favorable action on any proposed legislation to relax immigration quotas or to assign any unused quotas for the use of displaced persons or anyone else. On the contrary, the American Legion . . . is not only unalterably

37. Hearings Before Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, 1st Session, on H. R. 2910, Serial No. 11 June 4, 6, 13, 20, 25, 27, July 2, 9, 16, 18, 1947, pp. 320-334.

opposed to liberalizing immigration quotas but advocates further restrictions, including the barring of all immigration into the United States until such time as (1) unemployment shall be less than one million; (2) all veterans shall have been afforded the opportunity of gainful employment; and (3) all members of imported foreign-labor battalions, refugees, war prisoners, and those who have been given temporary sanctuary shall have been returned to the lands of their origin, which should be accomplished without delay."³⁸

When hearings were held on H. R. 2286 for purposes of amending the Nationality Act of 1940, John Thomas Taylor gave testimony before the committee and stated Legion policy. He supported amendment of this Act to the extent of requiring "those seeking citizenship to be able to read as well as to speak the English language"; that they be obligated to bear arms in support and defense of the United States; that a uniform period of residence be established for all types of candidates for naturalization and to add another clause "for cancelation of the naturalization of anyone who may have been found, after natura-

38. Congressional Record, 80th Congress, 1st Session Vol. 93, part 2, p. 1487, 1947.

lization to have concealed his true attitude."³⁹ These recommendations were repeated in 1948 by Harry V. Hayden, Jr. National Legislative Representative of the American Legion, when he gave testimony before the Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization.⁴⁰

Not only was the Legion interested in having the Nationality Act of 1940 amended to tighten immigration restrictions, it also demanded a strict enforcement of Article 75 of the Geneva Convention which calls "for the return of prisoners of war to their own countries" and that no exceptions be made by permitting them to remain in the United States or otherwise facilitating their re-admission.⁴¹

As a final indication of Legion policy and attitude toward immigration, the address of Paul Griffith, National Commander of the Legion, before the convention of the

39. Hearings Before Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization of the Committee of the Judiciary, House of Representatives, 80th Congress, 1st Session, on H. R. 2286, A Bill to Amend the Nationality Act of 1940. June 30, 1947, pp. 9-10.

40. Hearings Before Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization of the Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives, 80th Congress, 2nd Session, on H. R. 5004, A Bill to Provide the Privilege of Becoming a Naturalized Citizen of the United States, April 19 and 21, 1948, Serial No. 18, pp. 71-76.

41. Congressional Record, 80th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 93, part 5, 1947, pp. 6461-6463.

Daughters of the American Revolution on May 22, 1947 in Washington, D. C., needs brief consideration. In this address he attacked immigration as a growing menace to the United States. He was bitter when he stated:

Immigration in 1947 has run amuck. It has become a lawless torrent that is undermining the very foundations of our American way of life. It is robbing the returned veteran of his opportunities. It is building up a fifth column which may provide the margin for disaster in the next war.⁴²

At various times in the period 1919 to 1948, the Legion called for banning of immigration for periods of five, ten and two years. None of these were adopted by Congress. When complete banning of immigration was not adopted, the Legion accepted the quota system based on national origins. From time to time the Legion tried to get tighter restrictions enacted into laws regulating immigration and naturalization. The Legion's policies have been partly accepted in these matters. The Immigration Act of 1924, based on national origins, has become the policy of the United States in handling the immigration problem. The Legion has favored immigration restrictions to bar aliens who were considered "slackers" in that they would not bear arms in the defense of the United States, to prevent aliens from adding to unemployment problems in the United States, to prevent subversive activity,

42. Ibid., pp. 6462-6463.

to prevent aliens from being a threat to the national security, and to prevent aliens from competing with veterans for jobs and for housing.

Naturalization

It was the activity of subversive groups in the United States, particularly the Communists and German-American Bundists, that influenced the Legion to make a serious examination and study of the whole naturalization process. Many of the active members of both these groups had become American citizens. Yet, they were participating fully in activities that showed definitely that their loyalties were to foreign powers and not to the United States. The Legion had tried to prevent this situation arising by banning immigration altogether for a number of years. But when the national origins principle was adopted as official government policy, the question became one of proper induction into United States citizenship. Considering the fact that naturalization is an "extraordinary benefit that is conferred upon aliens" certain conditions preceding naturalization ought to be strictly complied with by all applicants for citizenship. Perhaps the Legion's suggestion is impossible of attainment, but its position was stated as follows:

The object in view ought to be the determination of the degree in which an applicant is attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, possessed of an acquaintance with the working knowledge of the Declar-

ation of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, as well as a true comprehension of the obligations and responsibilities of citizenship arising from his taking the oath of allegiance.⁴³

Other requirements in the naturalization process should be the five years continuous and constructive residence in the United States, making a solemn declaration of intention to become a citizen of the United States a uniform requirement, ability to read and speak the English language to be mandatory, "unequivocally" providing in the oath of allegiance administered to all naturalized citizens the duty to bear arms in defense of the United States, and Congress should repeal all special acts for classes of applicants in whose behalf it has made certain extraordinary exemptions.⁴⁴ The Legion favored stricter naturalization procedures "on the premise that citizenship by naturalization is the highest privilege we can bestow on aliens, and that the naturalization procedure ought to be so fortified that those admitted to American citizenry will be citizens in fact as well as in name."⁴⁵

The MacIntosh-Bland Case. A Professor of Yale University, Douglas Clyde MacIntosh, and a nurse, Marie Averil

43. The National Legionnaire, November, 1938, p. 10.

44. Congressional Record, 79th Congress, 1st Session Vol. 91, part 11, Appendix, 1945, p. 1836.

45. Hearings Before Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, 80th Congress, 1st Session on H. R. 2286, A Bill to Amend the Nationality Act of 1940, Serial No. 8, (June 30, 1947), pp. 9-10.

Bland, both citizens of Canada but residing in the United States, were denied citizenship by the Supreme Court of the United States, because they would not take an unqualified oath to bear arms in defense of the United States. In its decision the Supreme Court said in part:

Naturalization is a privilege to be given, qualified, or withheld, as Congress may determine, and which the alien may claim as a right only upon compliance with the terms which Congress imposes It is not within the province of courts to make bargains with those who seek naturalization, but such applicants must accept the grant and take the oath in accordance with the terms fixed by the naturalization law, or forego the privilege of citizenship.⁴⁶

Immediately after this decision the Griffin Bill was introduced in Congress to permit these Canadian citizens to become citizens of the United States and would permit them to decline to bear arms in the defense of the United States in the event the nation became involved in an unjust war from their viewpoints.

The Legion became interested in this bill because it involved the naturalization process and the national defense of the United States. Those supporting the bill based their arguments upon the high character and well-known abilities of Professor MacIntosh and Miss Bland. The Legion opposed the bill and in testimony against it pointed out that Professor MacIntosh, because of his age, and Miss Bland, because of her sex would neither be liable to

46. 75 Law Edition, 1302-1316.

military service in the event of war. Under these circumstances neither had feared the possible violation of the dictates of conscience through the assumption of citizenship--that they had, therefore, declined to assume the responsibilities of citizenship because of others rather than upon their own accounts.⁴⁷

The Legion regarded the testimony of those favoring the Griffin Bill as showing the desire and determination to establish a principle which would allow foreigners, regardless of military age, to become citizens of the United States upon a conditional basis under which they would refuse to protect the United States and its citizens if they deemed this course of action proper. When the House committee on Immigration and Naturalization declined to report the Griffin Bill to the House, the Legion's lobby claimed its opposition "was an influential factor in the refusal" of the House Committee taking such action.⁴⁸

Deportations

Although there had been agitation to deport undesirable aliens before World War I, it had never become so intense or on such a wide scale as during that war and

47. Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, House of Representatives, 72nd Congress, 1st Session, on H. R. 297 and H. R. 298, Hearing No. 72. l. 4, 1931, pp. 99-102.

48. Annual Reports, 1932, pp. 155-156.

immediately thereafter. During World War I, spy stories, sabotage, labor troubles, explosions in munitions factories, and other difficulties made many people desire and demand security from these outrages. But the great impetus given to demands for deportations came when Communist plots to overthrow the state and federal governments in the United States were uncovered by the Justice Department in early January, 1920.⁴⁹ The Legion spearheaded this drive in ridding the country of 60,000 undesirable aliens listed in Department of Justice files. Shortly after these raids, Soviet ships were loaded up with Communist aliens and shipped back to Russia. In an editorial in The American Legion Weekly, the organization's approval of deportation was expressed in these words;

The advance guard of the undesirables has sailed from New York bound for an unnamed Russian port. Preachers of sedition, disciples of the venomous philosophy of Bolshevism, they have been rounded up and sent, fare prepaid, to a land where common practice conforms to their utterances. They will be free hereafter to mingle with their own kind. They will be free to revel in the chaos and misery that are the inevitable products of their own disordered philosophy put into practice. They will not be fettered by the processes of sane, orderly government, of equal rights and equal responsibility.⁵⁰

Several thousand of these alien Communists were deported and shortly thereafter the quota laws were enacted

49. See Appendix, pp. 406-409.

50. "The Red Exodus Begins" in The American Legion Weekly, January 9, 1920, p. 12.

establishing an immigration policy for the United States. The next great wave of demands for deportation of aliens came in the Great Depression of 1929. Many aliens were holding jobs in American businesses and industry while American citizens were swelling the ranks of the unemployed. As unemployment mounted and radical ideas were being expressed, the Legion interpreted the radical problem of the United States as a "left over from the days when the country gorged on unrestricted immigration," and that immigration should be restricted "until our economic conditions guarantee satisfactory employment for every one now in the country."⁵¹ During 1931, the Legion was amongst those demanding the further restriction of the National Origins quota, which had gone into effect on July 1, 1929. This demand for further restriction was for the purpose of preventing the competition of immigrants with native labor in the United States. Since Congress would not meet until December of that year, President Hoover issued a proclamation to the effect that American consuls abroad take advantage of the immigration act of 1917 and refuse visas to all immigrants likely to become public charges in the United States. This cut down the immigrants from 1500 to 3000 a month. A tightening up of the administration of depor-

51. Annual Reports, 1931, pp. 320-321.

tation laws in 1931 resulted in 18,142 aliens being deported as compared to deportations of 16,631 in 1930.⁵²

The Legion reported with some satisfaction that by June 30, 1932, 103,300 aliens "departed from the United States while only 31,030 entered the United States, a situation unprecedented in United States history"⁵³ and in 1933, "23,068 aliens came to the United States while 80,081 went out."⁵⁴

The Legion opposed the Kerr-Coolidge Bill because it would have granted discretionary powers to an interdepartmental committee and would have provided it with apparent dictatorial powers, if that committee had wanted to use them, in preventing the deportation of "almost 3,000 so-called hardship cases."⁵⁵ In giving testimony for the Legion, John Thomas Taylor advocated the deportation of all alien-born persons who are members of any society, group, or organization that proposes to overthrow the government by force or violence, all destitute aliens and all aliens who have entered the United States illegally. He presented figures showing that there were 7,000,000 aliens in the United States, 3,000,000 of whom had entered illegally. He stated further that there were 1,000,000

52. Annual Reports, 1931, pp. 139-141.

53. Annual Reports, 1932, p. 182.

54. Annual Reports, 1933, p. 261.

55. Annual Reports, 1936, p. 72.

Communists in the United States. He recommended that American industry hire only Americans and that "all aliens engaged in criminal activities should be deported."⁵⁶ In a letter two years later to the House Committee on Un-American Activities he "urged national legislation that will punish American citizens who advocate the overthrow of our government by force, fraud, or violence, and deport all aliens who so advocate such overthrow."⁵⁷

During World War II the Legion asked Congress to enact legislation to deport aliens for resisting to fight and forever "forbid their re-entry or residence" in the United States and for the government to "amend treaties to deport naturalized citizens whose citizenship had been revoked due to subversive activities."⁵⁸ If any country refused to accept those people the United States ordered deported, that country's nationals were to be denied admittance to

56. Hearings Before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, House of Representatives, 74th Congress, 1st Session, on H. R. 7120, February, 1935; Congressional Record, 74th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 80, part 3, March 4, 1936, p. 3212.

57. Congressional Record, 7th Congress, 3rd Session Vol. 83, part 7, (May 6, 1938), p. 7571.

58. Congressional Record, 79th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 91, part 11, Appendix, 1946, p. 1836.

the United States.⁵⁹

When John Thomas Taylor and James O'Neil of the Legion in 1947 gave testimony on the Gossett Bill to amend the immigration laws of the United States, they recommended leniency as to deportation of relatives of aliens who contributed to the war effort of the United States in World War II. They recommended changes in the Gossett Bill listed as follows:

(1) Permit an alien to depart the United States to any country of his choice at his own expense, in lieu of deportation, or (2a) suspend deportation of such alien if the Attorney General finds that such deportation would result in serious economic detriment to a citizen or legally resident alien who is a spouse, parent, or minor child of such deportable alien, or (2b) suspend deportation if the Attorney General finds that such alien has made valuable contributions to the war effort and loyally aided the United States between December 7, 1941, and September 3, 1945.⁶⁰

The Harry Bridges Case. In 1938 the Legion began its long fight to have Harry Bridges, west coast Communist

59. Hearings Before the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, 80th Congress, 1st Session, on H. R. 1884 and H. R. 2122, Bills to Curb or Outlaw the Communist Party in the United States, March 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 1947, pp. 20-24.

60. Hearings Before Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, 80th Congress, 1st Session on H. R. 245, H. R. 674, H. R. 1115 and H. R. 2933, Bills to Amend Subsections (c) and (d) of Section 19 of the Immigration Act of February 5, 1917, as Amended February 26 and March 19, 1940. (April 21, 25, 28, 29, and May 2, 1947) Serial No. 5, pp. 41-47.

labor leader, and other "aliens whose activities as members of organizations which preach the overthrow of the American government by force and violence" to be deported.⁶¹ In a letter to Senator Reynolds, John Thomas Taylor was critical of Secretary Perkins for not calling certain witnesses to refute Bridges' denial of being a Communist.⁶² Later the Legion submitted records of Communist Party membership books to show that he was a member under different aliases. According to these records, "Harry Bridges made application for citizenship in New Orleans, Louisiana, 1921, San Francisco, 1928, San Francisco, 1936, and allowed them to lapse in all three cases."⁶³ If it could be proved that Bridges was a Communist, he would be subject for deportation.

In the first proceedings in 1939 Bridges faced deportation as an alien member of a group advocating the violent overthrow of government. The United States Supreme Court earlier had ruled that an alien, to be so expelled, must have been a member of the subversive organization at the time of his arrest. It was on this loophole--membership at the time of arrest--that Bridges was cleared by James

61. The National Legionnaire, November, 1938, p. 10.

62. Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 86, part 9, 1940, p. 9987.

63. Congressional Record, 77th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 87, part 2, Appendix, 1941, pp. 1221-1224.

M. Landis, Dean of Harvard Law School, who served as trial examiner. Evidence on this point, Judge Landis found, was not sufficient. Secretary of Labor Perkins accepted the Landis findings and dismissed the case.

In 1940 Congress changed the law to provide for deportation of an alien who was a member of a subversive group "at the time of entering the United States, or has been at any time thereafter." Meanwhile, also, the immigration service was shifted to the Department of Justice. The FBI took over, and, on the basis of new information, Attorney General Robert H. Jackson (now a member of the United States Supreme Court) ordered the Bridges case reopened.

A retired judge of the New York Court of Appeals, Charles B. Sears, served as trial examiner. The public hearings in San Francisco ran for almost three months. From the testimony offered, Judge Sears concluded that "Bridges' identification with the Communist Party and its policies formed a pattern which is more consistent with the conclusion that the alien followed this course as an affiliate of the Communist Party, rather than as a matter of chance or coincidence."

Judge Sears found that the evidence warranted deportation and submitted a proposed order. But the Board of Immigration Appeals, in January, 1942, reversed his findings, holding that the Australian's membership in the party

had not been established. The case went to Francis Biddle, who had become Attorney General. Biddle overruled the board and ordered Bridges deported. Finally, after a series of appeals, the case reached the Supreme Court of the United States, which found in a decision split five to three that Bridges had not been proved to be a Communist.⁶⁴

Bridges became a citizen of the United States in 1945. In May, 1949, he was indicted in San Francisco by the federal government on two counts. He was charged with perjury in having denied he was a Communist when he obtained citizenship in 1945, and was made defendant in a suit for cancellation of his citizenship. After an 85-day trial Bridges was found guilty of being a Communist and had lied when he denied it at his naturalization proceedings in 1945. He was sentenced to five years in prison. If this decision is upheld by higher courts, Bridges' citizenship would be lost. Since the matter is thus still sub judice, judgment on the outcome should be reserved. Should deportation be ordered, Australia may refuse to grant permission for Bridges to be returned to that country.⁶⁵ Meanwhile Legion policy continues to be that undesirable aliens be

64. The Denver Post, June 1, 1949, p. 17.

65. "No Sir, He's Your Baby" in Time, May 29, 1950, p. 17.

deported.⁶⁶

Conclusions

In the period, 1919 to 1950, the Legion called for the banning of immigration to the United States for periods of five, ten and two years. None of these were adopted by Congress. When Congress adopted the quota system based upon national origins the Legion accepted and approved this method of dealing with immigration. The Legion has called for tighter restrictions regarding immigration, naturalization and deportations. It has been partly successful in getting Congress to adopt changes. The Legion favors immigration restrictions to bar aliens who are considered "slackers" by that organization for not bearing arms in the defense of the United States, to prevent aliens from adding to unemployment problems in the United States, to prevent undesirables from entering the United States, to prevent Communists, Fascists and Nazis from entering the United States to engage in subversive activities, to prevent aliens from being a threat to the national security, and to prevent aliens from entering the United States and thus compete with veterans and other unemployed for jobs and housing. The Legion has been

66. Carey McWilliams, "The Bridges Decision" in The Nation, April 15, 1950, pp. 342-343; New Republic, April 17, 1950, p. 14; The American Legion Magazine, July, 1949, p. 54.

instrumental in preventing naturalization by special acts of Congress, as in the MacIntosh-Bland Case. The Legion has agitated for the deportation of undesirable aliens, and many of these have been deported. The Legion is continuing its battle to have Harry Bridges deported. Actions regarding United States alien and immigration problems would not be limited to the domestic legislative and administrative processes. The Legion advocated the use of diplomatic pressure to impress upon Canada and Mexico the need for their assistance in preventing smuggling of aliens across the borders of the United States from those countries. No action was taken by the government of the United States in applying diplomatic pressure for this purpose. The Legion called for the amending of treaties with other nations to assist in handling the problems with aliens, immigrants and deportees. No treaties have been amended for this purpose. Congress continues to handle the problem of immigration as a domestic issue and not as a matter to be negotiated with other nations through treaties.

CHAPTER IV

THE LEGION BATTLE AGAINST COMMUNISM

In Chapters II and III, two of the three dangers to the American heritage, as the Legion saw them, were considered. The present chapter will be devoted to the third menace, namely, Communism and the Legion's activities in opposition to Communism.

A large part of the propaganda of the American Legion has been directed against Communism. To the Legion the opposition to Communism belonged to both its domestic and foreign policy. Communism was a domestic issue in that alien agents in the United States trying to undermine the American system required actions to prevent Communist success in revolution. This involves deportations, immigration laws, exposing the Communist menace and outlawing the Communist Party. Communism was a foreign policy in that it involves diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia and her satellite states.

Communism's success in Russia in 1917 and in European countries after World War I made the founders of the Legion, and many other people, fear its spread into the United States.¹ As a matter of fact, the spread of Communism in

1. W. L. Whittlesey, "Where Do the Reds Come From?" in the American Legion Weekly, January 30, 1920, pp. 12-13, 33-34.

Europe and the effect this might have on the United States was one of the reasons for the Legion being organized in the first place. Difficulties arising in the A. E. F. and amongst the military forces already discharged and back in the United States were attributed to agitation by Communist agents. Even labor troubles during and after the war in the United States attributed mainly to Communist agitators. How the Legion regarded Communism and how it set about to counteract it are set forth here.

Legion Concept of the Communist Menace

Members of the Legion regarded their war service as defending the United States against an external enemy--Germany. A great deal of their time in peace, they feared, would have to be concerned with defending the United States against internal enemies--the aliens and their imported "isms"--the chief of which was Communism.

One of the earliest statements on Communism made by a Legion official was that of Eric Fisher Wood, temporary chairman of the Paris caucus, March 15, to 17th, 1919, at which meetings the Legion was formed. His statement had foreboding in it when he said:

We believe that during the next twenty or thirty years, which promise to be filled with world-wide social and economic displacements, the American Legion will be the greatest bulwark against Bolshevism and anarchy in our native country. . . .

The Legion is unalterably opposed to all those irresponsible, shiftless, and cowardly groups of man, who

seek by indirect anarchistic action to overthrow the government based upon the Constitution, in order to seize by violent methods what they have been too lazy, too stupid, or too incompetent to obtain by fair means.²

As it has turned out, not only was the Legion aware of the techniques of the Communists in overthrowing governments, it was equally alert to the analysis of other items in the Communists' repertoire, and it saw all these activities as adding up to the destruction of the American way of life if Communism were allowed to spread unchecked.

The Legion's educational campaign against Communist techniques, from the beginning, was not static. Indeed, it developed and changed to meet the constantly evolving methods of this subversive and opportunistic group. Views given at any particular time reflect the estimate or appraisal of any action taken by alleged Communist agents and agitators. So it was in 1922 when the National Commander, Alvin M. Owsley, spoke over the radio in Chicago, he saw the aliens in the United States as forcing foreign ideas upon Americans and as disturbers of "American peace and industry" and it would be necessary to provide sufficient "Soviet arks" to return them to Europe.³ In 1924, Communism was seen as undermining the patriotism, devotion

2. "The American Legion" in Forum, Vol. 62, August, 1919, pp. 219-222.

3. Literary Digest, Vol. 75, November 18, 1922, pp. 51-52.

and belief in the United States, and the spirit that had made the nation progress and led it to victory in all its wars. It was particularly the attempt to undermine any national defense preparations that was seen as having its aim to make of the United States "a nation of weaklings and slackers, which is part of a great international scheme to allow anarchy and Communism to domineer the world."⁴

In 1927 the Communists and Reds were seen as moving with "a desire to blast away the fruits of labor, toil and sacrifices of the generations which have gone before. Upon the wreckage and ruin, they would attempt to create a Fairyland or Utopia," in the view of the Americanism Commission of the Legion.⁵

In 1930 another statement which may be prophetic was given by the Americanism Commission to the national convention in which they stated:

In the opinion of your committee, the history of the next half century will be given over to the conflict between the political and social philosophies represented on the one hand by that movement known as "Communism" and on the other hand by the stabilized institutions of politics and society as represented by the constitutional governments of the world.

The National Americanism Commission urged co-operation and friendship "between those nations which share a history of

4. Annual Reports, 1924, p. 62.

5. Annual Reports, 1927, p. 42.

benefits bestowed by constitutional government . . . commensurate with national sovereignty and national safety" as the best bulwark against the rising tide of Communism.⁶ No plan of implementation was suggested by the Legion.

The Communists were seen by the Legion as disavowing the purpose of accomplishing their ends by parliamentary or constitutional methods. The Communists' plan was to collect into their organization enough fanatical, desperate men and women to strike at key industries and to inaugurate a reign of terrorism to bring about an armed uprising. They were seen as working through American children, primarily, because the older people of the United States were not so easily led to new and false doctrines.⁷ At a time when most people ignored or were more interested in other things, the Legion was studying and trying to evaluate this alien ideology to determine effective ways of counteracting it, if possible.

In May, 1930, the Select Committee of the House of Representatives under the chairmanship of Congressman Hamilton Fish of New York was appointed to investigate Communist propaganda in the United States.⁸ The Committee

6. Annual Reports, 1930, p. 273.

7. Annual Reports, 1931, pp. 318-319.

8. Hearings Before a Special Committee to Investigate Communist Activities in the United States of the House of Representatives, 71st Congress, 2nd Session Pursuant to H. Res. 220, part 1, V. No. 1, June 9 and 13, 1930, p. 111.

made its report to the House on January 17, 1931, and the Legion gave wide publicity to some of the findings of this committee. At that time the committee estimated that there were between 500,000 and 600,000 Communists in the United States, 70 per cent of them aliens, 25 per cent naturalized aliens and five per cent native born citizens.

The Fish Committee report gave a summarized statement of the techniques and objectives of Communism. The Legion studied this report and used it as a basis for determining its own counter measures against this menace. The quotation most often used in Legion publications defining Communism runs as follows:

A world-wide political organization whose program is: (1) Hatred of God and all forms of religion; (2) destruction of private property and inheritance; (3) absolute social and racial equality; promotion of class hatred; (4) revolutionary propaganda through the Communist International stirring up Communist activities in foreign countries in order to cause strikes, riots, sabotage, bloodshed and civil war; (5) destruction of all forms of representative governments, including civil liberties such as freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, and trial by jury; (6) the ultimate and final objective is by means of world revolution to establish the dictatorship of the so-called proletariat into one world union of Soviet Socialist Republics with the capital at Moscow.

Communism has also been defined as an organized effort to overthrow organized governments which operate contrary to the Communist plan now in effect in Russia. It aims at the socialization of government, private property, industry, labor, the home, education and religion. Its objectives are the abolition of other governments, private ownership of property, inheritance,

religion and family relations.⁹

Throughout most of the 1930's the Legion interpreted the attacks made on its national defense program as being inspired and carried on by the Communists and "radical pacifists."¹⁰ To the Legion, Communists and pacifists made strange bed fellows in this program. In the interest of world peace and government economy, these two groups were demanding that the army and navy be reduced and that appropriations be discontinued for the National Guard and for all reserve training. These two groups were using the schools, universities and churches to advocate this program of sabotaging national defense. The Legion pointed out the inconsistency in advocating the abolition of all national defense for the United States when Russia maintained a standing army of 600,000 and a reserve force of approximately 5,000,000--the greatest national defense system in the world. To the Legion this surely had a deeper significance. It was to Sovietize the United States of America

9. Report No. 2290, 71st Congress, 3rd Session, January 17, 1931, p. 4; Annual Reports, 1931, p. 101; The National Legionnaire, Vol. 1, No. 1, January, 1935, pp. 1-2.

10. Congressional Record, 73rd Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 78, part 5, (March 20, 1934), p. 4936.

and to set up in it a form of government like that of Russia.¹¹

The reason for this Communist attack on the Army and Navy was very simple, the Legion concluded. In all history these military forces have always been loyal to the government to which they owed allegiance, whether or not that allegiance was to a king, an emperor, a dictator or to a representative republican form of government, such as that of the United States. Every officer and man is sworn to uphold the government. The Communists "and all their aids and sympathizers" knew that in the end that they could not finally destroy the government until they destroyed the Army and Navy--the government's right arms.¹²

If the United States could be kept weak militarily, according to the Legion's analysis of the Communist Menace, then at the opportune time the Moscow Communists would "spread their doctrines by force of arms."¹³ One more comment as to what the menace of Communism meant was given by Brigadier-General John Ross Delafield, former chairman of the Legion's National Defense Committee, when, speaking

11. Annual Reports, 1932, p. 58; The National Legionnaire, March, 1935, p. 2; April, 1935, p. 2.

12. Annual Reports, 1934, p. 334.

13. The National Legionnaire, March, 1935, p. 2.

before a patriotic rally in New York City on July 4, 1931, assured the gathering that "Soviet Russia would attack when its five-year-plan was achieved."¹⁴

Still in the 1930's the Communists were not only considered as being a menace through their propaganda and through their sabotage of the national defense program, but also through their infiltration tactics, "the agents of Moscow had invaded our public rostrums, our factories, our schools and colleges, our press and our churches. They know neither God nor liberty. They have but one doctrine-- the doctrine of bloody revolution and the enslavement of free America under the crushing yoke of Moscow's domination." This was National Commander Belgrano's view in castigating the Communists in a national radio broadcast in April, 1935.¹⁵

In their 1935 annual report, the Americanism Commission stated that the Communist enemy did not come into the gates of the United States bearing guns and bullets, "but un-American theories and alien 'isms'." These spies of Communism, according to the Legion, were working night and day to teach the people, the workers and the children of

14. Scribner's Magazine, Vol. 90, August, 1931, p. 175.

15. The National Legionnaire, April, 1935, p. 6.

the United States to destroy themselves.¹⁶ And The National Legionnaire stated that the purposes of the Communists were "to undermine, sap, overthrow or otherwise destroy the principles of American Government."¹⁷ In contrast to all that the Communists stood for and did, National Commander Chadwick, speaking in Faneuil Hall, Boston, July 4, 1939, stated that "the Declaration of Independence was incompatible with the Marxian philosophy for this great document recognizes the right of no class to arrogate to itself power and domination over other classes or over individuals. It recognizes the right of no man to arrogate to himself dictatorial powers. Communism is incompatible with the American ideal which declares that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights."¹⁸

Examining the labor situation and economic recovery in 1936, the Americanism Commission declared that the Communist menace was not a future plague to be visited upon the United States. Communism and Communists had already caused the loss of life in the United States. They had organized to grasp every opportunity to use force to destroy property. They had even "constituted a serious check to the economic recovery of our country."¹⁹

16. Annual Reports, 1935, pp. 55-56.

17. The National Legionnaire, October, 1935, pp. 1, 8.

18. The National Legionnaire, July, 1939, p. 1.

19. Annual Reports, 1936, pp. 73-74.

Even when the Legion in its Milwaukee convention in 1941 voted to support the Roosevelt administration in sending Lend-Lease aid to Russia it declared this would not interfere with the continued recognition of the domestic dangers of Communism, and that it would continue to oppose its slave philosophy. There would be no "going to bed with the Communist political doctrine or socialistic economy here at home."²⁰

The United States became involved in the war and the energies and attention of everyone was engaged in winning the war. Russia was the ally of the United States against the common enemy. But the Legion did not let down its defenses against Communism. Even the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943 was not convincing to the Legion of any good intentions of the Russians. While recognizing that this dissolution could mean much or little, it would, nevertheless, call for "continued watchfulness."²¹

As soon as the war was over, however, Russian actions more definitely than ever pointed to the accuracy of previous Legion suspicions as to the Soviet's ultimate intentions on the international scene as well as in the domestic affairs of the United States.

By the middle of 1946--less than a year after the war

20. Annual Reports, 1942, p. 22.

21. Annual Reports, 1944, pp. 108-112.

ended--Legion leaders made more definite statements as to what were the Communist's aims and intentions. Speaking before the Legion convention for the state of Maine, the National Commander, John Stelle, charged that the Communists were swarming throughout industrial areas of the United States "seeking to fan labor-management controversies into flames of consuming Communism." Not only were they interfering in the economic and industrial affairs of this country. They were also entering the political arena when they were "trying to enlist all Americans to whom a policy of isolation appeals." And he continued in this manner:

There is another war in which no peace was signed on V-E and V-J days. It is the war against our internal foes--the enemies boring from within It is a war of 'isms'. False philosophies are its (Communism's) atomic bomb Objectives are the destruction of national unity and national harmony and thus to paralyze common defense.²²

Upon examining this statement one recognizes all the old charges as to the Communist menace--infiltration by Communist agents, labor-management agitation by these agents, ideological warfare and interference with the national defense efforts and national unity. One new danger from the Communist menace is added. In regard to participation by the United States in world affairs, the Communist line was for the United States to return to a

22. The Chicago Daily News, June 22, 1946, p. 4.

policy of isolation. All these form the chief dangers of Communism as the Legion saw them. And as far as the Legion is concerned, John Thomas Taylor in offering testimony before the Committee on Un-American Activities, stated that it "is a grapple to the finish so far as Communism in this country is concerned." He stated further that "the chief imports after 1919 were Communism, Nazism and Fascism while we homebrewed the Ku Klux Klan, technocracy, Townsendism and Coughlinism; Communism alone is alive after a quarter-century--alive, virile, and probably growing. It had the nourishment of the Communist triumph in Russia a certain amount of financial support from that country, and an endless propaganda support." He reviewed Communist activities and tactics as they affected the United States. The beginning of the introduction of Communism in the United States occurred with the I. W. W. trouble at Centralia, Washington, in 1919. This compared with the slipping of Lenin and Trotsky into Russia during World War I so as to free the men fighting on the Russian front. The Communists interfered with the Dies Committee and even threatened the life of Congressman Martin Dies. The Russians in World War II had their agents in every allied army and Stalin is the Ghengis Khan of the twentieth century. And finally, he stated that there is no way of separating Communism from Russia and Russia from Communism.

He saw Russia as a threat to the unity, strength and security of the United States, yet it has "taken the people of the United States 30 years to realize this danger of Communism."²³

Direct Action

To the men of the Legion, accustomed and hardened to hate for the Boche and tempered on the field of battle, direct action against the fomenters of domestic disturbances was tame in comparison. There were two chief methods of direct action: strike-breaking and interference with Communist meetings.

During the first years of its existence Legion posts and individual Legionnaires were active in dozens of big strikes, national and local. During the national coal strike in 1919 some Legion posts openly furnished strike-breakers. In New Jersey number of strike-breakers in the Switchmen's strike was chartered as a Legion post.²⁴ It

23. Hearings Before the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, 80th Congress, 1st Session, on H. R. 1884 and H. R. 2122, Bills to Curb or Outlaw the Communist Party of the United States, March 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 1947. pp. 3-20.

24. Walter Wilson, "Labor Fights the American Legion" in The American Mercury, Vol. 34, January, 1935, p. 5.

must be noted, however, that these were never policies enunciated by either the national convention nor the National Executive Committee. And when the National organization had considered these actions taken by local posts and individual members of the Legion, direct action was repudiated by the national organization.²⁵

One publication, The Nation, always critical of the Legion and its policies, described the changes in this regard in the following manner:

Present tendencies in the American Legion appear to be away from violence and intimidation But the change is one of practice, not principle--of manners, not morals. The Legion is still imbued with the spirit of repression and co-ercion, of prejudice and unreason, which the war nourished; but it has had to heed the cry of "back to Normal!" which the rest of the community is raising, and is beginning to clothe . . . its purposes in peace-time garments. "Back to Normal!" means back to a public sentiment which will tolerate almost anything but the "roughneck"; . . . The Legion is seeking to mold public policies and obtain laws, where a year ago it would have resorted to direct action.²⁶

Another type of direct action was the effort to keep school buildings or other public buildings from being used by Communists or other subversive groups "for the propagation of subversive doctrines."²⁷ This raises the question of the basic freedoms of the First Amendment to the

25. Annual Reports, 1939, pp. 88-89.

26. The Nation, Vol. 113, July 13, 1921, pp. 35-36.

27. The National Legionnaire, October, 1935, pp. 1, 9.

Constitution, assembly and speech. The Legion's answer to this is that the Communists are masquerading as a political party but are really agents of the Soviet government. And besides, their program of inciting violence is not safeguarded under the Constitution.²⁸

Very early the Legion recognized the weakness of the negative approach to counteracting Communism and advised against its use. The Legion was aware of the plan of making martyrs out of Communist speakers, thus gaining audiences, sympathy and support. When the Communists arranged speaking engagements, they were careful to place the programs in the hands of every patriotic group in the town where they were to speak, hoping that an attempt would be made to stop them from speaking. This would bring out the crowd to delight the Communists. It was suggested by the Legion that the wiser course to dissipate the false doctrines the Communists preach required promoting the Legion's own program of education rather than arouse greater interest in Communistic teachings "by openly combating them." "Building a solid foundation of Americanism in our youth and adults was a better way of combating subversive movements."²⁹

28. The National Legionnaire, October, 1941, p. 13.

29. Annual Reports, 1931, pp. 318-319; 1932, p. 52.

But if the situation ever arose where there would be a Communist uprising in the United States what would the Legion do? To the first National Commander, Franklin D'Olier, has been attributed the statement that the Legion was the "best insurance policy a country ever had." Alvin Owsley, National Commander in 1924, stated that, "If ever needed, the American Legion stands ready to protect the country's institutions and ideals as the Fascists dealt with the obstructionists who menaced Italy." In 1934, the National Commander, Edward A. Hayes, stated that the Legion stood ready "to step in and intervene in case of revolution." And finally, Louis Johnson, past National Commander, Assistant Secretary of War, and now Secretary of National Defense, while speaking over the radio in 1939, the Legion's 20th anniversary, gave his views on domestic disturbances caused by Communists or other subversive groups when he said: "While apostles of reactionary philosophies make every effort to smuggle into American life the false foreign gods of Communism, Fascism and Nazism, the solid phalanx of the American Legion stands on guard."³⁰

The Legion's attitude toward defending the United States and its institutions against foreign 'isms' may be

30. Walter Wilson, "Labor Fights the American Legion" in The American Mercury, Vol. 34, January, 1935, pp. 1-11; "20th Birthday Finds Legion Bulwark of Fight on 'Isms'" in Newsweek, Vol. 13, March 20, 1939, pp. 13-14.

summed up in this manner: the man who dares not expose his life in defense of his children, his property and the common safety has lost in society the first and most active energies of nature.³¹

Recognition of Russia

In 1917 when the Germans defeated the Russians, the czarist government of Russia fell and was succeeded by the Kerensky government. This new government of Russia was recognized by the United States government, but when the Kerensky government was overthrown and succeeded by the Communist government under Lenin, recognition by the United States was not granted.

There were both friends and enemies in the United States of such recognition. In 1922 the Legion took its first official action on the question when it opposed recognition of the Communist government of Russia. The Legion did not deviate from this policy of non-recognition of Soviet Russia down to 1933 when the Roosevelt administration granted recognition. In this 11-year period the Legion re-affirmed the 1922 resolution, but in 1924 there were more complete reasons given for non-recognition than just being opposed to Communism generally. When it had

31. Annual Reports, 1936, pp. 73-74.

examined Soviet propaganda, the methods it employed and form of government set up, the situation demanded "that the Legion re-affirm its stand not only in denunciation of Soviet Russia, but of any recognition on the part of the United States of such a government."³²

For the next two years after recognition of Soviet Russia in 1933 the Legion ignored the question. But when Earl Browder, head of the Communist Party in the United States, and other American Communists reported their activities to the Seventh World Congress of the Communist Party meeting in Moscow in 1935, the Legion re-examined the whole question of American relations with Russia. Earl Browder was quoted as saying to a closed executive meeting in Moscow:

The present situation in the United States is the race between Fascism and Communism for leadership of the masses. Our task is to rally the disillusioned masses into an anti-fascist organization and anti-capitalist political movement with the development of a workers' and farmers' labor party as the goal.³³

When this statement was published in the United States, Legion officials looked up the letter from Maxim Litvinoff, Peoples' Commissar for Foreign Affairs, USSR, to the United States government. In this letter certain promises were made as to Communist Party member behavior in the United

32. Annual Reports, 1924, p. 83; 1925, part II, p. 13.

33. The National Legionnaire, February, 1936, p. 11.

States should recognition be granted. Four promises as to future Communist activities in the United States were made. To the Legion officials it was very clear that these promises had been violated. The four pledges in the letter were quoted as follows:

The Communist Party was to (1) refrain from interfering in any manner in the internal affairs of the United States, its territories or possessions; (2) to refrain from any act liable in any way whatsoever to injure the tranquility or security of the United States and particularly from any act tending to incite or encourage any agitation or propaganda having as an aim the bringing about by force of a change in the political or social order of the United States; (3) not to permit the formation or residence on its territory of any organization or group having such aims against the United States and (4) not to permit on its territory any group having as its aim the overthrow of the political or social order in the United States.³⁴

To the Legion the Russian government had violated these pledges, and it was solely on these promises that United States recognition of Soviet Russia was accorded in 1933. The Communist Party in the United States, it was clear, was a member of the Third International and owed allegiance directly to that body, and the Third International was definitely a vital and integrated part of the Soviet government. Now, in view of the Soviets violating their pledges to the United States, as it had done with every nation according it recognition, the Legion called on the government of the United States for "immediate

34. Congressional Record, 74th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 79, part 11, p. 11947; The National Legionnaire, February, 1936, p. 11.

rescission of recognition of the USSR by the United States."³⁵

Another action taken by the Legion was to persuade Congressman George H. Tinkham of Massachusetts to introduce a concurrent resolution calling for rescinding American recognition of Soviet Russia. Secret hearings were started before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. When objections were raised because the hearings were not made public, nothing further came of the resolution.³⁶

In succeeding years in the annual conventions of the Legion, the resolution to rescind recognition of Russia was re-affirmed. In 1939, when Russia attacked Finland, the Legion fully expected the United States to break off diplomatic relations with Russia. Such action would have been in line with Legion policy "which opposed recognition of Russia, and has never reversed its stand."³⁷

No further actions were taken by the Legion on the question of rescinding recognition of Russia.

The Propaganda Battle

In view of the strong emphasis placed on propaganda

35. The National Legionnaire, February, 1936, p. 12.

36. Congressional Record, 74th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 79, part 2, (February 5, 1935), pp. 1487-1491; Annual Reports, 1936, p. 210.

37. The National Legionnaire, December, 1939, p. 8.

by governments in recent years, it is a matter of foreign and domestic concern as to what any nation may do in self-defense or even to strike back with its own propaganda. Russia especially, has spared no nation in its propaganda efforts. Not until after World War II has the United States set up an official agency, except in war emergencies, to counteract foreign propaganda, but also to give to the world its story. Except for noting that the Legion fully supported the Voice of America, the State Department's program of propaganda,³⁸ this will be concerned with the Legion's defense of the American system and its attack on the Communist system.

If the public statements, resolutions and articles in Legion publications and newspapers are examined, a general pattern of Legion propaganda can be discerned and formulated into about eight assumptions and propositions. These can be stated briefly as follows:

1. That the political system of the United States is superior to that of the Soviet dictatorship or any dictatorship;
2. That the free enterprise system of the United States is superior to the slave system of Soviet Russia;
3. That the people of the United States must be aroused to see and appreciate the advantages of their political and economic systems;
4. That much of the labor trouble of the United

38. The Chicago Sun, May 9, 1947; The Denver Post, July 8, 1947, p. 5.

States is inspired mainly by the Communists;

5. That the Communist Party in the United States is not a party in the true sense, but an agency of Moscow;

6. That the national defense program of the Legion for the United States is a peace program and not designed for attack or to carry on aggressive war against any nation;

7. That Soviet Russia is the new enemy of human freedom and

8. That Russia will eventually attack the United States.

If the first two of these, that the political system of the United States is superior to that of the Soviet dictatorship or any dictatorship and that the free enterprise system of the United States is superior to the slave system of Russia, seem so obviously true and therefore do not need any defense, it must be remembered that the United States went through a great depression and many people were less confident as to the soundness of their political and economic systems. Against this background of depression and unemployment, people were easier convinced that something was basically wrong.

Even before the depression, however, the Legion recognized that many things in America needed changing, for things that served well in the past were outworn. As the country had grown, new needs have arisen. The people of the United States are still faced with heavy tasks and problems in going ahead with the development of America.

The Communist and the Red, however, move with the desire to blast away the fruits of the labor, toil and sacrifices of past generations and upon the wreckage and ruin they would attempt to create a "Fairyland or Utopia."³⁹

The Legion recognized no short-cut to a better America. The path is confused by difficult, many-sided problems. The way does not lie over the ruins of the things that have made America great, but rather by continuous study and strong-hearted labor, "building patiently on the work of those who have preceded us, where the work is sound, and replacing it where found faulty; replacement to be by methods provided by the Constitution."⁴⁰ This was the appraisal of the problems that confronted the United States as far as the Americanism Commission saw them in 1927. In 1931, the Americanism Commission again examined the situation when the effects of the depression were at their worst. They agreed that it would not be safe to ignore the challenges to the American system nor of the attempts of the Communists to implant in the minds of American youth "disrespect for our home, for our government, and for religion. It is hardly conceivable but it is a deplorable fact that they are making some headway with their perni-

39. Annual Reports, 1927, p. 42.

40. Annual Reports, 1931, pp. 318-319.

cious, sinister teachings."⁴¹

Later in the 1930's this commission was not exactly satisfied with conditions. When recovery from the depression had not progressed as far and as fast as was anticipated, it was suggested that the Legion might do something to bring the people back to the basic teachings and principles of the founding fathers. Getting back to these basic ideas might be of greater advantage to recovery itself.⁴² But there were still depressed and disillusioned people in the United States who had turned unwilling ears to the treacherous doctrines of Communism. The Legion saw in this situation its duty to combat such ideologies by the general diffusion of knowledge in order that public opinion may be enlightened concerning the dangers to the rights of man. The profit motive, individual initiative, and the competitive spirit are so much a part of the national philosophy that they must not be surrendered or be allowed to perish by reason of civic lassitude or the desire for individual security.⁴³

The Legion did not lose faith in the American system

41. Annual Reports, 1931, pp. 318-319.

42. The National Legionnaire, February, 1938, p. 12.

43. The National Legionnaire, February, 1938, p. 12; Annual Reports, 1939, pp. 88-89.

regardless of the catastrophes that the people faced. When the United States became involved in World War II, the Legion saw this as a war to preserve the American way of life--to preserve the political and economic systems. Some of the members of the organization went back into active duty, but the great majority performed many duties on the home front. During the war there were studies made concerning the improvement particularly of the economic system, and the one study of greatest importance to the Legion was that of Lawrence J. Fenlon of Chicago. Using this study as a basis, the National Commander, Edward N. Schieberling, in February, 1945, warned that there was danger of the United States becoming a socialist state "unless there is a great technic of selling goods." In the past the nation has looked upon production as the key to prosperity and employment, whereas selling and distribution are the most direct springboards. To quote Mr. Schieberling further, he stated:

We are going to have to really sell for the first time in our national life or we may become a Socialist state, with government controlling all production and distribution. Grave are the forces aligned against us--those who advocate state socialism or state capitalism--ready to enslave us should we fail We must prove that our way of life is right or we must be prepared to lose it.⁴⁴

The biggest effort made by the Legion, designed to re-

44. The Denver Post, February 12, 1945, p. 2.

emphasize to Americans their heritage of freedom and the dividends they receive from democracy, began on April 1, 1948. This campaign, using the direct mail technique, was one of the largest and most elaborate public relations efforts ever undertaken by a non-profit organization.

It consisted of twelve elaborate booklets, all using color printing and illustrations, which were mailed one a month to individuals throughout the country. Each booklet discussed a phase of American life, relating its value and comparing it to other systems of government. The Legion plans called for the distribution of 10,000,000 copies of these booklets each month, at \$1.35 a set by subscription.

James F. O'Neil, National Commander, stated that the purpose of the campaign was to bolster faith in American ideals and institutions against the inroads of Communism by illustrating the superiority of the American system of government and its effect on daily living. He went on to state:

We are going to give to them (the American people) the actual margins of superiority of American life in terms of individual rights, freedoms, automobiles, food, refrigerators, and many other things which are considered necessities but are luxuries elsewhere.⁴⁵

45. The New York Times, March 7, 1948, p. 53; "Americanism by Mail" in The American Legion Magazine, May, 1948, p. 36.

The first of the booklets, Wanted 10,000,000 Salesmen, carried endorsements of the campaign from President Truman and many labor, business and church leaders. Another booklet described the Constitution and its effect on American citizens; another what the average American worker could purchase with an hour's labor as compared to the average Russian worker. Other booklets described and defined free enterprise and the preponderance of physical goods owned by Americans although the United States contains only seven per cent of the world's population.

Proposition number three, that the people of the United States must be aroused to see and appreciate the advantages of their political and economic system is one of the basic assumptions considered in the chapter on Americanism.

The fourth of the Legion's assumptions, that much of the labor trouble of the United States is inspired by the Communists, has been corroborated in recent years by confessions of former Communists, through investigations by the House Committee on un-American Activities and by documents seized in raids on Communist Party headquarters. Benjamin Gitlow, former head of the Communist Part in the United States, reveals that the Communists have used a three-flank attack in its sabotage of American labor unions--discrediting present labor leaders, replacing them with Communists and making wide use of the strike. He lists some of the big strikes in American business and

industry that were conceived and led by Communists. They were the steel and coal strikes of 1919, the Passaic Textile Workers' strike in 1925-1926, the New York Furriers' strike of 1926, the Cloakmakers' strike in 1926, the Dress-makers' strike in 1926, the New Bedford strike, and the Gastonia, North Carolina Textile strike of 1929, the sit-down strikes in automobile plants in Michigan in 1937 and strikes throughout the country at the beginning of World War II. He answers the question as to the importance of labor unions to the Communists in these words:

Without support in the unions the Communist Party cannot make a revolution. Getting control of the unions is, therefore, the number one task of the party. By getting control of those unions in the decisive, the basic industries of the lands, the industries upon which the economic life of the country depends.⁴⁶

Louis F. Budenz gives a similar account of the objectives of American Communists with regard to labor unions.⁴⁷ Robert E. Stripling, Chief Investigator for the House Committee on un-American Activities from 1938 to 1948, gives evidence of the aims and methods of Communist and other subversive groups.⁴⁸

Even labor unions themselves have become aroused to the Communist menace. In its Cleveland convention in 1949

46. Benjamin Gitlow, The Whole of Their Lives, pp. 99-136.

47. Louis F. Budenz, Men Without Faces, The Communist Conspiracy in the U. S. A.

48. Robert E. Stripling, The Red Plot Against America.

the C. I. O. purged itself of left wing unions charged with following every "twist and turn and zig and zag" of Communist policy. The unions expelled from the C. I. O. as being Communist-dominated were the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, the United Office and Professional Workers, the Food, Tobacco and Agricultural Workers, United Public Workers, United Electrical Workers, Farm Equipment Workers, Harry Bridges' Longshoremen, the Marine Cooks and Stewards, Fishermen and Allied Workers and the Fur and Leather Workers.⁴⁹ Other unions of the C. I. O. have been charged with following the Communist Party programs rather than C. I. O. policies and may be expelled if found guilty by the C. I. O. Executive Board. It was one of the aims of the Eightieth Congress in passing the Industrial Relations Act of 1947, otherwise known as the Taft-Hartley Labor Act, to aid labor unions in ridding themselves of Communists by requiring union leaders to swear that they were not Communists and to deny the services of the National Labor Relations Board to unions that had not met the requirement of this non-Communist oath.⁵⁰

The Legion feels that in view of these evidences, its

49. The Denver Post, February 16, 1950, p. 8.

50. Congressional Record, 80th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 93, part 5, 1947, p. 5614.

thirty-year program to arouse the people of the United States regarding the Communist menace is beginning to bear fruit.

The fifth proposition, that the Communist Party in the United States is not a party in the true sense, but an agent of Moscow, is covered in the next section, Outlawing the Communist Party.

The sixth proposition covered by Legion propaganda, that the national defense program of the Legion for the United States is a peace program and not designed for attack or aggressive war against any nation, is based on the thesis often voiced by Winston Churchill and many others, namely, big world powers or potential big powers, by remaining weak militarily, invite and encourage dictators to become aggressive. More specifically, the United States, by being weak militarily, invited, and probably encouraged Germany to become aggressive, thus bringing on World War I and World War II. In addition to this, members of the Legion have a personal reason in striving for a reasonable national defense program for the United States. They have not forgotten being rushed into battle with very little or no training and with inadequate weapons in World War I.

The first complete statement made by a Legion official stating the organization's position on an adequate national defense program was given by the first National Commander, Colonel Franklin D'Olier, in 1919, when he said:

The Legion is vitally interested in the creation and firm establishment of a military policy of the United States. There is no thought of bringing about a military autocracy. The world has had enough of Prussianism. But these men went over there and fought for a principle and determined to make America 100 per cent safe through the years to come Its sole purpose is to foster a fixed military policy that will safeguard America.⁵¹

The Legion has not deviated from this policy, but instead of developing an adequate national defense program, the United States participated in the Washington Naval Disarmament Conference, ~~the worst defeat ever suffered by the United States Navy,~~ *the Geneva Naval Disarmament Conference* in 1926, the London Naval Disarmament Conferences of 1930 and 1936, and allowed the ground forces in the United States sink far below the level of an adequate national defense. When the Legion came to realize the dangers to national defense at disarmament conferences, it memorialized Congress to accord it a representative to attend international conferences for disarmament.⁵²

The Legion has taken the position generally that the pacifists and the Communists have been instrumental in causing the fleet to be scrapped and the army to be reduced

51. Congressional Record, 66th Congress, Vol. 59, part 1, 1920, p. 110; The Literary Digest, Vol. 70, December 20, 1919, pp. 58-61.

52. Congressional Record, 70th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 69, part 4, 1928, p. 4605.

"to a point of danger and to reach a point of unpreparedness, which no doubt hastened, if it did not cause, the present war"--World War II.⁵³

The Legion maintains that there was a lesson the people of the United States should have learned from World War I--the lesson of national preparedness. They did not learn it. The lack of national preparedness leading up to Pearl Harbor and World War II was a more forceful demonstration for the need of learning that lesson. The Legion is not convinced that the people of the United States have learned that lesson. Some of the same forces against which the Legion struggled in the period between the two world wars still advocate the military policy that "spells weakness and ineffectiveness." But the Legion is still working for the program that it has strived to attain since 1919. It is trying to meet as effectively as possible the charges as they arise against the national defense program that is recommended for the security of the United States, always being careful to label it as a peace program. In 1947, when Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio denounced a part of the Legion program, universal military training, as being "un-American, wasteful and obsolete,"⁵⁴ the National

53. Annual Reports, 1944, p. 98.

54. The Denver Post, June 27, 1947. p. 3.

Commander, James F. O'Neil, addressing the American Federation of Labor convention in San Francisco, charged that Taft was making "common cause with the Communists" in opposing universal military training.⁵⁵

Legion propaganda for an "adequate" national defense for peace, begun in 1919, still goes on.

Propositions seven and eight, that Soviet Russia is the new enemy of human freedom and that Russia will eventually attack the United States, will be treated briefly.

These charges are made on the basis of the Soviet use of the veto in the Security Council of the United Nations, their failure to cooperate with war-time allies in establishing treaties of peace, in fighting the Marshall Plan for the recovery of European nations, Russian propaganda, Russian aggressions and other policies pursued by the Kremlin since the end of World War II. In view of these Russian actions, Paul H. Griffith, National Commander in 1947, speaking in Cincinnati, stated that "we were justified in calling Russia an aggressor nation" and urged that cognizance be taken of the possibility that they may "make war on us whenever she becomes able or competent."⁵⁶ Later in the year when he addressed the Pennsylvania Legion

55. Colorado Springs Free Press, October 11, 1947, p. 14.

56. The Chicago Sun, March 16, 1947, p. 9.

convention in Pittsburgh, he charged that Russia had "indicted herself as a new enemy of human freedom."⁵⁷

~~The most~~^A complete case drawn up against the Russians by a Legion official was given by the National Commander, James F. O'Neil, when he spoke to the national convention of the American Federation of Labor in San Francisco in October, 1947. Among other things he said:

The Soviets are planning surprise military actions against all governments Russia has worked out a master plan for the expansion of Communism that has overlooked no front on which the American people and every other free nation can be attacked. Russia is carrying out her ambitious five-year plan fashioning the planes, the tanks, the guns, the bombs and the bayonets which sooner or later will be used by the Soviet to topple by force all governments whose strength they have sapped by intrigue and political poison from within. The new Red Fascism is far more dangerous than Nazism, Fascism and Nipponism because more fiendish cunning is to be found in the long-range planning of the Kremlin dictators than Hitler, Mussolini and Tojo were capable of all put together.⁵⁸

In the Legion publication, The National Legionnaire, the Russians are generally referred to as "aggressors, spoilsmen and enemies of world peace."⁵⁹ Many more statements have been made by those connected with the Legion in official capacities, but they fit into this general pattern and little would be added to include them.

57. The Chicago Daily News, August 7, 1947, p. 3.

58. Colorado Springs Free Press, October 11, 1947, p. 14.

59. The National Legionnaire, March 15, 1946, p. 9.

Outlawing the Communist Party

The Legion has found that ways and means of counteracting or controlling the Communist menace is not an easy task and the solution has not been found yet. The Legion has tried many things to control and to counteract the evil influences of Communism. It has tried the denial of public buildings for them to hold their meetings, a program of education in Americanism and exposing the false propaganda and vicious doctrines of the Communists.

The Legion has maintained all along that Communism is an enemy. Yet Communist agents claim to be a part of the United States, claim all protections under its liberal Constitution when Communist methods and programs would effectively destroy the American system of government and everything connected with it. The question arises: Can an un-American enemy be controlled by present constitutional means?

There are two main difficulties in outlawing the Communist Party on a national scale. In the first place, political parties and elections are controlled mainly by the forty-eight states. In the second place, the Communist Party most likely would have to be declared a "clear and present danger" in the federal legislation outlawing it in the hope the Supreme Court would accept the legislation as not being in violation of the First Amendment to the Constitution.

While doubting that the Communists could be recognized as a political party in the true sense, because of its affiliation with, and under the control of, the Third International, nevertheless there have been attempts in the forty-eight states to have the Communist Party removed from the ballot.

Individual legionnaires, Legion posts and state departments have worked to bar the Communist Party from the ballot. In Indiana, a 16-year struggle to bar the Communists from the ballot was successful in 1940 when the Legion and other patriotic groups were successful in presenting evidence to the state election commissioners to the effect that the Communist petitions were falsified and that the Communists advocated overthrow of the government by force.⁶⁰ This made a total of fourteen states where the Communists had been barred from the ballot. The other thirteen states are: Wisconsin, Missouri, Ohio, West Virginia, Washington, Illinois, Connecticut, Kentucky, Utah, Minnesota, Kansas, Arizona and Arkansas. There were attempts that failed to bar the Communists in five other states, namely, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Texas and Michigan.⁶¹ The

60. The National Legionnaire, October, 1940, p. 14.

61. Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the United States, Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, 80th Congress, 1st Session, March 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 1947, pp. 25-26; The National Legionnaire, October, 1940, p. 15.

Legion's National Executive Committee met in Indianapolis on May 2 and 3, 1940, and appropriated \$2500 on the request of the New York Legion to prepare a legal case to test the issue whether or not the Communist Party was entitled to a place on the ballot in that state.⁶²

Following the victories in the fourteen states barring the Communist Party from the ballot and the formation of the Russo-German Alliance after Munich, the Legion went one step further in its Boston national convention in 1940 in passing a resolution requesting Congress to deny Communists, Nazis and other such persons engaged in subversive activity the right to hold public office, either appointive or elective.⁶³ Then on January 8, 1941, Congressman Shafer of Michigan, following Legion advice and support, introduced a concurrent resolution in the House of Representatives stating that it was the sense of Congress "that any political party or organization advocating the overthrow by force of the form of government of the United States shall not be recognized as a political entity and that the Congress recommend to the various state legislatures the enactment of legislation prohibiting the names of any such political party or organization on the

62. The National Legionnaire, May, 1940, p. 8.

63. Annual Reports, 1940, pp. 248-249.

official ballots of such states."⁶⁴

An interesting sequence of events occurred in 1941 beginning with the attack of Germany on Russia on June 22 of that year. The Communist Party's reaction to this attack was the publication of a manifesto by its National Executive Committee in the June 30th issue of the Daily Worker, official organ of the party. This manifesto was further evidence to the Legion that the American Communists were the tools of the Kremlin and not a bona fide party. As reported by Legion publications, the manifesto is quoted as follows:

Stop all government attacks on the Communist Party! Release Earl Browder and all working class political prisoners. Build the Communist Party, the party that stands in the foremost of the people's fight against Hitlerism and for Socialism! Support and build the progressive labor press! Forward to a world-wide people's front against Hitler fascism for the defense of the Soviet Union!⁶⁵

The Legion interpreted the real intent of this manifesto as disclosing that American Communists regarded the defense of America as secondary, and "preservation and exaltation of Communism as of paramount consequence

64. Congressional Record, 77th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 87, part 1, (January 8, 1941), p. 79; Annual Reports, 1942, p. 247.

65. Annual Reports, 1941, p. 24; The National Legionnaire, July, 1941, p. 4.

The Communist Party of the United States has plainly demonstrated that the first concern of the Communists in the present world crisis is not the safety of the United States but the defense of the Soviet Union."⁶⁶

If the American Communists expected sympathy from the Legion on the domestic front, they were doomed to disappointment, for at its convention in Milwaukee the Legion went on record as still being opposed to Communism, because it was a false and dangerous philosophy. The Legion urged its members and fellow citizens to be constantly on guard to prevent all types of dictatorship from "creeping into our midst and undermining our liberties founded on the Constitution." As if this were not enough, the Legion went on and enacted a resolution calling for the outlawing of the Communist Party. This resolution is quoted in full as follows:

Whereas, Communism invokes our constitutional rights of freedom of the press, assembly and speech as a mask to cover its sinister attacks and destructive campaign against both state and federal governments and loudly proclaims its avowed objective is to destroy by violence existing democratic institutions and supplant them with the despotism patterned on that of Stalin, be it resolved that Communism cannot be dignified by recognition on the part of the several states as true political party and must be outlawed.⁶⁷

66. The National Legionnaire, July, 1941, p. 4.

67. The Milwaukee Journal, September 18, 1941, pp. 1 and 23; The National Legionnaire, October, 1941, p. 13; Annual Reports, 1942, p. 246.

When the war was on, the Legion advocated, and Congress enacted more stringent laws on a number of subjects--finger-printing and registration of aliens, espionage, sabotage and general subversive activity. One of the biggest legislative victories for the Legion was the Alien Registration Act of 1940. This was the first peace-time sedition act passed in the United States since 1798, when the Alien and Sedition Acts were enacted into law. Similar legislative proposals to those of 1798 were proposed in 1920 when there was a "Red" scare in the United States.

The Alien Registration Act of 1940 does not confine itself to aliens, nor is it limited to wartime or defense emergency periods. It has two main sections. First, it extends into peace time the provisions of the anti-spy legislation which had previously applied only in war. Second, it makes it a crime for any person, alien or not, to do these things:

- (1) Knowingly advocate or teach overthrow of the government by force or violence;
- (2) Publish anything advocating violent overthrow of the government with intent to accomplish that result;
- (3) Organize or belong to any society which advocates violent overthrow of the government.⁶⁸

The Legion is still on record as advocating outlawing the Communist Party. When James F. O'Neil, National Commander of the Legion, gave testimony before the Committee

68. The Chicago Sun, July 25, 1948, p. 37.

on Un-American Activities, he recommended outlawing the Communist Party and banning the use of the mails to Communist publications on the grounds that the Communist Party and its members are not entitled to the liberties guaranteed in the Fourteenth Amendment. The rights guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment that he listed, quoting from a Supreme Court decision, *Meyer V. Nebraska*, were freedom from bodily restraint, the right of the individual to contract to engage in any of the common occupations of life, to acquire useful knowledge, to marry, establish a home and bring up children, to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, and generally to enjoy those privileges long recognized at common law as essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness by free men. Since the Communist Party in the United States would abolish these rights, it should be outlawed. The substance of his argument was that the Communist Party should be legally destroyed because it would illegally destroy constitutional and legal rights of the American people.⁶⁹

69. Hearings Before the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, 80th Congress, 1st Session on H. R. 1884 and H. R. 2122, Bills to Curb or Outlaw the Communist Party of the United States, March 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 1947, pp. 20-24.

From the hearings of the Committee on Un-American Activities there emerged two bills designed to remedy the situations caused by the Communist menace. The first of these was H. R. 4482, a bill designed to bar un-American parties from the election ballot. This bill was introduced December 15, 1947, and was designed to prevent further Communist inroads in the American body politic. Its chief provisions include the following:

That no party (a) which is directly or indirectly affiliated by any means whatsoever with the Communist Party of the United States of America or the Communist International, or any other foreign agency, political party, organization, or government; or (b) which either directly or indirectly advocates, teaches, aids, or abets the overthrow by force or violence, or by any unlawful means, of the Government of the United States of America; or (c) which directly or indirectly carries on, advocates, teaches justifies, aids, or abets a program of sabotage, force and violence, sedition or treason against the Government of the United States of America shall be recognized, of any candidate printed on the ballot, in any election in the United States of America.⁷⁰

Discussion of this proposition to outlaw the Communist Party in the United States became quite vigorous. A debate in 1948 between Harold Stassen and Thomas E. Dewey, both seeking the nomination for the Presidency on the Republican Party ticket, originated in Seattle, Washington. Two Gallup Polls indicated the thinking of the American people when one showed that 61 per cent favored barring

70. Congressional Record, 80th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 93, part 9, (December 15, 1947), pp. 11425-11428.

membership in the Communist Party in the United States,⁷¹ and the other showing 62 per cent favoring the outlawing of the Communist Party in the United States.⁷²

The second bill, H. R. 5852, to deal with the Communist menace, was introduced into the House and passed during the early months of 1948. This measure, the Mundt-Nixon Bill, did not outlaw the Communist Party. But it did, however, make it unlawful to conspire or work toward the establishment in the United States of a "foreign-controlled, totalitarian government"; it barred Communists from holding jobs; it denied passports to Communists; it required that organizations which the Attorney General had determined were Communist or Communist fronts to register, report their finances, the names and addresses of their leaders and require that wrappers on publications mailed out by such organizations be plainly labeled as coming from a Communist source.⁷³ This bill was shelved in the

71. Congressional Record, 80th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 93, part 3, (April 22, 1947), p. 3802.

72. Congressional Record, 80th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 94, part 5, (May 24, 1948), pp. 6349-6350.

73. Congressional Record, 80th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 94, part 5, (May 18, 1948), pp. 6020-6049; May 19, 1948, pp. 6102-6149; Time, Vol. 51, part 2, May 31, 1948, p. 13.

Senate June 28, 1948. This is the nearest any action has been taken to outlawing the Communist Party.

Conclusions

The Legion regards the Communist Party in the United States as an agent of the Soviet Government, whose propaganda, policies and practices are threats to the unity and security of the United States and Soviet Russia itself as a threat to world peace by virtue of its determination to carry on its program of world revolution. Since the Legion asserts that "Russia cannot be separated from Communism and Communism from Russia," the measures advocated do affect both domestic and foreign policies of the United States.

Before the national organization adopted any official policy for the Legion on domestic Communist activities, legionnaires and posts acting on their own initiative took "direct" action in breaking up Communist meetings, forbidding public buildings for their use and sometimes aided in the breaking of strikes on the assumption that labor troubles were Communist-inspired, especially in the C. I. O. When the national organization took official action, it opposed direct action because it gained notoriety and attention for the Communists, it made martyrs of them and it was negative. A positive program of proclaiming Americanism and democracy was agreed upon, in addition to pointing out the fallacies and dangers of Communism.

Because the Legion had the fear of Communism as one of its main reasons for organizing in 1919, it would be unusual indeed to expect the organization to favor United States recognition of Soviet Russia. Adopting a non-recognition policy in 1922, which coincided with the policies of the administrations of Harding, Coolidge and Hoover, the Legion maintained it until 1933 when the Roosevelt administration accorded recognition to Soviet Russia on the basis of four promises made by the Kremlin. The Legion took no action for two years after recognition, but when Earl Browder and other Communists in 1935 reported to a Communist convention in Moscow on their activities, thus indicating violation of the four promises, the Legion demanded rescinding recognition of Soviet Russia. This position was maintained until 1941 when in its Milwaukee convention the Legion voted for sending lend-lease aid to Russia. But the Legion was careful to state that this did not mean approval of Soviet Russia or Communism, and hence the battle against Communism would continue on the domestic front.

Legion counter propaganda against the Communist menace can be organized under about eight propositions, namely, that the political and economic system of the United States is superior to that of the Soviet dictatorship or any dictatorship; that the free enterprise system of the United States is superior to the slave system of Soviet Russia;

that the people of the United States must be aroused to see and appreciate the advantages of their political and economic systems; that much of the labor troubles, especially in the C. I. O., are Communist-inspired; that the Communist Party in the United States is not a party in the usual sense, but an agency of Moscow; that the Legion's national defense program is a peace program, and not a war program as the pacifists and Communists assert; that Soviet Russia is the new enemy of human freedom; and that the Soviet Union will eventually attack the United States. The Legion has reason to believe that after 30 years of its efforts, the American people are at last partly aroused to the dangers of Communism.

The Legion called for investigations of Communist activity and outlawing the Communist Party as early as 1930 when the investigating committee under the chairmanship of Congressman Hamilton Fish turned up evidence of subversive activity. As continued activity was revealed under other chairmen of this committee--Dies, Thomas, Rankin and Woods--the Legion became more determined for outlawing the party and to enact other stringent regulations. From these investigations emerged recommendations some of which were incorporated in two bills to curb the activities of the Communist Party. The Stassen-Dewey debate and general discussion in Congress of the issues

involved seemed to oppose outlawing the party since this would drive the Communists underground. Public opinion polls showed that over sixty per cent of the people favored outlawing the Communist Party and barring Communists from holding elected and appointive offices. The Mundt-Nixon bill passed the House but was shelved in the Senate. Although the Legion failed to have the Communist Party outlawed on a national scale, it has, however, been instrumental in getting it barred from the ballot in fourteen states.

CHAPTER V

NATIONAL DEFENSE

In the two decades between the First and the Second World Wars, national defense was one of the most controversial issues in American politics. Throughout this period, the American Legion was ^{one of} the most powerful pressure groups on the side of maintaining a strong army and fleet. This chapter will cover: (1) the Legion's appraisal of the defense policy of the United States, (2) Legion proposals for a safe national defense policy, (3) the Legion attitude toward, (a) universal military training, (b) the Geneva Gas Protocol, (c) the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact, (d) naval construction, (e) Lend-Lease and (f) the United Nations.

Legion Appraisal of Military Preparedness

Legionnaires of the twenties and thirties were prone to relate their experience in World War I to all the military history of the United States. What the various posts throughout the country heard in the way of lectures by numerous speakers, and what the Legionnaires read in the Legion literature led them to believe that the military policy of the United States for the past 150 years has

followed an unwholesome pattern.¹ In peace time military preparations are allowed to lag behind essential needs for security; the United States becomes involved in a war; there are hasty and costly expenditures for bridging the unpreparedness gap; men are rushed into action without proper training and equipment; at long last the enemy is defeated at needless cost of lives. And then the cycle starts all over again when the military force built up in war is allowed to disintegrate.

In the Revolutionary War Washington complained about the undisciplined troops who made up the bulk of his troops. The war dragged along for eight years and the colonies were unable to gain a final victory until the prepared forces of France came to their aid.

In the War of 1812 the United States had an army of less than 7,000 men. Volunteers were again called into the service, but they were no match for the well-trained

1. "The Circle of Unpreparedness" in The American Legion Weekly, Vol. IV, June 16, 1922, p. 10; Major C. E. Kilbourne, "What the War Taught the Army," Vol. II, July 16, 1920, p. 9, 21; "Re-building the Army; Legion Helping Congress Frame Policy," January 2, 1920, p. 22; Charles D. Kelley, "What Shall the Army Be?" Vol. I, September 19, 1919, pp. 16, 32, 34; "The Legion's Army Bill; Summary of Measure that Would Provide Four Months Training for Youths of from 18 to 21;" Vol. II, May 7, 1920, p. 12.

British. After this war, Congress provided for a permanent army of 10,000. Protracted Indian wars provided training grounds for these troops. When the war with Mexico broke out in 1845, the United States had a small but effective army. The army, however, was handicapped from the start by a lack of supplies and equipment.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, the United States had a regular army of a little more than 16,000, utterly inadequate to cope with the situation. The struggle might have been decided in one campaign instead of dragging through four disastrous years. Lack of preparedness again proved costly in the war with Spain in 1898. The camping, provisioning and equipping difficulties for 200,000 men caused unnecessary sickness and deaths. More disastrous results would have occurred if the United States had been faced by a more formidable enemy than Spain.

To the Legion, more than a century of failure of the unpreparedness program of the United States to prevent wars, and repeated examples of its danger and costliness were not sufficient to bring the people and the government of the United States to a policy of adequate preparedness. Even when Europe was being swept by World War I and the dangers of United States involvement came nearer, preparations for national defense were not stressed. Only when war actually came did the United States begin general preparations for

its defense. Even after World War I national defense lagged in spite of all the warnings of danger and the statements of minimum needs were proclaimed. It became the Legion's second most important announced activity to try to persuade the country and Congress to adopt a national defense policy that would adequately safeguard national interests.

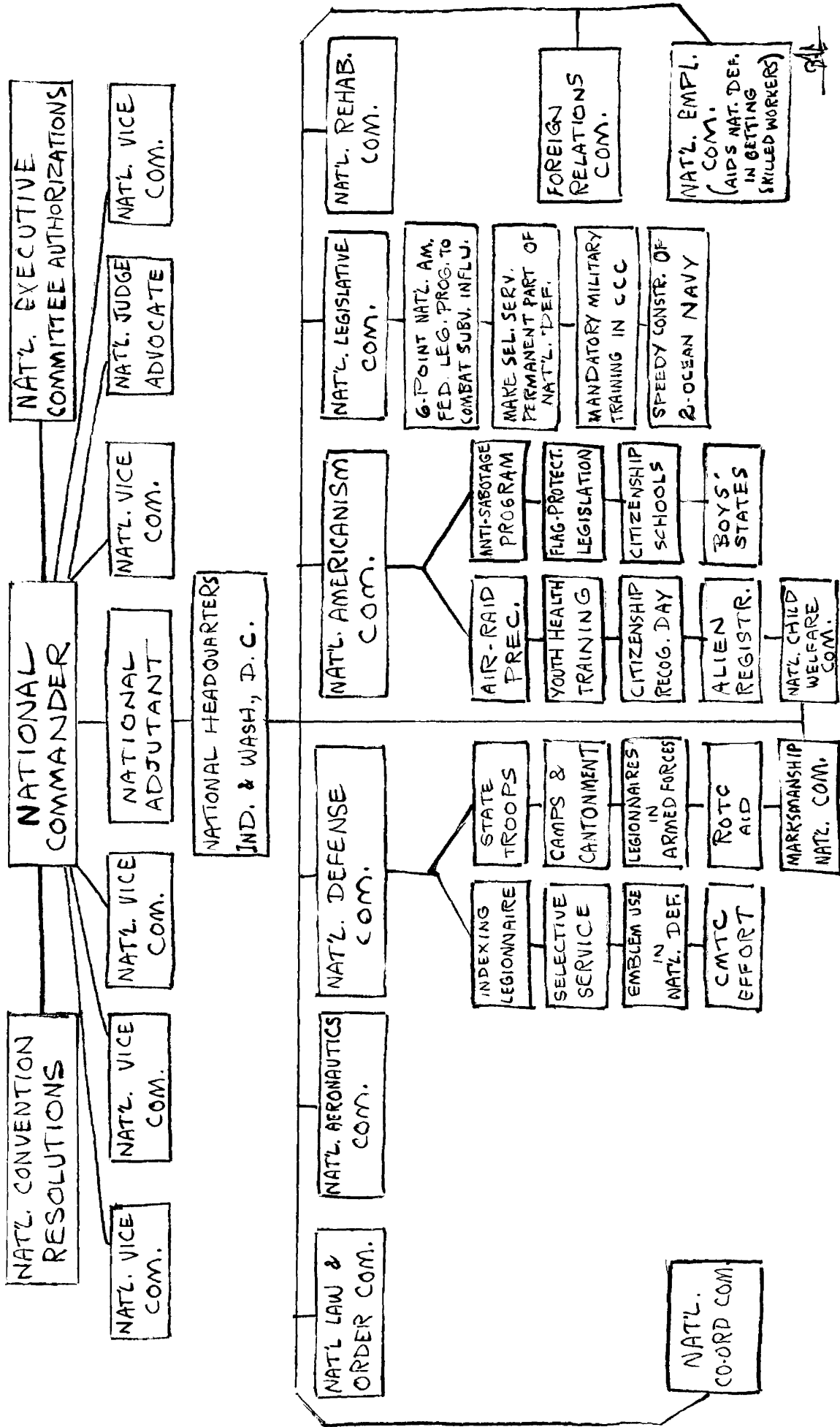
The Legion's National Defense Program

At an early date in Legion history, this organization adopted a platform of peace.² But such statements insisted that while arbitration and international co-operation should be promoted as instruments of peace, nevertheless, in the present age, the surest method for peace was adequate national defense. As far as Franklin D'Olier, the first National Commander of the Legion, was concerned, "the question before the country is not how large an army we should provide with or without the League of Nations. Rather it relates to the size of the force to be maintained during a period of uncertainty during which we face certain known obligations and a still larger number of uncertainties."³ This statement referred to the uncertainties of the military occupation of Germany as well as to the untried League of

2. Literary Digest, December 20, 1919, pp. 58-61.

3. Literary Digest, September 27, 1919, p. 10.

THE AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL DEFENSE PROGRAM¹



¹ THE NATIONAL LEGIONNAIRE JANUARY, 1941, P. 12.

Nations in keeping the peace. The United States was not a member of the League of Nations. That organization had not demonstrated its capacity to maintain peace. Until such time that this capacity was demonstrated, the United States should look for its own defense. The Legion recognized that nations constantly face the risk of fighting for their independence and vital interests or become subjected to another nation. Such subjection or control probably would be more disagreeable than war. To be weak, militarily, is to invite such subjection or control. Considering from this viewpoint the independence, vital interests and national defense, the Legion ruled out pacifism as the path to peace.

On the other hand, there were those who favored also, in the name of peace, building a war machine. It is assumed that if there is going to be war, a nation stands a better chance of winning it if it is prepared than if it goes into the war unprepared. As between the two, building a mass desire for peace or making military preparations, the Legion chose the latter course. There are certain reasons for doing this.

In the first place, the Legion assumed that there would be future wars. But when the fighting ceased on November 11, 1918, there were immediate and long-range problems. The immediate problem was the size of the force

to be maintained in the occupation of the defeated countries in meeting known obligations. The long-range problem was the size of the force for a larger number of uncertainties as to the military dangers to the security of the United States in the future--for the United States to become so formidable that other nations would be discouraged from attacking.⁴ The first World War had taught the Legion that "war-provoking acts of aggression are committed in the ratio that the peaceful party is prepared to fight."⁵

In the second place, if a war cannot be delayed or forestalled completely, then the ground work would have been laid for winning the conflict without too great cost in men and material.

And finally, considering it apart from the relations of nations, the desire for a program of national defense had a personal angle to be considered. Colonel William B. Donovan, in testifying before the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, July 3, 1940, in support of a draft act, told how men were sent to the front without having had on a gas mask and many of whom were given guns still filled with grease. The service men were entitled to three things, he thought. In giving testimony before the Senate Committee on Military Affairs he stated these three things

4. Literary Digest, September 27, 1919, p. 10.

5. The National Legionnaire, 1940, p. 3.

as follows:

First, they are entitled to a fair chance by their country to go into war with some kind of a reasonable opportunity to live while they do their duty. Second, they are entitled to officers in command of them who have had training in leading troops. It is all right to talk about natural leadership, but there is a technique of command that can only be developed by actually dealing with human beings. And third, I think these men are entitled to a fair opportunity to get a promotion while they are in the outfit, if they have the character and initiative and aspire to be officers.⁶

The Legion has constantly protested against the label of militarism. It has repeatedly stated that it is interested in "the creation and firm establishment of a military policy of the United States. There is no thought of bringing about a military autocracy. The world has had enough of Prussianism. But these men who went over there (to France, in World War I) and fought for a principle are determined to make America safe for herself through the years to come The sole purpose is to foster a fixed military policy that will safeguard America."⁷ The military policy of the Legion as adopted in its

6. Hearings Before the Committee on Military Affairs United States Senate, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, on S. 4164, A Bill to Protect the Integrity and Institutions of the United States Through a System of Selective Compulsory Military Training and Service. Revised. July 3, 5, 10, 11, and 12, 1940.

7. Literary Digest, December 20, 1919, pp. 58-61.

Minneapolis convention November 10, 1919, opposed a large standing army as "uneconomic and undemocratic," favored "a policy of universal military training," opposed "compulsory military service in time of peace," favored "a national military system based on universal military obligation, to include a relatively small Regular Army and a citizen army capable of rapid expansion sufficient to meet any national emergency," and a strong emphasis was placed on civilian control, because "the national citizen army should and must be the chief reliance of this country in time of war."⁸

The basic assumption in the Legion's program of national defense is that the dominant position of the United States in the western hemisphere must be maintained. Going from this, it would be necessary for the United States to have a navy "second to none." In the early thirties, the Legion began demanding a navy sufficient to take care of American defense problems in both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. This meant that the United States should have naval bases, fortifications, airplanes, aircraft carriers, a merchant marine with crews trained for war, submarines, destroyers, cruisers and battleships.

The Legion envisioned the outer defenses of the United

8. Congressional Record, 66th Congress, Vol. 59, part 1, 1920, p. 110.

States as running from Panama to Hawaii to Alaska with suitable bases for ships and planes to defend this line. As the Japanese designs became more evident, and particularly after Congress had passed legislation granting the Philippine Islands their independence, the Legion went on record for the President and Congress "to take steps immediately to re-examine the whole Philippine-American relationship, taking into consideration the present world situation and the new developments both in the United States and the Philippines, defensive and economic, and looking to the mutual best interests of the people of both countries."⁹

The Legion regarded the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans as the greatest assets or worst liabilities of the United States, depending upon its strength or weakness in them. These oceans represent the base of the world strategy of the United States. If it should be necessary for the United States to go to war, it would be the plan of the military to carry the war to the enemy, and thus prevent the enemy from bringing war to the United States. American military might must be strong enough "to meet any possible attack before it arrives and to turn the enemy back so that our homes remain intact and our families secure." To have these advantages in United States defense, the Legion called for air and naval bases in Iceland,

9. The National Legionnaire, October, 1941, pp. 13-14.

Newfoundland, Bermuda, Trinidad, Porto Rico, Panama, the Galapagos Islands, Hawaii, Wake, Midway, the Philippines, Guam and Alaska.¹⁰ Even in 1940 the Legion advocated a program of building "a navy with its own air arm capable of defending our interest in both the Atlantic and Pacific against any possible grouping of aggressors."¹¹

The navy would be the first line of defense of the United States. Backing it up and co-ordinating its activities with over-all defense plans would be the army. The size, equipment and material would be based on pre-determined needs. Universal military training would be an integral part of the national defense needs of the United States. Not to be neglected in the Legion's national defense program are adequate funds and facilities to carry on research in developing new weapons of offensive and defensive warfare.¹²

10. The National Legionnaire, October, 1941, pp. 9 and 12; Annual Reports, 1926, pp. 159-164.

11. The National Legionnaire, December, 1940, pp. 1 and 5.

12. Congressional Record, 66th Congress, Vol. 49, part 1, 1920, p. 110; Annual Reports, 1928, p. 128; Annual Reports, 1934, p. 337; Munitions Industry Hearings Before the Special Committee Investigating the Munitions Industry, 74th Congress, 1st Session, Pursuant to S. Res. 206, Part 21, February 22 and March 15, 1935, pp. 6013-6020.

The Legion was convinced that if its defense program were adopted, it would be the best safeguard against war, as is evidenced by the report of its National Defense Committee in 1933 when it stated: "We believe that America will never seek a war and that a war will never seek a prepared America. We believe in an America, peace-loving and intent on peace but strong enough to insure and enforce the peace. We know that the pitiably small army in existence at the start of every war has never kept us out of war."¹³ And the National Commander of the Legion, Frank N. Belgrano, Jr., echoed the same sentiment in 1935, when he spoke to the tenth Women's Patriotic Conference on national defense. Among other things he said: "I am not appealing for preparedness for war; I am appealing for preparedness for peace! A reasonably-armed America need not fear attack, and if we are not attacked, we shall not have war."¹⁴ The Legion has not given up its struggle for an adequate national defense, since this is its second most important activity. Testifying before the House Military Affairs Committee in 1945 the Legion's National Defense Chairman, S. Perry Brown, evaluated the national defense situation of the United States in these words:

We as a people have never accepted the fact that we need an armed force in our national life. There is not

13. Annual Reports, 1933, p. 58.

14. The National Legionnaire, March 1935, p. 7.

a man, woman or child in any community in this Nation that would disarm a policeman on his beat, and the reason is that they understand what that policeman is for Therefore, as long as we understand a force and have control of it we are perfectly willing to go ahead with it. The same is true of the Sheriff's departments in our counties. None of our people would dispose of them. It is likewise with the State police because we understand what their function is. But, as a people, since the beginning of this Nation, we have never understood the need for an armed force To understand an armed force young America must not only talk about it but, we believe, become a part of it ¹⁵

Universal Draft

The universal draft has as its purpose the mobilization of the entire resources of the United States--soldiers, capital and labor--with a maximum of speed and a minimum of cost in order to terminate a war quickly with the least expenditure of men and money, with the least disruption to the normal life of the country possible, and to take the profit out of war. The object would be to place the burdens of war "equally upon labor, capital, and the fighting men."¹⁶ When the plan is completely implemented, the United

15. Hearings Before the Committee on Military Affairs, House of Representatives, 79th Congress, 1st Session on H. R. 515, An Act to Provide Military or Naval Training for All Male Citizens Who Attain the Age of 18 Years, and for Other Purposes, Part 1, November 8, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, December 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 1945, p. 327.

16. Literary Digest, Vol. 95, November 5, 1927, p. 10.

States would have "an adequate army with modern equipment, a two-ocean navy, the strongest flying force in the air, and trained American youth--a continuing, reliable, high standard of national defense, not the on-again-off-again kind that makes us stronger once in every twenty years."¹⁷

The universal draft was the chief bulwark in the Legion's national defense program.

The Legion learned, however, that formulating a national defense program was one thing; getting it accepted, wholly or in part, is quite another. When the first official expression was made on a military program for the United States at its Minneapolis convention in 1919, the universal training phase of its program had not crystallized. The defense program suggested, calculated to be the minimum requirement to protect America from invasion, called for organization of a national citizen army in territorial units, administered by a general staff on which "citizen soldier officers and regular army officers shall serve in equal numbers." It condemned a large standing army, however, as "extravagant and un-American." The Legion recommended also that officers' training camps "be continued and that military training in schools and colleges be encouraged." The final item considered in its first national defense program, the Legion recommended that air service be

17. Annual Reports, 1940, pp. 226-237.

established "as a separate department under the control of a member of the Cabinet to be appointed for that purpose alone."¹⁸

At its second annual convention in Cleveland, however, September 27 to 29, 1920, the Legion set the keynote for all national defense programs for the next two decades when it adopted the following resolution:

The examination of young men called under the selective service act demonstrated a high percentage of physical disability and also illiteracy among both native and foreign born, indicating the necessity for a system of compulsory universal training of young men, which should tend to obviate this deplorable condition in the future. Therefore, we recommend the adoption by the Congress of a system of compulsory universal training, which shall include physical training, educational training, and Americanization, as well as efficient military training to form a foundation for future extended military training in time of war.¹⁹

This resolution was the Legion's reaction to President Wilson's recommendation to Congress in 1919, recommending that a national defense policy be established for the United States and called for "a universal voluntary system of military training."²⁰ In 1920, with the lessons

18. The Outlook, Vol. 123, November, 1919, pp. 348-349; Congressional Record, 66th Congress, Vol. 59, part 1, 1920, p. 110.

19. Congressional Record, 66th Congress, Vol. 59, part 1, 1920, p. 110.

20. The Outlook, Vol. 123, November, 1919, pp. 348-349.

of the World War fresh in mind, Congress enacted the new National Defense Act, designed to give America an adequate national defense for the first time in its history. The issue of universal military service came into the debates, but the Legion was not organized for effective action so early in its career, since it had been in operation less than a year at the time of the debates. Universal military service came up again in 1940 when the Selective Service Act was enacted by Congress and again in 1947-1948 when Selective Service was re-enacted.

In 1947-1948, the Legion exerted its greatest efforts to get its universal military service program adopted by Congress. In the intervals between these special drives, the Legion resolved in convention, publicized its program and influenced congressional committees to hold hearings for the purpose of getting universal military service adopted.

The Legion was enthusiastic when Congress enacted the National Defense Act in 1920, for this was "the first military policy this country ever had." The act would have given the United States a regular army of 290,000 men, a National Guard force of about 500,000, a large reserve of trained men and of war supplies and a navy second to none. Here one needs to be reminded of a little fact in congressional procedure. Congress quite often adopts a policy, but many times fails to appropriate funds to carry out the

policy. The Legion's enthusiasm for this act did not wane, but the performance of Congress in not appropriating the funds was saddening. The Legion's efforts the next twenty years were futile in getting Congress to implement the National Defense Act.²¹

The Legion lays the failure of Congress to implement the act of 1920 to "certain organizations--pacifist, communist and otherwise" but it still worked ahead to accomplish its purpose, recognizing that defense measures never arouse a great deal of interest in peace time. "This is the reason why wars have cost America so much in blood and treasure; the door is locked after the horse is gone. Yet members of the Legion who have seen war at first hand, have seen the bloody consequences of a short-sighted military policy, do not intend that unpreparedness through lack of public interest shall slay the youth of another generation should another war break upon us."²²

In 1923 the Legion had its own bill, the Universal Draft Act, introduced in Congress, known as the Capper-Johnson Act. This bill provided the President with powers, in time of war, to take the necessary steps to stabilize prices of commodities; to draft into service of the United

21. The National Legionnaire, May, 1945, p. 9.

22. The Outlook, Vol. 141, December 16, 1925, pp. 599-600.

States all persons between the ages of 21 and 30, or such other limits as might be fixed, without exemption on account of the industrial occupation; and to determine and proclaim the material resources and industrial organizations of the country to be under government control during the period of the emergency. This meant that, not only the man-power of the country, but its entire resources of every description would be mobilized under the control of the government. The intended purposes of the bill, according to the Legion, were to keep profits out of war, eliminate the war-time slacker, and place the burden of war equally upon all citizens. The Legion set out to push this measure through Congress "as strenuously as the power of three-quarters of a million veterans can push it." John R. McQuigg, National Commander of the Legion, writing in The Outlook, stated that the organization believed that "it is the one right way to carry on a war, and that it will prove in time to be the greatest peace measure this country or the world has ever known."²³

23. John R. McQuigg, "What the Legion Wants in 1926" in The Outlook, V. 141, December 16, 1925, pp. 599-600; Hearing Before the Committee on Military Affairs, United States Senate, 68th Congress, 1st Session, on S. 2561, A Bill to Provide Further for the National Security and Defense, April 10, 1924, pp. 9-12.

The National Commander in 1924, James A. Drain, writing in The Outlook, in defense of the Legion measure, stated his thoughts on the measure in these words:

War, the Legion believes, is every one's job. To finish the job as efficiently as possible requires the doing away of distinctions, the placing of every citizen on an even basis, the subjecting to immediate Government call every industry, every mutual resource, whether publicly or privately owned. The Legion stands for a programme of sound preparedness. It believes in the National Defense Act and a National Defense Day. It opposes any changes in the former and has pledged itself to take an active part in the latter The Legion knows its program to be one which will help the country. It believes the citizenry is behind it. It wishes their support, and it wishes to give its support to those things which will help the community, state and nation.²⁴

One of the features of the plan--removing the profits of war--was expected to be the attractive part in getting the country to accept the program. Men in the fighting forces felt that profiteering had gone on at their expense and at the expense of the country. In future conflicts this was to be prohibited. A study was made in 1921 of the war-time legislation in France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States. Even though Presidents Harding and Coolidge recommended some form of protection against profiteering in war, and both political platforms advocated the

24. James A. Drain, "The American Legion in the Year to Come" in The Outlook, Vol. 138, November 5, 1924, pp. 364-365.

protection, nothing more than hearings were accomplished in the first decade after the ending of the war. The idea was taken up by Senator Nye of North Dakota in the 1930's, and we shall see later how his crusade against "the merchants of death" set the stage for neutrality legislation in 1935.²⁵

In 1924 when the Legion became convinced that pacifist, Communist and other groups continued their influence over Congress in defeating the implementation of the National Defense Act of 1920, the Legion presented its own minimum program in the hope Congress would accept a smaller military force for the United States. Where Congress had failed to appropriate the necessary funds to provide for the military force of 790,000 as called for in the National Defense Act of 1920, the Legion's plan called for a military force of 277,000. Broken down into its component parts, this plan called for a regular army of 12,000 officers and 125,000 enlisted men in addition to the authorized increase in the air force, a National Guard of 190,000 men to be increased by annual increments to 250,000 by 1936, a Reserve Officers' Training Corps adequate to provide 5,000 reserve officers annually and a Citizens' Military Training Camp of 50,000. In addition to these forces,

25. Chapter VI, ISOLATION AND NEUTRALITY.

there was to be the procurement, development and maintenance of such material and camps as would properly equip all the above components and the further maintenance of an adequate war reserve for three field armies.²⁶

The Legion continued to publicize its universal draft act of 1923 as the best argument for peace. Congress and the country were being told that the burdens of war--if it should come--would be placed equally upon labor, capital, and the fighting men. A Literary Digest reporter, interviewing the National Commander, Edward E. Spafford, in 1927, quoted him as saying:

The American Legion believes in peace. But we believe one of the best preventives of war is the enactment of a bill which shall place the burden of war--if it come--upon all. Let labor and capital be conscripted, as well as men. Adequate preparedness is the best insurance of peace. The universal draft act means just the kind of preparedness that brings peace.²⁷

With the Geneva Naval Disarmament Conference of 1926 in mind and with the failure of Congress to provide adequate security by implementing the National Defense Act of 1920, the Legion in its Annual Reports of 1928 went further into

26. Hearings Before the Committee on Military Affairs House of Representatives, 69th Congress, 1st Session, January 19 to March 9, 1926, pp. 774-794; Howard P. Savage, "The American Legion's Program for 1926-1927" in The Outlook, Vol. 144, October 24, 1926, pp. 401-402.

27. Literary Digest, Vol. 95, November 5, 1927, p. 10.

the problem of peace as affected by national defense. The sequence of events that follow from weakness of a great power and particularly what would befall the United States if such a policy were persisted in was suggested in the statement which follows:

The actual cause of all wars has been, and always will be, trade conquest, so we must be prepared for any emergency that may arise from within or without. A strong America does not imperil peace, but a weak America surely will in due course. Unless America is adequately prepared to insist on peace there will be no peace. If adequately prepared for our own defense, no combination of powers will have the hardihood to force us into war. Deliberately to strip ourselves to a condition of immediate helplessness, trusting on high purpose to solve humanity's wrongs and grudges, is to invite utter destruction. If we persist in this we shall be living in a fool's paradise, with an awakening ahead of us more bitter than that of 1914.²⁸

Objection had been raised to the Legion plan on the ground that it would be unconstitutional to conscript labor and wealth (capital) during war. To meet this objection or to find the way out, the Legion succeeded in getting Congress to enact the Snell Resolution calling for the President to name a commission to study and report on its universal draft plan. President Hoover signed the resolution June 27, 1930, and the 14 members of the commission - six from the President's cabinet and four each from the House and Senate--began its study. Part of the

28. Annual Reports, 1928, pp. 286-287.

resolution, indicating the work of the commission, is quoted as follows:

A commission is hereby created to study and consider amending the Constitution of the United States to provide that private property may be taken by Congress for public use during war and methods of equalizing the burdens and to remove the profits of war, together with a study of policies to be pursued in event of war. The commission shall report definite recommendations to the President of the United States to be by him transmitted to Congress not later than the first Monday in December, 1931, together with copies of its proceedings and hearings and to report if, in their opinion, any constitutional amendment be necessary to accomplish the purposes desired.²⁹

In the meantime the Legion continued to publicize its universal draft act "as a peace measure, as a preparedness measure, and as a measure of simple justice."³⁰ Not all action ceased, however, on the legislative front. The Reed-Wainwright Universal Draft measure was introduced in Congress to achieve the purposes of the Legion and Senator Dill of Washington submitted a resolution calling for a constitutional amendment to carry out the universal draft in time of war. Senator Dill's resolution ran as follows:

Congress shall have the power, in time of war, to take private property for public use and for purposes of

29. Annual Reports, 1930, pp. 182-183; Congressional Record, 69th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 68, part 1, 1927, p. 689.

30. Annual Reports, 1930, p. 184; Congressional Record, 71st Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 71, part 2, 1929, p. 1693.

national defense, and to fix the compensation for the same, or to take private property without compensation by declaring the same to be necessary for the purposes of national defense.³¹

The Legion was particularly pleased with all these actions taking place and it reported in regard to the Snell Resolution as follows:

Thus, after eight years of constant effort, the American Legion has gained its first objective--and the American Legion always takes its objectives--its fight for justice, equal service for all and special profit by none in time of war, will be won in the end.³²

The War Policies Commission, created by the Snell Resolution, held hearings from time to time beginning March 5th and ended June 1st, 1931. Leaders from all walks of life were heard including Commander O'Neil of the Legion, past national commander Paul V. McNutt, Newton D. Baker, Bernard M. Baruch, Daniel Willard, Howard E. Coffin, Philip A. S. Franklin, Leonard P. Ayers, Augustus H. Griswold, General Palmer E. Pierce, Commander John M. Hancock, Eugene Myer, Major General C. C. Williams, Richard H. Aishton, Admiral Samuel McGowan, George M. Peck and others. Seven other individuals who had made a special study of the question of universal service in war time were also

31. Annual Reports, 1930, p. 185; Congressional Record, 71st Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 71, part 2, 1929, p. 1693.

32. Annual Reports, 1930, p. 186.

invited to give testimony. They were: Colonel Charles B. Robbins, William Green, Arthur J. Lovell, Homer L. Ferguson, General Douglas MacArthur, Frederick H. Payne and Senator Smith W. Brookhart. The Legion was extremely well satisfied with the testimony of these people, but as to the pacifist groups who appeared at their own instance, little was said. The brevity of the report was exceeded perhaps only by disgust at the pacifists when the report stated:

(The pacifists) argued that preparation for a universal draft in time of war is useless, for as we have ratified the Kellogg-Briand Pact, why talk about taking the profits out of war when there can be no future war?³³

On March 3, 1932, the War Policies Commission made its report to the President and this was transmitted to Congress on March 7, 1932. It recommended four legislative steps, namely, that the government should have authority to fix prices at the inception of war; that 95 per cent of all war incomes above normal be confiscated so that funds escaping the freezing of prices would be diverted back to paying the cost of war; and that a constitutional amendment specifically giving to Congress the authority to control prices in war-time should be submitted to the

33. Annual Reports, 1931, pp. 212-213.

states.³⁴

The next major step toward enactment of universal draft legislation as far as the Legion was concerned came April 12, 1932, when the Senate adopted the Nye-Vandenberg Resolution, creating a special committee to review the findings of the War Policies Commission, investigate war profiteering, to inquire into the desirability of creating a government monopoly of the manufacture of munitions, and to conduct other inquiries into the Legion's universal draft proposal.³⁵ This resolution, out of which grew the exposé by the Nye investigating committee of activities of munitions makers, officially gave credit to the Legion for the entire undertaking by stating in its title that it was approved in response "to the long-standing demands of American war veterans speaking through the American Legion for legislation to take the profits out of war."³⁶ The Legion was hopeful that this committee would make sufficient disclosures which would "arouse the people, make a profound impression upon the nation, and provide a powerful stimulus in public sentiment for enactment of

34. The National Legionnaire, January, 1935, pp. 1 and 8.

35. Annual Reports, 1934, p. 201; Congressional Record, 72nd Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 75, part 10, (May 23, 1932), p. 10972.

36. The National Legionnaire, January, 1935, pp. 1 and 8.

the Universal Draft."³⁷

Apparently the Legion's wish was being fulfilled, when, on April 9, 1935, the House passed the McSwain Bill embodying the Legion's universal draft proposals. The purpose of the bill as stated was: "To prevent profiteering in time of war, and to equalize the burdens of war and thus provide for the national defense, and promote peace."³⁸ When this bill reached the Senate, it was referred to the Munitions Committee. On May 3, this committee reported it back to the Senate, striking out the four-page House bill and substituted a voluminous bill containing 218 pages.³⁹ Because of its military and taxing features, it was referred to the military and taxation committees for further study and to be acted on the next session of the Senate in 1936.

The Legion was able to report that more "legislative progress has been made during the past year (1935) on universal draft legislation than in the combined thirteen

37. Annual Reports, 1934, p. 201.

38. Congressional Record, 74th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 79, part 5, 1935, pp. 4953-4968; 5033-5075; 5155-5173; 5178-5202; 5247-5250; 5333-5334.

39. Congressional Record, 74th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 80, part 9, 1936, p. 9191.

years which have elapsed since the Legion took up the fight for this just principle at its Kansas City convention in 1921."⁴⁰

The R. O. T. C. program in land-grant colleges and universities has always come in for attention by the Legion. Since this is an important program for training officers, the Legion is anxious to see this work expanded and made more effective as an integral part of its universal draft program. The Legion is interested also, because of the annual pacifist demonstrations on campuses of anything that smacks of militarism. The Legion sees in these demonstrations a deliberate attempt to sabotage that part of its national defense and security programs. In the interest of this phase of its program the Legion seeks out people who are favorable and has them appear before Senate and House committees to offer testimony. On June 3, 1936, the Nye-Kvale Bill was introduced for the purpose of withdrawing federal funds from any school, college, or university which maintains compulsory military training. Consequently, the Legion was instrumental in having Dr. William O. Thompson, President Emeritus of Ohio State University, to appear before the Senate Military Affairs Committee and offer testimony favoring military training in colleges

40. Annual Reports, 1935, p.238.

and universities. While favoring military training, he went on to point out the objections that individuals and groups made to this type of training in our schools. These objections were listed as follows:

First, that it is not required by the act of 1862; second, that such education fosters militarism which is not in harmony with American ideals; third, that the spirit of compulsion is out of harmony with the spirit of modern education; fifth, that the practice assumes the probability of future wars, and is out of harmony with the present trend of thought in American life.⁴¹

The Legion opposed the Nye-Kvale Bill on the ground that such a proposal, if enacted into law, would be unconstitutional. The Legion stated further that this program for training reserve officers was established in the presidency of Abraham Lincoln and if discontinued would deal a crippling blow to national defense. The bill was not reported out of committee, and the Legion felt that its opposition had much to do with this committee action.⁴²

The Senate committees considering the McSwain Bill in 1936 were unable to work out a satisfactory compromise to suit all factions in taking the profits out of war. Senator Nye's Munitions Committee had amended it too radically to have the Senate accept it. The subcommittee

41. Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Military Affairs, United States Senate, 74th Congress, 2nd Session on S. 3309, June 2, 3, and 4, 1936, pp. 291-296; Annual Reports, 1936, p. 198.

42. Annual Reports, 1936, p. 198.

dealing with the tax side of the bill was determined to relax the proposed taxes in order to keep alive the "profit motive" in war time industry. No bill was reported.⁴³

In 1937, the Legion proposals on universal service were embodied in the Sheppard-Hill Bill, which was written in broad general language leaving the administrative details to the President and executive departments concerned, but fully embodying the purposes of universal service. As summarized by the Legion's National Legislative Committee, the measure proposed, upon the declaration of war, to do these things, quoted as follows:

1. Authorize the President to determine and publicly proclaim prices.
2. Authorize the President to make adjustments when necessary by public proclamation.
3. Authorize the drafting of the Nation's man power between the ages of 21 and 31, subject to such conditions, exemptions, rules, and regulations as the President may prescribe.
4. Authorize the taking into the military establishment as civilians any persons engaged in the management or control of industrial or manufacturing establishments designated by the President.
5. Authorize the licensing of those classes determined by the President as necessary for the successful prosecution of the war.
6. Authorize the fixing of priority in which orders may be filled by any manufacturer, dealer, producer, exporter, importer, or public service in the United States.
7. Fix a tax for the duration of the emergency of 95 per cent of all income above the previous three-year average, with proper adjustments for capital expenditures for war purposes by existing or new industries.
8. Fix a penalty of \$100,000 or one year in jail, or both, in the discretion of the court for violation.

43. Annual Reports, 1936, pp. 206-207.

9. Give the President power to create agencies, boards, and commissions and to employ necessary personnel to carry the purposes of the act into effect.⁴⁴

The Sheppard-Hill Bill was introduced in both houses of Congress and hearings were conducted. On April 9, 1937, the Senate Military Affairs Committee voted to report the bill favorably but recommended that the bill go to the Senate Finance Committee for consideration of the taxing feature. On May 12, 1937, the House Military Affairs Committee recommended the removal of the man-power drafting provision and changed the taxing provision so that the Treasury Department would be able "to make a continuing study of war profits taxation and be in position to recommend this form of taxation upon the outbreak of war."

In 1938, Congressman Lister Hill of Alabama was elected to the United States Senate and he was succeeded as Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee of the House by Congressman Andrew May of Kentucky. The Sheppard-Hill Bill was amended and became the Sheppard-May Bill. This bill was reported out of the House Military Affairs Committee when President Roosevelt in his special message, asked for a law to end profiteering.⁴⁵ Along with the bill

44. Annual Reports, 1937, p. 218; Annual Reports, 1941, pp. 295-296.

45. Congressional Record, 75th Congress 3rd Session, Vol. 83, part 2, January 28, 1938, pp. 1215-1216.

was filed a minority report by Congressmen Maverick, Kvale and Andersen in which they said some very harsh things.

They reported as follows:

(The Sheppard-May Bill) is dishonest because it does none of the things it says it does. It takes absolutely no profits out of war, equalizes no burdens and does not promote peace. This is a draft of human labor. It is a blank check written in advance for an executive to conscript every person, man, woman at will and wholly upon whatever rules and regulations he may proclaim. There is not a line nor a word in the measure that in any way curbs profiteering. Should war come, Congress might as well let its halls be burned, go home and be prepared to be called occasionally for a speech in some opera house. The bill is the stuff of which Hitlers are made and the liberties of a free people lost.⁴⁶

In the debates on this bill, Congressman Maverick said that it was "an absolute fake and fraud on the American people. It does not do anything but stir up the war fever. It does more harm than good."⁴⁷

In 1938, more interest was being centered in the war profits bill, neutrality legislation, war referendum (the Ludlow Amendment) the Connally War Tax Bill and the Lee Bill on national defense. Consequently, the Legion officials, after holding conferences with War Department officials, did not push introduction of the universal

46. "Is the Legion Being Deluded?" in Christian Century, March 9, 1938, pp. 307-308.

47. Congressional Record, 75th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 83, part 2, February 24, 1938, pp. 2392-2393.

draft bill. However, the Legion reaffirmed its universal military service resolution in its national conventions in Cleveland in 1936,⁴⁸ in New York in 1937,⁴⁹ and in Los Angeles in 1938,⁵⁰ to keep the home front--its state departments, posts and legionnaires--informed and alerted so as to apply the pressure on Congress when their universal service bill was introduced again.⁵¹

In 1940, following a "phony war" through the winter in Europe, military operations speeded up, resulting in the Nazis conquering Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg and France. There was fear that even Great Britain would fall to the Germans. With such a possibility coming true, the security of the United States would be endangered. So chief interest in Washington was centered on national defense. Selective Service and other legislation were enacted and the Legion accepted these actions as the practical fulfillment of its universal service proposals as is to be seen in the report which follows:

The Legion may now take full credit for having laid the groundwork for the universal service plan that has

48. Annual Reports, 1937, p. 218.

49. "Legion Overwhelms New York" in Scholastic, Vol. 31, October 9, 1937, p. 13.

50. Annual Reports, 1938, p. 227; The National Legionnaire, October, 1938, pp. 1 and 2.

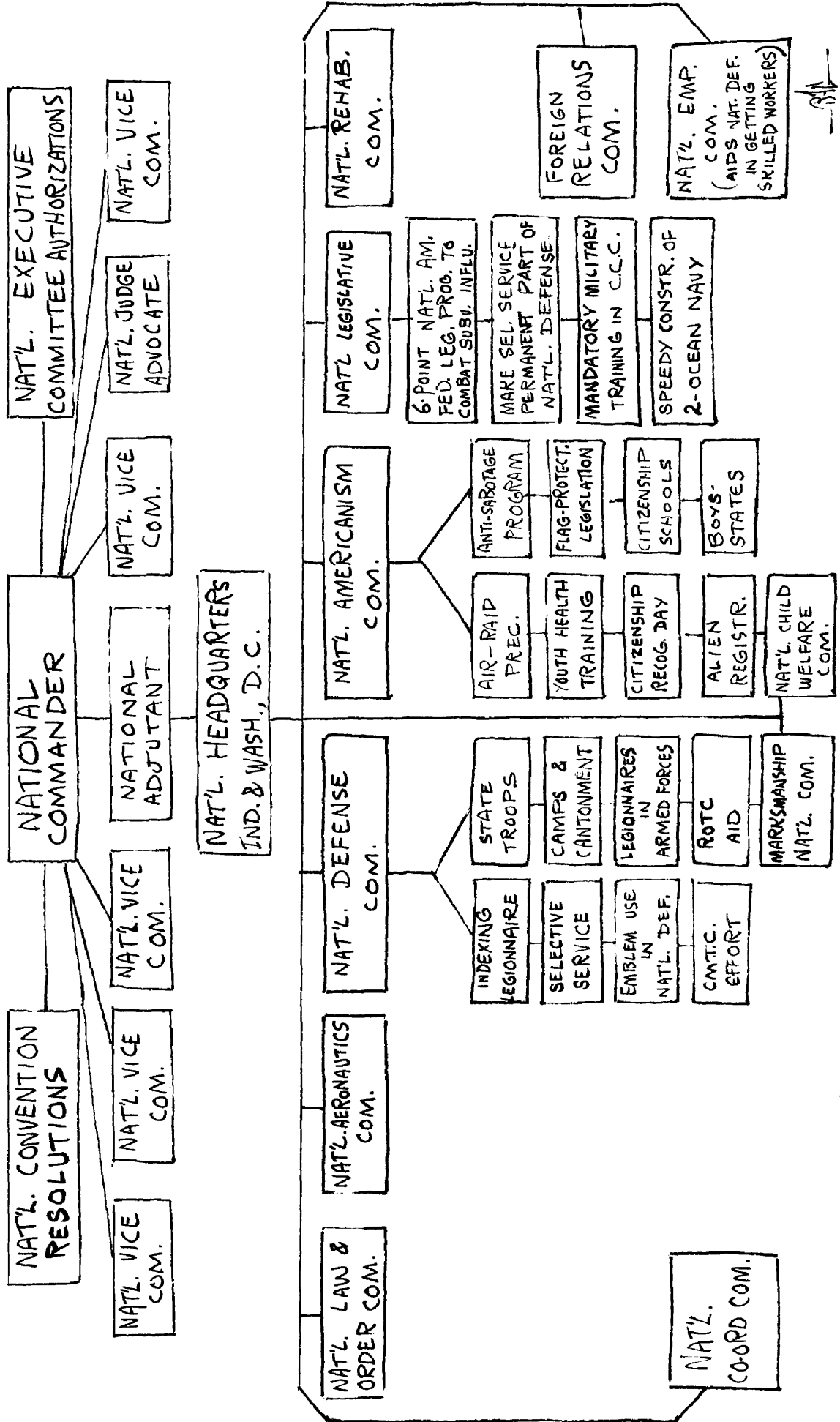
51. Annual Reports, 1939, p. 273.

been thrown together hastily in a hodgepodge of executive orders and piecemeal legislation. The Legion, throughout its existence, called upon the Congress and upon the public to make certain such a plan was enacted and ready for the time when it would be needed. Unfortunately, however, time passed and it was not until the emergency was upon us that officials hurriedly tried to throw the plan together. But the fact that it is now adopted, in practically every phase, displays the wisdom of the Legion in having advocated it and in attempting to have it enacted into law years ago.⁵²

Except for a resolution to make Selective Service, which was enacted in 1940, permanent, the Legion did not press too strongly for enactment of universal service during the war years. It did, however, try to keep its plan before legionnaires and the public generally by explaining the program to show the advantages that would accrue to the participants and to the nation itself. This plan would require young men just graduating from high school, or when they reach college age, to have a year of military training, but they could do so in a bracket of four or five years. The young men of the nation would live a wholesome, out-of-door life and receive training that would equip them not only to defend the nation in time of war, but would benefit them physically, mentally and morally to serve as good American citizens in time of peace. Young Americans would acquire a knowledge of taking care of themselves in camp life, where habits of accuracy,

52. Annual Reports, 1941, p. 295.

THE AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL DEFENSE PROGRAM¹



¹ THE NATIONAL LEGIONNAIRE JANUARY, 1941, P. 12.

obedience to constituted authority, thoroughness and promptness would be inculcated. They would learn leadership and teamwork. They would learn to recognize no standard of excellence save merit in placing the poor boy along side of the rich boy in a way in which he learns to respect the other for what he is actually worth through his ability to do things. The government of the United States would be satisfied to train young men as a worthwhile investment in good citizenship, for out of such a program, five benefits would accrue to the nation. These were stated to be as follows:

First, Universal training will, within a few years, create so great a body of effective reserves that this nation will be forever safe from attack. Second, when every young American reaches the age to enjoy the right to vote, to contract, to inherit property, to own property, to engage in business, to be entitled to the protection of his person through law, to free speech, to freedom of religion, to choice of occupation, to unemployment insurance, to workmen's compensation and to the thousands of other benefits and privileges conferred by American citizenship, has earned those rights and privileges by training to defend them, he will have a greater appreciation of their worth. Third, national discipline will reduce the commission of crime. Fourth, national health will be benefitted. Fifth, unemployment will be reduced.⁵³

In 1946, when the war emergency expired, Selective Service became inoperative and the Legion began its

53. The National Legionnaire, December, 1947, p. 12; "The American Legion" in Congressional Digest, Vol. 20, August-September, 1941, pp. 209-211.

campaigning for universal service. Recognizing the failure of Russia to co-operate in establishing peace after World War II, the Legion took the position that "we must have peace-time conscription to keep up our commitments and carry on until a real peace is made. This has apparently been hard for average Americans to swallow, and hard for Congress to accept as its duty in an election year."⁵⁴

In the final session of the 80th Congress, 1947-1948, the Legion put forth its greatest efforts to have Congress enact its program of universal military service. Noting that public opinion polls were 70 per cent favorable to universal service, passage would have been certain were it not for the "duty-shirking and political cowardice" of the leadership of the House and Senate "because this is an election year." The Legion's National Commander, James F. O'Neil, and its National Legislative Representative, John Thomas Taylor, were bitter when they named and blamed Speaker of the House, Joe Martin, Representative Charles Halleck, Republican floor leader, Representative Leslie Arends, Republican whip, Chairman Leo E. Allen, House Rules Committee, Representative Clarence Brown, Senator Taft's "voice" in the House, and Chairman Chan Gurney of

54. The National Legionnaire, May 20, 1948, p. 9.

the Senate Armed Services Committee for "this selfish and un-American procedure" in refusing to allow the bills to be reported to their respective houses for consideration.⁵⁵ So bitter was Commander O'Neil that he advocated calling Congress back in special session to enact its bill into law, because Congress "knows deep in its heart that this is the proper approach to security."⁵⁶

With both Democratic and Republican candidates for the Presidency and their respective platforms favorable, the Legion cast its hopes on the 81st Congress for enacting its universal service program.⁵⁷

Geneva Gas Protocol

One of the items called for in the Legion's program of national defense was research in general and especially the development of the Chemical Warfare Service to be sure that the United States would not be left behind other nations in this important work. In this scientific age, a nation's chance to exist is determined to a great extent by its ability to defend itself against new weapons of warfare.

Such a weapon of warfare that was used for the first

55. The National Legionnaire, March 1948, p. 1.

56. The Chicago Sun-Times, June 27, 1948, p. 62.

57. Chicago Herald-American, June 27, 1948, p. 4.

time in World War I was that of poison gas. It was the discovery by the British secret service that Germany was going to use this weapon that made it possible for the Allies to protect themselves better than if it had been used as a complete surprise to them. The use of this gas was done in spite of the fact that in 1899 at The Hague, Germany, France, Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, Russia and Japan had entered into a solemn agreement "to abstain from the use of projectiles the whole object of which is the diffusion of asphyxiating or deleterious gases," and again in 1907 at the same place, these same powers entered into a contract forbidding the employment of "poison or poisonous arms."⁵⁸

After the ending of World War I there were efforts at disarmament with the hope of eliminating war or lessening its effects. There had been the Washington Naval Disarmament Conference of 1921-1922 to limit competition in naval armaments. In 1926 there was called at Geneva, Switzerland, a conference for the purpose of discussing and arriving at some definite understanding on international trade in arms and ammunition. Congressman Theodore E. Burton of Ohio was Chairman of the United States delegation to this conference. There was included in the list

58. Annual Reports, 1926, pp. 101-103.

of arms and ammunition, chemicals and gases for war purposes. The smaller powers attending the conference objected to the inclusion of these items in the agenda. However, Mr. Burton produced a separate memorandum providing for the elimination of chemical warfare in its entirety and was successful in getting through a protocol doing away with chemical warfare by all countries which would ratify it. The conference was called for controlling international trade in arms and ammunition, but chemical warfare was another matter. The treaty to be signed by nations pledging themselves not to use poison gas was the Geneva Gas Protocol.

This treaty was submitted to the United States Senate for its consideration and ratification and many organizations and individuals appeared before the committee holding hearings to voice their support or objections to the proposed treaty. Among those for the protocol were eight women's organizations which had been called to meet in Washington by Carrie Chapman Catt during the week that the treaty was being discussed. The women's meeting was for the purpose of discussing "The Cause and Cure of War." Their lobbyists were active with members of the Senate to get ratification of the protocol.

The Legion was amongst the organizations opposing ratification. Its lobbyist, John Thomas Taylor, led the Legion's fight. Feelings ran high. Charges and counter

charges were made in the hearings. One of the charges made was that the head of the Legion lobby was serving as treasurer of an association which was carrying on propaganda to defeat the Geneva Protocol.⁵⁹

There were three main arguments used against its ratification by the Legion. First was the argument of gas as an effective weapon in warfare. "Gas proved to be a highly effective weapon during the World War (I). Thirty per cent of the American . . . battle casualties were gas casualties, leaving for all other weapons combined, such as rifle fire, machine guns, artillery high explosives, bayonets, hand grenades, land mines, and airplane bombs, only seventy per cent. Yet, only two per cent of the casualties of the other arms died--a death ratio in favor of gas, on a casualty basis, of twelve to one.

Second, was the argument of humaneness. Here it was argued that war is not humane, with or without gas, and Taylor quoted from a report adopted by the Association of Military Surgeons of October 16, 1926, to the effect that "the use of poisonous gases in war is more humane and less destructive (italics theirs) of human life than other methods of warfare."

The third argument was the impossibility of enforce-

59. Scribner's Magazine, Vol. 90, August, 1931, p. 181; Congressional Record, 69th Congress, 2nd Session, 1926, p. 226.

ment. "The history of warfare shows conclusively that where the national unity of a nation is threatened, that nation will make use of every effective weapon at its command, regardless of agreements to the contrary."⁶⁰

Fortified with resolution of the Omaha and Philadelphia conventions of 1925 and 1926, the National Commander of the Legion called on President Coolidge and stated the Legion's opposition to the ratification of the Geneva Gas Protocol. Furthermore, the Vice Chairman of the National Legislative Committee of the Legion wrote every Senator a letter to the effect that this treaty should be rejected. After three days of debate Senator Borah recommitted the treaty to his Committee on Foreign Relations. The treaty was never ratified.⁶¹

The Kellogg Peace Pact and Navy Construction

The Washington Naval Armaments Conference of 1921-1922 assigned a 5-5-3 ratio for the United States, Great Britain and Japan for capital ships (battle ships and battle cruisers), but placed no limitation upon the building of scout cruisers under 10,000 tons carrying 8-inch guns. After the ratification of this treaty Great Britain

60. Congressional Record, 69th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 68, part 1, 1927, p. 225; Annual Reports, 1925, pp. 121-122; Annual Reports, 1926, pp. 101-103.

61. See Appendix,

and Japan constructed these speedy scout cruisers, which were rated next in importance to the capital ships, and were vitally necessary to fleet operations and in connection with commerce in the event of an emergency.

Of these scout cruisers Great Britain had built 40 and was building 14 with 332,000 total tonnage, Japan had built 19 and was building 6 with 156,000 total tonnage, and the United States had built 10 and was building 5 with 125,000 total tonnage. England had almost three times the ratio in scout cruiser tonnage and Japan actually exceeded the United States.⁶²

It was an attempt to correct this situation that prompted President Coolidge to call the three-power Geneva Conference for the further limitation of naval armament. When the delegates met on June 20, 1927, such conflicting proposals were submitted by the United States, Great Britain and Japan that agreement to further limitation of naval armaments was impossible.⁶³

After the failure of the Geneva Three-Power Naval Limitation Conference of 1927, President Coolidge recommended to Congress a naval building program which would bring the United States up to parity with Great Britain. This program called for 71 ships of all types with emphasis

62. Annual Reports, 1927, pp. 129-130.

63. Annual Reports, 1927, pp. 130-133.

on cruisers and aircraft carriers at a total cost of \$740,000,000. The Legion welcomed this reversal of the administration particularly on the construction of fast scout cruisers.⁶⁴ But at that time a new element came into the picture: the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact was up for ratification or rejection in the Senate.

In April, 1928, as a result of discussions between Secretary of State of the United States, Frank B. Kellogg, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France, Aristide Briand, President Coolidge directed Secretary Kellogg to propose to the nations of the world that they should enter into a binding agreement that they "solemnly declare in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another" and to settle all disputes or conflicts "by pacific means." When the Legion held its convention in San Antonio, it was faced with its own position on the treaty. Of course, being a loyal, patriotic organization, it could not very well oppose an announced policy of the government. Supporting the naval construction for national defense, which was being made to appear to be a war program, and supporting the Kellogg Briand Peace Pact would appear to be supporting

64. Annual Reports, 1928, p. 117.

war measures and peace programs at the same time. When the convention had considered the terms of the treaty, it defined the Legion's attitude toward it and is quoted as follows:

We indorse the principles expressed in the recently approved multilateral treaty outlawing war as an instrument of national policy, but we desire that the American Legion make it clear to our people that the approval of this treaty does not, in any way, guarantee peace, and does not, therefore, permit of any reduction in the very modest military establishment maintained by our nation for purely defensive purposes.⁶⁵

A wave of pacifism struck the country and the immediate result was that the naval construction program was cut from the proposed 71 ships to 16--15 cruisers and one aircraft carrier--at a total cost of \$274,000,000. The organizations supporting the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact did what the Legion suspected--used the strategy of getting the pact ratified and then used ratification as an argument to defeat the naval construction program. It became a problem as to which would be considered first in the Senate--the pact or the construction bill. The pressure became so great that just before the Senate recessed for the Christmas holidays in 1928 a compromise was reached. When Congress was to reconvene on January 3, 1929, the cruiser bill became the unfinished business on the legislative calendar while the treaty became the unfinished business

65. Annual Reports, 1929, p. 224.

on the executive calendar. The treaty was ratified January 15 and the cruiser bill became law February 13, 1929.

But those favoring national defense for the United States have learned that authorizing the building of ships by Congress and seeing them slide down the ways are two very different matters. Shortly after President Coolidge signed the bill to add to the naval strength of the United States, Herbert Hoover became President. After proclaiming the Kellogg Peace Pact, he announced that Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald was visiting the United States for the purpose of discussing naval disarmament. To show the good intentions of the United States, President Hoover suspended construction on nine cruisers that were to have been built in 1929, 1930 and 1931, thus leaving only six to be constructed in those years. This brought a quick rebuke from the National Commander of the Legion, Paul V. McNutt, who wired President as follows:

Our lost parity can be regained by only two methods, which are continued cruiser building by America or extended cruiser scrapping by Great Britain or by a combination of these methods. It would seem therefore, that a drastic scrapping program of British cruisers should be inaugurated as proof that they concede us actual cruiser parity before America suspends construction on our cruiser program The Legion is not questioning at this time the authority of the Chief Executive to suspend construction on three of the five cruisers, although the United

States has not become signatory to any international agreement for the further limitation of naval armament.⁶⁶

President Hoover replied to Commander McNutt's telegram, and is quoted as follows:

I am glad to have your assurance that the American Legion supports the policy of parity for our navy with that of Great Britain Competitive building has been in progress on both sides since the Great War, and we have arrived only at disparity, not parity. It creates burdensome expenditure, a constant stream of suspicion, ill will and misunderstandings. Moreover, by constant expansion of naval strength we cannot fail to stimulate fear and ill will throughout the rest of the world toward both of us, and thus defeat the very purposes which you have so well expressed I fear you have been misinformed as to the actual problems that lie before us if we are to succeed in such a negotiation, for they are far more difficult than can be solved by the simple formula which you suggest.⁶⁷

Shortly after this set-back in its defense efforts, the Legion took stock of its ten years of activity in 1929 with the hope of correcting its failures in preventing reductions in the fleet of the United States or to get construction completed. There was the recognition that one of the big difficulties lay in the official delegations selected to represent the United States in international conferences. Too often, the Legion felt, these delegates were too pacifistic, too anti-war and likely to surrender

66. Annual Reports, 1929, p. 145; "Is the Legion a Menace?" in The Christian Century, Vol. 46, October 16, 1929, pp. 1271-1272.

67. Annual Reports, 1929, p. 146.

too much for what they would get in return. Legionnaires saw the reduction of armaments and the elimination of war as an "ideal that is only for the future" and having the effect of interfering with what it considered proper national defense. In order to forestall United States delegations from going too far in disarming, the Legion in its Louisville convention in 1929 recommended "to the President that at all international peace, disarmament or similar conferences involving the question of national security in which this country is a participant or has an observer, official or otherwise, the American Legion be accorded a representative at such international conferences."⁶⁸

Although the Legion did not have an observer at the London Naval Disarmament Conference in 1930, it urged ratification of the treaty which limited the size of navies until 1936 and eliminated competitive building in so far as the United States, Great Britain and Japan were concerned. When the Senate ratified the London Treaty on July 21, 1930, the Legion went on record to the effect that "it may be presumed that the London Naval Treaty

68. Congressional Record, 70th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 69, part 4, 1928, p. 4605; Annual Reports, 1930, pp. 271-272.

(was) not in conflict with the requirements of a policy of sound national defense."⁶⁹

By 1931 it began to appear to the Legion that it would be the twenties all over again in its defense efforts. Consequently, a campaign was begun to get Congress to build up the navy to the strength permitted by the London Naval Treaty. Such building was urged to be completed by 1936 if the United States was to maintain parity. But the depression was not loosening its grip and in the short session of Congress no legislation for national defense was enacted. This was irksome to the Legion and its National Defense Committee spoke more pointedly and is quoted as follows:

World peace and world disarmament are one thing, and the precipitous and voluntary disarmament of a nation is another. For the United States to disarm now or at any other time before other nations likewise disarm, is a project to which the American Legion is unshakably opposed. The American Legion is opposed to disarmament of the United States either for purposes of economy or as a claimed means to bring about world peace, or as an example, which it is hoped by some, other nations will follow that we believe in adequate military and naval preparedness for the defense of the United States as the best guarantee of peace.⁷⁰

The Legion's policy, 1921 to 1931, was that of trying to get Congress to build up the United States fleet to treaty strength as well as to get the other units of

69. Annual Reports, 1930, pp. 264 and 271-272.

70. Annual Reports, 1931, pp. 277-278; Annual Reports, 1933, p. 406.

adequate national defense strengthened. The Legion opposed the foreign policy of the Hoover administration of cutting off the construction of ships "to show the good intentions of the United States" toward other nations. The Legion, instead, would follow a foreign policy that would operate from a position of strength, not weakness, recognizing that any policy is effective in proportion to the national strength to carry it out. This policy would forestall the denial on the part of the United States of any effective weapons already in existence or any that might be developed. The Legion did not consider this policy to be one of hostility toward other nations, but only as a safeguard to the national interests of the United States. This policy would be a safeguard to peace also, for no nation would seek trouble with the United States when there was adequate force to prevent it. The Legion met defeat on most of its proposals for an adequate national defense. Only in opposing ratification of the Geneva Gas Protocol was it successful in preventing ratification. The pacifist wave that swept the country, the economy-minded administrations in Washington, the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact, the depression and the failure to appraise the national defense needs in terms of true world conditions all played a part in the failure to provide adequate national defense. To the Legion, the failure of the United States in keeping strong militarily

prevented strong leadership in world affairs.

Lend-Lease and National Defense

One of the stories that gained wide acceptance as to the United States entering World War I was the desire and determination of munitions makers to make big profits in the manufacture and sale of war materials. The Nye investigations tended to confirm this story. "Cash and carry" and neutrality legislation were the outcome. The Legion was still in the neutrality nightmare the first half of 1940. Writing in the National Legionnaire, Raymond J. Kelly, the National Commander, stated the Legion position in this way:

In the minds of many, the turn of the wheel has been completed since we came out of war. Again the nations of Europe are in the cockpit attempting to find an answer through force to the questions they have not found in the peace conferences. Inevitably the question of America's participation engages every man's attention. Our answer in the Legion is that we shall avoid involvement in this struggle. Neither the peace to follow these wars, nor the conditions facing our country, will be bettered by our participation Just now we advocate non-involvement in struggles which are not of primary concern to our people.⁷¹

The "phoney war" of the winter of 1939-1940 gave way to the German conquest of Norway and Denmark in April, 1940. But the Legion objectives, when the National Executive Committee met in Indianapolis on May 2 and 3,

71. The National Legionnaire, March, 1940. p. 6.

were "opposition to our involvement in the European war and mobilization of American defense."⁷² Hitler's conquests continued with the fall of Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg and France by June 17, 1940, and England had lost heavily before and during the evacuation of Dunkerque. More than half of her destroyers were sunk or damaged during this evacuation, most of her ground material was left or destroyed in France. The United States was called on for aid.

The United States was confronted with the problem of its own security. It was now a question of how that could be done best. If Britain fell, and Hitler took over the British and French fleets, nothing could stop him from invading the United States. Isolationist and interventionist groups became active, the former advocating non-involvement and the more extreme of the latter advocating a declaration of war against Nazi Germany. In between these two groups were those advocating all aid "short of war." The main questions at issue were the exchange of over-age destroyers for bases in the Atlantic and President Roosevelt's proposal to "sell, transfer, lease, exchange or otherwise dispose of" articles of defense to Great Britain, usually referred to as Lend-Lease. On September 3, 1940,

72. The National Legionnaire, April, 1940, p. 1.

President Roosevelt announced the consummation of the destroyer-base deal. Congress would be called on to implement Lend-Lease through legislation.

The first opportunity the Legion had to take any official action on these questions came in its Boston convention the latter part of September, 1940. A resolution was offered, not only favoring the destroyer-base deal, but a recommendation that additional air and naval bases be acquired by exchanging obsolete equipment. The Legion approved the action of the navy in taking over control of the Atlantic outpost of Iceland, July 7, 1940, thus relieving the British there and looked with favor upon the plan of Colonel John H. Houett, President of the Aeronautical Chamber of Commerce, to use this base for air patrol of the 2,000 miles to Britain.⁷³

The Legion's national defense program, it was assumed, appeared reasonably adequate so long as the European balance of power remained. Its Atlantic defenses had assumed a strong Britain to lessen United States commitments in that area. The Legion's defense program became inadequate "only because a situation which formerly seemed theoretic and remote had become real and imminent almost over night. The possible missions of our armed forces have been expanded

73. Annual Reports, 1941, p. 246.

almost beyond recognition because of events in Europe." The navy was not capable of operating simultaneously in the Pacific and Atlantic against a possible coalition of powers and this occasioned no serious alarm until Germany threatened the destruction of British sea power in the Atlantic. When this possibility threatened, all "the tacit assumptions on which our whole defense system was built were swept away."

Through this exchange of destroyers for bases it would be possible for the defenses of the United States to extend farther from the coast lines. National Commander Warner, in explaining the thoughts of the delegates of the Boston convention, is quoted as follows:

We want America strong enough to meet any intended invasion before it arrives and turn it back so that our homes remain intact and our families secure. We would prefer to fight outside the United States rather than see any part of the United States become destroyed. No more costly mistake in statecraft can be made than a program which envisages initial fighting upon our continental frontiers Our present program (is) to build a navy with its own air arm capable of defending our interests in both the Atlantic and Pacific against any possible group of aggressors.⁷⁴

The Legion was strong for Lend-Lease as a method of aid to Britain to make the defenses of the United States strong and thus avoid involvement in the war. At its Boston convention in September, 1940, its resolutions that "we believe that a sound national defense policy for

74. The National Legionnaire, December, 1940, p. 1.

this country requires that we should at this time give all practicable aid to Great Britain and those aligned with her in their fight for freedom," for "the United States (to) exercise all lawful means to prevent the shipment of war materials to the aggressor nations" and that we "extend to all peoples who are resisting aggression the fullest cooperation consistent with our own obligations, our security, our liberties and our peace" were adopted after a hard convention floor battle.⁷⁵

The bill for advancing Lend-Lease aid was introduced January 3, 1941, when Congress convened for its third session. In the hearings on Lend-Lease, the Legion not only supported this measure, but called for "actual delivery of the good to England."⁷⁶ Congress debated the bill for a little over two months and enacted it. At the time the bill, bearing the curiously historical number of H. R. 1776, became law, March 15, 1941, the National Executive Committee of the Legion held a special meeting in Indianapolis. At the end of its two-day deliberations a statement was issued calling for the "delivery of all

75. Annual Reports, 1941, pp. 243-244.

76. Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 77th Congress, 1st Session on H. R. 1776, January 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 1941.

practicable aid to Great Britain and those aligned with her in their fight for freedom, consistent with the building of our own national defense," urged upon the administration that all bottlenecks in defense industries be eliminated, and reiterated its stand against profiteering in defense work.⁷⁷

The United States had become the "arsenal of democracy," but another problem arose--how to get the materials to Britain. There was no point in making war equipment only to allow it to be sunk at sea by German submarines.

President Roosevelt discussed this problem in a "national emergency" fire-side chat to the nation in which he reasserted the American doctrine of the freedom of the seas and hinted strongly that proper action would be taken to insure safe delivery of the goods to Britain. This brought on warm discussions all summer as to what methods would be used to insure delivery of the goods without the United States being involved in the war. Specific methods of insuring the safe delivery of goods were the patrol, escort, convoy or actual delivery of the goods in United States ships. All were discussed pro and con.

77. The National Legionnaire, March 1941, p. 1; Congressional Record, 77th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 87, part 2, 1941, pp. 2277-2278.

Referring to the President's fire-side chat, National Commander Milo J. Warner put the Legion out ahead of the administration on this issue. He called for the actual delivery of such aid and that the President "as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces employ such units of the navy and auxiliary forces as in his judgment may be required to insure the safety of American vessels and their crews by guarding them against attacks from any source." He promised Legion support on whatever action was taken to insure safe delivery of the goods and called on all Americans to support the President, regardless of "personal prejudice, questions of partisanship, and selfish interest on matters of national defense," upon this "clear declaration of international policy."⁷⁸

Before the question of convoys was settled, another complicating element came in for consideration. On June 22, 1941, Germany attacked Russia, in violation of their non-aggression pact signed after Munich. Since the United States was sending Lend-Lease aid to Great Britain in her battle against Germany, the question was raised as to whether or not Lend-Lease aid should go also to Russia.

As far as the Legion was concerned, Russia and Communism stood for everything which the Legion detested.

78. The National Legionnaire, June, 1941, p. 9.

Russia had put herself in bad company when she signed the non-aggression pact with Germany, and in attacking Finland in the winter of 1939-1940 had not shown herself to be any better than any other of the totalitarian powers. Furthermore, her agents in the United States were doing everything they could to destroy the American economic and governmental systems.

The first public statement of the Legion regarding Lend-Lease aid to Russia came in a Fourth of July address in Kansas City, entitled, "Freedom vs. Piracy." National Commander Warner made a telegraphic poll of the opinions of the National Executive Committee and past national commanders on the question of Lend-Lease aid to Russia. He summarized their opinions which are quoted as follows:

A consensus of the advice I received in response to that inquiry may be summed up in a sentence. In no way changing our attitude toward communism, the invasion of Russia by Germany forms an occasion for the United States to increase and speed up her aid to Great Britain. It enhances the necessity for getting goods delivered in volume to Great Britain now. We should not worry now about aid to Russia, pro or con. We have no more of the essentials of war needs to spare than Britain can use as fast as we can get them to her. We can use every available ship to get goods to Britain. We can produce arms and munitions no faster than Britain can usefully employ them. When we can produce more than that, we can take time to consider if there is better use for them than in the hands of our own forces.⁷⁹

He was concerned mainly with manufacturing war materials and getting them delivered to England. Getting them

79. The National Legionnaire, July, 1941, p. 1.

delivered to England involved a problem with the Nazi threat to the freedom of the seas that had been encountered many times in American history. He described this Nazi threat to the freedom of the seas and to the whole world in the words quoted as follows:

We are convinced the Nazi threat to our freedom of the seas is a step in the familiar Hitler pattern of terror to persuade us that he is invincible. It is likewise a prelude to the Nazi attempt at domination of the western hemisphere. It is wise for us therefore on this Fourth of July to consider all the lessons of our naval history in preparing to defend actual and real independence of thought and action.⁸⁰

There was no indication of a change of attitude of Legion leadership as to approving Lend-Lease aid to Russia when the national convention convened in Milwaukee in September, 1941. The question would be determined finally by the delegate members, for there was certain to be a resolution for such aid to be sent to Russia.

The Roosevelt administration had included Russia in the list of nations receiving Lend-Lease aid. Recognizing that an unfavorable position taken by the Legion on this action would not be desirable from the administration's point of view, the democratic processes were relied upon. Speakers both favoring and opposing the administration's action appeared on the program.

In probably the most dramatic convention in Legion

80. The Milwaukee Journal, September 15, 1941, p. 1.

history the resolution for sending Lend-Lease aid to Russia was presented. The isolationists forgot all about national defense and argued against aid to Russia because of their hatred of Communism. Those favoring Lend-Lease aid to Russia argued that it was not a question of being for or against Communism, but for or against a government policy and those who would obstruct the Lend-Lease act would not be serving their country. A compromise was reached when Chairman Murphy of the Legion's Foreign Relations Committee announced that the Americanism Commission was offering a resolution voicing the Legion's traditional opposition to Communism. Voting Lend-Lease aid to Russia did not mean embracing Communism or its activities in the United States. The resolution passed by a vote of 874 to 604. (The full account of the Milwaukee Convention is given in the chapter, Neutrality and Isolation.)

The Legion has always maintained that all policies for national defense that it has pursued have been to achieve the goal of peace. Support for Lend-Lease to Britain and Russia was for the purpose "of building up our national defense to a point where we would be so strong that no nation would dare, or could attack us." It was a peace to be achieved through strength, not weakness. Lend-Lease came too late to achieve the kind of national defense the Legion worked for, since the program was to be completed

by 1947. Japan struck at Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941. National Survival then became the issue.

The United Nations and National Defense

The League of Nations was the first organization on a world scale for collective security. It was the fulfillment of a dream of centuries to achieve world peace. When, and for whatever reasons, world peace was not achieved, and World War II was upon the world, inevitably, another attempt would be made to set up an organization for collective security. What the new organization could or should do would be determined by the collective actions of the nations winning the war. Whatever it would do in setting up a system of force to keep peace in the world would have a bearing on national sovereignty and national defense systems. Looking to the future, the Legion in 1942 stated that "plans must be worked out for a concert of nations to guard the peace around the globe."⁸¹ In 1943 at its Omaha convention, the Legion called for American participation in setting up and maintaining "an association of free and sovereign nations, implemented with whatever force may be necessary to

81. The National Legionnaire, December, 1942, pp.

maintain world peace and prevent a recurrence of war."⁸² At the Dumbarton Oaks conference in 1944 there was prepared a tentative charter for this world organization to keep the peace of the world. At San Francisco in 1945 the world security conference adopted the Charter for the new organization to replace the defunct League of Nations and was called the United Nations. On July 4, 1945, National Commander Scheiberling wrote all United States Senators asking them to ratify the San Francisco Charter "at the earliest date consistent with due and proper procedure." He cited the previous three national conventions of the Legion voting unanimously in favor of the establishment of an association "of free and sovereign nations" to maintain peace.⁸³ The Senate ratified this Charter in the summer of 1945, thus making the United States a member of the United Nations along with some two score other nations. The United Nations became a going concern, although not all of its agencies have been established yet. The one agency of the United Nations having greatest bearing on national defense, the International Police Force, has not been created due to disagreement of the Big Five

82. Newsweek, Vol. 22, October 4, 1943, pp. 45-46; Annual Reports, 1944, p. 251.

83. The National Legionnaire, July, 1945, p. 2.

in the Security Council. An International Police Force worthy of the name would create confidence in the United Nations as a peace organization and would have the tendency to take the emphasis off of national security and rely on collective security, as was intended by the designers.

How the Legion regards problems of national defense along with a functioning United Nations is set forth here.

The Legion since its inception has always recognized the vital role of force in the community, in the state, in the nation, and in the world. It has never agreed to the pacifist goal of trying to operate a going concern from a status of weakness. In 1945 when feelings and hopes were so very high for the new peace organization, the Legion was enthusiastic too. It placed less emphasis on national defense as a separate, national problem, but rather one of co-operation with other nations in implementing the Charter of the United Nations to make it effective. While recognizing that "force to stop aggression is inherent in world organization for peace," National Commander Scheiberling urged early in 1945 that the United States "be ready to accept its responsibility to supply a large part of that force."⁸⁴ This did not mean, however, any deviation necessarily from the national defense program this organization has sponsored so long. National Commander Scheiberling,

84. The National Legionnaire, May, 1945, p. 2.

speaking for the Legion, thought of national defense in terms of building up a wholehearted backing for the United Nations "in the knowledge that it will require time to build a firm foundation and develop a functioning organization, but that it is a splendid start toward international outlawing of war." Universal military training should be enacted "as a bulwark of strength behind our planning at the peace table and as a safeguard for the future." And finally, another development in the Legion's national defense plans was to go back to an old suggestion of the organization, namely, to push "the movement to build an international force of trained and career diplomats so America's foreign relations will be in the hands of experts and its foreign policies clear cut so they can be a living force throughout the world."⁸⁵ To the Legion, "the first line of defense, truly speaking, is the State Department and the Diplomatic Corps. It is only when they fall down that a war is on the country. It is then that it is promptly turned over to the Army and Navy to fight as the last line of defense."⁸⁶

In 1945 also, the Legion called for maintaining the fleet of the United States intact "as a first line of world

85. The National Legionnaire, July, 1945, p. 1; August, 1945, p. 8; Proceedings of the Executive Committee, 1945, p. 103.

86. Annual Reports, 1936, pp. 251-253.

defense," and for the United States to "retain full control of islands captured from Japan."⁸⁷ Mr. Scheiberling considered that World War II and the peace which was to be safeguarded by the United Nations as a "fight for freedom."

And he continued this line of thought when he said:

To fight for freedom implies possession of the tools and men needed for the successful conclusion of such a fight. We believe that the faith and hope of free peoples of the world will be bolstered by the knowledge that, this time, the United States is ready to fight against any challenge to liberty throughout the world. The Legion is convinced that no peace, however welcome, can long endure unless it be made secure by the nations which have won it; nations which must be prepared in every sense to fight for the rights of free men and freedom-loving people.⁸⁸

It was not long after the end of World War II that the high hopes of the United Nations to keep the peace began to be replaced by doubts. Peace through co-operation was being challenged and frustrated by Russian determination to dominate. Her schemes and designs in the satellite countries made peace-loving peoples everywhere question the real motives and intentions of the Soviets. Her reluctance to co-operate in setting up an effective international police force in the Security Council did not fit the letter nor the spirit of the United Nations Charter. Her refusal to agree to any effective international control of atomic energy made the Soviets even more suspect, to the extent

87. The National Legionnaire, May, 1945, p. 2.

88. The National Legionnaire, May, 1945, p. 2.

it became accepted widely that the Russians "do not want peace; they do not want war; they want chaos and confusion." The attitudes and actions of the Russians since the end of World War II have had the effect of less stress being placed on collective security and more to individual and regional security, such as the Rio Pact and the North Atlantic Military Alliance. When policies designed to lead to peace could not progress through the United Nations, policies have been instituted outside that organization. Until there is a real desire and determination on the part of nations to achieve peace through collective security, the Legion would place its reliance on national efforts. When President Truman and Prime Minister Atlee announced their policy on the atomic bomb, the Legion approved and announced that "we will keep what secret we have until we can make the world security position as strong as possible with the hope that atomic power may be used fairly and peacefully. Anyone who thinks that by handing Russia, for example, all the data on the atomic bomb, we would once and for all cement friendly and peaceful understandings, is blind to a hundred correlative facts."⁸⁹ The United States must play a leading role in bringing the family of nations "into the promised land of lasting peace." She can do this by marshalling "her splendid

89. The National Legionnaire, December, 1945, p. 10.

strength behind the efforts of peacemakers." And the Legion sees the success of the United Nations as being dependent on the military force of the United States. Its logic in this conclusion is to be seen from the statement quoted as follows:

Any world security organization must depend for its success upon a militarily strong America. An impregnable America must be, therefore, the foundation upon which the world must build for its partnership of enduring peace, and it is the only basis on which America can plan her own security.⁹⁰

The significance of this conclusion is this: that before World War II, the Legion's national defense program assumed the United States to be the dominant power in the western hemisphere; now the United States should play the part of the dominant power in the world.

Conclusions

The Legion considers its second most important activity is to strive for an adequate national defense program for the United States. (Its first most important activity concerns veterans' benefits.)

While maintaining that the United States is the only great nation of the world that waits until it gets into war before it starts to get ready for it, the Legion asserts that this lack of preparedness down through its history is dangerous to national security, wasteful in cost and human

90. Proceedings of the Executive Committee, 1946, p. 22.

life and is a threat to world peace.

Assuming that there will be future wars the Legion is interested in seeing the United States stay out if it can, but to win if it has to fight. The United States could probably stay out of war, if adequately prepared to defend its interests. So, preparedness for peace would sum up the program and the goal of national defense.

Universal military training would be the basis of the national defense program. This would call for the conscription of capital, labor and soldiers in order to equalize the burdens of war and to prevent war profiteering. An army with sufficient equipment, a two-ocean navy, a stockpile of atom bombs and an air force would complete the national defense program.

The Legion supported many bills in the period 1922 to 1940 to get this program through Congress, but every time was defeated by various causes--its own lack of proper organization at first, the depression, waves of pacifism, communist activity, economy demands and the general indifference and lack of understanding by the American people. However, the organization considered the bulk of its program as being effected through Selective Service in 1940 and through executive orders setting up rationing and price control in World War II. In 1947 the Legion tried again to get its universal military training program through Congress and failed. Propaganda and political pressure

still go on for this program.

The Geneva Gas Protocol in 1926 failed ratification in the Senate partly through Legion opposition. There were two main objections: that gas warfare was no more inhumane than other types of warfare and that the United States should not deny itself the use of an effective weapon in case of war.

While favoring the ratification of the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact in 1928, the Legion opposed using it as an argument for unilateral disarmament of the United States. President Hoover ignored Legion requests to build up the navy to the 5-5-3 ratio as provided for in the Washington Naval Disarmament Conference in 1922.

The exchange of over-age destroyers for Atlantic naval bases with the British and Lend-Lease to Britain and Russia were favored by the Legion to provide national security, to keep the United States out of war and to aid national defense.

The Legion endorsed the United Nations as an agency to maintain peace through collective security and even advocated relying on implementing it for adequate national defense. When Russia failed to co-operate in setting up an international police force, the Legion reverted to its previous demands for a strong national defense as the surest way to safeguard American interests. This policy is to continue as the Legion program until the desire and

determination of nations are evident to make collective security work. The atomic bomb should continue to remain in American hands, if the Legion policy prevails.

The Legion approached national defense first from a national view. When the United Nations was being established, the Legion approved collective security. Russian sabotage in the Security Council was instrumental in forcing the Legion back to a more nationalist approach to national security. Whereas, down to World War II the Legion's national defense program was designed to maintain the dominant position of the United States in the western hemisphere, now the Legion advocates a national defense program that would have the United States assume the role of dominant power in the world.

CHAPTER VI

ISOLATION AND NEUTRALITY

The battle against isolation and neutrality in the five years preceding the Second World War is one of the spectacular chapters in the recent history of American politics. Prior to 1920, isolation and neutrality had been closely identified with the "traditional American foreign policy." It is true that this technique had failed to keep the United States out of the French Revolutionary Wars, the Napoleonic Wars and as well as the First World War. The League of Nations, proposed by Woodrow Wilson, meant the complete abandonment of isolation and neutrality, and the adoption of a policy of close political cooperation in opposition to aggression by warlike states. But the failure of the United States Senate, in 1920, to ratify the Covenant of the League of Nations, entailed the revival of isolation and neutrality as the keystone of American foreign policy.

In 1935, when the storm clouds of war again darkened European skies, the question of isolation versus collective security became a paramount issue before the forum of American public opinion. It was inevitable that the American Legion should play a conspicuous role in the ensuing battle over isolation.

Confusion Within the American Legion

Mussolini's defiance of the League of Nations followed by the invasion of Ethiopia by the Fascist army in 1935 found opinion within the American Legion just as confused as American opinion in general regarding the relation of the United States to the threatened war in Europe. Among Legionnaire leadership there were many ardent supporters of the same idealism of Woodrow Wilson that had led to the founding of the League of Nations. Early in the year 1935, Frank N. Belgrano, Jr., declared:

Those who practice the theory of splendid isolation are smoking the opium of self-deception. They may have pleasant dreams for the moment, but some day they will awake to a nightmare of tragic reality.¹

Belgrano's speech was made in February, 1935. Barely five months later, the Legion repudiated the fine sentiments of its Commander.

Alarmed by war reverberations in Europe, in August 1935, Congress hastily attempted to modernize the neutrality legislation of the United States. The Neutrality Act of 1935 revamped previous legislation by levying: (1) an automatic embargo on the export of arms and munitions to belligerent countries immediately after a status of war was declared, (2) a prohibition of private loans to belligerents, (3) a prohibition against American ships entering the ports of belligerents or navigating war zones on the

1. The National Legionnaire, March, 1935, p. 7.

high seas, and (4) a prohibition against American citizens taking passage on the ships of belligerents.²

The Neutrality Act of 1935 had been an expression of distrust by the isolationist and pacifist forces in Congress toward the President as the leader in molding foreign policy. The Act was a challenge to views that held the attainment of peace to be best achieved through international cooperation rather than by isolation. In St. Louis in September 1935, less than a month after the enactment of the Neutrality Act, the Legion was confronted with the issue raised by the Neutrality Act, and immediately repudiated its own National Commander's appraisal of neutrality as a national policy and supported the new Congressional legislation. On this occasion resort was had to the old plea that the Legion as a patriotic organization must not support a contrary policy to that of the government. Specifically, it approved the neutrality legislation on the grounds that "the Legion wishes that the United States remain at peace with all nations of the world." The resolutions commended the Neutrality Act and pledged "our support to the maintenance of absolute neutrality by the United States Government."³

2. 49 U. S. Statutes at Large, pp. 1081-1085.

3. Annual Reports, 1936, pp. 230-231.

A few months later the Senate and House of Representatives held hearings on proposed amendments to the Neutrality Act. It is significant that all through the neutrality period and even during its repeal, the Legion did not ask to give, nor did it give, testimony at the hearings, relying completely on its resolutions in convention to state its position.⁴ As usual when opinion within the Legion had not crystallized, the organization limited action to resolutions and public statements, and at one stage of the battle over neutrality this organization even failed to enact a resolution on this aspect of policy.

After the hearings of 1935-1936 Congress added a new provision to the Neutrality Act in 1936 prohibiting loans to belligerents.⁵ This second Neutrality Act was to remain in effect until May 1, 1937. The Legion favored this act as a continued observance of the Monroe Doctrine, and avoiding any entanglements in European quarrels and against

4. Compare Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, United States Senate, 74th Congress, 2nd Session, on 3474, A Bill Providing for the Prohibition of the Export of Arms, Ammunition, and Implements of War to Belligerent Countries; Restriction of Use of Ports by Belligerents; the Registration and Licensing of Persons Engaged in the Business of Manufacturing, Exporting, or Importing Arms, Ammunition, or Implements of War; and Restricting Travel by American Citizens on Belligerent Ships During War. January 10 to February 5, 1936.

5. 50 U. S. Statutes at Large, pp. 121-128.

any alliance which would draw the United States into war.⁶

Hearings were held again by the House on proposed amendments to the Neutrality Act of 1936. In the legislation that followed, two new major features were added to take effect on May 1, 1937. The first of these was the "cash and carry" system for trade with belligerents under which these belligerents would be required to pay cash for purchases and merchandise to be carried in foreign ships only after title had passed from American ownership. This system would be in effect only two years, this being regarded as a "trial period." The second addition would bring warring factions in civil wars within a nation under the scope of the provisions of the Neutrality Act. The act retained provisions of the old law for mandatory embargoes on extension of credit and loans and on shipments of arms, ammunition and implements of war to belligerents.⁷

The Legion continued its support in "urging the United States to maintain a strict policy of neutrality regarding foreign affairs and further urge the United States be kept

6. The National Legionnaire, October, 1936, p. 2.

7. Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 75th Congress, 1st Session, on H. J. Res. 147, To Maintain the Neutrality of the United States in the Event of War or Threat of War Between or Among Foreign Nations and H. J. Res. 242 To Maintain the Neutrality of the United States in the Event of War Between or Among Foreign Nations, and for Other Purposes. February 16, 17, 18, 19, and 23, 1937.

from any alliance which might draw this country into war."⁸

As previously passed neutrality acts were amended shortly after their enactment, so was the attempt made to amend the act that went into effect May 1, 1937. Sympathizers with the Loyalists in Spain and for the Chinese in their defense against Japan wanted changes made. The isolationists were content to keep the neutrality legislation as it was. Senator Borah of Idaho was one to oppose change. In a radio address March 28, 1938, he stated that the United States should be on guard against "sentimentalists and dreamers" who would plunge the country into war "under the attractive banner of cooperation" with other democracies. He contended that the theory that democracies can be saved through an alliance with other democracies is a misleading theory and that such an alliance would have all the vice and none of the virtues of the old balance of power.⁹

Later in the year 1938, Senator Key Pittman, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, announced plans for a broad reexamination of the foreign policy of the United States for possible revision by the next Congress. Nevertheless, at the ensuing Legion convention no resolution on neutrality was offered. The Foreign

8. Annual Reports, 1937, p. 229.

9. The Denver Post, March 29, 1938, p. 8.

Relations Committee of the Legion, however, did make some significant comments in the following vein:

We beg leave to say that it is now apparent that even the word "neutrality" is a relative term. It means one thing to one person and another thing to another. We have no particular recommendation to make at this time, but we do report that we consider a proper neutrality policy, whatever that may be, a perfectly proper part of the Legion's general peace objective.¹⁰

The Roosevelt administration in 1938 tried to persuade Congress to lift the arms embargo and failed. On July 18, 1939 the President called for a conference at the White House of leaders of both major parties. Those at the Conference were the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, Vice-President Garner, Senator Barkley, Majority Leader, Senator Pittman, Senator McNary, Minority Leader, Senator Austin and Senator Borah. President Roosevelt painted a pessimistic picture of the international situation and made the administration's position clear to the effect that existing neutrality legislation should be revised and the arms embargo lifted.¹¹ The Legion maintained a hands-off policy "in this fight for the reason that while we have resolutions on the subject of neutrality, apparently we have adopted no clear-cut attitude,"¹² stated the Chairman of the Legion Foreign Relations Committee.

10. Annual Reports, 1938, p. 330.

11. The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, Vol. 1, pp. 641-649; The Nation, September 17, 1938, pp. 256-257; The New Republic, Vol. 96, October 5, 1938, pp. 228-230.

12. Annual Reports, 1939, p. 309.

This confusion and uncertainty in the Legion had not vanished when the convention was held in Chicago in 1939. No new position was taken on neutrality, the explanation being that in "the present world crisis world conditions may change so rapidly that a pronouncement by the American Legion at this time on specific legislation might be wholly inadequate in the near future." Full confidence was expressed in the President and Congress and to take one possible way out when no resolution was submitted to the convention on neutrality, the Legion demanded that "Congress continue in session during the present grave crisis," and "that our armed forces be expanded immediately to maintain our neutrality."¹³

The success of the totalitarian powers in the early months of 1940 convinced the Legion of the futility of neutrality. The Foreign Relations Committee of the Legion expressed itself in the manner, quoted as follows:

The totalitarian powers, having proved their attitude toward neutral nations, are, in essence, no better than international bandits, uninfluenced by the customary rules of honor and fairness recognized by non-aggressor nationalities, as evidenced by their unprovoked invasion of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Greece, and other unoffending countries, and we strongly disapprove of any policy of compromise or so-called appeasement in American

13. Annual Reports, 1940, p. 261; Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 85, part 2, Appendix, October 23, 1939, p. 437.

dealings with the Axis powers and approve only a policy of stern and unrelenting justice.¹⁴

It was the impact of events upon the Legion and not an analysis of neutrality that exposed the weakness of this policy. Recalling the warning in 1935 of the Legion's National Commander Belgrano to the effect that "those who practice the theory of splendid isolation are smoking the opium of self-deception. They may have pleasant dreams for the moment, but some day they will awake to a nightmare of tragic reality," it may be said that the Legion had no pleasant dreams with neutrality, but it did awaken to the "nightmare of tragic reality." How these events influenced the Legion in the application and enforcement of neutrality and how they brought a reversal in Legion policy are set forth here.

The Ludlow Amendment

Two occurrences in 1937 serve to point up Legion policy on neutrality. The first of these was the Ludlow Amendment and the other was the question of applying the neutrality legislation to the "undeclared war" in China.

Congressman Louis Ludlow of Indiana proposed a constitutional amendment which would transfer the power to declare war from the hands of Congress to the people

14. Annual Reports, 1941, p. 332.

direct.¹⁵ This proposal had been buried in committee for three years, but was brought up again when President Roosevelt made his famous Chicago address on October 5, 1937, to "challenge the deadening influence of isolationism."

The original draft of the Ludlow Amendment was so extreme that it would prohibit action by the armed forces of the United States until a popular plebiscite could be held, unless the continental domain of the United States was actually invaded.¹⁶ It ignored the most elementary principles of national defense and repudiated the Monroe Doctrine. According to it, the enemy could occupy the St. Lawrence valley, Vancouver Island or the lower peninsula of Lower California while the people of the United States were still debating what to do.¹⁷

This proposal, calling for an amendment to the Federal constitution to provide for a referendum on the question: "Shall the United States declare war on ____?",

15. Hearing Before Subcommittee No. 2 of the Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives Seventy-Fourth Congress, First Session on H. J. Res. 167, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of the United States with Respect to the Declaration of War and the Taking of Private Property For Public Use in Time of War. Serial 8. June 19, 1935.

16. Congressional Record, 75th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 81, Part 3, pp. 3198-3204.

17. Congressional Record, 75th Congress, 3rd Session, part 9, Appendix, January 10, 1938, p. 97.

had the appearance of extending democracy in permitting the voters to participate more in the affairs of state. The Legion was struggling hard for a strong national defense program and saw that the proposed amendment would endanger any attempts to increase the security of the United States. Legion objections to the Ludlow Amendment were clear and completely stated in its resolution. Such a proposal

contemplates a serious and substantial departure from an existing and tried plan of government whereby the responsibility for making one of the most vital decisions affecting our nation is reposed in the duly chosen representatives of the American people. The present is no time to make a questionable experiment in the most delicate and far-reaching function that a government can be called upon to exercise. No sound reason for such a change has been advanced. In truth, none exists. Today, more than ever before, we must exemplify faith and confidence in the American form of government. The proposed amendment would seriously impair the functions and utility of our Department of State, the first line of our national defense. Under its terms, the entire operation of our national defense would be held in abeyance until a decision based on the referendum could be made. The necessary delay entailed at so crucial a time and in the circumstances requiring such a referendum would be fatal and jeopardize the safety of the nation. The procedure suggested . . . would be cumbersome in operation. Productive of dissension and confusion and in the final analysis result in a divided nation. At best, the decision would be a majority one. The proposed amendment implies lack of confidence on the part of our people in their congressional representatives. This is not in accord with the facts. Other nations would readily interpret it as a sign of weakness. It is impractical, would tend to destroy our whole plan of national defense and without question would invite war.¹⁸

18. Annual Reports, 1938, p. 229; The National Legionnaire, January, 1938, p. 4.

In Congress, the Ludlow Amendment eventually met defeat. Just before a vote was taken on the measure, Speaker Bankhead of Alabama read a letter from President Roosevelt wherein it was stated that such an amendment to the Constitution "would cripple any President in his conduct of our foreign relations, and it would encourage other nations to believe that they could violate American rights with impunity."¹⁹ The Legion's lobby was active in lining up votes against the measure. The proposal was defeated 209 to 180.

Although Congressman Ludlow was stunned by defeat, Congressman Hamilton Fish of New York announced that the issue would be carried into every congressional district in the coming election campaign and that "the proponents of the resolution would not stop until the American people have the right to keep us out of war." Peace societies increased their activities and on the Senate side agitation for a war referendum continued into 1939. The Legion continued its opposition in both House and Senate, but as the situation in Europe became more critical the demand for the legislation waned. Hearings, however, were held on two war referendum proposals and on July 6, 1939, the Senate Committee on the Judiciary

19. Congressional Record, 75th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 83, part 11, January 10, 1938, p. 277.

voted to report the two proposals without recommendation. One of these was S. J. Resolution 84 introduced in the Senate February 28, 1939, by Senator Robert La Follette and eleven other senators. The other was by Senator Wiley of Wisconsin. On October 27, 1939, just before the passage of the neutrality act by the Senate, an amendment was offered by Senator La Follette in the nature of a war referendum proposal. After considerable debate it was defeated by a vote of 73 to 17, with six not voting. This proposal read in part:

Except in case of attack by armed forces, actual or immediately threatened, upon the United States or its Territorial possessions, or by any non-American nation against any country in the Western Hemisphere, a national advisory election shall be held in the several states upon the question of war or peace prior to any declaration of war by Congress.²⁰

In a combined meeting of the American Legion posts of Dayton, Ohio and the Business Men's Association, the National Commander, Stephen F. Chadwick, speaking of the war referendum proposal said:

The largest group of America's ex-service men feel that no course could be more suicidal to the rights of free men.²¹

Neutrality and the Sino-Japanese War

Although slow in formulating a neutrality policy, the American Legion followed every phase of American

20. Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 85, part 1, October 27, 1939, pp. 986-1000; Annual Reports, 1940, p. 236.

21. Annual Reports, 1939, pp. 312-313.

diplomacy relating to neutrality with searching interest. In 1937 it studied the question of the application of the Neutrality Act to the "undeclared war" in China. For this purpose the Legion directed three questions to Secretary Hull regarding its application to this dispute.²² The first question was regarding the use of this act as an instrument of policy. Secondly, whether a state of war existed in China, and third, what was the administration's purpose in retaining American forces in China.

Secretary Hull replied that China and Japan had not declared war and that President Roosevelt had not found "that a state of war (existed)." As for applying the Neutrality Act, the Secretary stated that such action was dependent upon the President's finding that a state of war existed, but that the Department of State kept constantly in mind the fact that the principal purpose of the act was to keep the United States out of war. The armed forces of the United States were kept in China "for the protection of American nationals, primarily against mobs or other uncontrolled elements."

The reply of Secretary Hull satisfied the organization's questions and no more was said regarding the application of the Neutrality Act to the Sino-Japanese affair.

22. The National Legionnaire, December, 1937, p. 4.

However, there was constant agitation by the Legion to persuade the State Department to stop the shipment of oil and scrap iron to the Japanese. This agitation kept up until on July 26, 1939, when Secretary Hull served notice on Japan of this nation's intention to abrogate the 1911 Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, between the United States and Japan. This was looked upon with great favor by the Legion for it meant that Japan would have to get her supplies from other sources. The Legion expressed its satisfaction as follows:

That the abrogation of the treaty is a real blow can be readily seen when it is realized that Japan will have difficulty in purchasing the supplies elsewhere. It will not be a case of "someone else selling the stuff if America doesn't" as was in the case with Italy and Ethiopia in 1935. All the great powers are now engaged in an armament race and each one desires to keep as much of the necessary materials at home as it possibly can.²³

If more positive evidence is needed to show that the Legion was no longer neutral in the operation of neutrality regarding the Sino-Japanese War, it can be seen in the organization's expression of "our unbounded admiration for China and all other nations which are braving unprovoked and wilful aggression" and "we strongly disapprove of any policy of compromise or so-called appeasement in American dealings with the Axis powers and approve only a policy of stern and unrelenting justice."²⁴ These are not sentiments

23. Annual Reports, 1939, pp. 309-310.

24. Annual Reports, 1941, p. 332.

of a neutral. This is suggesting taking sides in war without specific mention of the action to be taken. Yet the isolationist thinking was still in evidence when all members of the Legion were warned "to watch developments closely, to do our own thinking and to analyze propaganda, whether it emanates from abroad or at home," to "combat propaganda designed to break down our neutrality"²⁵ and for the President to "avoid involvement and to fight all propaganda."²⁶ The National Commander, Raymond J. Kelly, came near to admitting that neutrality would not prevent involvement of the United States when he said: "May noise never excite us to battle, or confusion reduce us to defeat."²⁷

Aid to the Spanish Loyalists

In 1938 there was a number of proposals in both branches of Congress that would have affected the position of the United States as a neutral power. One of these was a determined effort to get the Administration to lift the embargo on arms and munitions so that the Spanish Loyalists

25. Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 86, part 3, 1940, p. 2371.

26. Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 86, part 8, 1940, pp. 8606-8607.

27. Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 86, part 2, 1940, p. 1362.

could procure implements of war in the United States.

Supporters and sympathizers in the United States of the Loyalists in Spain petitioned Congress to lift the arms embargo. Senator Reynolds of North Carolina in his extended remarks cast reflections upon some of these groups, especially the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, which was sponsored by the Communist Daily Worker.²⁸ Senator Walsh of Massachusetts took the position that regardless of which side won the civil war in Spain--Franco or the Loyalists--it would be a dictatorship.²⁹ On January 28, 1938, Senator Pittman, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations announced plans for a broad reexamination of the foreign policy of the United States for possible revision of neutrality by the next Congress. He stated that members of the Committee would devote themselves individually to exhaustive study during the recess of Congress in anticipation of such a movement. It was the purpose of the members to study the Neutrality Act as the focal point in the proposed revision of laws on foreign affairs because events had intensified international developments since the neutrality legislation had become law.

The Committee met several times during the recess and

28. Congressional Record, 75th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 83, part 1, January 8, 1938, p. 217.

29. Congressional Record, 75th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 83, part 10, April 1, 1938, pp. 1267-1269.

had conferences from time to time with members of the State Department, diplomatic officials and other authorities on world affairs. Secretary Hull approved the Committee's plans and asked that the American people and press give greater attention to the foreign policy of the United States.³⁰

On the question of lifting the embargo on arms the Legion was in opposition for the reason that it might have meant United States involvement in war. That organization went along with the isolationists, and particularly Senator Borah, who warned that the people of the United States should be on guard against "sentimentalists and dreamers" who would plunge the United States into war "under the attractive banner of co-operation" with other democracies.³¹

The isolationists had their way. No action was taken to lift the arms embargo to aid the Spanish Loyalists.

Neutrality and the Monroe Doctrine

In addition to the confusing world picture, the World Peace and Foreign Relations Committee discovered a mix-up in the Legion's own resolutions on neutrality and the Monroe Doctrine. In 1935, the organization had commended

30. The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, Vol. 1, pp. 643-647.

31. Annual Reports, 1938, p. 260.

the neutrality resolution passed by Congress and pledged its support to the maintenance of absolute neutrality by the United States government. In 1936 the organization adopted a resolution urging the government to maintain a strict policy of neutrality regarding foreign affairs and that the United States be kept free from any alliance that might draw the country into war. In 1938 the organization reaffirmed these two resolutions and went on to advocate strict adherence to the Monroe Doctrine.

Now the difficulty was this: the Monroe Doctrine is really an isolationist policy for the western hemisphere, but it is at the same time, an interventionist policy of the United States. The Legion committee recognized that it would be "difficult to adhere to the popular conception of the Monroe Doctrine and comply at the same time with the letter of the two resolutions." It added:

It is very difficult for the committee to understand how you can defend Brazil if some European country attacked them and still pursue a policy of non-intervention, of keeping our hands out of things. It seems to the committee that either the resolution at Los Angeles took in too much territory and contradicted itself so far as policy was concerned, or else the proponents of the resolution didn't realize what they were doing. In view of this, it would appear with neutrality of such vital interest to our people, that the policy of the American Legion ought to be defined and clear-cut.³²

32. Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 85, part 2, Appendix and Index, October 23, 1939, p. 437; Annual Reports, 1939, pp. 309 and 384.

The 1939 convention did not get the Neutrality-Monroe Doctrine situation untangled, nor did it later, as we shall see. The organization went on record, however, viewing:

with grave concern the apparently widespread belief that this nation must inevitably become involved in the . . . European conflict. We not only believe that this nation need not become involved, but insist and demand that the President . . . and Congress pursue a policy that, while preserving the sovereignty and dignity of this nation will prevent involvement. The American Legion is not a law body. It has often recommended the enactment of legislation establishing a permanent or fixed policy on important national problems. The American Legion has always strenuously advocated that this nation pursue a policy of neutrality and peace. In the present world crisis world conditions might change so rapidly that a pronouncement by the American Legion . . . on specific legislation might be wholly inadequate in the near future. Therefore, with full confidence in the President and Congress we demand that the Congress continue in session during the present grave crisis, and that appropriate action be taken to preserve the peace, sovereignty and dignity of this nation, and that our armed forces be expanded . . . to maintain our neutrality.³³

The next few months following the Chicago convention, the Legion officials issued statements indicating the position of the organization toward the world situation. Evidences of uneasiness continued to prevail. The new National Commander, Raymond J. Kelly of Michigan, announced that:

Tomorrow must not be dedicated for our sons and daughters to the service of the Red planet, Mars. To prevent this it is our job to preserve sober thought in an uncertain, liberty-destroying world. I pledge myself

33. Annual Reports, 1940, p. 261.

to make known to our fellow-citizens your mandates to keep our nation out of any armed conflict overseas. Attempting to cloak our neutrality with a biased belligerency must inevitably lead us straight into war.³⁴

The organization continued to stress strict neutrality as the policy for the United States, at the same time calling for a strong national defense to make it effective. They pledged themselves to fight against any propaganda designed to break down the neutrality of the United States and to uphold the principles of non-intervention and non-interference as embodied in the Monroe Doctrine. In February, 1940, the Foreign Relations Committee of the Legion stated that they had pledged themselves "to seek and keep an honest neutrality." On the 21st birthday of the Legion, March 17, 1940, the officers were convinced that the United States would "avoid involvement in (the) struggle," for "neither the peace to follow these wars, nor the conditions facing our country (would) be bettered by our participation."³⁵

The year 1939 saw the depth of the isolationist-neutrality feeling of the Legion.³⁶ Every statement of its officials and the resolutions passed by the national convention in Chicago indicate the desire to stay at

34. The National Legionnaire, October, 1939, p. 1.

35. The National Legionnaire, February, 1940, p. 4; March, 1940, p. 6.

36. Compare Henry L. Stinson and McGeorge Bundy On Active Service in Peace and War, pp. 312-314.

peace, but there was an uncertain feeling that the United States might not be able to remain out of war. National Commander Chadwick's statement of September, 1939, just after Hitler's march into Poland indicates this feeling. He cautioned when he said:

A state of war has existed at some place in this troubled world almost every day since the World War (I). We view today a situation in which, because of issues involved and former comrades in arms concerned, our natural and undeniable sympathies will constantly challenge our reason. The American Legion for the entire period of its existence has counseled the nation to a policy of neutrality to the end that we may not again become involved in another holocaust seemingly as futile for the ultimate peace of the European and Asiatic continents as was our participation in the World War (I). Our government's national policy is one of neutrality. It has been and is the American Legion's policy Current events must not be suffered to overcome our reasoned conclusions arrived at in less soul-stirring times. Continuing our hopes and our prayers for a means of remaining at peace, informing our public officials that such is our greatest desire, let us avoid and counsel all citizens to avoid the thought, act or deed which might threaten or disturb the peace of the Americas. To a generation that knows war from its participation in it, this today is the greatest and most solemn mission of the American Legion.³⁷

Banners in the 1939 parade at the national convention in Chicago give a graphic picture of Legion thinking and feeling. Placards bearing such sentiments as, "Keep out of War," "Never Again," "Lest We Forget," and "Button Your Lip--This Ain't Our War" were prominent.

Before the convention opened Commander Chadwick took

37. The National Legionnaire, September, 1939, p. 1.

two steps that emphasized the Legion's insistence on neutrality. First, he refused permission to use the Legion's name in connection with an American Ambulance Corps being set up in Paris. He cabled to George A. Aubrey, Commander of the Department of France:

Your request (is) sympathetically understood, but (it is) impossible to grant it We are chartered by Congress, which has enacted neutrality law, and the spirit (of) such a law would forbid the involvement (of a) private American organization.³⁸

The other action taken by Chadwick was the recommendation that the Legion withdraw from the Fédération Interalliée des Anciens Combattants, FIDAC, on the ground that continued membership would leave American veterans open to appeals from former comrades in arms, "who have of necessity become special pleaders for their nation's causes."³⁹

Thus the traditional view of avoiding entanglements in European affairs to prevent giving European nations an excuse to interfere in the affairs of the western hemisphere, particularly the United States, was the neutrality policy of the Legion. To the Legion, this would preserve the Monroe Doctrine.⁴⁰

38. "Legion's Neutrality" in Newsweek, Vol. 14, October 2, 1939, pp. 28-29.

39. The National Legionnaire, September, 1939, p. 1.

40. Annual Reports, 1940, p. 327; Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 86, part 3, 1940, p. 237.

Repeal of Arms Embargo

When Hitler completed the liquidation of Czechoslovakia, thus giving further proof of his depravity, President Roosevelt asked for repeal of the Arms Embargo section of the Neutrality Act. This was in April, 1939. On September 1, 1939, Germany attacked Poland. Even these events did not sway the Legion from its policy of neutrality. Speaking for himself, Commander Stephen F. Chadwick said:

I don't know the mind of the American Legion, with reference to preserving the embargo, but this I do know: that the ex-service men of the World War (I) are in substantial unanimity that if a truly neutral policy is observed, America can keep out of involvement in the wars of the old world. The law has kept us neutral so far, and we should be cautious about revising it. If we have any arms and munitions in the United States, we'd better buy them ourselves.⁴¹

Puzzled and uncertain as to the next turn of world affairs, the Legion convention took no action on this repeal issue, neither as to passing a resolution nor in the 44-day debate of the special session of Congress convened for the purpose of repeal of the Arms Embargo, September 21, 1939, to November 3, 1939.⁴²

Loan to Finland

When Russia attacked Finland in 1940, the question

41. Newsweek, Vol. 14, October 2, 1939, pp. 28-29.

42. The National Legionnaire, November, 1939, p. 2.

arose as to the United States government making a loan to Finland. This little country had the best record of any country making payments on its loans from World War I. Even though the feeling ran high against Russia and the people of the United States were sympathetic with Finland, the National Commander of the Legion counseled against the loan, saying:

The slightest possibility that it would lead this country into war would cause the American Legion to oppose a government loan to Finland. It's about time that we as a people became intelligently selfish about our own national welfare. There's plenty of crusading to be done here at home If the government entertains even the slightest doubt that such a loan would serve to pave the way for our entry into this war, it should not be made.⁴³

Opposition to the loan to Finland stemmed from acceptance of the thesis of the Nye investigating committee that the United States became involved in World War I because of loans made to European nations 1914 to 1916. This view was accepted by the Legion generally.

Another reason for objecting to the loan to Finland was the failure of so many nations after World War I to re-pay their loans. This was an old, persistent demand of the Legion--that these debts be paid. Its first official action on foreign loans came in its 1937 convention in New York, when the Legion approved a strongly-worded resolution to the effect that "the United States

43. The National Legionnaire, March, 1940, p. 7.

be required to demand from any and all foreign debtor nations payment in currency or in products or materials not produced in the United States or its possessions to the United States Government for any and all loans and interest for World War (I) advances for which they may be indebted to the United States Government." And then was added significantly, "Knowing as we do, however, that the creditor cannot collect unless the debtor pays, your committee has no particular recommendation to make in this connection at this time. We do report that the matter has been discussed with the State Department."⁴⁴

No new loan was granted to Finland and the Legion considered this as carrying out the letter and spirit of the neutrality legislation.

Aid to Britain

Aid to Britain bore a different relationship to American security than a loan to Finland. Events had a way of changing the thoughts and actions of Legion officials on isolation and neutrality. Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium and France were conquered in quick succession in campaigns by Germany in 1940 and there was the fear that England would fall. The "phony war" had become a real one. After the fall of France, Germany

44. Annual Reports, 1938, p. 330.

was warned against interfering with French colonies in the western hemisphere. And there was fear of what Germany might do regarding Greenland since the Nazis had over-run Denmark. In addition, there was one big fundamental question: How would the elimination of Great Britain as a world power affect American security? This question was sudden and no comprehensive answer could be formulated immediately.

On September 3, 1940, President Roosevelt made the destroyer base deal with Great Britain and all the old equipment that the United States could spare was sent to Britain. But the 1939 revision of the neutrality act was still on the statute books. Congress had wiped out the four-year-old arms embargo, but placed on the statute books a revised cash-and-carry policy for trade with belligerent countries, restricted financial dealings with the warring nations and American shipping was to be kept clear of the shipping zones.⁴⁵

The isolationists had a different answer. Their answer was that there was no connection--at least there need not be--between Britain's integrity and the safety of the United States. This answer assumed two things; first, that relations between the United States and Germany and her Axis partners would be as peaceful as

45. Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 85, part 1, October 27, 1939, pp. 986-1000; 1000-1027.

they had been with Great Britain; second, that the United States could trust exclusively to its own armed might in case of attack by the Axis. The trend of logic following these assumptions went on to accept Hitler's statement that he had no designs on the western hemisphere, that commerce would be resumed with Europe when the war was over, even though Germany dominated the continent, and they rejected the notion that the safety of the United States was dependent upon British sea power. In short, there was no real reason why Germany should not be just as good a friend of the United States as Great Britain. Those taking this side of the question were such staunch isolationists as Charles A. Lindbergh, Senators Wheeler and Nye, Congressman Fish and the America First Committee.

There were two main weaknesses in the isolationists' arguments; they ignored the plain record of Hitler's past lies and aggressions; and they were ignoring the sound facts of American history.

The great majority of the people, however, as measured repeatedly by the Gallup polls, wanted to aid Britain, and they were consistently ahead of Congress on this score.⁴⁶ The polls showed 85 per cent of the Democrats and 76 per cent of the Republicans favored transfer of Army and Navy

46. The Chicago Daily News, July 2, 1940, p. 1.

planes to Nazi foes. Stepping into the picture to popularize and gain support for the administration's program of aid to Britain was the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. This Committee grew out of the League of Nations Association which had been able to weather the storm of isolationism during the 1930's with the help of the Carnegie Endowment. William Allen White was chairman of the committee and its activities were endorsed and supported by some of the best known figures in American public life, such as General Pershing, Admiral Yarnell, Admiral Stirling, President Conant of Harvard University and scores of prominent persons representing a cross section of society.

The Roosevelt Administration gave the committee advance information of its proposed moves and the public was familiarized with the facts and the necessity of such moves well in advance of the events. A case in point was the base-destroyer deal. The committee began its campaign of publicity for the program in July, 1940, and the Executive agreement was concluded September 3, 1940.⁴⁷

The committee followed the opportunistic line of advocating aid "short of war." The people of the United States wanted to see the Nazis beaten and they were not

47. The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, Vol. 1, pp. 831-843.

troubled by the isolationist charge that the destroyer deal and other measures of assistance constituted "acts of war." But by this time the fiction that the United States was a neutral nation was unimportant. There was neither a political nor an ethical basis for neutrality in the great conflagration that was menacing western civilization. The American people were ready to do anything short of sending its young men to fight. Later Pearl Harbor swept even this reservation away.

When the Legion met for its 21st annual convention in Boston in 1940, it abandoned its 16-year position on neutrality by favoring all possible aid to Britain. For 16 years it had supported a "hands-off" policy toward foreign disputes. Even though the year before it had supported neutrality, there was no mistaking its position when it voted down with a strong chorus of "noes" a carefully worded neutrality motion. It approved the destroyer-base deal and asked for more bases on similar terms, condemned the aggressor nations in addition to supporting aid to Britain. Its resolution on these matters follows:

We believe that a sound national defense policy for this country requires that we should at this time give all practicable aid to Great Britain and those aligned with her in their fight for freedom. We urge that additional bases be acquired for our naval expansion and we endorse the principle of exchanging obsolete equipment for needed air and naval bases We of the American Legion, as lovers of peace and human freedom, devoted to the principles of Justice, Freedom and Democracy, condemn aggression and aggressor nations. We condemn all war

parties which are leading their own people to death and ruin, and the world to chaos. To those countries which have been ruthlessly and without just cause invaded, and particularly to our former comrades in arms in the invaded countries, we express our sympathy and the confident hope that soon they will break the chains of their present servitude. To the people of the Great British Commonwealth who are so heroically defending their shores and their freedom, and to the gallant Republic of China, we extend our friendship and our assurance of our sympathy. We urge that the government of the United States exercise all lawful means to prevent the shipment of war materials to the aggressor nations and that it continue to extend to all peoples who are resisting aggression the fullest co-operation consistent with our obligations, our security, our liberties and our peace.⁴⁸

Even though the Legion had abandoned neutrality in 1940, it had not abandoned all its isolationist ideas. Apparently it was still under the illusion that British propaganda had been partly responsible for bringing the United States into World War I when it passed a resolution also at Boston concerning foreign nations having and establishing agencies of propaganda in the United States which would seek to get the nation involved in war. It asked that all appropriate agencies of the government take steps to combat propaganda and that Congress take action to prevent the spread of propaganda and involvement in war. There was, of course, the act requiring agencies of foreign principals to register at the State Department. The Post Office Department was ordered to quit carrying

48. "What the Legion Thinks" in Scholastic, v. 37, October, 1940, p. 2; The National Legionnaire, October, 1940, p. 1; Annual Reports, 1940, pp. 296-297.

the foreign propaganda of Russia and Germany through the United States mails. In 1941 the postal authorities began destroying propaganda material as it arrived in United States ports.⁴⁹

The early months of 1941 saw the Legion spurring the defense efforts on to greater attainments. It counseled and pleaded against strikes and slow-downs as far as labor was concerned. It was felt that if American workers would supply enough tanks, planes, ships, food and the implements of war "to those who fight dictators," the United States might not be attacked. But if the United States should be attacked, her fighting forces would be "more certain of winning and more certain of living" if they are given the best weapons that could be made. John D. Biggers of the Office of Production Management warned:

Every industrial manager, every worker, every citizen, should realize that the safety of the nation and the future of all things that are so precious to Americans would depend on what we all do in making this country "the arsenal of democracies."⁵⁰

On May 27, 1941 the President declared an unlimited national emergency and the Legion asked that he and his officers should "make available immediately to the Congress and the people of this country a full and complete statement of the facts which constitute immediate danger to this nation as

49. Annual Reports, 1941, p. 23.

50. The National Legionnaire, May, 1941, p. 2.

they see it" for the people did not "understand and appreciate these dangers and had lapsed into a peacetime complacency." From such a revelation of these dangers it was hoped that they would be spurred on to greater activity.⁵¹

When there was talk of appeasement the Legion strongly disapproved "of any policy of compromise or appeasement in American dealings with the Axis powers and (approved) only a policy of stern and unrelenting justice" for the totalitarian powers have proved in their attitude toward neutral nations that they "are no better than international bandits, uninfluenced by the customary rules of honor and fairness recognized by non-aggressor nationalities, as evidenced by their unprovoked invasion of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Greece and other unoffending countries."

On May 30, 1941, the Legion came out for "actual delivery of aid to Great Britain and the President and Congress were asked to take any steps necessary for doing this by employing "such units of the Navy and auxiliary forces" according to the President's judgment of the needs "required to insure the safety of American vessels and their crews by guarding them against attacks from any source."⁵²

51. Annual Reports, 1941, p. 353.

52. The National Legionnaire, June, 1941, p. 9.

It was President Roosevelt's use of the ancient slogan, "freedom of the seas" that gave the Legion its break for coming out more strongly in support of the Administration's policy of aiding Britain and to get away from the suicidal neutrality policies it had followed for so long. The President used it to justify a "shooting war." It was the case of appealing to a historical memory: the Nazis were trying to abolish freedom of the seas. In a national broadcast from Kansas City on July 4, 1941, by National Commander Milo J. Warner on the subject, "Freedom vs. Piracy," he followed the same line of argument that President Roosevelt had used. He recalled American history, observing that the Declaration of Independence bespoke for the American colonies their right to the freedom of the seas. He asked if Americans today were of the same mind and character, if they still proposed to sail the seven seas in American ships, to "maintain our right . . . unhampered and uninterrupted." After recalling the actions of 1776 and 1812 he reviewed the causes of United States entrance into World War I. Then he stated why the nation entered that way as follows:

We declared that war because German submarines . . . sunk our ships and murdered our people on the high seas. When the German government undertook to tell us that we would be allowed to send one ship a week to England if we marked it a certain way and sailed it on certain days on certain routes, we went to war. That was what we thought about freedom of the seas in 1917. How long will we stand for having an American ship sunk in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean by a submarine? That is what happened to

the Robin Moor. How long will we stand for being told that we cannot navigate the North Atlantic or the Mediterranean or the Red Sea? And what if we are presently told we cannot cross the Pacific to Sumatra or Java, for rubber or tin, or China for silk or tea? We are convinced the Nazi threat to our freedom of the seas is a step in the familiar Hitler pattern of terror to persuade us that he is invincible. It is likewise a prelude to the Nazi attempt at domination of the western hemisphere. It is wise for us, therefore, on this Fourth of July to consider all the lessons of our naval history in preparing to defend actual and real independence of thought and action.⁵³

The pendulum of Legion policy was swinging away from staunch isolationism and neutrality to the other extreme, as can be seen from this statement. The fear that gripped the Legion to avoid doing anything that might be considered an un-neutral act gave way to pursuing the historic American doctrine of freedom of the seas and to wherever that would lead.

Aid To Russia and Repeal of Neutrality

When Germany attacked Russia on June 22, 1941, the question immediately arose as to the Legion's position on aid to Russia. Aid to that country would be more of a hurdle to overcome than aid to Britain because of the Legion's hatred of Communism and a distrust of Russia generally. The National Executive Committee of the organization took the position that the Legion "should not depart from its traditional policy of all-out opposition

53. The National Legionnaire, July, 1941, pp. 1 and 4.

to Communism, in favor of aid to Russia in her . . . conflict with Germany." They could not see that recent events called "for any change in the Legion's stand against Communism. The whole question is how to aid Britain quickly and effectively. Freedom of the seas means full protection of our shipping in all areas."⁵⁴ This attitude prevailed right into the national convention at Milwaukee in September, 1941. Even when the delegates to the convention were gathering in Milwaukee, Milo J. Warner, National Commander, gave out a statement to the effect that they still hated Communism. Stalin was simply defending his country from attack by Hitler. Whatever aid Stalin gave in resisting Hitler was incidentally of benefit to sincere peoples everywhere. That would not cause any change of attitude toward the Communist Party in the United States, but rather a redoubling of their efforts against Communism and other subversive agents for the circumstances would cause relaxation of their vigilance. The chief concern was to get aid to Great Britain and build up United States forces.⁵⁵

One can get a pretty good cross-section of the feeling of the Legionnaires by the placards carried in

54. The National Legionnaire, July, 1941, p. 4.

55. The Milwaukee Journal, September 16, 1941, p. 1.

parades at national conventions, by the handbills and by badges worn. Some of the placards at the Milwaukee convention ran, "Naughty Nazi," "Fooling Fascist," and "God Bless America--Love it or Leave It." Hundreds of people wore "To Hell With Hitler" badges. Circulars with pictures of Hitler and fingerprints of Swastikas with the headline, "Wanted For Murder" were in hundreds of hands.⁵⁶

The convention itself saw the most bitter struggles in Legion history. President Roosevelt wrote a letter which was read asking for "unity of purpose, unity of sentiment" in the struggles ahead. Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox, Mayor La Guardia, General George Marshall, former Ambassador Cudahy, Ambassador Josephus Daniels and Hanford MacNider were the principal speakers.

Mayor La Guardia made a rousing speech. Among other things he said:

We are not neutral. From the time Congress passed the Lend-Lease bill we have been fighting Hitler. Do you suppose that we are spending billions for supplies to send to England just so they can be sunk? The American people don't do things that way. There never was any idea of delivering supplies f. o. b. New York. We must deliver them d. o. d.--delivered on the dock--in England. F. o. b. just means "friend of the boche."⁵⁷

Before Secretary Knox spoke, "The Milwaukee Sentinel, a Hearst paper, carried a full page advertisement of the

56. The National Legionnaire, October, 1941, p. 5; The Milwaukee Journal, September 17, 1941, pp. 1-2.

57. The Milwaukee Journal, September 16, 1941, p. 5; The Milwaukee Sentinel, September 16, 1941, p. 3.

America First Committee asking Knox to reveal whether or not the United States was not getting into a "shooting war."⁵⁸ And Secretary Knox revealed quite a few things.

He inferred that delivery of materials was part of the policy officially approved by Congress and added:

The German government declared officially it would attempt to prevent the delivery of Lend-Lease material by sinking every vessel bearing such materials to British ports. This declaration was positive and left no room for doubt of German intentions. To effectuate our policy and to meet this German challenge, our government has created a naval and air patrol of the North Atlantic crossing, and, as a measure of additional defense, has occupied Iceland as an air and naval base. These measures have been in effect since July 7.⁵⁹

This was the first revelation of these activities of the Navy and there was a great deal of discussion as to whether it was a patrol, an escort or convoy. He revealed, furthermore, that the Navy was ordered to use every means to "capture or destroy Axis controlled subs or surface raiders encountered in these waters." When President Roosevelt revealed on September 17 that he had ordered the United States "bridge of ships" to "sink on sight," the former governor of Wisconsin, Philip F. La Follette stated that this order to "shoot on sight" was "a one man declaration of war in the style made infamous by Adolph Hitler."⁶⁰

58. The Milwaukee Sentinel, September 15, 1941, p. 4.

59. The New York Times, September 16, 1941, p. 1;
The Milwaukee Sentinel, September 16, 1941, p. 1

60. The Milwaukee Journal, September 18, 1941, p. 10.

Hanford MacNider, former national commander of the Legion, spoke vigorously for the isolationist cause. It was his purpose to embarrass President Roosevelt by having him try to push a declaration of war through Congress. Then he went on to say:

I plead with the Legion to have guts. If this is our war, let's get into it. If it isn't, let's stay out. I'm tired of hearing that someone else must fight our battles. I hope never to hear again the statement that we must cringe behind someone else's navy. Let's ask the President and Congress to tell the people of America whether this is our war. I plead no cause except for guts. If the situation is so critical, let the President tell Congress and Congress tell the nation, and we will march.⁶¹

Many of the Legionnaires, however, spoke out for an immediate declaration of war because of a lack of discipline in the army camps. Too many of the trainees had their cars near the camps and used a lot of gasoline on long week end trips. Market Analysis, Inc., on the basis of its check, estimated that three-fifths of the million Legionnaires in the United States expected the United States to get into the war before it was over, and two-fifths wanted an immediate declaration of war.

Former Ambassador Cudahy spoke against United States entry because of the great cost that would be involved. The United States Ambassador to Mexico, Josephus Daniels, dwelt on the need for solidarity in the western hemisphere. General Marshall called on the Legion to spread under-

61. The Chicago Tribune, September 17, 1941, p. 1.

standing of the army's training program so that the people would stop interfering with the training of the army.

The most interesting part of the convention came on the debates on the neutrality and land-lease resolutions.⁶² In these debates were such staunch isolationists as Senators Bennett Champ Clark of Missouri, Senator C. Wayland Brooks of Illinois and Congressman Hamilton Fish of New York. On the other side was Senator Tom Connally of Texas, who, it was thought was sent by the Administration to plead its cause for sending Lend-Lease aid to Russia. At first, he was challenged as to his standing in the Legion as a member. When this was cleared up, he was permitted to participate in the floor debates. It was the first time in Legion history that members of the United States Senate took an active part in debating on Legion resolutions.

The resolutions for repeal of the neutrality legislation and for removing all restrictions as to where the army could be sent in case of attack, went through easily. The question of aid to Russia came upon the minority report to the effect that the Legion "reiterate its oft-stated position on Communism and definitely go on record as opposing aid to Russia under the Lend-Lease act." The Foreign Relations

62. Much of this information was given the writer by Jackson Towne, Librarian at Michigan State College, who was a delegate to this convention.

Committee of the Legion had voted 36 to 6 against the resolution. When Senator Connally took the rostrum, he argued for the convention to keep faith with the committee and not betray them. But as for the Lend-Lease act he stated:

Not one dime is being given Russia. Russia is paying for the aid it gets from us. Issues must be met when they arise, not now. Former resolutions you have adopted have approved the acts of the President and Congress. Those who attempt to obstruct the Lend-Lease act do not serve their country.⁶³

Then Senator Clark took up the issue. He spoke as a "rank and file" member as he said :

I know that the rank and file is against participation in other people's wars. I know that the Legion has never embraced bloody Joe Stalin. If we endorse aid to Russia, let's advocate turning Earl Browder out of the penitentiary and have him entertained at the White House with Lord Halifax and others who are trying to get us into war. The policy against Communism and involvement in Europe's wars has been the policy of the Legion until the regime of the present commander (Milo J. Warner).⁶⁴

During his speech, Clark was booed. John Stelle, former acting governor of Illinois, argued against the minority report on the ground that the United States would not be aiding Communism by giving Lend-Lease aid to Russia. The United States would be helping itself. Stephen F. Chadwick, former national commander, could not see why he or his children should be taxed to "bail Russia out of the situation" she was in and he condemned Stalin and Communism.

63. The Milwaukee Journal, September 18, 1941, p. 9.

64. The Chicago Tribune, September 18, 1941, p. 2.

There were many appeals for the Legion to keep faith with the 22-year old policy of "opposing Russia and Communism." The difficulty, it appears, was in using the terms "Russia" and "Communism" interchangeably. Anyway, it was Ray Murphy, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Legion, who offered the best solution of giving Lend-Lease aid to Russia and still oppose Communism, when he stated:

So far as the matter of Communism is concerned, I am prepared to reveal that our Americanism Committee will offer a resolution that our Legion again go on record as opposing Communism, saying that it remains unalterably opposed to Communism, Nazism, and Fascism as equally false and dangerous That will take care of the Legion's stand on Communism. The question now before us is on a matter of government policy. Aid to Russia is primarily aid to the United States.⁶⁵

One other speaker talked in terms of what the effect would be when Hitler learned that the Legion had voted against aid to Russia and also what the effect would be in Russia. It would indicate division in the United States and the President had called for unity. It was felt that the Administration forces were stalling for time by postponing votes on the resolutions. In case of an adverse vote, the news would be kept out of the afternoon papers. The vote came late in the afternoon, and the minority report was tabled by a vote of 874 to 604. Then a resolution was submitted in such a way that it did not mention

65. The Milwaukee Journal, September 17, 1941, p. 1.

aid to Russia, but a general one to support the President and Congress in their foreign policy.

Commenting on this convention, Time summarized in this manner:

Significant was the convention's treatment of two men who have been Legion heroes for almost a quarter century: Missouri's beet-faced, belligerent Senator Bennet Champ Clark, and New York's gangling, ham-handed Representative Hamilton Fish, both airtight, waterproof, hermetically sealed isolationists. Clark, one of the 17 Legion founders and the first permanent Legion chairman, was roundly booed. Fish, who wrote the preamble to the Legion constitution, came to town to make converts, soon gave up and left.⁶⁶

Not so generous, however, was the Chicago Tribune. During the convention, the dispatches were all slanted along the well-known isolationist path of the Tribune owner, Colonel McCormick. One of its reporters took a poll of its own to refute the report of Market Analysis, Inc., to the effect that about 70 per cent of the Legionnaires did not favor United States entrance into the war.⁶⁷ But less than 100 Legionnaires were polled. All the isolationist speeches were played up in its pages during the four-day convention with barely a mention of the other speakers. Little was said of the aid to Britain, but it did emphasize the Legion's program against foes from within the country. When it saw that the isolationist cause had lost, the Legion convention was made to take on the appearance of

66. Time, Vol. 38, September 29, 1941, p. 12.

67. The Chicago Tribune, September 16, 1941, p. 2.

a New Deal conspiracy.⁶⁸ There was a "pro-war steam roller" in operation made up of New Deal "war mongers."

An editorial in The Chicago Tribune summarized its feelings thus:

The clique in control . . . saw to it that the official invitations to address the delegates were confined to such extremists among the war-mongers as Secretary Knox and Mayor La Guardia The war mongers' drive to obtain control of the convention was not difficult to achieve. The preparations were so elaborate, the machinery was so obvious, that the result has lost meaning in the public mind. The official record of the American Legion at Milwaukee will show that it voted to send American boys to fight in foreign wars and for the repeal of the neutrality act. These will permit a warbound administration to create the incidents which it hopes will influence the people to follow this suicidal course.⁶⁹

A few Legion posts in Illinois and Indiana rescinded the convention resolutions and refused to go along with the national organization, but later they all came back into line. The Chicago Daily News gave a much greater coverage of all the opinions expressed and took a more realistic approach to the international situation. A cartoon, no doubt intended as a slap at the Tribune's isolationist stand, showed Hitler at the console of a mammoth organ with Goebbels standing beside him and both were singing, "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" and the notes were engulfing

68. Compare Charles A. Beard, President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War 1941, pp. 4-12 and Forrest Davis and Ernest Lindley, How War Came; An American White Paper; From the Fall of France to Pearl Harbor.

69. The Chicago Tribune, September 19, 1941, p. 14.

Tribune Tower.

The New York Times also favored the stand the Legion took in its Milwaukee convention. It reviewed the changes in Legion policy through the conventions at Chicago, Boston and Milwaukee. The Legion declared at Chicago, one month after the war broke out in Europe that "this nation need not be involved in the present European conflict," insisted that the "President . . . and the Congress pursue a policy . . . (that would) prevent involvement." But meeting in Boston a year later, when Congress still thought that the Neutrality Act represented the real needs and the underlying loyalties of the American people, the Legion shouted down a resolution committing the United States to a policy of "hands off" and "strict neutrality," and instead voted a condemnation of "aggressor nations." At Milwaukee, when the nation was still technically at peace and the irresponsible Neutrality Act was still on the statute books, the Legion asked for the defeat of Hitler and what he stands for." If there should be war, then the United States should be prepared to do the fighting "outside of the United States . . . so that our homes remain intact and our families secure." The Times continued:

The American Legion's 1,000,000 members have not been noted for grinding any axe but their own. Drawn impartially from all the various social and economic strata of the nation, they are representative of no particular section, political party or special interest.

One thing they have in common--that nearly a quarter of a century ago they all wore their country's uniform. Otherwise the Legion is about as good a cross-section of American opinion, with all its confusion, contradictions and paradoxes, as can be found. These are facts which should be noted by Axis statesmen trying to weigh from afar the temper of the people of the United States.⁷⁰

Lyle U. Stambaugh of North Dakota was elected the new National Commander and was immediately accused of lacking faith in the Legion program. But he promised that he would faithfully carry out the mandates of the convention. He was convinced, he said, "that peace with Hitler is but another definition for enslavement to Hitler" and "that we should do everything we could to stop Hitler now, in 1941, rather than to be forced into a still more desperate and forlorn-hope struggle in 1944 or 1945."⁷¹ In a front page editorial of The National Legionnaire after the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese on December 7, 1941, he wrote:

We are not going to shout Japan into submission. We are going to shoot her there. The die is cast. There can be no turning back. Facing the brutal realities of life, we of America must go forward in our strength, must pay the price, and win the victory, whatever the cost in blood and treasure. America must be defended.⁷²

Six years earlier the Legion membership represented by their delegates in convention voted against their leader in following a policy of neutrality, "the opium of

70. Editorial, The New York Times, September 19, 1941.

71. The National Legionnaire, November, 1941, p. 1.

72. The National Legionnaire, December, 1941, p. 1.

self-deception." In 1941, the delegates representing Legion membership voted against their national commander to reverse their policy. For the fourth time in American history, the policy of neutrality failed to keep the United States out of war.

Conclusion

After World War I there were two conflicting theories as to the course the United States should pursue to remain at peace and to avoid entanglement in future wars. One of these was the Wilsonian theory to the effect that the United States could not long remain neutral in event of a major conflict and that the only hope for the United States was in active cooperation with other nations to prevent war. This theory was repudiated by the Republican Party after the election of 1920. The other theory was for the United States to remain aloof and be non-cooperative--to follow a policy of isolation and neutrality. The latter policy held sway.

When forces in the world gave evidence of impending war, Congress, instead of the President, seized the initiative in determining policy calculated to prevent United States involvement. Because of disappointment as to the achievements of World War I and to fallacious assumptions as to why the United States entered that war, the neutrality legislation of 1935 was accepted as the means to

prevent involvement in another war.

Although the National Commander of the Legion warned against just such a policy, the rank and file of legionnaires, being loyal and patriotic to the United States, repudiated their own leadership and supported the government's policy of neutrality. Once neutrality became official stated policy the Legion insisted on scrupulous observance of the laws enacted. In applying the laws to particular problems and issues in the foreign relations of the United States, it became evident that great segments of the population of the United States were not neutral in thoughts and feelings and that parts of the neutrality laws placed nations for which there was American sympathy at a disadvantage in their struggle against the aggressors--Japan, Germany, Russia and Italy. The application of these laws to rising issues proved to the Legion that a blueprint for the future in foreign policy cannot be accurately charted. It was the events and not an analysis of neutrality as a policy that proved its bankruptcy.

Because the proposed Ludlow Amendment would have meant a major change in the theory and practice of representative government in the United States and because it would have permitted aggression in the western hemisphere, contrary to the accepted interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine, the Legion opposed it.

When it became evident that the shipments of scrap iron and other war materials to Japan placed the victim of Japanese aggression--China--at a disadvantage, the Legion advocated cessation of these shipments, approved the abrogation of the trade treaty entered into in 1911, and, to show that it was no longer neutral, expressed sympathy for China.

The Legion has always decried the pacifist influence in preventing its national defense program from being adopted by the American people and Congress. However, it followed a type of pacifism itself in supporting neutrality resolutions that had the effect of nullifying the Monroe Doctrine, as far as intervention and United States supremacy in the western hemisphere were concerned. Yet it should be noted that generally neutrality stemmed from a policy of military weakness, and seemingly from a determination to remain weak. No doubt had the United States been acting from a position of strength instead of weakness, the Legion would have supported such action.

In 1938, the Legion opposed lifting the arms embargo to aid Spanish Loyalists, but took no action in 1939 in the 44-day debate in Congress when the arms embargo was lifted.

Although recognizing and appreciating the integrity of Finland in paying off her World War I debts to the United States, when Russia attacked Finland in 1940 and

the question of making another loan to Finland came up, the Legion opposed it on the ground that the United States might become involved in war. No loan was granted.

When the Legion approved aid to Britain through Lend-Lease and the exchange of over-age destroyers for Atlantic air and naval bases, neutrality as a policy had been pretty much abandoned and the Legion was concerned more with national defense and national security. These forms of aid to Britain came at a time when the Legion was uncertain as to whether or not neutrality would prevent United States involvement in the war. It was hoped that Lend-Lease and the bases would strengthen national defense and United States involvement would be forestalled. Neutrality now as far as the Legion was concerned had been replaced by a "biased belligerency."

In ideological matters, aid to Russia involved more than aid to Britain. There was a deep-seated hatred of Communism and a distrust of Russia ever since the Legion had been organized. While recognizing that aid to Russia would aid national defense and national security, the Legion officials opposed such aid on the ground that it implied approval of Communism and Russia. When it was pointed out that the Legion could still oppose Communism in the United States while approving Lend-Lease aid to Russia to aid national defense, the delegates to the

Milwaukee convention disregarded their leadership's wishes and approved administration policy in this matter. Along with this approval, the Legion came out for repeal of the neutrality legislation.

In general, it may be said, the Legion was a follower, and not a forerunner, of the policies of supporting and abandoning neutrality. World-shaking events and the impossibility to cope with them under the neutrality legislation gradually changed the administrations' policy away from neutrality.

CHAPTER VII

INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

For many years, the American Legion showed only slight interest in the relations of the United States with its Latin-American neighbors. This lack of concern characterized Legion opinion not only in the twenties but also for several years after the enunciation of the Good Neighbor Policy by President Roosevelt in 1933.

The Good Neighbor Policy

In his inaugural address on March 4, 1933, President Roosevelt stated that "in the field of world policy I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbor--the neighbor who resolutely respects himself, and, because he does so, respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors."¹ A little over a month later, on April 14, 1933, while addressing the Governing Board of the Pan-American Union in its celebration of Pan-American Day, President Roosevelt gave more details of his good neighbor policy, declaring:

The celebration of Pan-American Day in this building, dedicated to international good will and cooperation, exemplifies a unity of thought and purpose among the peoples of this hemisphere. It is a manifestation of the common ideal of mutual helpfulness, sympathetic under-

1. Congressional Record, 73rd Congress, Special Session, Vol. 77, part 1, March 4 to 6, 1933, pp. 5-6.

standing, and spiritual solidarity. There is inspiration in the thought that on this day the attention of the citizens of the 21 Republics of America is focused on the common ties--historical, cultural, economic, and social--which bring them one to another. Common ideals and a community of interest, together with a spirit of cooperation, have led to the realization that the well-being of one nation depends . . . upon the well-being of its neighbors. It is upon these foundations that Pan-Americanism has been built . . . Hand in hand with the Pan-American doctrine of continental self-defense, the peoples of the American Republics understand more clearly, with the passing years, that the independence of each republic must recognize the independence of every other republic. Each one of us must grow by an advancement of civilization and social well-being and not by the acquisition of territory at the expense of any other neighbor.²

Following these statements by President Roosevelt on the Good Neighbor Policy it devolved upon Secretary of State Cordell Hull to further define and implement the policy. For this purpose the Montevideo Conference was scheduled.

It was the strategy of Secretary Hull at this conference to permit the Latin American nations, especially Argentina, the rival of the United States in western hemisphere affairs, take the lead and for the United States to remain in the background. Through many private conferences with the delegations of these nations the old suspicions became less intense. Secretary Hull assured each delegation in the manner, quoted as follows:

2. Congressional Record, 73rd Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 77, Part 2, April 21, 1933, p. 2104.

There is nothing my Government wants or is seeking down here except to carry forward the doctrine of the Good Neighbor. We simply want to cooperate fully with all Latin American countries in promoting the political and economic ideals in which we are all alike equally and mutually interested.³

The doctrine of the Good Neighbor, according to Secretary Hull "included the fundamentals of all those relationships between the nations of this hemisphere which should be asserted and scrupulously maintained. It embraced the doctrine of territorial and political integrity of each nation, the freedom of their citizens and their absolute sovereignty. It also included the promotion of peace and economic welfare."

Nonintervention was probably the point of keenest debate at Montevideo. Secretary Hull was interested in having the United States government give up the practice of intervention in the affairs of Latin American countries, but this was contingent upon the satisfaction of previous commitments. His statement is quoted as follows:

My Government is doing its utmost, with due regard to commitments made in the past, to end with all possible speed engagements which have been set up by previous circumstances. There are some engagements which can be removed more speedily than others. In some instances disentanglement from obligations of another era can only be brought about through the exercise of some patience.⁴

As to the Convention on the Rights and Duties of States agreed upon at Montevideo, Secretary Hull voted to

3. Ibid., p. 326.

4. The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, Vol. 1, p. 333.

accept it with this condition: the United States reserved its rights by "the law of nations as generally recognized."

The Good Neighbor Policy was destined to drive out the old slogans of "the big stick," "the big brother," and "dollar diplomacy" and the actions that corresponded to these slogans. It was the policy of the Roosevelt administration to call for the cooperation of all the western hemisphere nations in making the Monroe Doctrine a multilateral policy of the western hemisphere nations instead of continuing it as a unilateral policy of the United States. Earlier President Roosevelt had implemented the pledge of Woodrow Wilson at Mobile, Alabama, in 1913 to the effect that the United States would "never again consent to seek one additional foot of territory by conquest" in declaring against "armed intervention" in Latin American countries.

Looking to the more practical aspects of the Good Neighbor Policy and especially to hemisphere defense, Louis Johnson as Assistant Secretary of War set forth plans for American industry in preparation for "M" Day. It was a part of this program to develop "close economic and military ties with Latin America."⁵ With the Axis

5. Compare Drew Pearson, "The Washington Merry-Go-Round" in The Denver Post, April 1, 1949, p. 5; Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 84, Part 13, Appendix, 1939, p. 3057.

powers making inroads in Latin American countries, apprehension was felt for the military security of the western hemisphere. The United States would need not only the cooperation of all western hemisphere nations in providing this security, but also would want to have access to the thousands of raw materials that would be essential in the war industries.

Acceptance of the Good Neighbor Policy by Latin American countries was enthusiastic. It was not so with the American Legion. At its Milwaukee convention in 1941, the United States Ambassador to Mexico, Josephus Daniels, was there to plead the cause of "western hemisphere solidarity" and for Legion support for the Roosevelt administration's Inter-American policies. In appealing for this support, Ambassador Daniels said in part, quoted as follows:

Our day of need is here You are the men who know that not only concerted action on our part, but also on the part of the peoples of all the Americas, are vital to safeguarding those things which constitute our very existence. You, and all patriots, therefore, celebrate with enthusiasm the advent of continental solidarity Members of the Legion returned from the Armistice with a knowledge born of bitter experience that the only answer to greed is force--force to the limit. Isolationists from 1920 to 1933 denied the sound doctrine of Washington, "To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace." We have another type of armament and one which strengthens us beyond any material weapon. It is the arsenal of full cooperation of all the people of the New World in mutual defense against the permeation of imported "isms" or alien symptoms of government All these republics have felt the sting of government imposed by imperialistic foreign rule. The heart's desire of all Americans from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego

is consecrated to continental solidarity--solidarity to uphold and undergird democracy and the right of every man and peoples to self-government. Each and all have joined in the high resolve to stand together against any totalitarian invasion by propaganda, gun or bombs, and in the solemn consecration that in mutual protection any attack upon one will call into action the combined resistance to the other 21 republics.⁶

Legion Attitude Toward The Good Neighbor Policy

The Latin-American policy of the United States seems to have first attracted the notice of the American Legion in 1923 at its national convention in San Francisco. On this occasion, the Legion called for creating "a committee on Americanism in foreign departments, to have direction over departmental work aimed to inform the natives of such foreign countries as Mexico, Panama, Cuba and other Latin-American countries, as to the real feeling of the American people toward the peoples of all other countries, and especially those of Latin-America, and the desire of the citizens of the United States to aid in any manner possible the advancement of friendly relations between the nationals of such countries and those of the United States."⁷ Not until after the Legion's convention in Milwaukee in 1941 when Ambassador Joseph Daniels asked for Legion support of the Good

6. Congressional Record, 77th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 87, part 13, October 6, 1941, pp. 4484-4488; Milwaukee Journal, September 17, 1941, p. 6; Milwaukee September 18, 1941, pp. 1 and 4.

7. Annual Reports, 1924, p. 84.

Neighbor policy was there any official recognition of that policy. This recognition came in a report of the Legion's Foreign Relations Committee when it called upon all legionnaires to make a thorough study "of the results of the recent conferences on Pan-Americanism," for the committee felt that "the rapid advancement of the new spirit of mutual help and friendliness can be furthered immeasurably by an appreciation of the economic, political, and cultural attainments of these neighbor nations." The committee was concerned in furthering this program when it stated:

Knowing that the triumph of tyranny elsewhere in the world would immediately challenge the entire economic policy now so carefully planned for the independence and prosperity of the Americas, we urge that the United States proceed as speedily as possible with the program of making these nations friends in fact, as well as in name, and of carrying out policies which will insure to the best economic, political, and cultural benefit of all, without harmful dislocation of existing markets Informed by press and radio of the inroads, even now, of Nazi-German colonization and propaganda, especially in Latin American countries, the committee urges assistance wherever possible to counteracting such inroads. In this connection, we recommend to our national officers of the American Legion a study of possible ways and means of giving aid to counterbalancing influences against such propaganda, as suggested recently by our Legion comrades in Central America. Among other proposals, these comrades have suggested that the American Legion might assist materially and effectively by broadcasting radio programs dedicated to Latin America designed to promote even friendlier relations with the Pan-American nations.⁸

8. Annual Reports, 1941, p. 333.

In addition to the recommendation made here, the Foreign Relations Committee made two suggestions for possible action of the Legion. One of these was "the desirability of encouraging the departments of the American Legion, and particularly those of the border states, and the Departments of Puerto Rico, Mexico and Panama, to increase the activities of their posts with regard to enhancing their friendly relations with the Pan-American nations." The other was that the national organization of the Legion should "make a survey of the possibilities in Latin America for the strengthening of existing posts of the Legion and all citizens of our great land to strive patriotically and loyally, now as ever, to uphold our American traditions, preserve our democracy, and be on instant call for the service of our nation."

No doubt the question of national defense played the strongest role in the Legion's desire to speed the Inter-American program when it recommended "intensified development of a complete system of federal highways in the United States, the construction of international links to Alaska and Central America."⁹ Chairman Sullivan of the Legion's Foreign Relations Committee urged legionnaires "to support friendly relations between the United States and the Latin American countries" for "one highly important element in the development and maintenance of defense

9. The National Legionnaire, October, 1941, p. 11.

of our country is continuance of the present policy of uniting the thought and effort of all the Americas."¹⁰

The Legion recognized the difficulties the State Department had in its diplomatic affairs. France had fallen, but the State Department still had important negotiations with the unoccupied part. Finland was in the war, but still at peace with the United States. Turkey was neutral and a "most important one." Even with all the best wishes for hemisphere solidarity the Legion was suspicious of what Latin America might do as is to be witnessed from the statement quoted as follows:

In a world where diplomatic promises have been tossed about like chaff, there remain nations with which we are at peace and with which our State Department carries on important negotiations At the same time the whole structure of our hemispheric solidarity remains the business of the State Department, aided by the Rockefeller group and other agencies. Latin America must remain American, and not go Latin on us, if Latin is at all synonymous with Italian. For Spanish America must be American and not Spanish. We face every sort of Axis intrigue in the nations to the south; intrigue, bribery, threats, espionage, propaganda.¹¹

This suspicion was further evidenced when the Legion continued to view with apprehension the high price Latin American countries were demanding for the price of cooperation. Its suspicion is evident from the

10. The National Legionnaire, November, 1941, p. 2.

11. The National Legionnaire, May, 1942, p. 10.

statement quoted as follows:

The United States has many and involved diplomatic contacts these days, one set being with South America, which is mostly our friend if not our ally, but has here and there shown a disposition to demand a good deal of money or trade advantages.¹²

In spite of this suspicion, and to allay it if possible, the Foreign Relations Committee of the Legion stated the policy to be pursued. This assurance is quoted as follows:

Toward our friends, and particularly towards those of the Americas, our policy is and will continue to be that of mutual helpfulness, fairness and good faith. We have no territorial ambitions, no desire for commercial domination anywhere.¹³

On May 7, 1943, the Legion invited Nelson A. Rockefeller, Co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs, to speak before its National Executive Committee in Indianapolis. He made an "off the record" talk, but was reported as saying:

The good neighbor policy is proving to be more and more effective ever since the framework was set up in 1933 when the first Inter-American Conference was held in Montevideo, culminating in the conference at Rio de Janeiro last year. The war has drawn the Latin-American countries and the United States closer together. The good neighbor policy will be carried on after the war¹⁴

He went on to report that the Inter-American Affairs branch of the State Department had carried on an

12. The National Legionnaire, July, 1942, p. 4.

13. Annual Reports, 1942, p. 311.

14. The National Legionnaire, May, 1943, p. 5.

"educational and good will campaign for two and a half years, through the medium of books, magazines, movies and the radio."

In October, 1943, the Legion held its twenty-fifth anniversary convention in Omaha. It was the tenth anniversary of the good neighbor policy and the organization warmly endorsed it apparently because it was "no longer a party policy, but a national policy." Its resolution approving the good neighbor policy read as follows:

Whereas, the American Legion desires to aid and encourage a better understanding between our country and the other American Republics; and whereas, the American Legion feels that the wartime security and peacetime prosperity of the United States are irrevocably linked with the other American Republics; and whereas, the American Legion believes that only through hemispheric solidarity may the United States hope to regain the standards of living always associated with the American way of life; now, therefore, the American Legion resolves that the people of the United States should be encouraged in securing a full knowledge of and a sympathetic attitude for the people of the other American Republics--their languages, customs, economy, geography and history--and, in concert with this sincere attitude and interest, to cooperate with the other American Republics in the fulfillment of their national development as friendly states; be it resolved, that the American Legion pledges its full cooperation to the promotion of hemispheric harmony and solidarity. We warmly endorse the Good Neighbor policies which have strengthened the bonds of friendship throughout all the Americas. We urge continued efforts to break down every difference of whatever nature that may now or hereafter threaten the solidarity of the Western Hemisphere. We recommend every honest effort to remove all cause of misunderstanding, so that the nations of the Americas shall speak and act as one in the cause of liberty and justice.¹⁵

¹⁵ Congressional Record, 78th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 89, part 12, Appendix, 1943, pp. 5556-5557; The National Legionnaire, October, 1943, pp. 1 and 2.

The Legion's Inter-American Affairs Program

The Legion launched its Inter-American Affairs program on November 26, 1943, at a dinner given at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington. The chief speakers were Commander Atherton of the Legion, Bishop O'Hara, Senator Barkley and Nelson A. Rockefeller, with representatives of Latin American Republics as guests. Rockefeller was pleased that the Legion had undertaken as "one of their major objectives the development of inter-American cooperation." He thought the Legion was interested in the good neighbor policy because "it is a practical policy and it works and there have been many mutual dividends. The other American republics are pulling their own weight and doing their part in this struggle and we in the United States can well be proud and grateful that we are a part of this family of nations."¹⁶

The Legion's Inter-American program was not to be a temporary affair. Defeating the Axis Powers--Germany, Italy and Japan--would not end the need to carry on this activity. The Legion, after evaluating the aims, methods and objectives of the Soviets, concluded that "justice, freedom and democracy" must still be defended. Consequently, its activities were aimed at counteracting

16. Congressional Record, 78th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 89, part 12, Appendix, 1943, pp. 5556-5557.

Communist infiltration in Latin America by circulating "the true gospel of American democracy."

With the view to "more efficiently combat Communist ideologies and propaganda" and "in order to implement in that part of the world our fight against Communism," Paul H. Griffith, National Commander of the Legion, called a conference of American Legion posts of the Caribbean area and Latin America in Ancon, Canal Zone, June 1 and 2, 1947. Here the conference agreed upon "a program looking toward closer cooperation with the duly constituted agencies of the Government of the United States of America and the governments of the various countries in which [Legion posts] are located, subject to the laws of those countries, and to offer all cooperation possible to the above-mentioned entities to combat Communism."

One resolution called for the Congress of the United States to restore the appropriation to continue the informational and cultural program of the State Department [the Inter-American program carried on under the direction of Nelson A. Rockefeller.] This, the 80th Congress did not do.

Another resolution called for the "dissemination of information on various phases of American life, the maintenance of libraries, the exchange of students, and other features . . . to promote better understanding of democratic ideals and attainments." And finally, another

resolution asked "that American tourists visiting foreign countries be provided with instructions in methods of how to conduct themselves so they will make friends for the United States of America in the foreign countries visited and that this be handled through the national headquarters of the American Legion." The State Department did not transfer the issuance of instructions to tourists visiting other countries to the Legion as this conference at Ancon requested. The Legion, however, regarded the results of the Ancon conference as representing "an extension of our Legion Americanism program to an international level."¹⁷

Commander Atherton, in discussing Legion participation in the Inter-American Affairs program, said, quoted as follows:

Let us continue to work and think together until the 'Pan' drops from Pan-Americanism and Americanism describes a better way of life from the Arctic to the Antarctic. The men who won World War I and whose sons are winning this war fervently pray that the little isthmus which binds us together may forever be a 'rock of ages' joining us in eternal friendship.¹⁸

Inter-American Affairs centers were organized in seventeen cities throughout the United States. These cities were Boston, Buffalo, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Chicago, Cleveland, Denver, Des Moines, Detroit, Kansas City, Missouri, Los Angeles, Memphis, Omaha, Philadelphia,

17. Congressional Record, 80th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 93, part 12, Appendix, 1947, p. 3159.

18. The National Legionnaire, March, 1944, p. 5.

Pittsburgh, Providence, Salt Lake City and St. Louis.¹⁹

If there were international relations clubs or other organizations in existence in these cities which would cooperate in carrying on the Inter-American programs, the Legion worked with them. If not, new organizations were formed. The Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Nelson A. Rockefeller, cooperated in setting up and carrying on the programs.

It is no small honor for a pressure group to be given a part in the carrying out of an important phase of American foreign policy and the Legion took pride in its role, even though its "end of the job was at home." In carrying out the program, however, Legion activity was not limited to the United States, as we shall see. In the preface to a bulletin published by the Legion, Proposed Program of Inter-American Activities, the Legion expressed a missionary spirit when it stated:

The American Legion has offered its services to the Government in its efforts to create better understanding between United States citizens and the countries to the South. The American Legion recognizes the great need of this activity not only as a wartime expedient but especially for the benefit of the entire hemisphere after victory has been won. The American Legion with its scores of thousands of members . . . offers its services as a patriotic duty and with the objective of a broad vigorous effort which will accelerate the acceptance on the part of the United States citizens of the Good Neighbor Policy Now, consistent with our Legion policy and with the expansion of our National Americanism

19. The National Legionnaire, March, 1944, p. 5.

program, we extend our influence to cover the American hemisphere. To the south of us lie lands that are themselves American also. Our inter-American relations have passed through many stages, but today we can point to a relation that is growing warmer with each passing day, a relation founded on a new understanding of our mutual inter-dependence and the security of the entire hemisphere. Our end of this job is at home, among our citizens. The people who are uninformed of the cultures of Latin America must be informed. They must be given a reason for enthusiastic interest. They must be shown that the interests of North and South America can be developed harmoniously and, by careful planning, with very little actual competition.

LET US EXTEND OUR AMERICANISM TO HEMISPHERISM.

The American Legion prides itself on deeds rather than words. Our National Americanism Commission has been working with the Co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs for many months. The principle of inter-American cooperation has been applauded throughout the Western Hemisphere--in Latin America as well as in the United States. The people of the new world realize that it pays to cooperate in solving both the problems of war and the problems of peace. As a part of this process of working together, we in the United States must come to know more about our neighbors to the South--their lives, their cultures, their aspirations, and their role in the present war. It is with the thought of encouraging an active community interest in inter-American affairs that this list of suggestions has been compiled.²⁰

The Co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Nelson A. Rockefeller, passed along to the Legion a list of fifteen suggestions with specific activities suggested to do in carrying out each one. This was not considered to be a complete list. The fifteen suggested were:

- (a) Observing Latin American Independence Days and Pan American Day.
- (b) Seeking more adequate news coverage on inter-American affairs in the press.
- (c) Encouraging the public schools to participate

20. Proposed Program of Inter-American Activities, 1944, preface.

actively in the program.

(d) Stimulating the showing of films in the inter-American field.

(e) Utilizing the radio as an integral part of the local program.

(f) Encouraging the libraries to acquire more material concerning Latin America.

(g) Initiating classes in Spanish and Portuguese, and in Inter-American affairs.

(h) Intensifying the program of lectures, round tables, panels, forums, etc.

(i) Establishing study groups in local clubs and organizations.

(j) Providing material to groups and individuals.

(k) Establishing and operating speakers' bureaus for the Latin American field.

(l) Holding Latin American concerts and art exhibits.

(m) Encouraging local merchants to feature and display Latin American products.

(n) Welcoming and entertaining Latin American visitors.

(o) Establishing permanent clearing-houses for inter-American affairs.²¹

Each of the fifteen suggestions had from ten to sixteen specific activities recommended to carry out the Inter-American program, a total of 166. For example, under the first suggestion, Observe Latin American Independence Days and Pan American Day, the following activities were recommended:

(1). Issue official proclamations signed by the Mayor or the Governor naming the day and calling for its observance.

(2). Stage flag-raising ceremonies at the city hall.

(3). Make the national anthem of the honored country

21. "Pan American Project of the American Legion" in Bulletin of the Pan American Union, Vol. 78, March 1944, pp. 176-177; Proposed Program of Inter-American Activities, pp. 2-17.

or countries available to radio stations.

(4). Stage general assemblies in the schools or devote one class period to a study of the country in question (or to Latin America in general).

(5). Display in the city the flags of the country honored.

(6). Invite diplomats, officials or leading citizens of the country to participate in radio programs, luncheons, etc.

(7). Put on special book displays in bookstores and libraries.

(8). Arrange special lectures on the country for groups, organizations, museums, etc.

(9). Encourage the showing of films in the theaters about the country in question.

(10). Feature goods and produce from that country in local stores.

(11). Key restaurant menus to famous recipes of the country.

(12). Include several questions about the country (or about Latin America) in radio quiz programs.

(13). Secure editorial comment in papers, together with feature articles.

(14). Encourage special activities (luncheons, concerts, art exhibits) by organizations in the inter-American field.

(15). Run feature articles of the country's contribution to our war effort in the press.

(16). Run pictures of prominent people participating in the program--e. g., the Mayor shaking hands with the Mexican consul.²²

Achievements of the Inter-American Program

As is the case with other Legion programs so it is with the Inter-American program that achievements and results are not always easy to single out and claim.

With so many organizations and governments working for the same goals, it is not easy to attribute to each the proportionate share of the results achieved. Whatever the effects may have been upon individuals in the 21

22. Proposed Program of Inter-American Activities, p. 3.

American republics there are certain results achieved by their governments. Nelson A. Rockefeller listed some of the achievements when he spoke to the leaders of the Legion at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington November 26, 1943. He credited the Good Neighbor Policy and the Inter-American program for enlisting the cooperation of the other 20 American republics in "pulling their weight and doing their part in this struggle." Other things he listed are quoted as follows:

Nineteen of them have broken relations with the enemy and have given freely of their resources to the cause of the United Nations. Twelve have declared war. As a result we have the use of military, naval, and air bases which have enormously simplified our strategic problems. In a very real sense the great base at Natal on the bulge of Brazil, where our planes swing across the South Atlantic, could be called Victory Corner. Without hesitation, Ecuador, occupying a strategic position in relation to the Panama Canal, gives us the right to use the Galapagos Islands for an outpost of defense, and the port of Salinas, the most important naval harbor on the west coast of South America. Cuban planes and subchasers are hunting down U-boats. Mexican merchant sailors have lost their lives at sea by enemy action. Brazilian airmen are blasting German submarines to the bottom, and Brazil is preparing troops for overseas service. The other Americas have smashed centers of espionage and sabotage on two continents. They have stepped up production of strategic raw materials. In the words of that distinguished legionnaire, Louis Johnson, we can say: "Those who laughed at the pioneers of the good-neighbor policy have lived to see the day when South American materials saved the day for the arsenal of democracy."²³

A preliminary action to the Legion making contacts in South America came in May, 1943, when Brigadier

23. Congressional Record, 78th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 89, part 12, Appendix, 1943, pp. 5556-5557.

General John N. Greely, the military analyst for Nelson A. Rockefeller's office, spoke in Spanish by short wave radio to Latin American countries telling them "about the Legion, how it is composed and its place in the American scheme."²⁴

This was followed by a thirty-day good will tour by National Commander Atherton, accompanied by Lieutenant Olmedo Alfaro, of the Ecuadorian Army, in 1944. This tour was under the auspices of the office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs and also the advisory committee on American Legion participation in Inter-American good-will promotion. Atherton and his interpreter, Lieutenant Alfaro, made seventeen stops in ten Latin-American countries. The tour included stops at Natal, Recife, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo in Brazil, Montevideo in Uruguay, Buenos Aires in Argentina, Santiago in Chile, Lima in Peru, Bogota in Colombia, Balboa in Panama, San Jose in Costa Rica, Guatamala in Guatamala and then to Mexico City. Atherton met the officials of the ten nations, visited as well at the diplomatic officials of the United States in those countries, talked with business, military and organization leaders and inspected war plants, military, naval and air installations.

24. The National Legionnaire, August, 1944, pp. 1 and 14; Inter-American News, February, 1944, pp. 1-2.

In his speeches over the radio and to groups he gave a first hand report of the Pacific war as he had just returned from that area, expressed the "greetings and good wishes of their friends in the United States" as well as the "appreciation of the people of the United States for the affiliation and cooperation of the Latin American Republics which have espoused the cause of the United Nations in the fight against the Axis Powers." According to Legion reports, Atherton made "a fine contribution for the American Legion to the friendship between, and the solidarity of, the great American republics."²⁵

Legion reports do not cover the entire Inter-American program. Occasionally, when some special program was planned, fairly wide publicity was given. Such was the case when 199 Legion posts of Los Angeles County joined to hold a mammoth Inter-American Relations Night in Los Angeles on February 4, 1944. At this meeting, consuls of the other twenty American republics as well as numerous civic leaders identified with the good neighbor policy were the distinguished guests. This pageantry, so often associated with Legion conventions, was described in the manner quoted as follows:

Impressive opening ceremonies included a Parade of the Republics in which the respective consuls were escorted to the platform with legionnaires in uniform,

25. The National Legionnaire, August, 1944, pp. 1 and 14.

preceded by their national flags, carried by members of Star Post's uniformed color guard. The flags were posted in the rear of each consul's place on the rostrum, and following the singing of our national anthem by Carlos Ramirez, distinguished Colombian operatic and motion picture baritone, were posted en masse in the center of the platform.

Two speakers were quoted. The first was Eugene W. Biscailuz of the National Inter-American Activities Committee of the Legion who said: "I am determined that we shall develop an active and understanding interest in inter-American affairs throughout every community in Los Angeles County. By so doing, our citizenry, as a whole, will come to know more about our American neighbors to the south--their lives, their culture, their aspirations, and their role in the present war." The other speaker was the consul-general of Chile, who was quoted as follows:

The people of Latin and South America are determined to stand by the side of the North American Republic in the battle to defeat the forces threatening free men all over the world. I express the corps' appreciation and gratitude to the American Legion for this most important contribution toward inter-American understanding and cooperation.²⁶

The more solid work of inter-American affairs, however, was done in a less spectacular manner. The Midwest Inter-American Center at Kansas City, Missouri is evidence of this. Interested people there started

26. The National Legionnaire, March, 1944, p. 11.

programs in 1938 when a prominent citizen from Kansas City returned from South America, sponsored a regional trade conference, and at the University of Kansas City, Dr. Lynn I. Perrigo introduced a new program of courses on Latin America. Beginning in 1941 the University sponsored annual conferences on inter-American affairs and interest grew rapidly. Then the Office of the Co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs granted financial assistance for these conferences, thus making it possible to bring in outstanding specialists from both Latin America and the United States. In the summer of 1942 Dr. Perrigo conducted a workshop for teachers and more financial assistance came from Rockefeller's office. In 1943 there were 15 teachers in the workshop and 43 in 1944. Visitors from Honduras, Guatamala, Argentina, Paraguay, Chile and other Latin American Republics served as consultants in this activity.²⁷ These visitors were in the United States pursuing studies along lines of their own interests such as the police force, investigating farm practices, and the restoration of points of historical interest.

In 1943 business and educational interests in Kansas City were merged. A Pan American Council was organized with a local business man as President. Representatives of business firms with Latin American trade and teachers

27. Inter-American News, Vol. 1, number 12, June, 1944, pp. 1 and 4.

from the schools and colleges in that area worked together in the programs. The purpose of the Council was to coordinate the various local efforts and to keep the separate interests informed as to what others were doing and also concerning the coming of various visitors from Latin-American countries.

With a generous grant from the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs in 1943, the Council incorporated as a "center" with a local board of directors and a full-time executive. Dr. Perrigo became the first director and the first year of the center's activities is described by him, quoted as follows:

The educational activities included the distribution of movies, thousands of pamphlets and other materials to schools, churches, and study groups; the organization of a local speakers' bureau; the sponsorship of several public meetings; assistance with a number of collegiate conferences; and the promotion of tours by Latin American speakers and artists. In addition, the Center arranged for a prominent scholar and faculty member at the University of Guatemala to come to the University of Kansas City and give some special courses in the fall of 1944.

For the business interests the Center served as an information clearing house and a kind of a placement office for jobs requiring ability to use foreign languages. Because people trained to handle foreign trade were scarce, and the demand for them was increasing, the Center sponsored a special foreign trade training course of twelve weekly meetings, and nearly one hundred office employees took the course. Out of this came the organization of a permanent Foreign Trade Club, headed by leading business men.

In the field of language studies the Center did not need to sponsor classes in Spanish and Portuguese; there were plenty of them in local schools and colleges. Instead, the Center organized conversation clubs which would provide the means for cultivating practical use of the languages. First came the Saturday afternoon club;

then a Friday noon business men's luncheon club, (and it was surprising to discover how many business men knew some Spanish); then soon a Portuguese club, and three more Spanish clubs, making six altogether. In each, several local Latin Americans took part, but there was no organized instruction--just conversation and a sociable get-together.

Because the Center was a regional office, the director went into neighboring cities and set up committees to render similar services there in cooperation with the Center and the Washington office. By the end of the first year, sub-centers were functioning at Springfield and St. Joseph, Missouri, and at Topeka and Pittsburg, Kansas.²⁸

The Inter-American News was the official organ of the Midwest Inter-American Center and was published monthly. Its predecessor was the Pan American News, published during 1943. The Inter-American News was the agency for typing all the activities of the Center together. "The greatest immediate need is to let each other know what is going on already."²⁹ This paper grew from a mimeographed sheet to a six-page printed paper, and the circulation increased from 200 to 3,000. Each issue contained reports of recent events, announcements, book lists for those interested in increasing their knowledge of Latin America, editorials on inter-Americanism, reports of interviews with visitors, and an article in Spanish or Portuguese.

There was a Foreign Trade Club for the purpose of

28. Lynn Perrigo, "Midwest Inter-American Center" in Ball State Alumnus, Vol. III, No. 1, November, 1944, pp. 8-9.

29. Pan American News, January, 1943, p. 1.

"helping the Latins help themselves," offering courses dealing with export and import procedures, international finance, foreign policy, tariffs, cartels and other related subjects.³⁰

Dr. Ferrigo summarized the work of the Midwest Center at Kansas City, quoted as follows:

The major achievements of the Midwest Inter-American Center, in my opinion, were the development of a foreign trade consciousness and technical preparation to conduct foreign trade, as well as a general interest in learning more about Latin America on the part of a great variety of civic groups and individuals in a part of America noted normally for a traditional provincialism.

Of these, the foreign trade aspect, developed through the Chamber of Commerce, was the more lasting and thus the more significant. The general interest in Latin America, on the other hand, was in part a natural war-time response to planned promotion. Everyone wanted to give energy and thought to the war effort, and to many this program had a strong appeal. The policy of the Office of the Co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs, working through the Inter-American Centers, was to enlist, utilize, and coordinate the interest of as many existing organizations as possible, and to get them to adopt resolutions to sponsor study groups, distribute literature, hear speakers, see motion pictures and learn some Spanish. To this, in the Kansas City area, the schools, colleges, churches, lodges, luncheon clubs, American Legion, Chamber of Commerce, and others, responded well. Much of the interest continued only "for the duration," but this effort should not be discounted entirely because of a partial lapse later. After all, the educational work, while it lasted, must have made an impression, and in some phases--in schools, colleges and language conversation groups--the interest has continued.

With this program in the Kansas City area the Legion

30. Inter-American News, December, 1943, pp. 1-2; March, 1944, pp. 1-2; September, 1944, pp. 1-3.

cooperated through having programs on inter-American affairs, having Latin-American visitors speak at its post meetings and having general study groups.³¹

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the good neighbor policy was getting the cooperation and participation of Latin American countries in defending the western hemisphere and in winning World War II sooner than might have been the case otherwise. Don Bolt, noted traveler and lecturer, quoted the chargé d'affaires of the American Embassy in Mexico City, Dr. Cunningham, as saying that the assistance of Mexico alone shortened the war by six months. He stated further that Latin American countries supplied over 3,000 critical war materials without which the war might not have been won at all by the nations fighting against Axis aggressions.

When Dr. Joseph F. Thorning, honorary fellow of the Historical and Geographic Institute of Brazil and executive secretary of the Cuban-American Council of University Studies, received the decoration, Order of Merit, from the Ecuadorian Republic, he made an address on "Inter-American Cultural Cooperation" in which he said:

Without the naval base at Salinas and the air stations on the Galapagos Islands, which are both the national property of the Ecuadorians, the United Nations might not have been able to defend the Panama Canal.

31. Inter-American News, February, 1944, pp. 1-2.

This was inter-American friendship at its best; this was devotion on the part of our good neighbors that we in North America are bound to remember with profound appreciation as long as this democracy endures.³²

While Senator Dennis Chavez of New Mexico was reviewing the history of international cooperation in the western hemisphere, and especially in evaluating the effects of the riots in Bogota, Colombia, during the Ninth Pan-American Conference in 1948, he summarized the cooperation and participation of Latin American countries in World War II, quoted as follows:

Perhaps some persons do not know how important it is that the resources, the manpower, and the political strength of Latin America be on our side. How fortunate it was for the world and for democracy that the American hemisphere was united.

When we formally declared war on Japan eight American Republics were already at war with her. Within three days of our declaration of war against Germany, ten of the Latin-American Republics had ranged themselves against Hitler. Never before in history have so many nations accepted the hazards of war and supported their pledged word and national honor.

In addition to vital political and economic measures directed against the Axis, Latin-American nations were prompt to participate in the military prosecution of the war. Mexico, Brazil, Cuba, Colombia, and Venezuela, among others, engaged their air, sea, and military forces in protecting the American seaboard and in the war against the Germans' U-boats.

Military airfields, troop bases, and shipping depots, throughout the Latin-American nations were made available or were specially built for the use of all American forces. Air and ground components of the Brazilian and Mexican armies fought alongside the armies of the United Nations. As our forces drove up the Italian Peninsula, Mexican and Brazilian air and ground units, under the leadership of Mark Clark, distinguished themselves in the fighting which took place in July and August of

32. Congressional Record, 79th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 92, part 10, Appendix, April 2, 1946, pp. 1857-1858.

1944 and were an important factor in driving back the Germans. The technical skill and daring of the Mexican pilots in the Pacific were commented upon by all nations. Their record is one which must not be forgotten. The value to the United States of these services cannot be overestimated.³³

Conclusion

With the advent of the New Deal in 1933 came the announced Good Neighbor Policy of the Roosevelt administration. This took on a special significance as far as the relations between nations of the western hemisphere were concerned. The Good Neighbor Policy was in line with the evolution of the Pan Americanism that had been developing for over a hundred years. Although conceived to achieve the goal of peace, it bore fruit in assuring the cooperation and participation of Latin American countries in winning World War II.

President Roosevelt, Secretary of State Cordell Hull, the Assistant Secretary of State, Sumner Welles and Latin American political leaders popularized the concept of hemisphere solidarity in view of aggressions by the Axis Powers--Germany, Italy and Japan. Popularizing the ideology of the good neighbor was the political phase as between the nations of the western hemisphere. Louis Johnson, Assistant Secretary of War, conceived the system

33. Congressional Record, 80th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 94, part 4, April 20, 1948, pp. 4592-4593.

of military defense, the military phase, as a partial implementation of the Good Neighbor Policy.

Even though the Legion back in 1923 had envisioned a good neighbor policy of its own, no activity followed to implement it. Not until the United States was a "biased belligerent" in aiding the nations fighting Axis aggression and the United States Ambassador to Mexico, Josephus Daniels, called for Legion support of the good neighbor policy did this organization take official notice and approve the policy by resolution. When Nelson A. Rockefeller assured the National Executive Committee that the Good Neighbor Policy was "a national policy and not a party policy" the Legion decided to participate in it. This participation was enthusiastic and wholehearted. The Office of Inter-American Affairs set up and coordinated the work of seventeen Inter-American centers, later raised to twenty. Individuals and groups responded magnificently, partly because of the war tensions and partly to a sincere desire to see improved relations between the peoples and nations of the western hemisphere.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the good neighbor policy was the response of Latin American nations in cooperating and participating in the war. Raw materials, air, military and naval bases, and even actual participation in the war bear witness to the reality of "hemisphere solidarity." The "good neighbor" was the ideal with

World War II and alien propogandas created the pressure that extended Pan Americanism.

In these developments the Legion was a leader in establishing a goal of good neighborliness, but lost the objective temporarily. It was picked up again under the stress of war when the Legion became a good follower in pursuing the goal of hemisphere solidarity.

CHAPTER VIII

PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

During the three decades under study, the Legion always maintained that its programs were designed to achieve the goal of peace. Consequently, achieving this goal revolves around the methods to search out and reach, if possible. This organization recognizes some of the fundamental causes of war--lack of understanding between peoples and nations, violations of treaty rights, sharp trade practices, international propaganda of hate and aggression. The second most important item on the Legion schedule--national defense--was in the name of peace. The neutrality legislation was supported with the sole idea of keeping the United States at peace. The elimination of war profits was supposed to remove an important cause for war. The disarmament program was entered into, reluctantly, by the Legion to remove friction between nations in the hope that it would prevent war. After a few years in support of the cause to get the United States into the World Court, this was abandoned as an "entangling alliance" likely to lead the country into war. Trade between nations and economic affairs in general were given little attention until after the great depression. At first refusing to take any action on the League of Nations because it was a political matter and then coming out in

opposition to United States participation in its deliberations, the Legion has come out strongly for international co-operation in general and supports the United Nations as the agency for making this effective.

The Legion carried on activities designed to achieve peace between countries on a person-to-person basis as well as policies on a nation-to-nation basis. First will be considered individual and group activities.

FIDAC and Peace

The Federation Interallieé des Anciens Combattants (Interallied Federation of Ex-service Men), shortened to the initials, FIDAC, was the only agency of veterans that worked solely for peace. It was an international organization of World War I veterans' societies in eleven allied countries, with a total membership of approximately eight millions. It was founded in Paris in 1920 and at its height had 65 veterans' associations in Belgium, France, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the United States. The American Legion is the only member society of the FIDAC in the United States and every member of the Legion automatically becomes a member of it.¹

1. "What is this FIDAC?", Legion pamphlet; Annual Reports, 1924, p. 53; Annual Reports, 1925, p. 62; Annual Reports, 1926, p. 17; Annual Reports, 1928, p. 20; Annual Reports, 1932, pp. 312-316; Annual Reports, 1934, pp. 348-351; Annual Reports, 1939, p. 388.

The fundamental object of the FIDAC was to maintain and develop a spirit of comradeship which manifested itself on the battlefields of the first World War and to use that comradeship in the promotion of peace. The FIDAC maintained headquarters at 15 Rue de Presles, Paris, France, and published the FIDAC REVIEW, an illustrated monthly printed in English, French and Italian, which contained news of the ex-service men of all countries and authoritative information on international affairs.

The work of this organization was divided into two principal classes: first, assistance to ex-service men and their dependents, and second, peace propaganda. The assistance to ex-service men and their dependents was rendered both to large groups of veterans and to individuals. The headquarters in Paris might be called an international rehabilitation bureau because on file in that office were records of veterans' legislation of all the nations and complete data on what each country was doing for its veterans. Valuable help is given by FIDAC to countries that wish to improve the condition of their own veterans. Headquarters receive letters daily from individual veterans in all parts of the world seeking various kinds of aid--copies of citations issued by foreign governments, papers necessary for the filing of pensions, certified copies of hospital records, medals issued by Verdun and Chateau-Thierry to soldiers who served in those sectors

during the war, location of graves, search for missing comrades and relatives, naturalization difficulties and many other problems.

The FIDAC aimed to make contributions toward peace through a person-to-person basis. Believing that the road to peace lies through a better understanding of the problems of other nations it established in Paris a Peace Bureau to disseminate accurate information on the problems and viewpoint of the different allied nations. Articles of this nature appeared each month in the FIDAC REVIEW and were usually reprinted and given wide distribution in the different allied nations. The Legion co-operated in this peace program by supplying articles by outstanding legionnaires on various phases of American life and government. Attempts were made to remove friction between allied nations through unofficial explanations and contacts of responsible citizens and officials. Visits of veterans to other countries were encouraged as a means of promoting friendly relations, and veterans' groups operated through the Travel Bureau of FIDAC in arranging tours.

Recognizing that the hope for peace in the future rested with the youth of that day, the FIDAC encouraged the peace efforts of schools and colleges by offering each year three medals of honor to educational institutions in each of its member countries for outstanding work in furthering international friendship and under-

standing. The Legion selected the American schools to receive the FIDAC awards by conducting each year a nationwide competition among the universities and colleges of the country.²

Each year the FIDAC held a congress in one of the allied countries, bringing together more than one hundred delegates who were representative leaders of the FIDAC nations. Two of these congresses were held in the United States--in New Orleans in 1922 and in Washington in 1930. The Legion withdrew from FIDAC in 1939 for fear its sympathies with other allied veterans and nations might draw the United States into World War II.³

Legion Conventions in Paris

In view of the great stress placed on personal associations as a means of furthering the goal of peace, the Legion's conventions in Paris in 1927 and in 1937 and the official calls by Commander Savage and 250 other officers of the Legion on the governments of Italy, Switzerland, Belgium and England might be considered as applications of this idea. (A third convention in Paris was to have been held in 1947, but it was called off due to a lack of shipping facilities).

2. Annual Reports, 1932, pp. 311-319.

3. The National Legionnaire, October, 1939, p. 5.

In the 1927 convention, 30,000 legionnaires made the pilgrimage to Paris. Some French reporters objected to the visit being called a "pilgrimage" for one goes back to ancient civilizations and to the dead in pilgrimages and this convention should have been dedicated to the living, to fun and to good fellowship.⁴

The French government appropriated 3,757,243 francs for entertaining the Legion. First on schedule was the official banquet where the official welcome and exchange of niceties by city and French government officials and Legion officials took place. No convention of the Legion would forego a parade and the 30,000 legionnaires put on a good show for the several hundred thousand spectators. One hundred thousand French soldiers were ordered to duty in Paris for the convention, parade and other Legion activities. Parisians had never seen such a show--and the Communists referred to it as a circus. With the multi-colored uniforms worn by various state delegations, the French people thought that it was designed as a burlesque on Europe's centuries old militarism. In L'Humanité the legionnaires were referred to as the "Fascist, Puritan and Alcoholic Legion." The Communists were critical of Americans for having executed the two Boston anarchists,

4. The Literary Digest, Vol. 95, October 15, 1927, p. 38.

Sacco and Vanzetti. While the Legion was meeting in Paris, 14,000 Communist members met in the suburb of Clichy and baptized "a square by the name of Place Sacco Vanzetti."

In carrying out the idea of person-to-person contacts to further the cause of peace, the 30,000 legionnaires as guests of the French government and people caused the diplomatic relations between France and Russia to be strained. The mutual animosity between legionnaires and Communists is well known. During the convention in Paris the Russian ambassador to France ordered the Communists to overthrow the French government for having invited the Legion to Paris, and for this the French government asked the Russian government to recall its ambassador as persona non grata.⁵

Relationships between France and another government, Germany, were involved as a result of the Legion convention in Paris, when, a week before the convention was held, President Hindenberg of Germany made a statement to the effect that Germany was not guilty for starting World War I and invited the official delegation of the Legion to visit Germany. After the French government protested against an official Legion visit to Germany, that country was removed from the official list of the Legion.⁶

5. "The American Legion Conquers Paris" by Othon G. Guerlac, in Current History, Vol. 27, November, 1927, pp. 283-285.

6. "American Youth and French Battle-Scars" in Literary Digest, Vol. 95, October 15, 1927, pp. 38-44.

It is to be noted that not all the 30,000 legionnaires making the pilgrimage to Paris were burning with the idealism to make personal contacts with Frenchmen nor to establish better relations between France and the United States. Out of such a large group it would be unusual if some did not act in a contrary manner. The great majority were sincerely desirous of renewing old acquaintances and making new ones. Some went along for the fun and frolic. One legionnaire from Arkansas went along for revenge against a "Montmarte joint where he had been short-changed in 1918, right after the Armistice." The tale of what happened was unfolded later to Judge Philip Sullivan, of the Legion's Illinois delegation, who, by courtesy of the French courts, sat with a French judge at a special tribunal for Legion cases. The legionnaire had hurled two terrace tables through the plate glass front, and when a couple of garçons tried to interfere, he pitched them in among the wreckage. The management then called a squad of gendarmes who arrested him and took him off to jail. When he was brought into court for trial, he looked around and said: "I ain't going to tell my story to a lot of Frogs." Then Judge Sullivan spoke up, saying: "I am an American judge, and I am here to see that you get a square deal." The legionnaire then told his story, admitted that he had wrecked the place and was proud of it. "They gyped me in 1918," he said.

"I argued about it then, and didn't see no use to argue all over again, so I just cleaned up the place. But I'd just as soon pay the costs--it was worth it." Judge Sullivan assessed the legionnaire 500 francs (about twenty dollars).⁷

There were twenty-eight other cases on the docket of the international court that day, most of them for drunkenness, for the "gendarmes had been instructed not to arrest Yanks who merely want to pull their whiskers or pull the birdies out of their hats."

The convention of 1937 when 10,000 legionnaires made the visit to Paris was without particular incident. Many monuments were dedicated commemorating the heroism displayed by allied and particularly by American soldiers. French political and military leaders and Legion officials reviewed the historical friendship between France and the United States and dedicated the monuments to eternal peace.⁸ The French government entertained the legionnaires for six days furnishing free hotel accommodations, including food and vin blanc and vin rouge at a cost of 6,000,000 francs.⁹

7. "American Youth and French Battle-Scars" in Literary Digest, Vol. 95, October 15, 1927, pp. 38-44.

8. The National Legionnaire, September, 1937, p. 1.

9. The National Legionnaire, March, 1937, p. 8; May, 1937, p. 9.

As to the achievements and advantages of "contact and knowledge" as the basis of "international understanding," the Legion considered its pilgrimages "successful," and "international incident of more than usual consequence," "the greatest peace-time trans-Atlantic movements in the world's history" and General Pershing considered the "Second A. E. F. as the greatest good-will pilgrimage in history."¹⁰ "Peace, understanding and good will (were) the chief goals of the visits."¹¹

Various emotions were expressed on the legionnaires' visits to the continent. Jean Piot, a noted French journalist, who himself in World War I rose to the rank of a captain in the French army, in welcoming the pilgrimage in L'Oeuvre, wrote:

Welcome, boys, you are welcome! . . .

For you, the dead are dead and that's all there is to it. It was not for that you came to France. You came to enjoy life, real life, not the complicated business which our brains evolve, but the simple business of eating, drinking, laughing and joking, which is repeating all those curious adventures you had here ten years ago in this old country.¹²

Ida Treat, writing in The Nation, was sarcastic and critical when she said, quoted as follows:

10. "The Legion's Second A. E. F." in Literary Digest Vol. 95, October 15, 1927, pp. 5-7.

11. The National Legionnaire, November, 1937, pp. 9-11.

12. "American Youth and French Battle-Scars" in Literary Digest, Vol. 95, October 15, 1927, p. 38.

Paris saw the Legion--in tens of hundreds--crowding the dance halls and night restaurants of Montmarte, with rows of police standing by; painting the boulevards a deep alcoholic red; parked in long rows of taxis before the houses with the big numbers; and toted home at four in the morning too far gone to remember its address. Peace-time Paris saw what war-time Paris had already seen: the obviously arrogant, the obviously drunk, giving vent to opinion that all Paris is a bar and a brothel--and that the town is ours!

The Legion's unofficial "ambassadors, according to the press, but what America do they represent? Is it the old America France had learned to honor; pioneer America, generous, brave, simple, sincere in faith and modest in achievement? America, where the very word militarism was anathema? The America she thought she had found in Lindbergh? For Lindbergh was an "ambassador."¹³

A. Albert Petit, writing in the Journal des Debats, was more generous, when he said:

These true and valiant friends, we can think only of the friendship that must always last between Americans and Frenchmen despite all misunderstandings, all difficulties and all statistics. They are the messengers of concord and confraternity. They carry on direct diplomacy, namely, that of the heart. We know very well that this diplomacy is not all-sufficient, and is not competent for all purposes. So be it. But at least it answers one purpose that is very strong and very noble, and without which there could not be that understanding which is based not on signatures, but on trust and faith in the same ideal.¹⁴

Tide of Toys

A third type of activity illustrative of the Legion's person-to-person or unofficial "ambassador" is the Tide

13. "Is this America?" by Ida Treat, The Nation, Vol. 125, October 19, 1927, pp. 420-422.

14. "Overseas Glances at Our Legionnaires" in Literary Digest, Vol. 95, October 15, 1927, pp. 21-22.

of Toys.

Recognizing that the children of today will be the soldiers and enemies in the next war, if there is one, the Legion is hopeful of making these children in different countries friends. That understanding and friendship may grow, the Legion before Christmas in 1949 put on a campaign of collecting Christmas toys of American children and sending them to the underprivileged children of European countries--France, Italy, Great Britain, Greece, Norway, Netherlands, Austria, Berlin and West Germany.¹⁵

It was the goal to collect 3,000,000 toys and have CARE, a relief organization, to distribute them in the Netherlands, Austria, Berlin and West Germany, while in the other countries, the toys will be distributed by other agencies.¹⁶

First shipments arrived in Europe February 7, 1950, and immediate distribution began. Nine hundred thousand toys were sent in the first shipment.

This activity is in line with the idea that many things have to be done to achieve the goal of peace. Only the future can tell whether those things that must be done will be done to achieve this goal.¹⁷

15. Albuquerque Journal, February 5, 1950, p. 22.

16. The Denver Post, February 5, 1950, p. 1.

17. Appendix, p.411 for letter of Francis A. Mock of Philadelphia to Drew Pearson on the Legion's Tide of Toys.

The next group of activities of the Legion to be considered have to do with its activities as a pressure group in attempting to influence official governmental policy of the United States in its dealings with other nations. To be considered in order are: Peace and War Profits, Peace and Preparedness, International Trade, Debts and Loans, International Co-operation and Post-War Policies.

Peace and War Profits

Legionnaires came out of World War I with the very definite feeling that there had been an unfair sharing of the burdens of the war. They had drilled in training camps and served in the trenches for a dollar a day. But those serving on the home front had made fabulous wages and many industrialists had made millions out of war contracts.¹⁸ Twenty-three thousand millionaires were added to the list of those of the United States in World War I. The Legion's plan for equalizing the burdens of war was embodied in the Universal Draft Act. They urged Congress to pass such legislation on the grounds that in time of war it is only right that the man in the trench

18. Hearings Before the Special Committee Investigating the Munitions Industry United States Senate, Seventy-Third Congress, Pursuant to S. Res. 206, A Resolution to Make Certain Investigations Concerning the Manufacture and Sale of Arms and Other War Munitions, Part 6, Sept. 17 and 18, 1934, pp. 1537-1573.

should be placed on an even plane with the man in the shipyard and the man who manufactures the bayonet. For, "war . . . is everybody's job. To finish that job as efficiently as possible requires the doing away of distinctions, the placing of every citizen on an even basis, the subjecting to immediate government call every industry, every resource, whether publicly or privately owned."¹⁹

A careful study was made in 1921 by economic and military experts of the experiences of France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States in war-time legislation. As a result, the Capper-Johnson Bill, embodying the Legion's recommendations, was introduced. Congress was afraid of the legislation at first and from 1922 through 1926 it got no further than hearings before congressional committees.²⁰ Presidents Harding and Coolidge both advocated such protection and later it was included in the platforms of both of the major political parties at their national conventions.²¹ President Hoover on June 27, 1930, signed a resolution for the purpose of

19. James A. Drain, "The American Legion in the Years To Come" in The Outlook, Vol. 138, pp. 364-365, Nov. 5, 1924; The Literary Digest, Vol. 95, Nov. 5, 1927, p. 10.

20. Hearing Before the Committee on Military Affairs, United States Senate, Sixty-Eighth Congress, First Session, on S. 2561, A Bill To Provide Further For the National Security and Defense, April 10, 1924.

21. Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 86, Part 10, Aug. 28, 1940, pp. 11093-11094.

creating a joint commission to study the proposal, thus carrying out an eight-year Legion objective.

This commission reported its findings on March 3, 1932 and transmitted the report to Congress on March 7, 1932. It recommended that three legislative steps be taken; first, give the government authority to fix prices at the inception of war; second, confiscation of 95 per cent of all war income above normal so that funds escaping the freezing of prices would be diverted back to paying the cost of war; and third, a constitutional amendment specifically giving to Congress the authority to control prices in war time.²²

The next important step toward enactment of legislation to take the profits out of war came on April 12, 1932 when the Nye-Vandenberg resolution, creating a special committee to review the findings of the commission and investigate war profiteering. The neutrality legislation of 1935 grew out of the Munitions Investigating Committee distortions. (See Chapter V.). The Legion accepted the now-discredited "findings" of the Nye committee and emphasized strongly the taking of profits out of war as destroying automatically "one of the greatest incentives to war." It is to be noted that when this program was launched

²². Congressional Record, 72nd Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 75, Part 5, March 7, 1932, pp. 5340-5344.

in 1921, the emphasis was on "equalizing the burdens of war." Beginning in 1935 and carrying on in the May Bill, it was considered as a "peace measure." The May Bill was described as a measure to "prevent profiteering in time of war and to equalize the burden of war and thus provide for the national defense, and promote peace." The May Bill was reported out of the House Military Affairs Committee after President Roosevelt's special message asking for a super navy and for a law to end war profiteering. When the bill was under debate it was discovered that it did none of the things which it claimed, but would fasten on the United States a dictatorship "as rigid as is exercised by Hitler, Mussolini or Stalin." Three members of the committee, Congressmen Maverick, Kvale and Andersen, filed a minority report charging that the May Bill was dishonest, for it did none of the things it claimed; it took no profits out of war, equalized no burdens and would not promote peace. They looked upon it as "a draft of human labor," and was a blank check "written in advance for an executive to conscript every person, man or woman, at will and wholly upon whatever rules and regulations he may proclaim. There (was) not a line or a word in the measure that in any way (would curb) profiteering." If war should come, "Congress might as well let its halls be burned, go home and be prepared to be called occasionally for a speech in some opera house. The bill (was) the

stuff of which Hitlers are made and the liberties of a free people lost."²³

The Legion supported this bill fully, asking all legionnaires to write their congressmen in behalf of it. The New York convention had placed "a firm demand for universal service legislation in (the 75th) session of Congress, providing for an equal distribution of the burdens of war, with special privileges and profits for none." Frank Pinolo, chairman of the Legion's national legislative committee said that "the adoption of (that) bill (would) be the greatest single contribution to the cause of peace of (that) generation." Men from 21 to 31 would be drafted at one dollar per day, but industry was assured a five per cent clear profit above the previous three years average earnings. The lure of the universal service bill to thousands of legionnaires was that they believed it would make the rich person work for the same wage as the soldier. This influenced them to consider the bill as a peace measure. They argued: "Make a law that allows no more pay or profit to the millionaire or industrialist than to the private in the trenches, and make them also get out and go through what some of us have gone through, and there will be no more war."

23. Congressional Record, 74th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 79, Part 5, April 3, 4, 5, 6, 1935, pp. 4957-4968; 5033-5076; 5154-5173; 5178-5201.

The substitute House bill, H. R. 6704, insured a fair normal return to labor, management and invested capital, and the Secretary of the Treasury was to recommend to Congress within 30 days after war was declared what should be taxed away.²⁴

The War and Navy Departments were more interested in an Industrial Mobilization Plan, so no legislation was enacted in that session. In the 76th Congress the Legion did not sponsor any universal service legislation for fear it would wreck their national defense program. At this time the Legion was working closely with the War and Navy Departments in determining the order of bills to be presented for national defense. However, on March 21, 1940, Senator Homer Bone and 49 other senators had a bill introduced to take the profits out of war and there were companion bills introduced in the House, providing a detailed tax schedule which should go into effect automatically upon a declaration of war by Congress.²⁵ The New York Times criticized these bills on the ground that a resident

24. Congressional Record, 74th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 79, Part 2, Feb. 20, 1935, pp. 2347-2350; Part 5, April 4, 1935, pp. 5055-5068; pp. 5184-5186; Raymond H. Laury, "Is the Legion Being Deluded?" in The Christian Century, Vol. 55, pp. 307-308, March 9, 1938; "The Legion and the May Bill" in The Christian Century, Vol. 55, pp. 326-327, March 16, 1938; Annual Reports, 1938, pp. 230-231.

25. Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 86, Part 8, June 19, 1940, pp. 8619-8630.

of that state with an income of \$500,000 would be paying to the state and federal governments \$26,130 more than his taxable income. It revealed also that of the 50 senators listed as sponsors of the Senate measure only six besides the four real authors--Senators Bone, Clark, Nye and Vandenberg--said that they had read the bill. The Army had its own plan for mobilization of industry and such tax legislation, ranging up to 98.9 per cent, were "so confiscatory they would paralyze industry in an emergency." The Brookings Institute at that time was engaged in a study of legislation that would forestall war-time inflation.²⁶

As the debate on these measures progressed in 1940 and 1941, the Legion emphasized its support exclusively in terms of preventing "profiteering, racketeering and inflation" for "excessive profits (were) being demanded in many lines of defense endeavor," and the argument of such a measure for peace was dropped. The Sheppard-May Bill passed by Congress included the principal features of the Legion plan. Needless to say, the measure did not prevent profits nor war.²⁷

26. New York Times, March 23 and 25, 1939; Annual Reports, 1939, pp. 273-276; Annual Reports, 1940, pp. 237-238; Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 86, Part 8, June 19, 1940, pp. 8619-8630.

27. Congressional Record, 77th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 87, Part 7, September 29, 1941, pp. 7571-7573; 7584-7587; October 2, 1941, pp. 7609-7612; 77th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 88, Part 1, January 10, 1942, pp. 242-246; Annual Reports, 1941, pp. 294-298.

Peace and Preparedness

On the question of preparedness the Legion presented a much better case. Its plan for preparedness is based on these assumptions: The United States, though not perfect, is a great and good country. It has an important part to play in the affairs of the world, but particularly in the western hemisphere. It has a fine system of self-government, civil and religious liberties and an economic system that has brought about the highest standard of living of any nation in the world. It has grown great mainly through peace. The Legion does not "entertain the fallacious idea that peace can be maintained by wishful thinking,"²⁸ but that the people of the United States "must pay what it costs in time and interest and money to maintain it We will pay for peace in one way or another, at one time or another! Either with effort and time and money now, or with the lives of our youth when the war tocsin is heard."²⁹

The continental holdings of the United States, its territorial possessions, its responsibilities under the Monroe Doctrine, and now to see that the United Nations gets off to a good start, require that this country give strong consideration to preparedness in order that it may

28. The National Legionnaire, August, 1938, p. 4.

29. The National Legionnaire, May 20, 1946, p. 4.

meet its responsibilities. The United States must recognize its responsibilities in the western hemisphere and in the world and take the necessary steps in a preparedness program to meet them, if the Legion's wishes are to prevail.

The Legion's idea of peace for the United States is based on the sound Aristotlean assumption that force is necessary in the world. Its statement of the thesis is sound, logical and was even prophetic when it said in 1928, quoted as follows:

A strong America does not imperil peace, but a weak America surely will in due course. Unless America is adequately prepared to insist on peace there will be no peace. If adequately prepared for our own defense, no combination of powers will have the hardihood to force us into war. Deliberately to strip ourselves to a condition of immediate helplessness, trusting on high purpose to solve humanity's wrongs and grudges, is to invite utter destruction. The state of the world today makes this sheer madness. If we persist in this we shall be living in a fool's paradise, with an awakening ahead of us more bitter than that of 1914.³⁰

This may not be in accord with the wishes of a majority of the American people as far as maintaining peace is concerned, but it is true that a nation's influence in the world is based on its economic, propaganda and military force and "armies and navies constitute the only instrument that dictators of police states. . . . respect."³¹

30. Annual Reports, 1928, pp. 286-287.

31. Kenneth W. Colegrove, in a review of Quincy Wright's book, A Foreign Policy of the United States, in The Chicago Sun, July 13, 1947.

But, to the Legion, force is not to be the first line of defense of the United States. It is not practicable or possible under the system of government of this country for the Army and Navy to start wars. They are the last line of defense and their function is to end wars. The first line of defense then is the State Department and the diplomatic corps. It is only when they fall down that a war is on the hands of the country.³² Since 1937, the Legion has been asking that the State Department be modernized so as to meet its present-day responsibilities with dispatch and that a foreign service academy be established to train diplomats and consuls who will adequately and effectively represent the country's interests abroad. Such a proposal would have as its ultimate goal the prevention of war. The suggestion is good as far as it goes, but there would have to be structural changes in the government to make it completely effective. The experience the State Department has had with a reluctant Congress on the reciprocal trade agreements is a case in point.

The Legion is frank in stating that there is no method of guaranteeing that there will not be war. The prime purpose of a preparedness program would be to

32. Congressional Record, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, Vol. 86, Part 2, 1940, p. 1362.

prevent any nation or group of nations from "practicing aggression against us on the one hand, or on the other, through superior forceful means, embroil us in the complications or wars of others. Like fire insurance which you pay on your house year after year, the expenditure is never regretted if the fire fails to materialize."³³

Having achieved the Legion's program of preparedness, it would not be the purpose of the United States to seek war with other peoples. "We have no hate; we do not covet; we harbor no desire for world dominion; and we do not seek to impress our will upon others." But if war does come, the preparedness program as proposed for the United States by the Legion, it will be possible for this country to keep the fighting from its shores and thus protect its families and homes. The cost in hurried, desperate preparations and in human life will be less and the United States would stand a better chance of coming out victorious.

There is much to be said in favor of such a program. The Legion points out that it is definitely known from two world wars in this generation that the dictators of police states took liberties in flaunting the wishes of the United States either on the ground that it would not fight, or that they could get away with their loot before

33. Annual Reports, 1936, pp. 251-253.

the United States could get ready to fight. Germany in two wars gambled that the United States would not fight and Japan tried it once. The Legion is apprehensive regarding the purposes and intentions of Soviet Russia as well as the tendency of the United States to get back to peaceful ways. It is well known that the dictator of any police state will press for every advantage. The struggle for preparedness still goes on in Congress, and to the extent that it is delayed, the Legion is convinced that Russia will take more and more chances with the peace.³⁴

Such a program of preparedness would be the best "insurance policy for peace" for the United States, according to the Legion.³⁵ It hasn't been tried in the history of the United States and the country has gone into every war unprepared as the record shows. A prepared America "means an America whose peace will remain inviolate."³⁶ In accepting the office of national commander in 1946 at San Francisco, Paul Griffith stated: "A soldier knows from hard experience that the price of peace is the ability to defend oneself against aggressors--we need not fear our real friends. The constant plea for giving this plan a trial has been going on for

34. The National Legionnaire, August, 1946, p. 7.

35. The National Legionnaire, May, 1945, p. 9.

36. Annual Reports, 1945, p. 92.

over 25 years. We have gone the way of unpreparedness and have been involved in wars, some of which we might have avoided."³⁷

Such a plan runs into opposition from the pacifist organizations, of which there are about 60 in the United States, according to Legion estimates. These pacifists' programs are analyzed by those who favor a reasonable preparedness for the United States. As the Legion sees these programs, the pacifists have evolved a philosophy of peace which lays great stress on psychological factors. They would build a sentiment for peace in the minds of all. The United States must stop leading the nations of the world in rearming for this is inconsistent with the various international pacts outlawing war. Instead of training youth for war, the United States should be educating the newer generation to thoughts of peace and ways of utilizing and improving upon the various methods of pacific adjudication which have been worked out among the nations of the world. Every sincere lover of peace should demand "the abolition of military training of youth and should deny the right of governments to impose conscription." The Legion recognizes two main groups of pacifists. The first group, the "mischievous ones, consists of the pathological pacifists" who have distorted

37. The National Legionnaire, October, 1946, p. 3.

the truth about preparedness and established in the minds of the citizens of the United States a sense of security that is as dangerous as it is false. The second group consists of people who are as loyal and sincere as legionnaires for peace. They are groping for the goal of permanent peace also. But they have become deluded with the idea that world peace can be obtained by disarming this nation while the rest of the world prepared for war.³⁸

The Legion's battle against unilateral disarmament has been considered in Chapter III. It objected to disarmament of the United States whether for purposes of economy or as a claimed means to bring about world peace or as an example which it was hoped other nations would follow. "World peace and world disarmament attained by international agreement are one thing, and the precipitous and voluntary disarmament of a nation is another."³⁹ In the interest of universal peace the Legion reluctantly agreed to parity with Great Britain and Japan. They believed the friction between nations would be removed and that a curb would be placed on foreign aggrandizement. But experience showed that neither of these beliefs was justified. World peace was never menaced more than then,

38. Scribner's Magazine, Vol. 90, August, 1931, pp. 174-175; Annual Reports, 1932, p. 310.

39. Annual Reports, 1931, pp. 277-278.

with Japan marching into Manchuria. The stabilization of naval strength through equality failed to insure peace. The United States had fallen into an inferior position and "our words (were) not given that consideration which they would receive were we well armed."⁴⁰ The experience of England was cited as an example. England became pacifistically inclined to a pronounced degree. Her national defense program broke down. Pacifist organizations brought about this program. In 1938 Britain was frantically preparing its defenses, for it had no armaments to back up its commitments. "The situation in England, plus the sentiment in America, . . . afforded the aggressor nations the opportunity they apparently were waiting for. It will not do to have only this nation pacifistically organized with all the other nations of the world belligerently constituted." And here is made the distinction between the positions of the Legion and that of the pacifists: "To the ardent pacifist, peace is all that counts--but to the legionnaire, peace with honor is more desirable."⁴¹

The Legion points out another difference. The pacifist would take the chance of having the United States go along unprepared, as was done in the Mexican War, the

40. Annual Reports, 1932, p. 310.

41. Annual Reports, 1938, pp. 331-332.

Civil War, the Spanish-American War and now two world wars, and the United States won them all. Through preparedness, the Legion would prevent wars or lessen their duration and lessen the "tragic cost" by paying for peace on a current basis. "This (cost) should be the last element of a nation's organization to be influenced by economic conditions."⁴² "The cost of maintenance of peace is insignificant compared to the cost of war. No nation can, alone, maintain the peace."⁴³ The United States reached such "a point of unpreparedness, which no doubt hastened, if it did not cause, the present war (World War II)."⁴⁴ Such a program does not envisage conquest or aggression, for the legionnaires "believe in an America, peace-loving and intent on peace but strong enough to insure and enforce that peace. We know that the pitiably small army in existence at the start of every war has never kept us out of war."⁴⁵ On and on the statements run with the goal of peace to be achieved by preparedness, of which those just quoted are examples.

As to signing agreements reducing armaments, setting up tribunals to settle differences peacefully, there is not much evidence in their support. For, "instead of

42. Annual Reports, 1933, p. 59.

43. The National Legionnaire, October, 1944, p. 2.

44. Annual Reports, 1944, p. 98.

preventing wars, they have changed the methods of starting wars. When Japan decided to make Manchuria a Japanese province it issued no declaration of war on China. It marched in and took what it wanted."⁴⁶ Later the changed attitude and position of the Legion on international co-operation will be shown.

International Trade, Debts and Loans

The Legion has been slow to take an active interest in the trade policies of this nation. In its first decade of operation the United States was enjoying the highest prosperity in its history, so there did not seem to be a particular need for such interest. There were two tariff measures passed in this period--the Fordney-McCumber Tariff of 1922 and the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930. The Legion took no official interest or notice of either, for political matters are forbidden by its constitution. While requiring that every member of the organization perform his full duty as a citizen according to his own conscience and understanding, the "organization shall be absolutely non-partisan and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles or for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office

45. Annual Reports, 1933, p. 58.

46. The National Legionnaire, March, 1935, p. 7.

or preferment."⁴⁷ The great depression however, with veterans selling apples and engaging in the bonus march on Washington, interest quickened for something to be done. This interest was directed to the payment of a bonus and that will not be considered here, since it is peculiarly a domestic policy.

Because the Legion has concentrated most of its efforts on getting a national defense and preparedness program into operation, it has seen problems of international trade largely through defense-minded eyes as is to be witnessed from this statement: "The actual cause of all wars has been, and always will be, trade conquest, so we must be prepared for any emergency that may arise from within or without."⁴⁸ It had said earlier "that Americans and American interests should receive the same protection in foreign countries as is given by other first class powers, and believed that a sufficient number of the Navy's ships should be used in the foreign service in order to safeguard all our interests abroad."⁴⁹ Again in 1932 the Legion called for the President and Congress to build up the United States Navy to treaty strength in order to safeguard "our overseas possessions and our rich foreign

47. National Constitution and By-Laws, Article II, Section 2; The Outlook, Vol. 122, May 21, 1919, pp. 104-105.

48. Annual Reports, 1928, pp. 286-287.

49. Annual Reports, 1926, p. 222.

trade." The Navy was inadequate in ships and personnel to protect the vast commercial, industrial and financial interests of the nation abroad and to maintain such important national policies as the Monroe Doctrine and that of the Open Door and the integrity of China.⁵⁰

The position of the United States in the commerce of the world had completely changed since the period before World War I. The United States had passed out of the "infant industry" stage of its economic development. It was no longer a predominantly agricultural nation, dependent upon the outside world for capital and for manufactured products. Between 1900 and 1930 the total foreign trade of the United States--the sum of its exports and imports--more than doubled. The importance of foreign trade to the nation could be measured in a number of ways. International trade is naturally conducive to peace; great cultural advantages flow from it. About 10 per cent of the national production must be exported if many industries are to operate profitably, and for some of the agricultural crops, such as cotton and wheat, the foreign trade is of vital importance. On the other hand, many essential foreign products are imported, without which the United States could not continue the operation of its highly complex modern life.⁵¹

50. Annual Reports, 1932, pp. 309-310.

51. Annual Reports, 1932, p. 323.

By 1933 there was recognition by the Legion that "at no time in its history had the United States government and her people been confronted with problems involving foreign affairs which were more complicated and widespread, more without precedent and more vital to our national peace and prosperity than in this present world. What took place at the London Economic Conference . . . without any result but demonstrations of powerful nationalism, was an outstanding example of some of our problems in foreign affairs." As a leading world power and the greatest creditor nation, the United States had much at stake in world affairs. Its obligations would continue to insure that this country would be involved more and more in the affairs of the world. In spite of this intense nationalism, isolation would be impossible for the United States.⁵² And yet the Legion was swept along, and it went along willingly with the neutrality legislation in 1935, and it supported the "Buy American" movement.⁵³ It also encouraged the acceptance of Secretary Hull's reciprocal trade agreement program for unblocking the channels of international trade. Plainly, the Legion, along with many others, was confused.

The Legion's first official statements made concerning the reciprocal trade agreements came when the Depart-

52. Annual Reports, 1933, p. 408.

53. Annual Reports, 1933, p. 64.

ment of State was negotiating a trade treaty with Canada. It went on record in its St. Louis convention in 1935 "as being heartily in accord with any and all measures taken to remove all barriers, restrictions, unnatural economic forces, foreign control and/or ownership of transportation systems which are or may be detrimental to the best welfare of the states of the Union," and went on to protest against the British tariff preferentials and Canadian discriminatory subsidies which work against the best interest of American ports and shipping. The State Department was asked to take steps to have these unfair trade practices eliminated in the proposed reciprocal treaty that was being negotiated.⁵⁴ And it summed up its policies in the manner quoted as follows:

To be good neighbors and good friends with all, to conduct our foreign trade freely and lawfully, these sum up our foreign policy.⁵⁵

This veterans' group saw in these measures of tariff preferentials, discriminatory subsidies, restrictions and particularly the ownership of transportation systems as endangering the merchant marine of the United States which is an integral part of its preparedness for carrying on foreign trade and to be ready for use also in time of war. These peace time activities were to be kept in operation

54. The National Legionnaire, October, 1935, pp. 1 and 8.

55. The National Legionnaire, January, 1937, p. 4.

for easy conversion to war time service. All the activities in foreign trade were designed to give the United States economic strength and prosperity in peace time and military advantages in case of war. The United States has these obligations to its people in order to safeguard the economy at home and from possible enemies abroad.

During any war United States interests are increased because of the need for strategic materials. In World War II the Legion was interested in cementing better relationships with nations of the western hemisphere for obtaining these strategic materials. When some of the sharp practices of cartels were exposed, the Legion called on Congress to eliminate them when it could be done "without injury to our legitimate foreign business."⁵⁶ Looking to the end of the war when international trade would again be on a peace-time basis the government was asked to further "international good will" by encouraging and advancing at home and abroad the foreign trade of the United States "and to discourage any unfair trade practices by citizens of the United States."⁵⁷

Another item of interest to the Legion was the loans to foreign countries, both public and private. It called attention to the purposes to which these loans were being

56. The National Legionnaire, October, 1944, p. 2.

57. Proceedings, 1945, p. 85.

used. Noting that the private loans to former allies of World War I had reached the staggering figure of \$12,000,000,000, and that no small part of this loan was used to build up foreign navies and shipping interests, the United States was actually financing its own competitors. Lloyd's Steamship Lines and the Cunard Line had each floated a loan of \$20,000,000.⁵⁸ At the same time the United States government was suspending construction of ships for its own fleet. What sense did such manipulations make anyway? To the Legion, None! (In Chapter III we have seen the struggle made to get the fleet built up to treaty strength).

One of the policies of greatest interest to the United States revolved around war debts and reparations. On June 7, 1929, a committee of financial experts under the chairmanship of Owen D. Young presented to the Reparation Commission and to the governments concerned a plan for the "complete and final solution of the reparation problem." The plan embodied the annual and total debt payments of the allies of the United States to be paid to this country in a period of 62 years while German reparations payments were allotted for a 59-year period. Although the United States government refused to recognize any moral or legal connection between reparations and

58. Annual Reports, 1928, pp. 286-287.

war debts, the Young Plan was based upon a recognition of the financial connection of the two forms of obligations.

The "war debts" became a political issue; the private debts did not. The "war debts" fanned popular hatred on both sides of the Atlantic; like Calvin Coolidge, the average American saw only the dollar sign and shrugged his shoulders over the difficult problem of international payments. The average European, burdened with taxes and an inflated currency, grumbled about "Uncle Shylock."

As the great depression continued to get worse, President Hoover on June 20, 1931, proposed to the world a one-year moratorium on all inter-government debts. This proposal was brought forth by reason of the financial crisis in Germany and the fear that a German collapse would have very serious effects on all other countries of the world. It was expected that the proposal would have had both an immediate effect on the existing situation and a psychological effect contributing to recovery from the general depression. After meeting some objections of the French Government, the proposal was made effective and accepted by 28 nations. The national convention of the Legion at Detroit in September, 1931, adopted a resolution commending the President for his action in suggesting the moratorium and urged that Congress confirm it with the least possible delay. In December, 1931, an act was passed by Congress authorizing the postponement of debt

payments to the United States. Both the House and Senate, however, indicated opposition to further postponements.⁵⁹

On December 23, 1931, the Young Plan Advisory Committee issued a report on its meeting at Basle, emphasizing that reparations and war debts must be promptly adjusted if a disaster in Germany was to be avoided. Premier Laval of France suggested a temporary extension of the moratorium but this was unacceptable to Germany. Chancellor Brüning of Germany, relying on the Basle report of the Young Plan Committee declared that it was impossible for Germany to continue to pay reparations. A European conference was held at Lausanne in 1932 which finally disposed of reparations. But Hitler took over in Germany in 1933, and that story is not necessary here.

The Legion also took notice of the part played by the United States in international banking. The most important economic change of the 20th century was the shift of the world's center of financial power from the old world to the new. Throughout its history to World War I the United States was a debtor nation, dependent on the old

59. 47 U. S. Statutes at Large, pp. 3-4; Congressional Record, 72nd Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 75, Part 1, Dec. 8, 1931, pp. 22-23; Dec. 9, 1931, pp. 256-258; December 10, 1931, p. 276; p. 297; pp. 332-334; Dec. 11, 1931, pp. 379-380; 386-402; 405-412; Dec. 14, p. 457; 485; Dec. 15, 1931, pp. 523-540; Dec. 16, 1931, pp. 603-607.

world for the capital with which to develop its growing industries. In 1914, the United States was indebted to foreign countries to the extent of approximately \$5,000,000,000 and American investments abroad were only about half that amount. Less than a dozen foreign government and municipal obligations were listed on the New York Stock Exchange.⁶⁰

After the outbreak of World War I this situation was sharply reversed. Between August, 1914, and November, 1920, every one of the leading governments of Europe became heavily indebted to the United States. The loans of the United States government alone amounted to more than \$10,000,000,000 in addition to large private loans issued by American bankers. After the war the stream of American investment loans to foreign countries continued in increasing amounts until 1930 when the gross amount of American investments of all kinds in foreign countries reached the huge total of approximately \$15,000,000,000.

In addition to large foreign investments, American banks became international depositories for foreigners and the New York Stock Market and the New York Money Market became in a very real sense international markets, exercising a profound influence on money and stock prices throughout the world. The financial influence of the

60. Annual Reports, 1932, p. 327.

United States had become so great that the chairman of one of the "big five" banks of England declared that the "dollar standard" rather than the "gold standard" was the basis of the currency of Europe.⁶¹

But as far as the debts owed to the United States, the Legion, following the example of both political parties in their convention platforms, passed a resolution in its convention stating that it was "unalterably opposed to the cancellation of any debts (owed to) the United States by foreign governments."⁶² In future conventions it continued passing resolutions approving the government's efforts to collect these debts "without further extension or reduction," and in 1936 the Legion advocated the refusal of future loans to nations which had defaulted on their debts. This became a part of the neutrality legislation of that period.⁶³

The last recognition made of the debt problem by the Legion was in its New York convention of 1937 when it resolved "that the United States government be required to demand from any and all foreign nations payments in currency or in products or materials not produced in the United States or its possessions to the United States

61. Annual Reports, 1932, p. 327.

62. Annual Reports, 1935, p. 405.

63. The National Legionnaire, October, 1935, p. 8; October, 1936, p. 2; Annual Reports, 1936, p. 233.

government for any and all loans and interest for World War (I) advances for which they may be indebted to the United States government." The committee of the Legion reporting and recommending this resolution stated that it had conferred with members of the State Department and added somewhat ruefully that it had nothing else to suggest, for the "creditor cannot collect unless the debtor pays."⁶⁴

We have already seen that the lend-lease program was entered into strictly as a defense measure. It was felt, however, that this program should be continued after the war "for such period and to such extent that (would be) necessary to preserve the fruits of victory."⁶⁵

As to the future loan policy of the United States, the Legion supported Secretary of State Byrnes in his declaration that loans would be made to help restore business, industry and trade to a war-torn world, but not to appease unfriendly governments. It should be the purpose of the United States, according to the Legion, to use American credit to help restore peace and prosperity, but never to use it to help establish un-American ideologies anywhere. Nations in the future applying for loans or relief gifts must have shown by performance that they have a desire to "work for peace, friendship, world trade and

64. Annual Reports, 1938, p. 330.

65. The National Legionnaire, October, 1944, p. 2.

world freedom," according to the Legion.

The difference between the Russian and American ideas and practices in foreign trade can be seen shaping up in these requirements. The Legion saw in the gradual termination of UNRRA a cessation of "American generosity to help unfriendly countries."⁶⁶ The Legion even petitioned the government to exert its influence by every possible means to insure a fair and impartial trial for General Draja Mihailovich who was being tried by Marshall Tito's Yugoslavian government on the charge of collaboration with the Nazis. This intervention into the Chetnik leader's trial was based on the fact that he was declared personally responsible for saving the lives of 600 American airmen who were forced down over his territory during the war, and also because the "Communist government of Marshall Tito was charged with planning to stage a trial with the conviction of the former Chetnik leader predetermined." The United States government was asked by the Legion to withhold all financial aid, UNRRA supplies and other assistance from the Tito government.⁶⁷

When it was proposed by the United States to loan Great Britain \$4,000,000,000, the Legion looked upon it as being a tough problem for Congress and the people of

66. The National Legionnaire, November, 1946, p. 6.

67. The National Legionnaire, October, 1946, p. 4.

this country, where the arguments on one side are easy to understand and on the other less simple. It was easy for opponents of the loan to say that the United States was already in debt too much, that Britain did not pay her debts from the first World War, that nobody else paid the United States except Finland, and that a loan is just a gift of the United States taxpayer's money. It would be more involved for the advocates of the loan to show how the money should be lent to sustain British trade and thereby help world trade and American prosperity or to demonstrate that without this loan the whole world commercial structure would likely crack up. The Legion recognized that Americans were not fully informed about the functioning of international finance. Many Americans would feel that the United States would not get much in return from lend-lease and that this country was trying to do too much for the other nations of the world. While the Legion recognized the issues involved domestically and internationally, it took no action on the British loan.⁶⁸

Later we shall see that the Legion policy of loans granted by the United States to foreign nations should fit into the program of containing Russian aggression

68. The National Legionnaire, May 20, 1946, p. 9; Annual Reports, 1946, p. 311.

and stopping the further spread of Communism.

International Co-operation

In regard to the first great attempt to get the United States to co-operate with other nations in peaceful change--the League of Nations--the Legion took no stand because of the bickering in the United States Senate over the League was considered to be a political question and the organization was committed to take no action on political questions. However, it cannot be said that the Legion was devoid of interest and action on international matters. We have seen how the regular organization of the Legion, FIDAC, attempted insofar as possible to meet the problems between nations by direct diplomacy. In addition, the Legion set up a permanent foreign relations commission in 1924 "in order to broaden the scope of . . . activity in connection with foreign nations." This commission represented the organization in its work as a member of FIDAC, and also was responsible for any other foreign relations questions that might be referred to it.⁶⁹ Also, there was a world peace committee formed for the purpose of considering all the factors of the international situations and consult with other peace organizations and report "the most practical plan whereby the influence and the power of

69. Annual Reports, 1924, O. 55.

the Legion (could) be most effectively utilized for securing permanent world peace." It was decided to cooperate with the foreign relations commission and FIDAC, to list and analyze the projects of other organizations working for peace, take counsel of men skilled in world affairs and to consult with the State Department as to any suggested plan of action. This committee of ten had sub-committees on the League of Nations, the Bok Peace Plan and one on arousing Legion and public interest on any actions which might be taken. The committee corresponded with world leaders at home and abroad on important questions of the day.⁷⁰

Considering the division of opinion in the United States and of the problems facing the world, this was a good start for a new organization. The Legion maintained that it had a sincere desire to study the problems facing the nations of the world and to offer tentative solutions to them. A study program was inaugurated and every post gave one meeting each year to the study of some phase of international affairs. And this desire to participate in international affairs was further evidenced by the Legion's recommendation that the United States become a member of the Permanent Court of International Justice in 1925 before the United States Senate adopted a resolution on

70. Annual Reports, 1925, p. 62.

January 26, 1926, for the adhesion on the part of the United States subject to the Swanson reservations which were made a part and condition of the resolution adopted by the Senate.⁷¹ The member nations of the Court found no real difficulty in any of these except the fifth, which stipulated that no advisory opinions should be given without the consent of the United States on any question in which the United States had or claimed an interest. The other nations were not sure whether the United States merely wished equality with all other members of the Court or whether she sought a special privilege. They suggested a compromise based on the idea of equality. The matter rested there for two years.

On February 19, 1929, however, the United States, in a note to the various member nations of the Court, expressed a desire for the further exchange of views which had been suggested by the member nations of the Court in 1926. The Council of the League of Nations promptly asked a special committee of jurists, which included Elihu Root, to consider the matter in connection with amendments to the statute. The committee drew up a new agreement, based on Mr. Root's formula, which seemed to the committee to adjust the situation by setting

71. Hearings, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, January 21, 27, 31, 1925, on H. Res. 426, 68th Congress, 2nd Session; Reports, 1926, p. 64.

forth a procedure for the application of the Senate reservations which it was thought would eliminate uncertainties and misunderstandings. The committee's report was unanimously accepted by a conference of member nations in September, 1929, and was approved by the Council and Assembly of the League of Nations.

The report was put into treaty form and was signed by 53 nations. Together with the other two Court treaties, or protocols, this treaty was signed on behalf of the United States by instructions of President Hoover on December 9, 1929. The three treaties were, the protocol of signature covering the Statute of the Court, dated December 16, 1920, the Protocol for the Revision of the Statute, dated December 16, 1920, the Protocol for the Revision of the Statute, dated September 14, 1929, and the Protocol of American Accession, dated September 14, 1929.

President Hoover, on December 10, 1930, laid these three protocols before the Senate for their advice and consent to ratification. On December 10, 1931, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations decided to postpone consideration until pending urgent domestic legislation was disposed of.⁷²

The Legion supported all these attempts to have the

72. Annual Reports, 1932, p. 320.

United States become a member of the Court on the basis of statements from the Secretary of State and the President that American interests were fully safeguarded. In fact, the Legion took great pride in calling to the attention of its members that its "policy in this matter was in accordance with every president for thirty years." Statements of presidents from McKinley through and including President Hoover were given as evidence of this claim.⁷³

Not only did the Legion support United States entrance to the World Court, it also gave favorable publicity and reports of the activities of the Court. The Court had rendered, at that time, 16 judgments and 18 advisory opinions and was growing in usefulness in "the settlement of international disputes."⁷⁴

Even though the Legion refrained from any action on the League of Nations, it gave favorable reports on its activities and approved the limited co-operation of the United States, such as the United States' signature to the treaty curbing the manufacture of dangerous drugs, the International Sugar Accord. The Legion spoke favorably of the League's assistance to China in reorganizing its finances, health services and educational system and of the system of European federation sponsored by Briand

73. Annual Reports, 1930, pp. 265; 272-273.

74. Annual Reports, 1931, p. 277.

and Stresemann.⁷⁵

When the Senate hesitated to take up the question of ratification of the World Court protocol, the Legion officials wondered if they should approve President Hoover's action in recommending ratification, but finally decided to take no action.⁷⁶ The only other form of co-operation of note was the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact outlawing war as a national policy. The Legion endorsed this treaty, but warned "that the approval of this treaty does not in any way guarantee peace."⁷⁷ (The question of disarmament for attaining world peace has been considered in Chapter IV).

There is no question but what the wrangling in the United States Senate over the League of Nations had a profound effect on the Legion as it has on all peace-loving organizations and peoples. This, plus a lack of effective leadership from the President probably had much to do with the Legion passing this resolution:

That they are opposed to the adherence of the United States to the World Court on any terms, and also that they are unalterably opposed to the United States joining the League of Nations in any form, both being entangling alliances of the worst sort, against which George Washington, whose two-hundredth birthday we honor this year, so strongly advised the nation in his farewell address.⁷⁸

75. Annual Reports, 1931, pp. 278-297.

76. Annual Reports, 1930, p. 265.

77. Scribner's Magazine, Vol. 90, August, 1931, p. 181; Annual Reports, 1929, pp. 229; 245-246.

78. Annual Reports, 1933, p. 405.

This was done in spite of the fact that both political parties had placed favorable planks in their convention platforms approving entrance into the World Court in accordance with the Root formula.

Thus the largest of the veterans' organizations went from internationalism to isolationism. But there was no turning back or change of heart. In 1933 at its Chicago convention the Legion reaffirmed its Portland stand stating that it opposed "entry . . . into the League of Nations or . . . adherence to the World Court, either with or without reservations."⁷⁹

It was at this time that the nationalism and isolationism of William Randolph Hearst and his newspapers were accepted and followed by the Legion. One of the familiar sights on city streets was Hearst trucks occupied by "members of the Legion" collecting signatures to petitions against participation in the League of Nations and the World Court. In a radio broadcast, the National Commander, Edward A. Hayes, publicly expressed his gratitude to Mr. Hearst for his help against the League.⁸⁰

In 1936 the Legion again went on record in opposition to "the entry of the United States into the League of

79. Annual Reports, 1933, p. 58.

80. Henry Goddard Leach, "Patriotism Before Profits," in The Forum and Century, Vol. 91, June, 1934, p. 322.

Nations."⁸¹ The organization had placed its faith the year before in the neutrality legislation for keeping the United States out of war. The world peace and foreign relations committee of the Legion were still in operation doing what they could for peace through programs on the post and state levels throughout the country. The programs were designed to build "a wholesome devotion to world peace" by combatting "propaganda and international hate."⁸²

In this period since its organization the Legion had run into difficulties with peace organizations over its national defense program and its goal of 1924 of studying and co-operating with other peace organizations had disappeared. But in 1937 the organization recognized that it had not been as effective in the United States as it could have been in the cause of world peace. For the second time it was decided to try co-operating with other peace organizations. The Legion's co-operation would be for one sole purpose and end--a year's program to convince America that "a world war is not inevitable." Through radio programs, meetings, essays and speeches, the Legion would attempt "to lift the American people up out of that fatalism that a world war must be nearly

81. The National Legionnaire, October, 1936, p. 2.

82. The National Legionnaire, May, 1936, pp. 1 and 4.

upon us."⁸³ In reviewing its opposition to the Ludlow Amendment and the World Court, both of which peace societies supported, the Legion stated that their "own road to peace (had) been mostly imaginary, though idealistic. There have been several apparently necessary detours."⁸⁴

In 1938 the Legion reaffirmed its opposition to entrance into the League of Nations,⁸⁵ and the isolationist policy continued until the Boston convention of 1940 when there was a change in the other direction. That reversal was continued further at Milwaukee in 1941 through the resolutions to repeal the neutrality legislation and making it possible to send lend-lease aid to Russia. After the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese, it was a matter of co-operating with other nations to defeat the Axis partners.

Shortly after the war broke out the Legion with seven other organizations--the National Grange, American Federation of Labor, National Association of Manufacturers, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Knights of Columbus, B'nai B'rith and the Grand Lodge of Masons of New York--began a combined study of a post-war program to end "the philosophy of isolationism" and embrace a "world

83. Annual Reports, 1937, p. 364.

84. Annual Reports, 1938, p. 264.

85. Annual Reports, 1938, p. 264.

arrangement of nations to establish and maintain order" under the leadership of the United States. Such a program should cover "economic, social and political problems," and such a study "should be predicated first upon an all-out effort to win the war, and upon the further all-out effort to win and hold peace after the war." What World War I proved and what World War II re-emphasized seemed to point to a Pax Americana as is to be noticed from the statement made, quoted as follows:

Whether we like it or not, we are a part of the entire world; that as a nation we cannot escape repercussions from mighty social, economic and political upheavals in any quarter of the world; that isolationism is dead; that now is the time to condition the public mind for full acceptance of this inexorable fact; that however complete the military victory may be, we cannot win the peace, we cannot provide assurance to our people against periodic repetition of our involvement in world catastrophes, unless we as a major nation recognize and assume our responsibilities and take our position of leadership in organizing the world to establish and maintain order; that there can be no assurance or permanent national security except through world security.⁸⁶

At its convention in St. Louis in 1942, the Legion went on record to the effect that "after winning a total victory the United States should make sure of a total peace by taking the lead in some international association of nations."⁸⁷ Nothing was said at that time, however, as to what this "association of nations" should be.

86. The National Legionnaire, May, 1942, p. 8.

87. Scholastic, Vol. 41, October 5, 1942, p. 4; Annual Reports, 1942, p. 263.

But early in 1943 there was a definite idea of what the association should not be. The question came up in the Delaware legislature over the ratification of a plan known as the "federation of the world." This had been accepted by a few other state legislatures. The Legion flatly opposed the plan or any plan that would consider the surrendering of "national rights by amalgamation or confederation" in any such federation. No plan or merging the identity of the United States with other nations would be acceptable. The Legion would favor and support "the utmost collaboration and co-operation in the maintenance of world peace and the preservation of the rights of nations and people, providing the national sovereignty of our country is not infringed upon." While pointing out that it was not isolationist, the Legion did "not believe in the creation of a central international government or superstate to which the subscribing nations would surrender . . . their sovereign powers having to do with external affairs." Any such federation would be useless unless it had authority and the physical powers to enforce its decrees, and the armed forces of the United States should be used to enforce a decree only by authority of their government and "not by the dictates of any world federation."⁸⁸

88. The National Legionnaire, April, 1943, p. 4.

In 1943 there was speculation regarding a substitute League of Nations with an international police force. Since there would be difficulties involved in getting a new League approved by the United States Senate with its two-thirds rule on treaties, there might be a series of "agreements" which would require only a majority vote of each house to commit the United States. There was suggested as an alternative to another League a system of regional agreements. The United States by virtue of a big Army and Navy would police the western hemisphere, Britain would have her sphere to control, China, in the Orient, and Russia would have a large segment of Europe and Asia. The big nations of each sector would confer and consult with each other, but there would be no binding league.⁸⁹

In its convention in Omaha in 1943, the Legion approved of the United States participating "in the establishment and maintenance of an association of free and sovereign nations, implemented with whatever force" would be necessary to maintain world peace and prevent the recurrence of war. No definite plan was suggested, but that was left to time and events. When the Connally and Fulbright resolutions were before the Senate and House,⁹⁰ copies of this action taken by the Legion were

89. The National Legionnaire, September, 1943, p. 7.

90. Congressional Record, 78th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 89, Part 6, September 20, 1943, pp. 7657-7660; 7677-7682.

sent to them and to other "appropriate Senators and Congressmen."⁹¹ At this time the Legion stated some of the requirements for maintaining peace--that the nations doing the fighting must be prepared to protect the peace, that the military power of the enemies must be destroyed, and that the heathen philosophy of might makes right must be destroyed. The New York Times looked upon these endorsements of the Legion as "further evidence that the tide of American opinion is running strongly and irresistibly in favor of the assumption by the United States of the leadership and responsibility in world affairs which fall logically to a world power."⁹²

When the Dumbarton Oaks Conference was called for drawing up a tentative charter to be considered for adoption at the San Francisco Conference, the Legion asked all posts to lead in the discussion of the proposed organization "so that the American people may be fully informed on this momentous issue." Since the membership of the Legion is about as good a cross-section of American opinion as can be found in any pressure group, since its membership is drawn from all sections of the country, all political party wings and all social and economic

91. The National Legionnaire, September, 1943, p. 7.

92. The New York Times, September 24, 1943, p. 1; Newsweek, Vol. 22, October 4, pp. 45-46; The National Legionnaire, October, 1943, pp. 1-2.

strata are represented the support or opposition of this organization can be of vital importance. The Legion considered its influence and support would be great in forming a favorable opinion of the organization to be set up.⁹³

The Legion, however, could not give all its attention to the proposed planning for peace. The victory still had to be won and there were still appeasers in the United States. There were two organizations particularly which the Legion considered were of this feeling--the "Peace Now" group and the League for Reconciliation. Their activities, to the Legion, were interpreted as constituting a "direct attack upon the national defense and would be detrimental to national security." These peace organizations advocated immediate peace on terms other than "unconditional surrender." The National Executive Committee of the Legion adopted a resolution condemning any group which advocated peace at that time because they "were giving aid and comfort to our enemies, prolonging the war and thereby sacrificing the lives of our service personnel."⁹⁴

The success of the world security conference at San Francisco became the "foremost objective of the Legion." To insure this success Americans were discour-

93. Scholastic, Vol. 45, October 9, 1943, p. 9; The National Legionnaire, November, 1944, p. 3.

94. Annual Reports, 1944, pp. 98-100.

aged from making "disparaging remarks about our former allies," but should meet them fairly and firmly. The Legion warned against bluster and appeasement as the two things which most often "create trouble between nations." Such an organization proposed to keep the peace could succeed only "through the utter good faith of its members to end war."⁹⁵

When the conference opened at San Francisco on April 25, 1945, Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., assigned one member of the Legion as consultant to the United States delegation.⁹⁶ After the deliberations at San Francisco were completed, President Truman submitted the proposed Charter of the United Nations to the Senate for ratification on July 2, 1945. The Committee of Foreign Relations started holding hearings a week later and a Legion representative appeared before that committee to advocate ratification. A letter and a telegram were sent by Commander Scheiberling of the Legion to this committee advocating the Senate's ratification of the United Nations Charter.⁹⁷ The Senate wanted to postpone

95. Proceedings, 1945, p. 85.

96. Compare Report to the President on the Results of the San Francisco Conference, By the Chairman of the United States Delegation, The Secretary of State, June 26, 1945.

97. Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 79th Congress, 1st Session, on The Charter of the United Nations For the Maintenance of International Peace and Security, Submitted by the President of the United States on July 2, 1945. July 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13, 1945, pp. 418; 476-477.

ratification until after its summer vacation, but public opinion throughout the country demanded immediate action. Many organizations throughout the country asked for action quickly.⁹⁸ Commander Scheiberling of the Legion sent every Senator a letter asking them to ratify the San Francisco Charter for International Security "at the earliest date consistent with . . . proper procedure."⁹⁹ The Legion summed up its desire and determination to work through the United Nations in the manner quoted as follows:

We cannot leave the world alone because the world will not leave us alone.¹⁰⁰

After the hearings on the United Nations Charter, the Senate debated the question of ratification for most of the month of July, 1945. When the vote was taken July 28, 1945, there were 89 votes favoring ratification and two opposing, those being Senators Langer and Shipstead. Five Senators did not vote. They were: Bailey, Glass, Johnson of California, Thomas of Idaho and Reed of Kansas.¹⁰¹

98. Congressional Record, 79th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 91, Part 6, July 23, 1945, pp. 7954-7955.

99. The National Legionnaire, May, 1945, p. 3; July, 1945, p. 2; Appendix, pp. 409-410.

100. Proceedings, 1945, p. 85. (Italics added).

101. Congressional Record, 79th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 91, Part 6, 1945, pp. 7941-7966; 7967-7994; 7998-8004; 8059-8066; 8067-8089; 8095-8132; 8143-8190.

Post-War Policies

The United Nations began its operations the latter part of 1945 with the United States as a full member and partner. Since the United States had not participated in the League of Nations as a member, higher hopes were held for the success of the United Nations. Here it is desirable to state briefly the Legion policies toward the great issues and problems that confronted the United Nations and the world since World War II.

In being "most helpful in formulating and implementing the foreign policy" of the United States, the Legion has aimed primarily at three activities listed as follows:

Implementing the European Recovery Program and its ramifications; enlightening the world as to the democratic methods and ideals of the United States, and strengthening the United Nations' Charter in the interest of world peace.¹⁰²

At the end of the first year of operation of the United Nations, peace was coming to the world slowly if at all. The Russian delegate to the Security Council used the veto freely and Secretary Byrnes, and later Secretary Marshall, found Molotov, the Russian Foreign Minister, anything but co-operative in Big Four meetings.¹⁰³ Many people throughout the world who gave Russia full

^{102.} Digest of Minutes, National Executive Committee Meeting, May 4, 5, 6, 1949, pp. 219-220.

^{103.} Compare James F. Byrnes, Speaking Frankly, pp. 72-73.

credit for doing her share in winning the war came to have doubts as to the Russian Government's good intentions and sincerity in establishing peace in the world. Particularly were Soviet tactics of obstruction in the United Nations annoying and disconcerting to the extent that the Legion was "the first national organization to offer specific methods of how the Charter of the United Nations could be strengthened so that it would become an effective world authority."¹⁰⁴ The Security Council was referred to as a "perpetually hung jury" and the Legion proposed three "tyranny-proof" amendments. These three amendments are quoted as follows:

(1) Removal of the veto in matters of aggression or preparation for aggression; also the strengthening of the International Court of Justice by giving it the power to interpret aggression and preparation for aggression with appropriate jurisdiction over individuals, corporations and nations in these matters.

(2) In connection with this, the limitation of world arms production through the establishment of arms quotas guaranteed through a system of positive international inspection, and the adoption of United States proposals for international control of atomic energy.

(3) Establishment of an effective world police force to consist of an independent active force, presumably to be recruited from the small nations, under the direct control of the Security Council; and a reserve force made up of national contingents of the five major powers.¹⁰⁵

104. The Denver Post, July 23, 1947, p. 3; The New York Times, July 24, 1947, p. 6; The Chicago Daily News, July 23, 1947, p. 3; Twice is Too Often, (Legion pamphlet), 1947; Digest of Minutes, 1947, p. 220.

105. Digest of Minutes, 1947, p. 220.

Sumner Welles, writing before the Legion plan was generally known, but on the basis of Congressional resolutions designed to achieve somewhat the same goals, indicated that such a revision would split the world into two hostile groups. If Russia did not like the proposed amendments, she could veto them or even get out of the United Nations, taking her satellites along with her. The hope for a peaceful world would become merely an alliance against Russia and her satellites and then there would not be any universal organization. This would wreck one of the basic assumptions for the success of the United Nations, namely, that both Russia and the United States must remain members of the organization. Such a revision of the Charter and the limitation of the Soviets' veto rights would not likely change Russian policies.¹⁰⁶ After five years of bickering and wild accusations by the Russian and their satellite delegates in the United Nations against other member nations and with evidence still to be shown if the Russians mean to co-operate, a change has been made to have the General Assembly take action in case of disagreement in the Security Council. Because this change was advocated and sponsored by Secretary of State Dean Acheson, and, since the Legion "condemned the failure of the State Department to deal

106. The Chicago Sun, July 22, 1947, p. 10.

adequately with the advance of communism," "deplored (the) presence in (the) State Department of men well known to possess communist leanings," this organization in its Los Angeles convention stuck by its own demand to amend the Charter of the United Nations.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, the Legion considers Soviet Russia the enemy of peace-loving nations, declares Russia to be an aggressor nation and demands that Russia be ousted from the United Nations.¹⁰⁸

When former President Hoover suggested that the United Nations be reorganized and eliminate the Russians and their satellites¹⁰⁹ there was no support for such a drastic change, except from Senators George and Hickenlooper. An Associated Press poll of political leaders throughout the world of both Communist and anti-Communist countries condemned the Hoover proposal.¹¹⁰

As to the second part of the Legion program after World War II--"to enlighten the world as to the democratic

107. The American Legion Magazine, November, 1950, p. 41.

108. The Denver Post, December 5, 1950, p. 5.

109. The Denver Post, April 28, 1950, pp. 1 and 29.

110. The Denver Post, April 29, 1950, p. 3. Annual Reports, 1949, pp. 74-75; Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 81st Congress, 1st Session, on H. R. 3085, H. R. 4497 and H. R. 4708, Bills to Amend the United Nations Participation Act of 1945, May 10, 11, 12 and 13, 1949, pp. 59-60.

methods and ideals of the United States"--nothing further than support of the State Department's Voice of America program "and the overseas information branches of the Government" is contemplated and both should be continued and expanded.¹¹¹

Russian ambitions in the Balkans are well known. Since World War II her designs for world revolution and world domination have been recognized. The Communists merely continued the policy of expansion of the Czars, but it took Communist moves in Balkan countries, her designs on the Turkish Dardanelles and Greece and the warning of Winston Churchill at Fulton, Missouri to arouse the United States to the seriousness of Russian gains. Possible moves into Greece and Turkey by Russia seemed to be the greatest threat to the security of European nations and to the peace of the world. Within the year, President Truman went before Congress and stated the administration's view of the situation and asked for aid to support the independence and military security of these two countries. To turn back Communism from Greece and Turkey became known as the purpose of the "Truman Doctrine."¹¹²

111. Digest of Minutes, 1949, pp. 17-19.

112. Congressional Record, 80th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 93, Part 2, March 12, 1947, pp. 1980-1981; Part 3, pp. 2993-2997; 3368-3370; 3672-3673; 3801-3803; 3887-3890; Part 4, pp. 4605-4607; 4615-4644; 4685-4743; 4790-4828; 4910-4975.

Before aid became effective to Greece and Turkey, it was recognized that other European nations needed aid to rebuild factories and cities destroyed during World War II, for the unemployment and chaotic conditions caused by the war provided the kind of situation that made Communist expansion easy. The aid to Greece and Turkey and the proposed aid to other European countries under the Marshall Plan became the Truman Administration's program of "containment of Communism."

Regarding aid to Greece and Turkey the Legion cautiously emphasized that "the implications of the American policy in the Balkans extend very far indeed. Through it we hope to avert war; but obviously it involves a challenge which might actually lead to war. Our people should understand this clearly. Half measures are worse than futile. Our nation must be strongly prepared in order to make this policy successful."¹¹³

But when the European Recovery program (the Marshall Plan) was proposed, the Legion was more definite and spoke strongly for its support. The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations held hearings and National Commander James F. O'Neil appeared before this committee to outline the Legion's position. He stated that the greatest menace

113. Annual Reports, 1947, p. 355.

to the United States was the aggressive spread of Communism, fostered by a powerful totalitarian state, and that it was to "America's own intelligent self-interest in behalf of a sound American economy, and particularly in behalf of a sound American national security . . . that recommend the support of the Marshall Plan by the American Legion." Recognizing that the security of the United States was involved in European recovery, O'Neil stated further that such recovery would perform three vitally important functions for the United States. These he stated as follows:

1. It will block the expansion of Communism;
2. It will be our best means for preventing a third world war;
3. It will bring about the rehabilitation of Europe.¹¹⁴

The Marshall Plan went into effect in 1948 and is to be continued until July 1, 1952. But this plan to aid Europe to recover economically was not to operate freely if the Russians could prevent it. For the purpose of sabotaging the Marshall plan the Russian government organized the Cominform.

During the first two years of operation of the Marshall Plan, the emphasis was on recovery. After that, because of Russian efforts to sabotage European recovery,

114. Hearings Before The Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 80th Congress, 2nd Session on United States Assistance to European Economic Recovery, Part 2, January 16-28, 1948, pp. 663-673.

the emphasis was on security. Out of this situation developed the North Atlantic Military Alliance designed to safeguard the economic recovery and independence in Marshall Plan countries. The Legion, however, gave as one reason for support of the North Atlantic Military Alliance the misuse of the veto by Russian delegates in the United Nations, when it said, quoted as follows:

Because of the misuse of the veto in the United Nations, the peace-loving countries of the North Atlantic Area have been forced to take action to guarantee their mutual self-defense . . . and have joined together in a regional defense pact in accordance with the provisions of Article 51 of the U. N. Charter. We wholeheartedly approve the North Atlantic Pact.¹¹⁵

Another reason given by the Legion for supporting ratification of the North Atlantic Military Alliance was that it would prevent war.¹¹⁶

Although the Legion states that since the close of World War II, its foreign policy has been aimed primarily at three activities--"implementing the European Recovery Program and its ramifications; enlightening the world as to the democratic methods and ideals of the United States, and strengthening the United Nations Charter in the

115. Summary of Proceedings, 1949, pp. 25-26.

116. Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 81st Congress, 1st Session, on Executive I, 81st Congress, 1st Session, The North Atlantic Treaty, Part 3, Private Witnesses, May 12, 13, 16, 17, and 18, 1949, pp. 1171-1179.

interest of peace"--these three points do not cover all of Legion foreign policy.¹¹⁷

When, in 1946, the Baruch plan for sharing the United States' secrets in atomic energy was proposed, the Legion opposed it in its San Francisco convention. Its resolution against such sharing is quoted as follows:

At present, it is in the interest of peace and the preservation of our democracy to control all of its secrets pertaining to atomic bomb and other secret weapons created or developed by the United States of America.¹¹⁸

The Legion has not changed its position on sharing atomic secrets, even though the General Assembly of the United Nations approved the Baruch Plan on November 4, 1948.¹¹⁹

In view of Communist gains in China, the Legion has concerned itself with developments in the Pacific area. Its position toward China is that "a free, stable, and independent China with whom the United States can deal with mutual respect and confidence" is desirable and necessary.¹²⁰ In its meeting on May 5, 1950, the National Executive Committee of the Legion stated that the

117. Digest of Minutes, National Executive Committee, May, 1949, p. 219.

118. The Chicago Herald-American, October 15, 1946, p. 10; A Report on the International Control of Atomic Energy, March 16, 1946.

119. Digest of Minutes, National Executive Committee, Meeting, November 4, 5 and 6, 1949, pp. 125-126.

120. Digest of Minutes, 1949, p. 125.

United States should hold Formosa "as a bastion of freedom" and a military base against Communist aggressors on the Asiatic mainland. The committee adopted a resolution which said that "we believe it is imperative that the United States department of defense appraise the defendability of Formosa."¹²¹

In its Pacific area policies, the Legion goes further to support United States efforts to draft a peace treaty with Japan, to stop the dismantling of factories in Japan and to form a "Pacific Pact under Article 51 of the United Nations, whereby those freedom-loving countries of the Pacific and Far Eastern Area who, through self help and mutual aid, desire to guarantee their mutual defense and preserve individual liberties."¹²²

The Legion has approved point four of President Truman's State of the Union address of January, 1949, whereby American technical assistance would be given to undeveloped nations of the world for "one of the requirements for a peaceful and secure world is a constantly rising standard of living throughout the world, by means of the elimination of poverty and the resultant social unrest."¹²³ It may be said generally that Legion policy

121. The Albuquerque Tribune, May 5, 1950, p. 13, The American Legion Magazine, November, 1950, p. 41.

122. Digest of Minutes, May 5, 6, 7, 1949, p. 125.

123. Ibid., p. 125.

is to attack "everywhere the forces of Communism and to help create a firmer foundation for peace and understanding among all liberty-loving peoples."¹²⁴

Perhaps half of the policies the Legion advocates, or has advocated since World War II, are in operation or being put in operation. The Truman Doctrine in Greece and Turkey, the Marshall Plan for 16 European countries and the North Atlantic Military Alliance are in operation. In the request for appropriations for the third year operation of the Marshall Plan, Congress has authorized a start on President Truman's "point four" program. The President asked for \$45,000,000 to start. The Senate authorized the full amount, while the House authorized only \$25,000,000.¹²⁵ The two houses compromised on \$35,000,000. No international plan for the control of atomic energy has been accepted even though the General Assembly of the United Nations has recommended accepting the Baruch plan. The non-acceptance of this plan is fulfilling Legion policy. No action has been taken on Formosa, the treaty for Japan and a Pacific Pact.

Conclusion

All the Legion's activities to achieve peace and

124. Digest of Minutes, Sept. 1, 1949, p. 19.

125. The Santa Fe New Mexican, May 8, 1950, p. 2.

international co-operation can be classified into the person-to-person or government-to-government categories.

In the person-to-person category, FIDAC, conventions in Paris and the Tide of Toys are the chief activities. In such programs contributions can be made to international understanding, but cannot achieve the complete goal. FIDAC made some contributions between the peoples of the nations involved, but it was handicapped in not including all nations involved in World War I and nations not involved in that war at all. The conventions in Paris had both good and bad results. Not all personal contacts between legionnaires and other peoples contributed to international understanding but the opposite when some legionnaires went along to Paris to engage in roughhouse activities. Because of the enmity between the Legion and Communists, strained relationships between the governments of France and Russia resulted when the Russian ambassador in France ordered the Communist Party of France to overthrow the French government for having invited the Legion to hold its convention in Paris. Strained relations also between France and Germany came about when France, paying a large sum to entertain the legionnaires, objected to the Legion officially visiting Germany, the common enemy in World War I.

In its activities as a pressure group to influence governmental foreign policy, which fits into the category

of activities of government-to-government relationships, the Legion immediately after World War I advocated taking the profits out of war as having the possible result of removing an important cause for war. Such an act, the May Bill, was finally enacted into law, but it did not remove the profits of war nor did it prevent war.

The peace and preparedness program of the Legion is based upon the assumption that peace can be achieved through strength and not weakness and that the United States has an important responsibility in international affairs to be strong and thus prevent war. By being weak, the United States encourages wars that should never, and probably would not, be started. Then at great cost and the loss of human life, the United States has to exert and extend itself to help win unnecessary wars. This weakness-strength-weakness cycle the Legion is trying to break by having the United States be permanently strong for the cost in the long run will not be greater and it will achieve the important goal of peace. The United States is reluctant to follow this policy.

After a slow start in becoming interested in international economic affairs, the Legion, after the great depression, advocated the Hull reciprocal trade agreements program to remove or alleviate an important cause of war between nations. The adoption and putting into operation of this program came too late, for international

affairs had drifted too far toward war to be changed or stopped.

The war debts after World War I did not contribute to the good relationships between nations. When European nations were unable to pay during the great depression, President Hoover's Moratorium was supported by the Legion. Later when payments were to have been resumed, the Legion did not offer any solution as to what could be done if these nations did not pay. In addition to opposing cancellation or reduction of the war debts, the Legion supported the provision in the neutrality legislation to refuse credits and loans to countries defaulting on their debts. After World War II, the Legion has supported loans to the Marshall Plan countries as a means of halting the advance of Communism, to prevent another world war and to strengthen the security of the United States. That is to say, the chief consideration has shifted from the economic to the ideological and the military in the matter of granting loans.

The Legion began its career with peace as its goal and international co-operation as the means of achieving it because it had appraised correctly some of the international forces and the part the United States should play in international affairs. It became isolationist because of obstructionists in the United States Senate not permitting the League of Nations and the World Court

Treaties to be ratified; because of its interpretation of Washington's farewell address in reference to 'entangling alliances'; and because of the leadership of the Legion itself. Although the Legion never gave up its goal of peace, its support of the neutrality legislation and the various bills to take the profits out of war did not achieve the goal desired.

The Legion came back to support international co-operation and the United States playing a strong part because "the United States cannot secede from the world." The United States can drift into war by following a do-nothing or negative policy as in the neutrality legislation, but to attain peace the Legion advocated positive, planned, intelligent, co-operative action with the other nations of the world.

In the lifetime of the Legion the United States has gone through revolutions of the peace-war-peace cycle, the international co-operation-isolation-international co-operation cycle, the involvement-neutrality-involvement cycle and prosperity-depression-prosperity cycle. The Legion advocates following its policies as a means of avoiding these extremes.

In its postwar policies, the Legion has taken a more determined stand than after World War I. During and after World War II, this organization has operated under a more limited definition of political activity in trying to help

"formulate and implement" American foreign policy. No stand was taken on the United States joining the League of Nations at first because it was considered political. The Legion took an active part from the inception of the United Nations and all the way to offering amendments for making the United Nations operate as originally intended. When the United Nations was not functioning as expected, the United States pursued policies outside this organization to try to achieve economic rehabilitation in Europe as a means of containing Communism and preventing future war. The Legion supported policies that not only were intended to achieve this goal, but also to achieve military security. Although the Legion announced a threefold policy--implementing the European Recovery Program, informing the world of the intentions and ideals of the United States, and to strengthen the United Nations Charter--its policies extend further. Its policies call for the holding of Formosa and a Pacific Pact against the further spread of Communism. All Legion policies after World War II have been designed to attack "everywhere the forces of Communism and to help create a firmer foundation for peace and understanding among all liberty-loving peoples." Legion opposition to the sharing of atomic secrets fits into this policy, even though it is official United States and United Nations policy. The Legion is not convinced that sharing atomic secrets would be "an

instrument for lasting peace" but really "appeasement."

And appeasement does not lead to peace, but to war.

CONCLUSIONS

The American Legion was organized in France after World War I partly (as an attempt) to solve a problem of discipline in the American Expeditionary Forces, partly to better the economic condition of its members when they would become civilians again, partly to combat Communism, and partly to promote fraternal relations. It was chartered by Congress in 1919. The Legion's organization is simple. The individual legionnaire is the basic unit. He joins with other individuals to form a post, or local unit. Posts within each state or territory or foreign country form a department. Departments form the national organization, the American Legion.

The Legion is more effectively and widely organized than other pressure groups in that it extends through the forty-eight states, the United States territories and districts, and also to foreign countries. While other pressure groups appeal mainly to economic or professional interests, the Legion, in addition to appealing to these, also appeals to the patriotic emotions. This organization of veterans uses the various propaganda agencies and techniques commonly used in the attempt to get its programs accepted, and it cooperates with other organizations which have similar goals.

Most legionnaires feel that by virtue of their military service, they have a special interest in the

nation's heritage and a little better claim than other citizens to be the custodians of that heritage. The Legion feels that there are three main dangers to the nation's heritage that make this role of custodian necessary:

(1) ignorance and indifference of Americans who do not understand and appreciate the freedoms and responsibilities in the American system, (2) the alien and the immigrant living in the United States, and (3) the spectre of Russian Communism bent on the establishment of a Soviet America.

The Legion's concept of Americanism is made up of nationalism, patriotism, and devotion to the United States. Its Americanism program would indoctrinate Americans and those aliens who would be considered desirable for citizenship and thus counteract alien "isms" and propoganda which are designed to undermine and destroy the American way of life.

In its program of preserving and extending the American heritage, the Legion sees both internal and external dangers. The ignorance and indifference of Americans, the alien and the immigrant living in the United States are considered as internal dangers, while Russian Communism is considered both an internal and an external danger. After the Great Depression the Legion came to realize that Communism gained followers in a condition of economic paralysis. The Great Depression was instrumental in

arousing the Legion to a greater interest in economic affairs.

The Legion's Americanism program is divided into three main activities--Education, Youth Activities, and Community Service. Through these programs the Legion hopes that all age groups will be reached and indoctrinated with what it believes is good Americanism.

In order to indoctrinate the aliens and immigrants living in the United States the Legion asked Congress to ban completely all immigration to the United States for a period of years. When Congress adopted the quota system instead, the Legion called for tighter restrictions regarding immigration, naturalization, and deportation. The Legion has been more successful in persuading Congress to bar certain groups or individuals from the national origins quotas as "slackers," aliens considered to be economic burdens, Communists, Fascists, and Nazis. In general, the Legion opposed admission of any aliens who would be considered poor risks as citizens, those who would agitate for the overthrow of the American system of economics and government, and those who would compete for jobs in industry and agriculture or in other ways.

The Legion has been somewhat successful in persuading Congress not to pass special acts of naturalization, such as that proposed in the MacIntosh-Bland Case. Pressure has been brought to bear on governmental agencies

to have undesirable aliens deported, and many aliens have been deported. The Legion has waged a long battle to have Harry Bridges, Pacific coast labor leader, deported, but without success. In addition to making use of the legislative and administrative processes in dealing with the immigration problem, the Legion has advocated a more extensive use of the treaty power and diplomatic pressure. Neither has been used, and Congress continues to handle the problem of immigration as a domestic issue.

The Legion asserts that "Russia cannot be separated from Communism and Communism from Russia," and the measures the Legion advocates affect both domestic and foreign policies of the United States. Although the Legion has always voiced its opposition to Communism it has not expressly stated the methods of opposing Communism. Consequently, the Legion's opposition to Communism took the form of "direct" action by individual legionnaires and posts breaking up Communist meetings, forbidding the use of public buildings to Communists, and sometimes aiding in strike-breaking on the ground that labor troubles are Communist-inspired. When the national organization of the Legion adopted a policy on Communists in the United States it opposed "direct" action as negative and favored a positive policy. The Legion's positive policy in handling the Communist menace domestically consists of such activities as proclaiming Americanism and democracy,

pointing out the dangers and fallacies of Communism, advocating the outlawing of the Communist party nationally, barring Communists from serving in elective and appointive offices by requiring non-Communist oaths from teachers and labor leaders. The Legion has not been successful in getting Congress to outlaw the Communist party nationally, but it has been instrumental in having 14 of the 48 states bar Communists from the ballot.

As to the foreign aspect of Communism, the Legion very early adopted a non-recognition policy of the Soviet Union. This coincided with the policies of Presidents Wilson, Harding, Coolidge and Hoover. When President Roosevelt in 1933 recognized Communist Russia, the Legion took no action. But when Earl Browder in 1935 reported the activities of United States Communists to a convention in Moscow in violation of the four promises, the Legion demanded rescinding the recognition of Soviet Russia. This position was maintained until 1941 when, in its Milwaukee convention, the Legion voted to support American foreign policy which included the shipment of lend-lease materials to Russia. The Legion was careful to state that this action did not mean approval of Soviet Russia or Communism and that the battle against Communism would go on in domestic affairs. Other actions advocated by the Legion to check or contain Russian Communism internationally are the Truman Doctrine regarding Greece and

and Turkey, the Marshall Plan, the North Atlantic Military Alliance, the State Department's Voice of America program, the use of Formosa in the western defense line of the United States, a Pacific alliance similar to the North Atlantic Military Alliance, and the building up of the military defenses of the United States to such a point as to prevent any surprise attack by Russia like that by Japan at Pearl Harbor in 1941.

The two most important concerns of the Legion are (1) veterans' benefits and (2) an adequate national defense for the United States. The basis of the national defense program is held by the Legion to be universal military training. This would call for the conscription of capital, labor, and soldiers in order to equalize the burdens of war and to prevent war profiteering. An army with sufficient equipment, a two-ocean navy, a stockpile of atom bombs, an air force and suitable air and naval bases in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans would complete the defense program. This program of national defense is calculated to provide national security through the prevention of war if possible and to make possible the winning of any war that the United States might be forced into. It is a program to be borne much as insurance--the cost not to be regretted if there is never occasion to use it. This program is considered necessary because there is always the possibility of war, because the United

States has always been weak militarily at the beginning of every war, because a hurried-up program of national defense always results in waste in cost and human life, and because a weak United States is a threat to peace. The Legion has supported many Congressional bills of national defense but has been defeated by various causes-- at first by its own lack of proper organization, then by the depression of 1929, by waves of pacifism, by Communist activity, by economy demands, and by the general indifference and lack of understanding of the American people. The Legion felt, however, that the major provisions of its national defense program were accepted when the Selective Service act was passed in 1940 and when executive orders set up rationing and price control in World War II.

On the international scene, the Legion opposed the Geneva Gas Protocol of 1926 on the ground, first, that it would weaken national defense through the denial to the military of an effective weapon, and, second, that gas warfare was no more inhumane than other types of warfare. It favored ratification of the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact, but opposed using it as an argument for unilateral disarmament of the United States military forces. And it warned, too, that this pact would lull the people of the United States into a false sense of security. The Legion urged President Hoover to build

up the navy to the 5-5-3 ratio as provided for in the Washington Naval Disarmament Conference of 1922, but the President ignored the pleas. The Legion favored the exchange of over-age destroyers for Atlantic bases with the British and lend-lease to Britain and Russia, as means of providing for national security, of keeping the United States out of war, and of aiding national defense. The Legion endorsed the United Nations as an agency to maintain peace through collective security, but until such time as the provisions of the Charter were implemented with adequate force to keep the peace, the Legion felt that the United States would have to continue to be strong militarily. The Legion continues to oppose disarmament of the United States either for purposes of economy or as a claimed means to bring about peace or as an example for other nations to follow. It opposes sharing the atomic bomb with Russia, because such a policy would weaken the national defense of the United States and because Russia has not shown any sincere desire to cooperate for peace. Until World War II the Legion advocated a national defense program to maintain the dominant position of the United States in the western hemisphere. Since World War II the Legion has advocated a national defense program that would have the United States assume the role of dominant power in the world.

After World War I there were two conflicting theories

as to the course the United States should pursue to remain at peace and to avoid entanglement in future wars. One of these was the Wilsonian theory to the effect that the United States could not long remain neutral in event of a major conflict and that the only hope for the United States was in active cooperation with other nations to prevent war. This theory was repudiated by the Republican Party after the election of 1920. The other theory was that the United States should remain aloof and be non-cooperative--that it should follow a policy of isolation and neutrality. The latter policy held sway. When world events gave evidence of impending war, Congress, instead of the President, seized the initiative in determining policy calculated to prevent United States involvement. Because of disappointments as to achievements of World War I and because of fallacious assumptions as to why the United States entered that war, the neutrality legislation of 1935 was accepted as the means of preventing involvement in another war.

Legion leadership warned that those who practiced the theory of splendid isolation were "smoking the opium of self-deception" and would awaken some day to "a nightmare of tragic reality." These warnings were ignored, and the government's policy of neutrality was supported by the rank and file of legionnaires. The Legion insisted upon the neutrality legislation being enforced in specific

cases in international affairs, but it soon became evident to the Legion that no blueprint for the future in American foreign policy could be accurately charted and that great segments of the people were not neutral in the world-shaking events because the neutrality legislation aided the aggressors. The Legion itself shared this "biased belligerency" in advocating the stoppage of scrap iron shipments to Japan, in approving abrogating the trade treaty signed with Japan in 1911, and in expressing sympathy with China for Japanese attacks upon that country. The Legion opposed lifting the arms embargo to aid Spanish Loyalists in 1938, but took no action in 1939 in the 44-day Congressional debate when the arms embargo was lifted. The Legion opposed granting a loan to Finland in 1940 for fear it might involve the United States in war. In this the Legion supported the visions of the neutrality laws, but ignored the neutrality legislation in favor of national defense and national security in supporting lend-lease aid to Britain. But when Legion leadership opposed sending lend-lease aid to Russia, again for the second time the rank and file of legionnaires disregarded their leaders in voting for such aid to Russia and coming out for repeal of the neutrality legislation. The Legion's opposition to the Ludlow Amendment was based on the grounds that it would have meant a major change in the theory and practice of representative government in the United States and that

aggression would have been permitted in the western hemisphere, contrary to the accepted interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine.

In general, the Legion was in accord with the policies of the United States in supporting and abandoning neutrality. World-shaking events and the impossibility to cope with them under the neutrality legislation gradually changed the administration's policy, and that of the Legion, away from neutrality.

Although very early in its career, the Legion, in 1923, stated its own good neighbor policy with regard to western hemisphere nations, nothing was done to implement the policy. Ten years later, in 1933, President Roosevelt stated the Good Neighbor policy of his administration. When it had been in effect exactly eight years, and when the Legion had been invited by Josephus Daniels, the Ambassador of the United States to Mexico, to participate in this policy, the Legion officially recognized and approved of the policy. The Legion's participation in this policy--its Inter-American Affairs program--began in 1943. Its participation was enthusiastic and wholehearted. The Legion along with many other organizations and the 21 countries of the western hemisphere, cooperated to make the policy effective. This is evident in the fact that Axis propaganda in these countries was counteracted, twelve of the countries participated in the war, they supplied raw materials

for the war effort, they granted air, military and naval bases, and their contributions brought the war to a successful conclusion much sooner than might have been possible otherwise.

The Legion began its career with peace as its goal and international cooperation as the means of achieving it because it had appraised correctly some of the international forces and the role the United States should play in international affairs. It became isolationist partly because of the obstructionists in the United States Senate who did not permit the League of Nations and World Court Treaties to be ratified; partly because of its interpretation of Washington's farewell address in reference to entangling alliances; and partly because the Legion is loyal to the government of the United States and its policies. Although the Legion never gave up its goal of peace, its support of the neutrality legislation and the various bills to take the profits out of war did not achieve the goal desired. Since World War II the Legion has been supporting international cooperation but has also urged the United States to play a strong part because the United States cannot secede from the world. The Legion holds that the United States can drift into war by following a do-nothing or negative policy as in the neutrality legislation, but to attain peace the Legion advocates positive, planned, intelligent, cooperative action with the other

peace-loving and freedom-loving nations. Here the Legion draws the line against Soviet Russia, for that country does not meet these two conditions for cooperation. Furthermore, cooperation with Russia with her announced goals of world conquest and world domination is impossible. Therefore, all policies of the Legion are designed to attack "everywhere the forces of Communism and to help create a firmer foundation for peace and understanding among liberty-loving peoples."

In its efforts to formulate and implement American foreign policy, the Legion advocates programs designed to establish prosperous economies in the United States and in the freedom-loving nations and to safeguard these nations militarily and politically. The programs the Legion favors for economic well-being are the following: reciprocal trade agreements, Marshall Plan aid, President Truman's Point Four and loans to undeveloped countries. The programs designed for military security of the United States and the freedom-loving countries are the Truman Doctrine in reference to Greece and Turkey, the North Atlantic Military Alliance, the Rio Pact for the western hemisphere, a Pacific Pact similar to the North Atlantic Military Alliance, to include Formosa in the western defense line of the United States, to withhold atomic bomb secrets from Russia and her satellites, to strengthen the military defenses of these countries and to support the

United Nation's defense of Korea. For political security the Legion would declare Russia to be the enemy of peace--an aggressor nation that should be ousted from the United Nations.

The fear of Russia--the Russian threat to freedom-loving nations and to peace--is the main motivating force behind the foreign policy advocated by the American Legion.

APPENDIX

WHAT IS THE LEGION?

We of another war sometimes are asked: "What is the American Legion"? The American Legion is not a club, although it offers the fellowship of comrades in arms. The Legion is a service organization. It is the trustee of a sacred responsibility and power. The beneficiaries of this trust own the Legion. It belongs to those men and women who bear on their bodies and minds the marks of the price they have paid for love of country It belongs to those sons and daughters of ours who yet serve America in the far-flung spaces of the world. It belongs to every man and woman of America who has honorably served his nation in the armed forces. While it serves its membership and those who were of the armed forces, it also has a primary concern in the future of America. It has offered and will continue to offer leadership in those causes that promote the well-being of the nation. It seeks the cooperation and help of every citizen. It belongs to the nation. Those who own it are the beneficiaries of its service and its strength. Through it we who served America in times of war continue to serve it and each other in time of peace.¹

1. Chief Justice Robert G. Simmons, Supreme Court, State of Nebraska. Congressional Record, 79th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 92, part 9, 1946, p. 1182.

Report of a boy attending Boys' State:

Although I had had history and civics courses in my classes at school, I had never realized fully the wonderful workings of our American democracy until in the short space of a couple of weeks I had the experience of attending Boys' State and the Boys' Forum of National Government in Washington, both American Legion projects. Like many other boys who attended these forums-in-democracy I went through the motions of doing the work of a public official, getting instructions concerning my duties from the man who did the work every day. Thus each of us was at some time in the driver's seat, and I am sure that what we learned will help our fellow Americans as well as us.

At Boys' State we had a full week--a time all too short. We dug into the fundamentals of practical government in a practical way, learning the American system from its beginning in the community and up through successive stages to the complete state administration. The Boys' Forum of National Government, also in session for a week, gave us the national picture. The hundred boys who made the trip to Washington had a down-to-earth course in civics that will pay dividends to their community, state and the nation.

Like a great many other high school students I knew in only a very general way about the American Legion's

interest in youth training and education. I had earned an Eagle Scout's badge in a Boy Scout Troop sponsored by a Legion post in my home town. But perhaps like a number of others I had thought of Boys' State as something like a Scout summer camp. Before enrollment was completed, I knew that this was something different.

At Boys' State I met a selected group of high school students of the junior and senior classes who came from every part of the state. These boys had been selected on the basis of leadership, scholarship, or other values. We were in very short order assigned to two simulated political parties--the National and the Federal--and were then told to set about the organization of a complete system of government, beginning at the very bottom. I learned then that this method is used in all the forty-two Boys' States established by the Legion in as many states of the Union. I came to know also that while the ultimate aim of representative government is the same in all the forty-eight states, there is, however, some slight variance in forms and procedure among the several units.

I had read somewhere that the Boys' State project was operated as a sort of junior laboratory of civil government and administration. After the first day or so and after a close personal participation in the party conventions, the caucuses, the elections, and the preliminary work of getting a governmental unit in workable shape it

dawned on me that this was not really an overstatement. That is exactly what the Boys' State is planned to be, and what it actually is as we worked it out through that busy week. My single criticism is not based on the plan itself or what it attempts to do, but that the time given the citizens to organize their local and county governments, and finally their mythical forty-ninth state, is not long enough.

The plan of operation, perhaps, can be better understood by those who have read of it only as a "Legion program" by telling something about what we did and how we worked. The working hours were broken by plan and competitive sports--basketball and softball, for instance--and each day we had a drill and parade. And there were jokes and pranks to lighten the hours.

Each citizen was assigned to one of the simulated cities and given a place in a political party. To better carry out the idea of a representative citizenry, neither party was given a numerical advantage--and that made for some hot political campaigning, a lot of silver-tongued oratory, and much clever political maneuvering as each evenly balanced party made its supreme effort to win enough votes from the opposition to carry the election.

The first elections were for city offices, progressing from the city to county and state. I was fortunate enough, as a Federalist, to be elected to both city

and county offices, but passed these offices on to others when I was elected Secretary of State--the only member of my simulated party to weather the onslaught of the Nationalists The final night for campaign speeches before the election of state officers was the most exciting and eventful of the week. It was the climax to all our efforts, and we were all worked up to a high pitch of excitement. A state election with the actual offices at stake could hardly have been more exhilarating or inspiring to a similar group of qualified voters.

Instruction in the particular duties of the several offices in the local and state governments was given by men qualified to speak because, for the most part, that instruction was given by the men who actually held the high offices.

On a tour through the nerve center of the real state government I was taken to the office of Secretary of State, and there as a beginning filling a simulated office I was inducted into the work of the Secretary of State by the Secretary himself. That night simulated sessions of the Senate and House of Representatives were held in the legislative halls directly under the supervision of men experienced in legislative procedure. The Boys' State judicial system was completed from police to the Supreme Court.

Aside from the educational values and the practical knowledge of how we keep our government going, of equal

importance was the opportunity the simulated state gave to meet boys from all sections of the state. There we learned other lessons in what might be called human relations, in good sportsmanship, in getting along with people, of caring for ourselves in a school of give and take, and in developing such talents of leadership that we might possess. The lasting friendships made there will help us all to a better understanding of our fellows and their problems, whether it be in school, on the playing fields, or in the affairs of real life after we reach maturity.

The National Boys' Forum is but an expansion of the idea of the Boys' State at the national level, but is more limited and more restricted in attendance because of the long distances most of the delegates must travel to reach Washington

The schedule of one week was a crowded one, with preliminary caucuses and elections in order to complete a national government comparable to the state government the delegates had just helped to organize. This work out of the way, we were taken on tours to every department of the government, met the heads of each department and through informal interviews learned how each one functioned, and how that division was interlocked in the general pattern of the national government. We were introduced to and were addressed by President Truman, Secretary of State Marshall, Secretary of Agriculture Anderson,

Secretary of the Interior Krug, General Vandergrift, Admiral Nimitz, world famous foreign correspondents and radio news analysts, and many others

That each one who attended Boys' State and the National Boy's Forum of National government was measurably helped in many ways need not be repeated. Some of us--I can speak for myself--have a quickened interest in state, national and international affairs as a result of some of the lessons and demonstrations I cannot express in words my gratitude to the American Legion for giving me the privilege better to acquaint myself with the government of my state and nation, thereby equipping me to be a better citizen and to take my rightful place in society. It will help me to contribute toward improving our national and world conditions. Then, I learned to appreciate more fully the honor, as well as the duty and responsibility, of being an American citizen.¹

Text of a telegram sent by Paul V. McNutt, July 24, 1929, to President Hoover, protesting the suspension of construction of nine of the 15 cruisers provided for by Congressional action in 1928:

The American Legion respectfully protests against any action by the Chief Executive which will prevent in any way the regaining by America of our lost naval parity

1. Dan Mathes, Jr., "Your Candidates in '68" in American Legion Magazine, June, 1948, pp. 24-25 and 34.

with Great Britain.

Our lost parity can be regained by only two methods which are continued cruiser building by America or extended cruiser scrapping by Great Britain or by a combination of three methods.

Should Great Britain definitely abandon completion of the two cruisers Surrey and Northumberland which Prime Minister MacDonald has announced work will be suspended upon, and should all of our fifteen cruisers authorized last winter be completed, America would still be 75,000 tons inferior to Great Britain in cruiser tonnage.

It would seem therefore that a drastic scrapping program of British cruisers should be inaugurated as proof that they concede us actual cruiser parity before America suspends construction on our cruiser program which, if fulfilled, will still fail to achieve us cruiser parity with Great Britain.

The Legion is not questioning at this time the authority of the Chief Executive to suspend construction on three of the five cruisers which the Congress authorized should be undertaken during the fiscal year which ended June 30 last, although the United States has not become signatory to any international agreement for the further limitation of naval armament.

The Legion has uniformly stood and still stands for movements which will make permanent peace more certain and assure a better understanding between nations, but we would, however, respectfully remind the Chief Executive of the one-sided sacrifices which resulted from America's zeal for peace at the Washington Conference, when our scrapping of the most modern battle fleet in the world led to our present cruiser inferiority and the loss of our former naval parity.¹

President Hoover's reply to Paul V. McNutt, National Commander of The American Legion, regarding the suspension of construction of the nine cruisers; July 30, 1929:

I am glad to have your assurance that the American Legion supports the policy of parity for our navy with

1. Annual Reports, 1929, p. 145.

that of Great Britain. This principle is enunciated by our naval authorities as a complete defense of the United States in any contingency and defense is all that we seek.

The first step of the renewed consideration of reduction of the excessive world naval armament has been acceptance of that principle as a preliminary to discussion between Great Britain and the United States. This is a forward step of the first importance.

It seems to me that every person of common sense will agree that it is far better to at least try to establish such a relation by agreement before we resign ourselves to continued attempts to establish it by rival construction programs on both sides of the Atlantic. We need not disguise the fact that (aside from the capital ship limitations under the Washington Treaty) competitive building has been in progress on both sides since the Great War, and we have arrived only at disparity, not parity. It creates burdensome expenditure, a constant expansion of naval strength we cannot fail to stimulate fear and ill-will throughout the rest of the world toward both of us, and thus defeat the very purposes which you have so well expressed as being the object of the Legion, when you say, 'The Legion stands uniformly for movements which will make permanent peace more certain and assure better understanding between nations'.

I fear you have been misinformed as to the actual problems that lie before us if we are to succeed in such a negotiation, for they are far more intricate and far more difficult than can be solved by the simple formula which you suggest. But I feel confident that the American Legion will be sympathetic with principles of parity by negotiation and of reduction and limitation of armament instead of competitive building, with its continuous expansion and all its train of world dangers.

I am further confident that the American Legion will join with me in endeavoring to establish and co-operate with others in an atmosphere of good-will and sincerity within which to find such a solution.

We and other nations have entered into a solemn covenant that we shall not resort to war as an instrument of national policy, that we shall seek to settle disputes by pacific means and if we are honest in this undertaking it follows that every effort should be made to establish confidence in our intentions and to hold our preparedness program solely within the area of efficient defense. I

am confident that these policies are consonant with the many declarations of the American Legion and the sentiment of the American people.¹

Letter of Vice-Chairman of the National Legislative Committee to U. S. Senators on the Geneva Gas Protocol, June 9, 1925:

The Geneva Gas Protocol should be rejected.

Even if the use of gas were attended by the results at first supposed when its novelty inspired new terrors, experience ought to warn this country that no war weapon can be outlawed by treaty any more than war itself can be. The futility of such attempts is demonstrated by the single fact that when war comes there is no authority or power anywhere to enforce a treaty of that kind. All wars violate treaties. If treaties were effective there would be no wars. When a nation determines on war or is forced to accept war by the aggression of another, it will use every means and every arm available to achieve its object. What is war indeed by an admission that all other methods of conducting international relations have failed? From the moment the first gun is fired all civil laws go into suspension. Surely no fact of human history has been more clearly demonstrated.

The Geneva Protocol should be rejected. America's defense should not be hazarded by a bond which this country might be the only one to keep and which others, in the hour of emergency, might repudiate. In such case could America expect Geneva to protect it?

The American Legion, deeply interested in our national defense policy, respectfully requests your aid and assistance in defeating this protocol when called before the Senate in Executive Session, and takes this opportunity to express to you our appreciation for your interest in this matter.²

1. Annual Reports, 1929, p. 146.

2. Annual Reports, 1926, p. 103.

Manifesto and Program of the Communist Party--1219
Blue Island Avenue, Chicago

The United States is now a world power. It is developing a centralized, autocratic Federal Government, acquiring financial and military reserves for aggression and wars of conquest. Imperialism now consciously dominates the national policy. The war strengthened American capitalism, instead of weakening it as in Europe. But the collapse of capitalism in other countries will play upon and effect events in this country. Strikes are developing, verging on revolutionary action, and in which the suggestion of proletarian dictatorship is apparent. The strike workers try to usurp functions of industry and government, as in the Seattle and Winnipeg strikes.

The Communist Party will endeavor to broaden and deepen these strikes, making them general and militant, developing the general political strike. The Communist Party accepts as the basis of its action the mass struggle of the proletariat.

Communism does not propose to "capture" the bourgeois parliamentary state, but to conquer and destroy it. As long as the bourgeois state prevails the capitalist class can baffle the will of the proletariat.¹

1. New York Times, January 5, 1920, p. 2.

Manifesto of the Communist International as proclaimed by the Communist Labor Party:

The Communist Labor Party proposes the organization of the workers as a class, the overthrow of capitalist rule and the conquest of political power by the workers. The workers organized as a ruling class, shall, through their government, make and enforce the laws; they shall own and control land, factories, mills, mines, transportation systems, and financial institutions. All power to the workers!

The Communist Labor Party of America declares itself in complete accordance with the principles of communism, as laid down in the manifesto of the Third International formed in Moscow.

We maintain that the class struggle is essentially a political struggle, that is a struggle by the proletariat to conquer the capitalist state, whether its form be monarchical or Democratic-Republican, and to replace it by a governmental structure adequately adapted to the communist transformation.

The most important means of capturing state power for the workers is the action of the masses, proceeding from the places where the workers are gathered together-- in the shops and factories. The use of the political machinery of the capitalist state is only secondary. The working class must organize and train itself for the capture of State power.

1. New York Times, January 4, 1920, p. 1.

Documents based on First Congress of the Communist International held in Moscow March 2-6, 1919

The Communist Party, far from conjuring up civil war artificially, rather strives to shorten its duration as much as possible--in case it has become an iron necessity--to minimize the number of its victims, and, above all, to secure victory for the proletariat. This makes necessary the disarming of the bourgeoisie at the proper time; the arming of the laborer, and the formation of a communist army as the protector of the rule of the proletariat and the inviolability of the social structure. Such is the Red Army of Soviet Russia, which arose to protect the achievements of the working class against every assault. The soviet army is inseparable from the soviet state.¹

Document "Issued by the Communist Party of America"
New York Times, Jan. 12, 1920, p. 3.

The workingmen of Russia have shown the way. In Russia the shops, as well as all other means of production and distribution, belong to the workers. The Russian workers organized their power. They created shop committees in every plant and united these workers in workers' councils. Thus they built up the means of direct action. When the crisis came they were prepared to use their mass power. Before their mass power the government of the capitalists and land owners broke up and disappeared.

1. New York Times, January 5, 1920, p. 2.

The workers' councils became the organs of the working class government. The workers controlled the state power, and police and the army.

The workers must organize to secure control of the shops. The first step is to organize a shop committee in the shop in which you work. Bring together all the enlightened workers who are ready to participate in the struggle to win control of the shop. Organize them in a Communist Party shop branch. This committee will carry on the work of agitation among the other workers. It will collect funds and secure papers and pamphlets for distribution in the shops.

The work of the committee will be to unite all the workers in the shop organization--machinists, carpenters, shipping clerks, workers of every trade, all must unite in the workers' organization in their shop. Prepare to take control of your shop, of your work, of your lives and happiness. Organize and make it your shop.

Letter of National Commander of the Legion to each United States Senator asking their support in ratifying the United Nations Charter

July 3, 1945

At the last three National Conventions of The American Legion the delegates voted unanimously in favor of the establishment and maintenance of an association of free and sovereign nations to maintain peace and prevent recurrence of war. In 1943 and 1933 the Convention declared that such association should be implemented with whatever force may be necessary for such purpose.

Soon after the Dumbarton Oaks Agreement was reached by representatives of participating powers, the State Department, by all usual media, gave widest publicity not only to the Agreement, but to the reasons advanced by such representatives for the inclusion of the various provisions of the Agreement, as well as the reasons for exclusion of some provisions which certain groups or individuals thought should be included.

The American Legion, with more than one hundred other representative American organizations, participated in several discussions of the Dumbarton Oaks proposal either initiated by the State Department or held with State Department cooperation, and American Legion representatives participated as consultants at the UNCIO at San Francisco, together with representatives of more than forty other American organizations. The American Legion feels that the charter produced at the San Francisco Conference is a charter arrived at through unprecedented participation of American people, after unprecedented opportunity for every American to know that which preceded and that which occurred at the Conference.

The American Legion feels that the San Francisco charter is an honest and able attempt to create a workable association of free and sovereign nations implemented with force to maintain peace and prevent recurrence of war.

Obviously it is the best and only charter which can be produced at this time.

The American Legion believes that the President's hand should be strengthened for the grave and difficult tasks which lie ahead of him in the field of foreign relations, by early ratification of the charter. It believes that such action is strongly desired by the American people, more thoroughly informed upon the subject matter than they have ever been informed heretofore on any important international undertaking. The American Legion therefore respectfully requests that you support ratification of the charter at the earliest date consistent with due and proper procedure.

Sincerely yours,

EDWARD N. SCHLIEBERLING
National Commander

Letter from Francis A. Mock of 8525 S. Front Street, Philadelphia, Pa., to Drew Pearson on the Legion's Tide of Toys:

Today I worked on a ship loading toys for tots, or Tide of Toys as the program is called. After loading 12,000 cases of CARE we proceeded to load the toys. I want to take my hat off to the American Legion for sponsoring this program. There is a lot of thought behind it, and you could almost feel it as I did today.

During my lunch hour, I strolled around the various piles and looked at the names of the towns and cities of the United States that were represented there. Big towns and little towns all alike. You know it made me feel good to look at those various piles of toys. A pile would measure about 40x30 feet by 10x12 feet high. Some were marked England, some Italy, some Germany, others Czechoslovakia, Belgium France. It was a great feeling to know that the people who sent these toys were Americans, possibly your next door neighbor.

You know stevedores and longshoremen are a cynical group and it takes a lot to make them proud of anything. Longshoremen are noted for their pilfering ability. But you can rest assured that cargo wasn't even considered for that purpose. Take my word for that. Every case handled was treated as though it was their own personal property, and we were proud of the privilege of handling them.

You know when the American Legion and other veteran organizations were organized the cry went up that the vets were organized so they could ride a perpetual gravy train, paid for by the government and playing upon the sympathy of the public for their part in World Wars I and II; or perhaps they were out for some personal glory, or for sponsoring a bonus, or other reasons.

However, this effort belies these rumors. It looks like a step forward. I only hope that some people in government have the same trend of thought and have as much farsightedness as the originator of this idea for amity among nations.

I could go on for ages about career men in key government positions who know little about what is going on in the world today. In closing I want you to know that all the effort you are putting on this behalf isn't going to be forgotten. And perhaps the future holds the solution, and let's hope that we can get our nations and the various others to get together and have lasting peace.

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Curriculum Vitae

ROSCOE BAKER

Born in Clay City, Kentucky, on March 2, 1907.

Education. B.A., Berea College, 1929; M. A., Ohio State University, 1933. Studied at the University of London in 1938-1939, and at Northwestern University in 1945-1947. Candidate for Ph.D. at Northwestern University.

Languages. Reading knowledge of French and German.

Academic Record. Instructor in History and Political Science, Michigan State College, 1940-1942. Instructor in Political Science, Northwestern University, 1945-1947. Assistant-Professor of Political Science, Colorado College, 1947-1948. Associate-Professor of Political Science, New Mexico Highlands University, 1948-date.

Public Service. Candidate for election as representative in the Ohio General Assembly in 1938 and 1940.

Military Service. Commissioned a Lt. (j. g.) in the U.S.N.R. in 1942, he was promoted to Lt. in 1944 and served to 1945. Served as an instructor of history and political science in the Naval Academy Preparatory School, Norfolk, Virginia in 1942-1944.

Author. "The Reference Committee of the Ohio House of Representatives" published in the American Political Science Review (April 1940), Vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 306-310.

Fields. Political theory, public law, public opinion, international relations, and modern European history.

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