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2/20/95

GULF WAR ILLNESSES SPEECH
OUTLINE

Objectives:

1. To demonstrate that the President cares about and is compassionate towards Gulf War veterans who are suffering from illnesses that may be related to their service in the Gulf.
2. To underscore the President's commitment to ensuring that no effort is spared in seeking the origins of the illnesses being reported by Gulf veterans and in providing comprehensive medical care to those affected.
3. To draw attention to the major Administration actions to date in areas such as research, diagnosis and treatment, and to unveil new Administration initiatives, including the establishment of a Presidential Commission on Gulf War Illnesses.

Points to Make:

1. The President cares about those who served in the Gulf and believes we have the same obligation to them as we do to our World War II veterans.

-- Last June I traveled to Normandy, and earlier this month I went to Iwo Jima, to honor those who served with courage and distinction to defeat the forces of fascism in Europe and the Pacific some fifty years ago.

-- I believe that the brave men and women who fought in the Gulf some forty-five years later are owed a similar debt of gratitude. They, too, must not be forgotten, especially those who are still suffering from illnesses that may be related to their service on behalf of this great nation. We must and will take care of them.

2. This is a complex problem, which we have been grappling with since the end of the Gulf War.

-- Nearly 700,000 Americans served their nation in the Gulf, in both active duty and reserve units. Since then, roughly half have left military service.

-- Reports began to surface of persistent, sometimes inexplicable illnesses, within a short time after U.S. forces began to return home.

-- Over time, these very real and sometimes disabling health problems became known as *Gulf War Syndrome*. But, in our efforts to diagnose and treat these veterans, we have not discovered a single syndrome or illness. In fact, there appear to be many different types of *Gulf War illnesses*.

-- A number of causes have been suggested for these illnesses, including:

- * smoke from oil well fires;
- * depleted uranium from U.S. munitions;
- * tropical diseases;
- * possible exposure to chemical or biological weapons, or the drugs and vaccines used to protect against such weapons;

-- We have examined and are continuing to examine these and other possibilities but, thus far, no single cause has emerged, just as no single illness explains all of the symptoms being reported by our veterans.

-- We are as frustrated as Gulf veterans themselves over our inability to get to the bottom of this problem.

3. We will leave no stone unturned in our efforts to determine the origins of the illnesses affecting our veterans. We will also spare no effort to ensure that our veterans get the medical care they need, and get it quickly.

4. Many important initiatives have already been undertaken, or are underway, to respond to the needs of Gulf War veterans who are ill. Some of the most important of these are in the areas of diagnosis, treatment and compensation. For example:

-- Any Gulf War veteran who believes that his or her illness or symptoms may have been caused by exposure to a toxic substance or environmental hazard is now given free medical care by the VA.

-- The VA has established a Persian Gulf Registry program that offers free, complete physical examinations to every veteran who served in the Gulf who has health concerns, whether or not that veteran is ill. Thus far, some 40,000 veterans have participated in this program.

-- Gulf War veterans who are still in military service, and their families, can take advantage of DOD's comprehensive clinical evaluation program for both diagnosis and treatment. Since its establishment last June, some 13,000 people have joined this program, more than 8,000 of which already are undergoing in-depth medical evaluations.

* I want to encourage every Gulf War veteran, whether in the military or not, to participate in these important VA and DOD medical programs.

-- In the area of compensation, I made sure, by legislation I signed last fall, that veterans disabled by unexplained illnesses receive a monthly check, even as we continue to search for what is causing their illnesses.

* I am pleased to have with us here today _____ and _____, who have received some of the very first of these checks.

-- On the research side, we have more than 30 studies already underway on a range of subjects, such as mortality, environmental hazards, and exposure to oil well fire smoke.

5. I hope this gives you a sense of how hard we are already working to respond to the medical needs of our Gulf War veterans. But as proud as I am of what has been accomplished, it is clear to me that it is not enough.

6. Today I'd like to draw your attention to a number of other initiatives which are just now getting underway, or will soon be established, to help deal with the medical problems of Gulf War veterans. Some of the most important of these are in the research area.

-- We are spending between \$7-12 million on new research on the effects of drugs and vaccines used to protect against chemical or biological weapons, on infectious diseases present in the Gulf, and on possible reproductive health risks from exposure to chemicals such as pesticides. We are also beginning new research to see if a combination of these and other factors could be causing the illnesses of Gulf War veterans.

-- Of particular note, as well, is a major study which is looking at whether Gulf War-related illnesses can be passed on to others, or if they can cause birth defects or miscarriages.

-- On the treatment side, DOD is establishing Specialized Care Centers in Washington, D.C. and San Antonio, TX to provide care

for patients who have already had comprehensive examinations at other DOD facilities and need additional testing or treatment.

-- And, in a move toward even greater openness, DOD will, in response to individual requests, prepare and make available analyses concerning reports of the detection of chemical or biological weapons.

7. Finally, to ensure that we are doing all of this right, I have decided to establish a Presidential Commission on Gulf War Illnesses.

-- This Commission will review and evaluate the full range of U.S. government activities related to the illnesses being reported by U.S. service personnel who served in the Gulf War, in areas such as research, diagnosis and treatment and public outreach.

-- I will ask the Commission to provide an interim report within six months of beginning its work, and to include in this report not only an evaluation of the activities we have underway, but also recommendations on what else we should be doing, or should be doing differently.

8. I am committed to ensuring that we learn from the mistakes that the government made in its handling of Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange.

-- For many years, those veterans were denied both disability benefits and the medical care they needed and deserved. This will not happen again.

9. So, as we recall the sacrifices of those on the battlefields of Europe and the beaches of the Pacific some fifty years ago, so too should we remember and, indeed, do all that we can to help, our younger veterans. That is my solemn pledge.

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3/1/95

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

Date

FACT SHEET

Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses: New Initiatives

Various steps have already been taken by the Clinton Administration to respond to the health concerns of U.S. military personnel who served in the Gulf War. Today, the President announced a number of new initiatives aimed at further enhancing the U.S. government response to the needs of Gulf War veterans who are ill.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The President will establish an Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' illnesses to review and make recommendations on U.S. government activities related to the illnesses being reported by U.S. military personnel who served in the Gulf War. This Committee, which will begin its work in the spring of 1995, will review and make recommendations on Gulf War illnesses-related research, the activities of the Persian Gulf Veterans Coordinating Board, medical examination and treatment programs, public outreach efforts, the implementation of recommendations from external reviews, possible risk factors, and reports of the possible detection of chemical or biological weapons. The Committee is to provide an interim report within six months of beginning its work and a final report by no later than December 1996.

TREATMENT

The Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are enhancing their current programs for diagnosing and treating Gulf War veterans.

- **Specialized Care Centers:** DOD is establishing Specialized Care Centers in Washington, D.C. and San Antonio, TX, to provide care for patients who need additional testing or treatment after completing comprehensive medical examinations at other military medical facilities. These centers will open in March 1995.

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Placeholder language pending
Presidential decision.

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- **Reproductive Problems:** VA and DOD diagnostic test programs for Gulf War veterans will soon include guidelines for testing individuals who have had reproductive problems since returning from the Gulf. Nationally recognized medical experts are being consulted for advice in developing these guidelines.

EXPANDED RESEARCH

In addition to the research that is already underway, VA and DOD are planning to spend \$8-13 million on new research on Gulf War veterans' illnesses in 1995. Most of these studies will be designed, peer reviewed and conducted by university researchers and other independent scientists or, in the case of VA research, by scientists at VA medical centers across the country.

- **Epidemiological Research:** For the first time, major epidemiological studies will be conducted to examine whether such things as exposure to medications and pesticides, the location of troops during the war, and the age and sex of such troops are associated with specific symptoms. The DOD-funded studies will be based on a random sample of Gulf War veterans and civilians employed by DOD. A VA study will compare the health of 15,000 Gulf War veterans and 15,000 veterans who served during the same years but not in the Persian Gulf. Miscarriages, birth defects, and other reproductive health problems and illnesses among spouses or children will also be studied by DOD and VA.
- **Drugs and Vaccines:** New research is being conducted on the drugs and vaccines provided to help protect U.S. military personnel in the Gulf against chemical and biological weapons. This research will include further studies on the anti-nerve agent pill pyridostigmine bromide, alone and in combination with other medications or chemicals such as pesticides. Research on the long-term effects of anthrax and botulism vaccines will also be conducted, for the first time.
- **Medical Evaluations of Spouses and Children:** For the first time, VA will provide medical evaluations and diagnostic tests to spouses and children of Gulf War veterans. These tests will be provided as part of a research project on the possible relationship between the illnesses of Gulf War veterans and those of their spouses and children. Dependents of veterans who are enrolled in the VA Gulf War Registry will be selected for inclusion in this study.

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- **Environmental Hazards:** DOD and VA will support new research to expand existing information on potential environmental hazards such as infectious and parasitic diseases and the effects of exposure to petrochemicals, lead, depleted uranium and other toxic substances.
- **Improving Treatment:** Later this year, DOD will accept research proposals from scientists across the country designed to improve treatment for Gulf War veterans with diagnosed and undiagnosed illnesses and symptoms.

OPENNESS

In addition to the DOD declassification program previously announced, DOD and VA are taking other steps to make information available about issues of concern to Gulf War veterans.

- **Chemical and Biological Weapons:** Since the end of the Gulf War, some veterans have expressed concern about the possibility that they were exposed to chemical or biological weapons during the war. In response to these concerns, DOD will prepare and make available analyses of the most frequently cited reports of the detection of chemical or biological weapons and will continue to declassify and release documents bearing on these and other reports.
- **Data on Serious Illnesses:** Information regarding cancers and other serious illnesses among Gulf War veterans who have received care in VA and DOD medical facilities will be made available to the public. Reports, categorized by age group, sex and race, will be released every six months by the Persian Gulf Interagency Coordinating Board.

OUTREACH

VA Secretary Jesse Brown has recently sent letters to all VA Gulf War Registry participants informing them of new compensation regulations for undiagnosed illnesses.

FUTURE SAFEGUARDS

The Gulf War made clear the need for better training of U.S. troops on health risks prior to overseas deployments, for improvements in on-the-scene preventive medicine during deployments, and for better follow-up documentation and medical screening of troops after deployments. In response, DOD is developing a comprehensive approach that will strengthen training on the risks of toxic exposure and make more information about such risks available to individual service members. The effort

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will also improve documentation of each service members' health, medical problems and exposures before, during and after deployment. Policy guidelines for this new approach will be completed this spring, with the military services developing detailed implementing instructions thereafter.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

Date

FACT SHEET

Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses: Ongoing Initiatives

Shortly after returning from the Persian Gulf following Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, some U.S. military personnel began to report a variety of symptoms, such as fatigue, muscle and joint pain, memory loss, and headaches. In order to address these Gulf War veterans' health concerns, the Administration has taken many steps, highlights of which are listed below.

COMPENSATION

To make sure that veterans with chronic disabilities resulting from Gulf War service are compensated, the Administration is moving quickly to compensate those with both diagnosed and undiagnosed illnesses.

- **Compensation for Diagnosed Illnesses:** Under traditional disability compensation programs, veterans receive monthly compensation checks for diagnosed disabilities connected to their service. As of January 31, 1995, 106,390 veterans are receiving this type of disability compensation, including 472 for disabilities resulting from exposure to environmental hazards.
- **Compensation for Undiagnosed Illnesses:** President Clinton strongly supported and signed legislation to allow for compensation to veterans suffering from undiagnosed illnesses. This is the first time ever that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has compensated veterans before their illnesses are diagnosed. The first compensation checks under this new program were sent in mid-February 1995. All Gulf War veterans who had disability compensation denied have been contacted to reapply under this new program.

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TREATMENT

The Administration's first priority for Gulf War veterans is to provide them with the best possible medical care, even when diagnoses have not been made.

- **Priority Access to VA Health Care:** In 1993 and again in 1994, President Clinton signed legislation that changes standard eligibility rules to enable veterans to obtain free medical care for illnesses that may be related to service in the Persian Gulf. To date, more than 140,000 Gulf War veterans have received free medical care in VA facilities.
- **Free Specialized VA Health Examinations:** Under the VA Persian Gulf Registry Health Examination Program, every Gulf War veteran who has health concerns, whether or not the veteran is ill, is eligible for a free, complete physical exam. More than 40,000 veterans have participated in this program since it began in 1992. Since June 1994, veterans with unexplained illnesses whose medical conditions require a more specialized approach have had access to a more comprehensive health examination, which is also provided without charge at any VA and military medical center.
- **Specialized VA Diagnosis Centers:** For those veterans most difficult to diagnose, VA has established Persian Gulf Referral Centers in Washington D.C., Houston, TX, and Los Angeles, CA.
- **Special Treatment for Active Duty Military Personnel & Their Families:** Under the Defense Department's (DOD's) Comprehensive Clinical Evaluation Program, more than 13,000 Gulf War veterans still on active duty have registered for extensive free medical exams and treatment. Between 8,000 and 9,000 individuals have begun to receive these exams and treatment since the program began in June 1994. Military personnel register by hotline and are then examined and treated at local military medical centers and then, if necessary, at 16 major medical centers in the U.S. and Germany.

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DECLASSIFICATION

In June 1994, DOD announced that it was declassifying all of the material related to the potential causes of Gulf War veterans' illnesses. The Department is proceeding with declassification efforts and releasing information as it becomes available. To date, DOD has reviewed more than 400 linear feet of records to declassify material that mentions the possible detection of chemical or biological weapons. By the end of 1995, DOD will have the capability to match the wartime locations of individual service members with these incidents, as well as the presence of various other potential environmental hazards, such as smoke from oil well fires.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Because one of the most frustrating aspects of undiagnosed Gulf War veterans' illnesses is the lack of medical knowledge about the cause or cure, the Administration is reaching out to military personnel and veterans to educate them about available medical exams, treatment and compensation, as well as about new findings as they develop.

- **Hotlines:** DOD, as of June 1994, and VA, as of February 1995, began operating hotlines to provide Gulf War veterans with easy access to medical examinations and treatment. Callers are referred to the appropriate DOD or VA medical treatment facility. In addition, the VA hotline provides information on all VA medical care, compensation and research programs for Gulf War veterans. The hotline numbers are: DOD, 1-800-796-9699; VA, 1-800-PGW-VETS. VA is also providing medical and compensation benefits information on an electronic computer bulletin board, available 24 hours per day. This number is 1-800-US1-VETS.
- **Defense Secretary and Joint Chiefs Chairman Letter to Veterans:** In May 1994, Secretary Perry and General Shalikashvili jointly sent letters to all Gulf War veterans, encouraging them to go to any medical facility for an evaluation and exam if they have experienced health problems since returning from the Gulf.
- **Staying Healthy Handbooks:** As part of the 1994 deployment to the Gulf, DOD published and distributed "Staying Healthy" handbooks to help troops protect themselves against health hazards overseas. Handbooks were also provided to troops in Somalia and Haiti. Similar information was not consistently

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available to military personnel during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

- **Persian Gulf Review:** VA publishes a quarterly newsletter, Persian Gulf Review, which is sent to everyone on its health registry, each VA Medical Center, and veterans' service organizations. It provides information relevant to the health and compensation concerns of Gulf War veterans and their families.

RESEARCH

More than thirty research projects are underway to try to determine the causes of Gulf War veterans' illnesses. The research projects include epidemiological investigations, environmental hazards research, psychological and neurological studies, studies of the effects of the anti-nerve gas drug pyridostigmine bromide, research on the tropical disease leishmaniasis, and on the effects of exposure to depleted uranium. A few of the more than thirty studies are highlighted below.

- **Environmental Hazards Research Centers:** VA Environmental Hazards Research Centers, located in Boston, MA, East Orange, NJ, and Portland, OR were opened in October 1994. The centers are carrying out fourteen research projects in such areas as: the effects of toxic exposure on behavior, memory, the immune and nervous systems, and the development of cancer and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Specific studies are also examining chemical hypersensitivity, chronic fatigue syndrome, and risk factors for undiagnosed illnesses.
- **Mortality Study:** The VA Epidemiology Service is completing a study of death rates and causes of death among those who served in the Gulf War. Comparisons will be made with veterans who did not serve in the Gulf. Results are expected later this year.
- **Birth Defects Study:** The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), VA and the Mississippi State Health Department examined a report of increased numbers of birth defects in the children of two units of the Mississippi National Guard. The study, completed in December 1994, found no increase in major or minor birth defects.

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- **Iowa Study:** At Congressional request, the Administration is conducting a pilot survey of Gulf War veterans from Iowa, comparing a random selection of those who served in the Gulf War with a random selection of those who served elsewhere during the same period. This CDC study includes a detailed assessment of veterans' health concerns as well as those of their families.
- **Kuwait Oil Fires Study:** This ongoing study is examining health risks to military troops and personnel exposed to oil fire smoke in the Gulf. The study's initial findings, released in September 1994, concluded that the levels of toxic substances measured in May through December 1991 were well below United States regulatory limits.
- **Anti-Nerve Gas Drug Studies:** DOD is conducting studies of the effects of pyridostigmine bromide, an anti-nerve gas drug given to troops in the Gulf. The studies are examining the effects of this drug on women and men as well as the effects of interactions between this drug and other environmental chemicals such as insecticides that were present in the Gulf. Results are expected later this year.
- **Tropical Disease Study:** DOD, VA and the Department of Health and Human Services are examining the occurrences of the tropical parasitic disease leishmaniasis in Gulf troops. These studies aim to develop better diagnostic tests and treatment for this disease.
- **Navy Studies:** Three large epidemiological studies, begun in October 1994, are being carried out by the Naval Health Research Center in San Diego, CA. The studies are analyzing the health of Gulf War Construction Battalion (SeaBee) service members, hospitalization rates among all Gulf War veterans, and birth outcomes in all Gulf War veterans and their families. Preliminary results are expected in late 1995.

REVIEWS BY OUTSIDE EXPERTS

To ensure that all avenues for research on Gulf War veterans' illnesses are being aggressively pursued, the Administration has asked several panels of non-governmental scientists to review ongoing activities and make recommendations for further research. These reviews indicate a consensus in some areas. For example, there is agreement among reviewers that, rather than a single

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cause or illness, there are likely to be several different causes and illnesses among Gulf War veterans.

- **National Institutes of Health (NIH) Workshop:** In April 1994, the NIH hosted a panel of outside experts to examine research efforts to date and make recommendations for future research in areas such as epidemiology, stress-related diseases, pyridostigmine bromide and leishmaniasis. Many of these recommendations are now being implemented.
- **National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine (IOM):** As directed by Congress, an IOM panel is reviewing and evaluating current research efforts related to Gulf War veterans' illnesses. The group's first report, issued in January 1995, provided a number of recommendations for improving research, many of which are being implemented. The IOM is also reviewing and evaluating DOD's Comprehensive Clinical Evaluation Program.
- **Defense Science Board Task Force:** This panel, headed by Nobel laureate Dr. Joshua Lederberg, was asked by DOD to examine intelligence and other information related to possible troop exposure to chemical or biological weapons, and potential health consequences resulting from low level chemical exposure, environmental pollutants, Kuwait oil fires and other health hazards. The panel's report, released in June 1994, concluded that there was no evidence of the use of chemical or biological warfare against U.S. troops in the Gulf.

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Specialty press
press at VA
+ DOD

Outreach meeting

- reference in speech to signing it
- send note + pin after sign

1) Pre-event Congressional aspect

2 chmn + ranking vets committees

- Daschle

- Evans

- Buyer

- Joe Kennedy

- Shelby

ASCs

VAs

MHS??

*
get list
of names

⇒ only need phone calls beforehand
→ and fact sheet fax

need talking points

VSOs - phone calls + faxes

→ need talkers + fact sheets

Dianna will draft

2) Post-event

Cony

PR

- VFW - press release immid after

- follow up calls to get into magazines

- op-eds

Jen to ask Depts to do Qs + As



Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Public & Intergovernmental Affairs

FAX: (202) 273-5717

TELEPHONE: (202) 273-5750/5751

FAX FACTS:

TO: Jennifer O'Connor
Steve Silverberg

DATE: 3/1

FROM: Kathy Turado

Transmitting: Cover page plus _____ pages

COMMENTS: _____

Memorandum

Date: March 1, 1995

To: Jennifer O'Connor

From: Kathy Jurado

Subject: Communications Plan for POTUS Speech to VFW

VFW Press

VA will work with VFW Public Affairs to facilitate media interviews with Commander Gunner Kent and Executive Director Larry Rivers on TV and radio following the speech. We will encourage them to conduct media interviews throughout the week of March 6th.

VSO Outreach

VA will copy President Clinton's speeches from Colleville, Manila and Iwo Jima and distribute these to the VFW delegates (1000).

VA will distribute to the Veterans Service Organizations and their publications 1) a summary of the President's VFW Speech, 2) a VA press release with speech highlights and quotes from Secretary Brown, and 3) a copy of the speech for publication and distribution.

Post Speech Media

VA will target the following states: Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, California, Illinois, Louisiana, Iowa, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Connecticut.

In each of the above states, VA Public Affairs will target media in major population centers 1) distributing a VA press release and President Clinton's speech and, 2) utilizing Secretary Brown, Deputy Secretary Gober and Under Secretaries Vogel and Kizer for print and radio interviews.

In addition, VA Public Affairs will distribute a press release and the President's speech to the Persian Gulf media list which includes nationwide media who write on Persian Gulf illnesses.

Memorandum

Date: March 1, 1995
To: Steve Silverberg
From: Kathy Jurado
Subject: Rescission Media Report

Tuesday, February 28

Secretary Brown

Florida Radio Network

Orlando Sentinel

States News Service

Wednesday, March 1

Secretary Brown

Tampa Tribune

Deputy Secretary Gober

WNIS-AM, Hampton, Virginia

Thursday, March 2

Deputy Secretary Gober

West Virginia Radio Network

KARN, Little Rock, AR

PRESS CLIPS and TRANSCRIPTS Attached

Gainesville Sun "Panel slashes funding for local VA clinic"

Orlando Sentinel "Orlando may lose VA clinic at base"

Hartford Courant "VA hospital expansion threatened by cuts"

WPKT Radio, Hartford, CT

The Gainesville (FL) Sun, 2/28/95

Panel slashes funding for local VA clinic

■ The outpatient clinic has been on the drawing board for 11 years.

San staff and wire report

WASHINGTON — A project that's been on the Gainesville Veterans Affairs Medical Center drawing board for 11 years has been dealt a severe blow in Congress.

A planned \$17 million ambulatory care or outpatient clinic at the VA Medical Center here, and similar projects at five other locations, have made it on the budget hit list of a key House Appropriations subcommittee.

"We've spent millions of dollars to design things we don't build," said Ed Dougherty, management engineer for the Gainesville VA Medical Center.

The subcommittee agreed to pull \$17.8 million budgeted for the Gainesville hospital's new outpatient clinic this year, as part of a \$17.5 billion budget-cutting measure to come before

the full committee Thursday.

The proposed cuts came a short time after Veterans Affairs signed a \$1.2 million contract with Gainesville architects Flad & Associates.

The predicament is not new, according to Dougherty.

"We're all frustrated," he said.

The VA has spent close to \$3 million designing the project since 1983, and a shovel has yet to hit the ground.

In 1983, the outpatient clinic was part of a 290-bed psychiatric unit and parking garage project, totaling \$90 million. It gradually has shrunk in scope over the years. The psychiatric facility has been lost, and the garage remains on paper.

The ambulatory care clinic is now in danger unless the full House Appropriations Committee restores it to the budget, and the Senate agrees.

"I've been messing with this project for 10 years, and I'm beginning to lose hope," Dougherty said.

Other clinics were scheduled to be built in Orlando, San Juan, Puerto Rico, Columbia, Mo., West Haven, Conn., and Hampton, Va.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jesse Brown condemned the House subcommittee's actions.

"I am bitterly disappointed that these projects have been canceled. I have never seen anything like this before and am afraid that this action sets a dangerous precedent," Brown said.

He added that cuts strike at one of the more vulnerable segments of populations, aging World War II and Korean War veterans.

Brown said the proposed cuts also fly in the face of the national trend for outpatient services rather than more expensive hospital stays.

Rep. Karen Thurman on Monday expressed outrage over the decision, saying it smacked of partisan politics.

"It's outrageous," the Inverness Democrat said. "They're going to take and cut something they believed was extremely important not less than one year ago."

The panel responsible for veterans spending voted to cut \$158 million worth of construction projects last week, shrinking a \$240 million program to \$84 million. Subcommittee members agreed last Thursday to eliminate the Gainesville clinic along with five others, all of which are based in Democratic districts, but spared one located within the district of Republican Rep. Porter Goss in Fort Myers.

Rep. Cliff Stearns, a longtime defender of veterans' interests, was quick to rise above party lines and join Thurman in lambasting the cuts. "I'm going to fight this," Stearns said Monday during a telephone interview.

The Ocala Republican said he already contacted Thurman and Rep. Corrine Brown, D-Jacksonville, in hopes of uniting the area's congressional delegation against the planned cutbacks.

Steven Cohen, Thurman's spokesman, struck a partisan stance in defending the project.

"There were another five projects that weren't touched, and those were all in Republican districts, except one," Cohen said.

But, Stearns said the cutbacks were more of a regional issue than a partisan one.

"When it comes to veteran affairs, no one is partisan, and we shouldn't be," Stearns said. "We are going to suggest that the facilities that are getting funding up in the northern part of the United States be looked at carefully, because the vets are leaving the North and coming South."

News Clip Identification

Sender Identification

Newspaper: Orlando Sentinel
 City & State: Orlando, FL
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Orlando may lose VA clinic at base

☐ The GOP wants to ax the \$14 million outpatient clinic. The planned VA hospital in Brevard could be at risk, too.

By Sean Holton

SENTINEL WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — Republican budget-cutters have slashed money for VA outpatient clinics in Orlando, Gainesville and four other U.S. cities in a move that would kill all six projects unless the money can be restored.

Veterans Affairs Secretary Jesse Brown Tuesday condemned the action as "un-American" and "political meanness at its worst." He said he would fight to have the money restored when the full House Appropriations Committee meets to discuss the issue on Thursday.

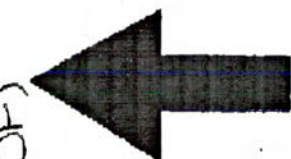
At stake for Orlando is the \$14 million approved by Congress last year to convert the hospital at the Orlando Naval Training Center into a VA outpatient clinic and a 120-bed nursing home.

Brown warned in an interview with The Orlando Sentinel that Central Florida may eventually take an even bigger hit on a planned VA hospital in Brevard County — a project that came to fruition only after years of intensive lobbying by Florida lawmakers.

"This is just the beginning of the battle," Brown said of the Orlando and Gainesville setbacks. "In the 1988 budget, I have about \$150 million set aside for that Brevard hospital ... and I think that's at risk."

Besides putting the Orlando outpatient clinic in peril, the situation illustrates a political dilemma that will be replayed again and again this year for Republican congressmen who signed the "Contract With America."

U.S. Rep. Bill McCollum, R-Longwood, fought to get money.



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PAGE 2 OF 2

News Clip Identification

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Remarks:

VA secretary hopes clinic can be saved

VA from A-1

for the outpatient clinic in his home district. But, as a contract signer, he may ultimately have no choice but to vote for a broader budget-cutting bill that would include the death warrant for his pet project.

"To have me vote against the [budget-cutting] bill as a whole because this is in there, I probably would not do that," McColm said. "I would probably vote for that ... bill. But that doesn't mean I'm not

going to fight very hard to get this out of it."

The new outpatient clinic would ease the strain on a crowded clinic on Columbia Street in Orlando, which serves veterans from Orange, Seminole, Osceola and parts of Brevard, Sumter and Lake counties.

Converting the relatively new NTC hospital to a VA clinic would also save some of the 300 jobs Orlando would lose when the hospital closes this summer as part of the closing of the base.

"Now here you've got a beautiful hospital that we were getting ready to take over," Brown said. "It makes perfect sense for us to occupy that building ... It's a good investment for the public. And now they come and take away that \$14 million that we set aside so we could move forward."

The Cabinet secretary said he

wouldn't be able to find the money elsewhere in his budget.

Other cities with planned outpatient clinics on the chopping block are Columbia, Mo.; Hampton, Va.; West Haven, Conn.; and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

"It kills it," he said of the planned cut to Orlando. "It's not just Orlando (that's been cut). There are \$200 million worth of projects they have here ... I don't have that kind of money just laying around to pull out of the system."

McColm disputed that notion, and said Brown could probably find the money to at least get the outpatient clinic running — if not the nursing home.

But Brown said if the action stands, he will seek to cancel the June 1 transfer of the hospital from the Navy to Veterans Affairs.

"I would not want the property if

I can't develop it," he said. "Because if I acquired the property, then I'm going to have to maintain it. Why should I want to maintain property that I can't make use of?"

An appropriations subcommittee cut the money for Orlando from the Veterans Affairs department's 1996 budget as part of a sweeping mid-year budget review under way in the House. Various appropriations panels have slashed \$17.5 billion in projects governmentwide that were approved by last year's Congress.

Nearly \$15 billion of that total has come from programs overseen by the departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Labor and Veterans Affairs. Though they deal with a past year's budget, these specific spending cuts represent the first salvo in the GOP's battle to trim government as promised in its "Contract With America."

Hartford (CT) Courant, 2/25/95

VA hospital expansion threatened by cuts

By DREW WEAVER
Courant Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — Federal dollars that had been allocated to a \$48 million expansion and renovation of the West Haven Veterans Affairs Medical Center could be revoked under a package of cuts introduced in Congress late Thursday.

A House subcommittee voted to rescind funding for construction projects at six veterans' hospitals nationwide, including West Haven's, in an attempt to shave \$156 million from the current year's budget.

The cuts were pushed through the House Veterans' Administration and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Subcommittee Thursday night by its Republican majority in a 6-3 vote.

They could reach the House floor as soon as the week of March 6.

Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-3rd District, criticized the plan to cut the West Haven hospital's funding. The money is essential, because the hospital is old and needs renovation, she said.

"It's really a slap in the face to veterans," DeLauro said Friday. "Nobody is saying we can't deal with fiscal responsibility ... but this is extreme."

Republicans contend, however, they are just making a down payment on their promise to cut the federal deficit.

"The money had to come from somewhere. We had to make priority decisions," said John Czwartacki, press secretary for the House Republican Conference. "They're very tough decisions. None of these are going to be easy, otherwise they'd already be done," he said.

The West Haven hospital had planned to use the \$48 million, which DeLauro had worked to add to the fiscal 1995 budget, for renovations in two buildings and construction of a new two-story structure that would link two buildings. The construction would provide more space for surgery and ambulatory care and create an indoor walkway between the two nearby buildings.

The West Haven hospital's public affairs director, Louise Fitz-Simons, said it was ironic that saving money had been cited as the reason for the cuts, because the renovations would make the hospital run more efficiently.

The construction, she said, would enable the hospital to treat more people as outpatients, a cheaper alternative to hospital stays.

"We thought we had the money, since Congress passed it and the president signed it," Fitz-Simons said, adding that the hospital expected to select the construction company and receive the cash this September.

Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., vowed to fight the cut when the package reaches the Senate, saying it was wrong to "put our veterans in the crosshairs."

Rep. Christopher Shays, R-4th District, said although he hoped the VA hospital would be spared when the package is voted on in the House, he understood the nation must "get its financial house in order."

DeLauro said she plans to meet Saturday with hospital officials and veterans to devise a strategy for preserving the funding.

WPKT Radio (Hartford, CT) "News," 2/27/95

Transcript

RESCISSION BILL

John Nowacki, anchor:

A Congressional committee has dealt a blow to the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in West Haven. The Appropriations subcommittee voted to cancel a check for nearly fifty million dollars for an expansion. The proposed cut still has to be approved by the full Appropriations committee, and on the House floor and then in the Senate. The money was approved by Congress last year. The subcommittee stopped payment on six projects of which West Haven is the largest. Eight veterans turned out this weekend to rally against the lawmakers' plan. The cut is part of nine billion dollars in the federal budget legislators have cut to pay for emergency disaster aid and future tax cuts. The West Haven VA would lose \$48.6 million dollars.

#



Department of Defense
Office of the Assistant to the Secretary
of Defense for Public Affairs
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-1400

FAX COVER SHEET

DATE: March 1, 1995

TO: Jennifer O'Connor
White House

PHONE: 202-456-2572

FAX: 202-456-6704

FROM: Jim Turner
Media Relations

PHONE: 703-695-0192

FAX: 703-697-3501

SUBJECT: VFW Gulf War Illness Speech Follow-up Media Plan

Number of pages including cover sheet: 2

If all pages are not received or are illegible, please call (703) 695-1092

MESSAGE:

Forwarded as requested.

Follow-up Plan for Presidential VFW Gulf War Illness Speech:

Monday, March 6:

- DepSec Deutch interviewed by Armed Forces Radio and Television Network at 4 p.m. to be aired world-wide March 7th.
- Presidential Speech.

Tuesday, March 7:

- DepSec Deutch Armed Forces Radio and Television Network interview aired.

Wednesday, March 8:

- Secretary Perry conducts a Chicago Tribune Editorial Board at 4:15 p.m.
- Dr. Joseph with Sorya Nelson, Times News Service at 9 a.m. (t)

-more-

Thursday, March 9:

- Dr. Joseph Testifies before House Veterans Affairs Committee on PGWI.
- USD Dorn with Tom Philpot, Military Update (A personnel-issue-oriented columnist who reaches 38 newspapers that serve military communities across the nation.) (t)

Friday, March 10:

- Dr. Bailey with Nancy Tomich, U.S. Medicine. time TBD. (t)

-end-



Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Public & Intergovernmental Affairs

FAX: (202) 273-5717

TELEPHONE: (202) 273-5750/5751

FAX FACTS:

TO: Jennifer O'Connor

DATE: 3/1

FROM: Kathy Turzelo

Transmitting: Cover page plus _____ pages

COMMENTS: _____

Memorandum

Date: March 1, 1995
To: Jennifer O'Connor
From: Kathy Jurado
Subject: Communications Plan for POTUS Speech to VFW

VFW Press

VA will work with VFW Public Affairs to facilitate media interviews with Commander Gunner Kent and Executive Director Larry Rivers on TV and radio following the speech. We will encourage them to conduct media interviews throughout the week of March 6th.

VSO Outreach

VA will copy President Clinton's speeches from Colleville, Manila and Iwo Jima and distribute these to the VFW delegates (1000).
VA will distribute to the Veterans Service Organizations and their publications 1) a summary of the President's VFW Speech, 2) a VA press release with speech highlights and quotes from Secretary Brown, and 3) a copy of the speech for publication and distribution.

Post Speech Media

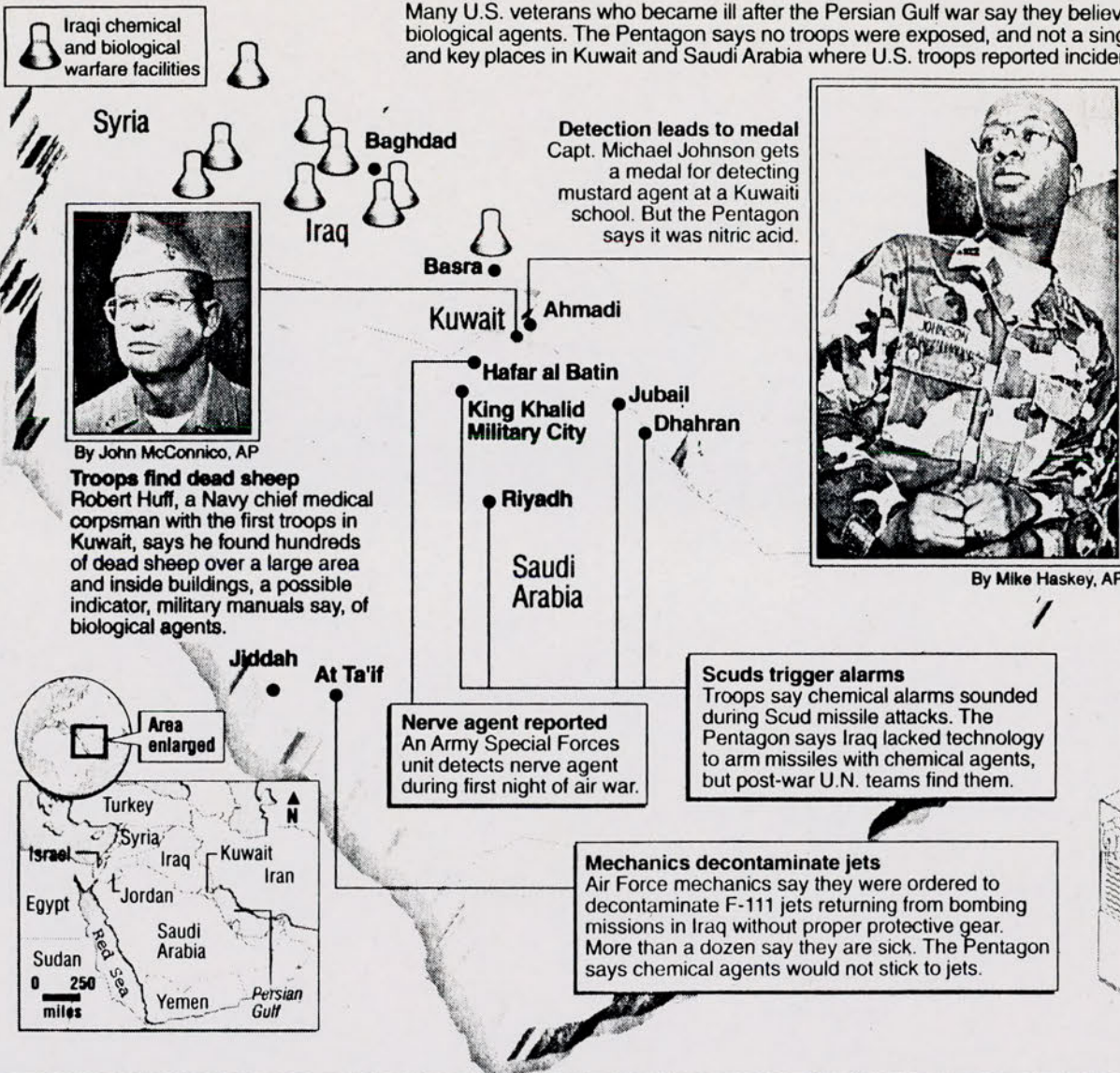
VA will target the following states: Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, California, Illinois, Louisiana, Iowa, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Connecticut.

In each of the above states, VA Public Affairs will target media in major population centers 1) distributing a VA press release and President Clinton's speech and, 2) utilizing Secretary Brown, Deputy Secretary Gober and Under Secretaries Vogel and Kizer for print and radio interviews.

In addition, VA Public Affairs will distribute a press release and the President's speech to the Persian Gulf media list which includes nationwide media who write on Persian Gulf illnesses.

Veterans claim gulf war chemical exposure

Many U.S. veterans who became ill after the Persian Gulf war say they believe they were exposed to chemical or biological agents. The Pentagon says no troops were exposed, and not a single detection report was verified. Iraqi targets and key places in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia where U.S. troops reported incidents:



Winds can spread chemical agents

The Pentagon disputes a theory that winds carried fallout from bombed Iraqi targets back over U.S. troops, causing gulf war illnesses.

3 Wind direction can change, spreading debris over a different area

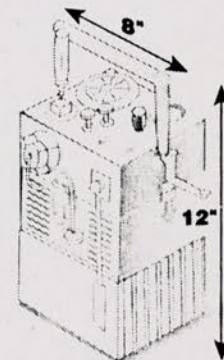
1 Close to the ground, winds may be blowing in one direction ...

2 But as smoke or fumes rise ...

Chemical alarm

U.S. forces scattered more than 13,000 battery-powered M-8 chemical detectors across the desert.

- ▶ Detector sounds alarm when heavy chemical agents are present.
- ▶ If used in blowing sand or dust, air filter must be replaced every day and sometimes every hour.



REFAX

THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

TELEFAX TRANSMISSION MEMO

ATTENTION:

ORGANIZATION:

TELEFAX NO.:

Jennifer O'ConnorCabinet Affairs456 6704

FROM:

Robert L. Jones, Special Assistant to the Secretary (00F)

ORGANIZATION: Department of Veterans Affairs

TELEFAX NO.: (202) 273-4876, Office No. (202) 273-4836

White House Phone No. (202) 456-5178, FAX No. 456-6218

NO. OF PAGES TO FOLLOW:

3

DATE:

2/23/95

MESSAGE:

Per our conversation. I met with the
Staff of the VEA to work out initial
Plans - Hope this is helpful


Putting Veterans First

DRAFT

February 22, 1995
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Annual Washington Conference

Date: March 6, 1995

Location: Sheraton Ball Room Washington Sheraton Hotel Washington, DC

Time: 10:30 -11:30 a.m.

From: Jennifer O'Connor

I. Purpose

To deliver a major speech to approximately ¹⁵⁰⁰2,000 delegates attending the VFW Annual Washington Conference and provide a photo-op (group) for 54 youth participants in the Voice of Democracy program, their escorts and the leadership of the VFW and its Auxiliary.

II. Background

The VFW is the second largest congressional chartered veterans service organization with 2.2 million members. The organization was chartered in 1936 and traces its roots to the American Veterans of Foreign Service and the National Society of the Army of the Philippines which merged in 1914 to form the VFW. The membership consist of all US citizens with honorable discharges from the armed forces who have earned an officially recognized overseas campaign medal. The organization has over 10,700 post comprising 55 departments in 50 states plus Puerto Rico/Virgin Islands, Panama, the Pacific Areas, Europe and Washington, DC. The National Headquarters is in Kansas City, Missouri and the organization operates a Washington office. Interest of the organization are VA Health Care and Foreign Affairs/National Security.

You will meet Allen "Gunner" Kent, National Commander, Paul Spera, Senior Vice Commander and James Nier, Junior Vice Commander. These officials were elected to their positions at the National Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada in August 1994. You will also meet Larry Rivers, Adjutant General, Bob Currieo, Executive Director, Joe Ridgley, Quartermaster General, Helen Harsh, President Ladies Auxiliary and Rosemary Mazier, Auxiliary National Secretary. The Chief of Staff of the Army Gordon Sullivan is scheduled to speak to the organization at approximately 9:45 a.m. Secretary Jesse Brown will speak at 10:30 a.m.

III. Participants

Allen "Gunner" Kent, National Commander and his wife Becky
Paul Spera, Senior Vice Commander and his wife Joanne
James Nier, Junior Vice Commander and his wife Kimmy
Larry Rivers, Adjutant General and his wife Connie
Joe Ridgley, Quartermaster General and his wife Judy
Bob Currieo, Executive Director and his wife Cecilia
Helen Harsh, President Ladies Auxiliary,
Rosemary Mazier, National Secretary/Treasurer Auxiliary
~~Ron O'Mara~~ ^{Burke}, General Manager Washington Sheraton Hotel
Jesse Brown, Secretary of Veterans Affairs
54 Voice of Democracy students with 10 escorts.
Approximately ~~2,000~~ ¹⁵⁰⁰ VFW delegates

IV. Press Plan

White House, VA and VFW photographers National broadcast media and print media will be present during remarks.

V. Sequence

^{Burke}
10:30 a.m. arrive at the Washington Sheraton Hotel, Calvert Street Entrance. Met by ~~Ron O'Mara~~ ^{Burke}, General Manager. Escorted up the elevator where you will be met by Allen "Gunner" Kent, National Commander. ^{Bob Currieo Ex. Dir}
(Holding Room 8201)

10:35 a.m. escorted by Gunner Kent to the Washington Room where you will take a group photo with the Voice of Democracy students and their escorts. ^{Indiana}
(Brief casual remarks 54 students/10 escorts)

~~10:45 a.m. escorted to the Delaware Room (directly across the hall) where you will take an individual photo with the leadership of the VFW as listed above. (No remarks required)~~

10:50 a.m. Secretary Brown will complete his remarks to the delegates and will join you in the Delaware room.

11:00 a.m. Accompanied by SecVA and Gunner Kent, you will proceed to the stage where you will be introduced by Gunner Kent.

11:00 - 11:20 a.m. Deliver Speech (At the conclusion of remarks sign into law a change to the VFW National Charter-provide pens to Gunner Kent, Larry Rivers and Bob Currieo).

11:25 a.m. Depart for the White House



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

*Nail
down
photo
3-4*

TELEFAX TRANSMISSION MEMO

ATTENTION:

Jennifer O'Connor

ORGANIZATION:

Cabinet Affairs

TELEFAX NO.:

456 6704

FROM:

Robert L. Jones, Special Assistant to the Secretary (00F)

ORGANIZATION: Department of Veterans Affairs

TELEFAX NO.: (202) 273-4876, Office No. (202) 273-4836

White House Phone No. (202) 456-5178, FAX No. 456-6218

NO. OF PAGES TO FOLLOW:

2

DATE:

2/16/95

MESSAGE:

*For Your use - Please fill
in The Time & let me know*

BoS



Putting Veterans First

DRAFT

February 16, 1995

PHOTO-OP WITH THE CHAIR PERSON NATIONAL SALUTE TO HOSPITALIZED VETERANS

DATE: MARCH 6, 1995

LOCATION: OVAL OFFICE

TIME:

FROM: Jennifer O'Connor
Robert L. Jones

I. PURPOSE

To have a photograph taken with the Chairperson of the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans.

II. BACKGROUND

The annual VA Salute to Hospitalized Veterans began in 1978. The Traditional observance during the week of Valentine's Day is appropriate because of the sentiments of call. ring and sharing match the Salute's purpose of expressing honor and appreciation to hospitalized veterans. The program pays tribute to veterans hospitalized in VA and other facilities, increases community awareness of VA's role of providing comprehensive medical care and encourages visits to hospitalizes veterans. The National Chairperson serves as the public spokes person and visits VA facilities throughout the year.

You will meet Mr. Charles Durning, a decorated World War II veteran and noted film, stage and TV actor. Durning won critical acclaim in the 1960 touring company of "The Andersonville Trial" and later established himself as a top character actor on the New York stage. He appeared in the Academy Award - winning film "The Sting" and won a Tony Award for his supporting performance as "Big Daddy" in Tennessee Williams's "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof". During the 1990s, Durning continued an active stage and movie career while becoming a network television series regular on "Evening Shade" receiving six Emmy nominations. His acting career spans more than fifty years and encompasses roles in 185 plays and 70 films. Durning is reluctant to discuss his military service, but acknowledges that it had a major impact on his life that remains with him today. Durning enlisted in the Army in 1944. He was awarded three purple hearts and the Silver Star for his wartime service.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Charles Durning, National Chairperson Salute to Hospitalized Veterans

DRAFT

Jesse Brown, Secretary of veterans Affairs

Jennifer O'Connor, Cabinet Affairs

Robert Jones Special Assistant to the Secretary

IV. PRESS PLAN

White House photographer only.

V. SEQUENCE

Charles Durning and Secretary Brown are escorted into the Oval Office.

Photos are taken.

Group departs.

VI. REMARKS

None required.

KJ -

- events - where people are going anyway
- talking points
- Potus speech to USAs in afternoon
- own press rel w/ comments from

Sec'y

widely distributed

- same papers

→ get out to PG fax line to
all reporters

- regional pub aff offices in
targeted states

- Sec'y + sub cabinet on radio

- Mon pm - Thurs

DoD -

- Sec'y = supporting other speech
will piggy back

- Deutch - extensive internal network

- to active duty

- interview w/ them on BRAC
Monday

- will piggy back

- Josephs → interviews

Marcey

- still need guidance
 - Dr. Satcher - something re Iowa study
 - maybe bringing a few folks in to talk to it
-
- testifying Thursday
 - VA subcommittee
 -

ROUTING SLIP

DATE: 2/28/95

FROM: Billy Webster
Director of Scheduling and Advance

SUBJECT: PHOTO/OP For Hospitalized VETERANS

Don Baer

Abner J. Mikva

Ersine Bowles

NEC

Rebecca Cameron ✓

Leon Panetta

Rahm Emanuel ✓

John Podesta

Mark Gearan ✓

Jack Quinn

Jack Gibbons

Carol Rasco ✓

Cindy Gire

Lee Satterfield ✓

Pat Griffin

Steve Silverman ✓

Marcia Hale ✓

Patti Solis

Alexis Herman ✓

G. Stephanopoulos

Nancy Hernreich ✓

Ann Stock

Kitty Higgins

Stephanie Street

Harold Ickes

Kim Tilley

Anthony Lake

Jodie Torkelson

Bruce Lindsey ✓

Kris Van Giesen

Mike McCurry ✓

Melanne Verveer ✓

Anne McGuire ✓

Anne Walley

Mack McLarty

Maggie Williams

(J O'CONNER)

FILE: ✓ Accepted 3/6/95 → 10:25 AM

FYI ✓ ADVICE ACTION

REGRET POTUS, suggest a surrogate is needed:

COMMENTS: Accepted Per Billy 2/28/95

ROUTING SLIP

DATE: 2/6/95FROM: Billy Webster
Director of Scheduling and AdvanceSUBJECT: Photo Op for Hospitalized Veteran

Don Baer	_____	Abner J. Mikva	_____
Erschine Bowles	_____	NEC	_____
Rebecca Cameron	_____	Leon Panetta	_____
Rahm Emanuel	_____	John Podesta	_____
Mark Gearan	<u>X</u>	Jack Quinn	_____
Jack Gibbons	_____	Carol Rasco	_____
Cindy Gire	_____	Lee Satterfield	<u>X</u>
Pat Griffin	_____	Steve Silverman	<u>X</u> (J.O'Connor)
Marcia Hale	_____	Patti Solis	_____
Alexis Herman	<u>X</u>	G. Stephanopoulos	_____
ancy Hernreich	<u>X</u>	Ann Stock	_____
Kitty Higgins	_____	Stephanie Streett	_____
Harold Ickes	_____	Jodie Torkelson	_____
Anthony Lake	_____	Kris Van Giesen	_____
Bruce Lindsey	_____	Melanne Verveer	_____
Mike McCurry	<u>X</u>	Anne Walley	<u>X</u>
Anne McGuire	<u>X</u>	Maggie Williams	_____
Mack McLarty	_____		

FILE: ✓ Accepted to be incorporated in a vet event
- BillyFYI ✓

ADVICE _____

ACTION _____

REGRET POTUS, suggest a surrogate is needed: _____

2/10/95 mtg.
COMMENTS: Accepted to be fit in to a veterans event @
some point.



THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

January 27, 1995

Attach to
proposal
Under
3/6/95
pending
Cab. affairs.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Billy Webster, Deputy Assistant to the President
and Director of Scheduling and Advance

FROM: Hershel Gober, Deputy Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs 

SUBJECT: National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs submitted through Cabinet Affairs a schedule request for actor Charles Durning, the 1995 chair of the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans to pay a courtesy call to the President and have a brief photo-op on either February 21 or 22, 1995. I have been informed that this request has been rejected.

Charles Durning, a decorated World War II veteran and noted stage, film and TV actor, will visit hospitalized veterans during the period **February 12-18** and at various times throughout the year. He will serve as public spokesperson for VA Voluntary Services. Local celebrities, youth groups and veterans service organizations will visit VA medical centers, State Veterans Homes and other facilities for the sixth consecutive year. Newspaper Columnist Ann Landers has devoted her column in January to ask readers to send a Valentine to a hospitalized veteran. This tradition demonstrates the sentiments of caring and sharing while expressing honor and appreciation to hospitalized veterans.

Traditionally, the President has met briefly with the chair to express appropriate appreciation and the photographs of the courtesy call are utilized to promote the VA volunteer program. I recognize that there are numerous demands on the President and that his schedule is extremely busy. This is an important symbolic national event.

I recommend that you reconsider the decision to regret this courtesy call and invite Mr. Durning to the White House to meet briefly with the President.

01/24/95

TO:

William Webster
Deputy Assistant to the President and
Director of Scheduling and Advance

FROM:

Jennifer O'Connor
Special Assistant to the President, Cabinet Affairs

REQUEST:

For the President to do a photo op with the Chair of the 1995 Salute to Hospitalized Veterans and during the photo op place a call to a hospitalized veteran.

PURPOSE:

To show the President's commitment to veterans and his compassion for sick veterans in particular

BACKGROUND:

A description of the program is attached. Each year, Veterans Affairs selects a prominent person to chair the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans. It is usually an actor and s/he visits sick vets and chairs a program to encourage others to visit them and volunteer in their hospitals.

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION:

The President did a photo op last year. He did not do the phone call part of this request. Presidents participate in the photo op each year. The phone call is a new idea.

DATE and TIME:

02/12/95

DURATION:

15 minutes

LOCATION:

Oval Office

PARTICIPANTS:

President, Charles Durning, the national chair of the National Salute to Veterans, Secretary Jesse Brown, Deputy Secretary Goyer

OUTLINE OF EVENTS:

The President shakes hands and poses for a photo. He then places a call to a sick veteran. (Note -- Billy -- we can do the photo op without the call, but the call would be a nice touch.

REMARKS REQUIRED:

Brief talking points will be provided if he does the call.

MEDIA COVERAGE:

Pool press/ local press at the site of the phone call

PROPOSED ATTENDANCE:

- ☒ President
☐ Vice President
☐ 1st Lady
☐ 2nd Lady

RECOMMENDED BY:

Secretary Jesse Brown

95 JAN 24 P3:41

possible w/ VFW a part not as separate event. Billy 1/24/95

CONTACT:

Jennifer O'Connor 6-2572
Kathy Jurado -- 273-5750

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 24, 1995

Billy --

Per our conversation this morning, I am resubmitting the request for the President to do a photo op with Charles Durning, the national chair of the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans.

To add to your information about this, David Dreyer thinks the call on Valentines Day is a good idea. Given your interest in adding this to another vets event, we could do it Friday Feb 17, as part of the salute to African American veterans. Of course, Durning is not African-American. But that seems to be the next veterans event on the schedule.

Thanks!

-- Jennifer O'C

gmo
if we do VFW, we will
try this on the front end
3/6/95 but we will not do
a separate event

Billy
1/24/95

ROUTING SLIP

DATE: 1 / 23 / 95

FROM: Billy Webster
Director of Scheduling and Advance

SUBJECT: Photo-op w/ Chair of the 1995 Salute to Hospital Veterans

Don Baer	<u>✓</u>	Abner J. Mikva	_____
Erskine Bowles	<u>✓</u>	NEC	_____
Rebecca Cameron	_____	Leon Panetta	_____
Rahm Emanuel	_____	John Podesta	_____
Mark Gearan	<u>✓</u>	Jack Quinn	_____
Jack Gibbons	_____	Carol Rasco	_____
Cindy Gire	_____	Lee Satterfield	_____
Pat Griffin	_____	Steve Silverman	<u>✓</u>
Marcia Hale	_____	Patti Solis	_____
Alexis Herman	_____	G. Stephanopoulos	_____
Nancy Hernreich	_____	Ann Stock	_____
Harold Ickes	_____	Stephanie Streett	_____
Anthony Lake	<u>✓</u>	Jodie Torkelson	_____
Bruce Lindsey	_____	Kris Van Giesen	_____
Mike McCurry	<u>✓</u>	Melanne Verveer	_____
Anne McGuire	<u>✓</u>	Anne Walley	_____
Mack McLarty	_____	Maggie Williams	_____

FILE: Regret

Jennifer O'Connor ✓

FYI ✓

ADVICE _____

ACTION _____

GRET POTUS, suggest a surrogate is needed: _____

COMMENTS: Per mtg. w/ 13/1/95 1/23

01/19/95

95 JAN 23 4 8: 48

TO:

William Webster
Deputy Assistant to the President and
Director of Scheduling and Advance

FROM:

Jennifer O'Connor *me*
Special Assistant to the President, Cabinet Affairs

REQUEST:

For the President to do a photo op with the Chair of the 1995 Salute to Hospitalized Veterans and during the photo op place a call to a hospitalized veteran

PURPOSE:

To show the President's commitment to veterans and his compassion for sick veterans in particular

BACKGROUND:

A description of the program is attached. Each year, Veterans Affairs selects a prominent person to chair the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans. It is usually an actor and s/he visits sick vets and chairs a program to encourage others to visit them and volunteer in their hospitals.

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION:

The President did a photo op last year. He did not do the phone call part of this request. Presidents participate in the photo op each year for. The phone call is a new idea.

DATE and TIME:

2/12-18/95

DURATION:

15 minutes

LOCATION:

Oval Office

PARTICIPANTS:

President, Charles Durning, the national chair of the National Salute to Veterans, Secretary Jesse Brown, Deputy Secretary Gober

OUTLINE OF EVENTS:

The President shakes hands and poses for a photo. He then places a call to a sick veteran. (Note -- Billy -- we can do the photo op without the call, but the call would be a nice touch.

REMARKS REQUIRED:

Brief talking points will be provided if he does the call.

MEDIA COVERAGE:

Pool press/ local press at the site of the phone call

PROPOSED ATTENDANCE:

- ☒ President
- ☐ Vice President
- ☐ 1st Lady
- ☐ 2nd Lady

RECOMMENDED BY:

Secretary Jesse Brown

CONTACT:

Jennifer O'Connor 6-2572
Kathy Jurado -- 273-5750

NATIONAL SALUTE TO HOSPITALIZED VETERANS 1995

WHEN: Week of February 12-18, with special emphasis on Feb. 14, Valentine's Day

WHERE: All VA medical centers and many state veterans homes

WHO: National Chairman Charles Durning, a decorated World War II veteran and noted stage, film and TV actor, will visit hospitalized veterans during the week and at various times throughout the year and serve as public spokesperson for VA Voluntary Service. Local celebrities, youth groups (schools, Scouts, Campfire and others) and veterans service organizations will visit patients at VA medical centers, state veterans homes and other facilities.

WHY: To pay tribute to veterans hospitalized in VA and other facilities; to increase community awareness of VA's role of providing comprehensive medical care to the nation's veterans; and to encourage Americans to visit hospitalized veterans and work as VA volunteers.

BACKGROUND: The annual VA National Salute program began in 1978 when VA took over sponsorship of a program started in 1974 by No Greater Love, Inc., a humanitarian organization. Voluntary Service chiefs plan and execute a program of activities at local VAMCs. The traditional observance during the week of Valentine's Day is appropriate because the sentiments of caring and sharing match the Salute's purpose of expressing honor and appreciation to hospitalized veterans.

SPECIAL SUPPORT: For the sixth consecutive year, newspaper columnist Ann Landers will devote her column in January to asking readers to send a Valentine to a hospitalized veteran. Readers will be asked to send cards and letters to their nearest VAMC or to the Hines, IL, VA Hospital which distributes them to other facilities.

BACKGROUND ON "PT PHONE HOME" PROGRAM

VA medical centers in general do not provide telephones in patients' rooms. Patients who are not mobile must rely on nurses or volunteers to bring the telephones to them, or they must use pay phones. Generally, VA hospitals have not been wired for individual bedside telephones.

VA is currently replacing the telephone systems in VA medical facilities, and for the past 4 years wiring for patient (PT) bedside telephones has been included in the modernization effort. Of course, funding for bedside phones can compete for funding for direct patient care, so a number of volunteers have contributed time and equipment to make bedside telephones in VA hospitals a reality. This program is known as "PT Phone Home." By the end of 1996 all VA hospitals will have bedside telephones for patients.

The partnership between telecommunication unions and VA has brought dignity and hope to thousands of hospitalized veterans across the country. These veterans, who may be far away from their families now have an easy way to keep in touch with the people they care about most. The partnership has also meant a savings to VA of several million dollars in equipment and installation costs.

For the February 1995 telephone call, VA recommends that the President call a veteran at the Bay Pines VA Medical Center, near Tampa, Florida. Their telephone system has been operational for just over a month.

The President has participated in these calls before, and they are invariably covered by the local and state media. Calling during Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week will bring a great deal of attention to this program, and to the President.

ROUTING SLIP

DATE: 2/10/95

TO: Billy Webster
Director of Scheduling and Advance

SUBJECT: Hospitalized Veterans

Don Baer	<u>X</u>	Abner J. Mikva	_____
Erskine Bowles	_____	NEC	_____
Rebecca Cameron	_____	Leon Panetta	_____
Rahm Emanuel	_____	John Podesta	_____
Mark Gearan	<u>A</u>	Jack Quinn	_____
Jack Gibbons	_____	Carol Rasco	_____
Cindy Gire	_____	Lee Satterfield	<u>X</u>
Pat Griffin	_____	<u>J. O'Connor</u>	<u>X</u>
Marcia Hale	_____	Steve Silverman	_____
exis Herman	<u>X</u>	Patti Solis	<u>X</u>
		G. Stephanopoulos	_____

Nancy Hernreich

Kitty Higgins

Harold Ickes

Anthony Lake

Bruce Lindsey

Mike McCurry

Anne McGuire

Mack McLarty

*Attach to pending proposal
Under cabinet affairs
prop. attached.*

FILE: Accepted, when

2/9/95

FYI X

ADVICE _____

ACTION _____

EGRET POTUS, suggest a surrogate is needed: _____

COMMENTS: _____

see "Valley" -
see Iwaca
Iwaca Iwaca or VFW

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

09-Feb-1995 03:26pm

TO: Margo L. Spiritus

FROM: Jennifer M. O'Connor
Office of Cabinet Affairs

SUBJECT: Veterans Scheduling Memo for Billy

Margo -- please pass on to Billy. Thanks!

Billy --

I wanted to follow up on your suggestion that the way to accomplish the Hospitalized Veterans photo-op is to add it on to an already-scheduled veterans event.

To that end, could we add it on to the front or back end of the January 19 Iwo Jima anniversary event. We could do a photo in the Diplomatic Reception room before the motorcade leaves or as it comes back. What do you think?

Jennifer -
Billy suggests Iwo Jima or VFW. Talk
to her to see if it works better on
Feb 19th or for March 6th (no desk)
is assigned yet. Valley may know or
may not know how VFW is working. As I
get more info I will pass to you. ASAP.
Charles Corleen McCauley

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WAR OF THE UNITED STATES



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS WASHINGTON CONFERENCE



March 3 - March 7, 1995

FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 1995

12:00 noon

Adjutant General's Office
and Press Headquarters

Idaho Room

12:00 noon

Conference Office

Colorado Room

12:00 noon

Registration

Convention Lobby
"B" Side & Office

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 1995

7:00 a.m.

National Veterans Service Committee

Wisconsin Room

9:00 a.m.

Adjutant General's Office
and Press Headquarters

Idaho Room

9:00 a.m.

Conference Office

Colorado Room

9:00 a.m.

Registration

Convention Lobby
"B" Side & Office

9:00 a.m.

Time and Place Committee

Holmes Room

8:30 a.m.

Homeless Veterans Committee

Calvert Room

10:00 a.m.

Budget and Finance Committee

Warren Room

12:00 noon

National Awards and Citations
Committee

Calvert Room

2:00 p.m.

National Council of Administration

Sheraton South

5:00 p.m.

Catholic Mass

Maryland Suite

SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 1995

8:00 a.m.	Catholic Mass	Washington Ballroom
8:00 a.m.	Protestant Service	Maryland C
9:00 a.m.	Adjutant General's Office and Press Headquarters	Idaho Room
9:00 a.m.	Conference Office	Colorado Room
9:00 a.m.	Registration	Convention Lobby "B" Side & Office
9:00 a.m.	By-Laws, Manual of Procedure, Ritual Review Committee	Kansas Room
9:00 a.m.	Americanism Committee	Maryland A
9:00 a.m.	Civil Service and Employment Committee	Maryland B
9:00 a.m.	Hospital Committee	Calvert Room
9:00 a.m.	Life Membership Committee	Warren Room
9:00 a.m.	National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee	Virginia Suite
9:00 a.m.	Youth Activities and Voice of Democracy Committees	Sheraton South
1:30 p.m.	Buddy Poppy Committee	Calvert Room
1:30 p.m.	Community Activities Committee	Maryland A
1:30 p.m.	National Legislative Committee	Virginia Suite
1:30 p.m.	POW/MIA Committee	Delaware Room
1:30 p.m.	Safety Committee	Maryland B
1:30 p.m.	Public Relations Seminar	Warren Room
6:15 p.m.	Voice of Democracy Parade of Winners	Sheraton Ballroom

Commander-in-Chief Kent and National President Harsh will announce the winners of the National Voice of Democracy Contest.

DAYBOOK EDITOR
(Washington Area Conferences)

March 3-March 7--Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Washington Conference. Sheraton Washington Hotel. Contact: Bill Smith/Steve VanBuskirk (202) 745-2119 or 328-8000, Ext. 5920, (Idaho Room). Prior to Conference, (202) 543-2239

Events

Saturday, March 4

9:00AM VFW National Homeless Veterans Committee Meeting--address by Dale Renaud, Special Assistant to the Secretary on Homelessness, Department of Veterans Affairs--*Update on VA Homeless Programs*

10:00 AM Address by Ken Smith, Executive Director, New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans, Boston--*Overview of the Shelter's Program*
Location: Sheraton Washington Hotel, Calvert Room
Contact: 328-8000, Ext. 5920

Sunday, March 5

9:00AM VFW National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee--address by RADM John Mazach, USN and MG Tom Wilkerson, USMC--U.S. Navy Roles and Missions--*"Forward...from the Sea"*
Location: Sheraton Washington Hotel, Virginia Suite
Contact: 328-8000, Ext. 5920

9:05 AM VFW National Civil Service & Employment Committee--address by Leonard R. Klein, Associate Director, Career Entry Group, U.S. Office of Personnel Management--*Changes in Federal Personnel Policies Pertaining to Recruiting, Hiring, Promotion, Firing and How Some of these Changes Will Affect Veterans Preference*
Location: Sheraton Washington Hotel, Maryland Room B
Contact: 328-8000, Ext. 5920

9:25 AM VFW National Civil Service & Employment Committee--address by Richard A. Whitford, U.S. Office of Personnel Management--*The New Application Process for Federal Jobs*
Location: Sheraton Washington Hotel, Maryland Room B
Contact: 328-8000, Ext. 5920

MONDAY, MARCH 6, 1995

7:30 a.m.

Department Senior and Junior
Vice Commanders Breakfast

Maryland A/B

7:30 a.m.

National Council of Administration
members, Department Commanders,
Adjutants and Quartermasters
Breakfast

Virginia Suite

8:45 a.m.

General Session

Sheraton Ballroom

9:00 a.m.

Adjutant General's Office
and Press Headquarters

Idaho Room

9:00 a.m.

Conference Office

Colorado Room

9:00 a.m.

Registration

Convention Lobby
"B" Side & Office

1:00 p.m.

VFW-PAC State Chairmen

Maryland B

ROLL CALLS will be taken at all committee meetings. Members receiving expenses to attend the National Conference will be expected to attend their respective committee meetings and the General Session, Monday, March 6, 1995. Failure to answer roll call will result in a request to return expense allowance advanced by the National Organization.

TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 1995

8:45 a.m.

NATIONAL AND DEPARTMENT OFFICERS
WILL BOARD BUSES AT THE 24TH STREET
ENTRANCE OF HOTEL TO ATTEND JOINT
HEARING BEFORE SENATE AND HOUSE
COMMITTEES ON VETERANS AFFAIRS.

9:00 a.m.

Adjutant General's Office
and Press Headquarters

Idaho Room

9:00 a.m.

Conference Office

Colorado Room

9:00 a.m.

Registration

Convention Lobby
"B" Side & Office

9:30 a.m.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF KENT WILL
PRESENT VFW LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM
TO SENATE AND HOUSE COMMITTEES ON
VETERANS AFFAIRS, CANNON CAUCUS
ROOM, CANNON HOUSE OFFICE
BUILDING (ROOM 345).

6:00 p.m.

Reception - General

Exhibit Hall A

7:00 p.m.

Congressional Banquet

Sheraton Washington
Ballroom

Commander-in-Chief Kent will present
the VFW Congressional Award to
Senator John McCain, Arizona.

Photo session with Voice of Democracy
winners immediately following the
Congressional Banquet.

Virginia Suite

**HEAD TABLE ACCEPTANCES
ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL DINNER**

Senator John McCain, Recipient of Congressional Award
Mrs. Cindy McCain
Honorable William J. Perry, Secretary of Defense
Honorable (Mrs.) Jamie S. Gorelick, Deputy Attorney General (rep/Attorney General)
Honorable Eugene Moos, Under Secretary of Agriculture (rep. Sec. of Agriculture)
ADM Jeremy M. Boorda, USN, Chief of Naval Operations, Joint Chiefs of Staff
VADM Kent Williams, USMC, Chief of Staff (rep. Commandant of the USCG)
LTG George R. Christmas, USMC, Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (rep. Commandant of the Marine Corps)
LTG Richard Hawley, Principal Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition (rep. AF Secretary and AF Chief of Staff)
Honorable John H. Dalton, Secretary of the Navy
LTG Claude Kicklighter, USA (Ret), 50th Anniversary of World War II
LTG Joseph S. Laposata, USA (Ret), Secretary, American Battle Monuments Commission
Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Ranking Democrat, Committee on Judiciary (DE)
Senator Thomas A. Daschle, Senate Minority Leader (SD)
Senator John Glenn, Ranking Democrat, Committee on Governmental Affairs (OH)
Senator William V. Roth, Jr., Chairman, Committee on Governmental Affairs (DE)
John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Democrat, Committee on the Judiciary (MI)
Benjamin A. Gilman, Chairman, Committee on International Relations (NY)
Bill Goodling, Chairman, Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities (MO)
Jim Kolbe, Commander-in-Chief's Congressman (A7-5)
Norman Y. Mineta, Ranking Democrat, Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure (CA 15)
G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery, Ranking Democrat, Committee on Veterans Affairs (MS 3)
Martin A. Sabo, Ranking Democrat, Committee on the Budget (MN)
Gerald B. H. Solomon, Chairman, Committee on Rules (NY 22)
Bob Stump, Chairman, Committee on Veterans Affairs (AZ 3)
Robert S. Walker, Chairman, Committee on Science (PA 16)
R. E. Smith, National President, Air Force Association
Leon E. Panetta, Chief of Staff to the President
Allen F. "Gunner" Kent, VFW Commander-in-Chief
Mrs. Becky Kent, Wife of Commander-in-Chief
Paul A. Spera, VFW Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief
James E. Nier, VFW Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief
Larry W. Rivers, VFW Adjutant General
Joe Ridgley, VFW Quartermaster General
James R. "Bob" Currie, Executive Director, VFW Washington Office
Rev. Thomas W. Neville, VFW National Chaplain
George R. Cramer, Past VFW Commander-in-Chief (Master of Ceremony)
Thomas A. Pouliot, Chairman, VFW National Legislative Committee
Lloyd E. Vanderhoof, Chairman, VFW National Security Committee
Donald B. Myers, Chairman, VFW Voice of Democracy Committee
Mrs. JoAnne Ott, Director, VFW Ladies Auxiliary Voice of Democracy Program
Mrs. Helen Harsh, National President, Ladies Auxiliary to the VFW

**FINAL AGENDA
VFW OPENING SESSION
MONDAY, MARCH 6, 1995**

8:50-9:00 AM Musical Prelude (Patriotic Music) -- **United States Army Chorale and Combo**

9:00 AM Commander-in-Chief Kent calls Opening Session to Order and requests National Honor Guard to Advance Colors

(United States Army Chorale and Combo will play National Anthem at proper time--after Colors are placed)

After National Anthem, Commander-in-Chief Kent will call on **National Chaplain, Reverend Thomas Neville**, for the Benediction.

Commander-in-Chief asks audience to be seated

Commander-in-Chief Kent introduces the **U. S. Army Chorale and Combo** which will perform patriotic musical program--approx. 15 minutes)

9:40 AM Commander-in-Chief Kent will introduce **Diane Evans, Director, Vietnam Women's Memorial Project**

Remarks by Diane Evans

9:45 AM Commander-in-Chief Kent will present Gold Medal of Merit and Citation to **AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION** -- acceptance by General Monroe Hatch

Response by General Monroe Hatch

10:00 AM Commander-in-Chief Kent will introduce **General Gordon Sullivan, Army Chief of Staff**

Address by General Sullivan

10:30 AM Commander-in-Chief Kent will introduce **Honorable Jesse Brown, Secretary of Veterans Affairs**

Address by Secretary Brown

11:00 AM Commander-in-Chief Kent will introduce **The President of the United States**
Keynote Address by The President

As time permits: ~~ Commander-in-Chief Kent will introduce Sr. Vice Commander in Chief Spera for remarks

~~ Commander-in-Chief Kent will introduce Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief Nier for remarks

~~ Remarks by Commander-in-Chief Kent

~~ Commander-in-Chief Kent will call on Kansas City staff for membership update and presentations)

Jennifer,

The VFW Charter Change

S257 ~~H2623~~ passed Today. 11:40 AM (send B.11)

POTUS could sign on March 6

Suggest that OMB / Hqs Service / Security
office be alert to expedite

Pos
2/28/95

Commitment to those currently
serving

↳ DoD

McCaui - Tues banquet

Speech

Opening / theme = engagement ✓
isolationism

SO ¹² danger of war

↓
where em stand

have VA print up Netuno etc
speeches & distribute
to audience

Want Photos at 1030

543 2239
1832

Bill
Smith
Bob Currie

Thurs, 180 same time & place

Salute Issue

Bob - PGW vets

ROUTING SLIP

DATE: 2/8/95

FROM: Billy Webster
Director of Scheduling and Advance

SUBJECT: POTUS Keynote address to VFW conf.

Accept

March 6, 1995

Don Baer	☒	Abner J. Mikva	☐
Erskine Bowles	☒	NEC	☐
Rebecca Cameron	☐	Leon Panetta	☐
Rahm Emanuel	☐	John Podesta	☐
Mark Gearan	☒	Jack Quinn	☒
Jack Gibbons	☐	Carol Rasco	☐
Cindy Gire	☒	Lee Satterfield	☐
Pat Griffin	☐	<i>Kitty Higgins</i> Steve Silverman	☒
Marcia Hale	☐	Patti Solis	☒
Alexis Herman	☒	G. Stephanopoulos	☐
Nancy Hernreich	☒	Ann Stock	☒
Harold Ickes	☐	Stephanie Streett	☐
Anthony Lake	☒	Jodie Torkelson	☐
Bruce Lindsey	☐	Kris Van Giesen	☒
Mike McCurry	☒	Melanne Verveer	☐
Anne McGuire	☒	Anne Walley	☒
Mack McLarty	☐	Maggie Williams	☐

*VFW ✓
speech
March 6
track*

FILE: X accepted March 6, 1995

FYI X ADVICE _____ ACTION _____

REGRET POTUS, suggest a surrogate is needed: _____

COMMENTS: per 2/8/95 meeting

ROUTING SLIP

DATE: 1/18/95FROM: Billy Webster
Director of Scheduling and AdvanceSUBJECT: POTUS Keynote address to VFW conf.March 6, 1995

Don Baer	<u>✓</u>	Abner J. Mikva	<u> </u>
Erskine Bowles	<u>✓</u>	Leon Panetta	<u> </u>
Rebecca Cameron	<u> </u>	John Podesta	<u> </u>
Rahm Emanuel	<u> </u>	Jack Quinn	<u> </u>
Mark Gearan	<u>✓</u>	Carol Rasco	<u> </u>
Jack Gibbons	<u> </u>	Bob Rubin	<u> </u>
Cindy Gire	<u>✓ fix</u>	Steve Silverman	<u> </u>
Pat Griffin	<u> </u>	Patti Solis	<u>✓ fix</u>
Marcia Hale	<u> </u>	G. Stephanopoulos	<u> </u>
axis Herman	<u>✓</u>	Ann Stock	<u> </u>
Nancy Hernreich	<u>✓</u>	Stephanie Streett	<u> </u>
Harold Ickes	<u> </u>	Jodie Torkelson	<u> </u>
Anthony Lake	<u>✓</u>	Kris Van Giesen	<u>✓ fix</u>
Bruce Lindsey	<u> </u>	Melanne Verveer	<u> </u>
Mike McCurry	<u>✓</u>	Anne Walley	<u>✓</u>
Anne McGuire	<u>✓</u>	Maggie Williams	<u> </u>
Mack McLarty	<u> </u>		

FILE: Pending 3/6/95FYI X ADVICE ACTION REGRET POTUS, suggest a surrogate is needed: REMARKS: per mtg w/Billy on 1/18

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

1-13

Billy -

The President asked
Secretary Brown to
make sure he (the
President) did this
event. Can you
let me know if
it is on the
schedule?

Jennifer O

SCHEDULE PROPOSAL

95 JUNE 9/21/94

☐ ACCEPT☐ REGRET☐ PENDING

9:55

TO: Ricki Seidman
Assistant to the President and Director
of Scheduling and Advance

FROM: Alexis M. Herman
Assistant to the President and Director of
Public Liaison

REQUEST: The President deliver a keynote address to the Veterans of
Foreign Wars Mid Winter Conference.

PURPOSE: The purpose of speaking at their mid-winter conference is to
build a relationship with this Veterans Service Organization
and to recognize their efforts on behalf of the Administration.

BACKGROUND: The Veterans of Foreign Wars is the second largest Veteran
Service Organization of approximately 2.2 million members
and has supported the President on health care reform and
other significant legislative initiatives.

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION: The President has not participated in this event before.

DATE AND TIME: March 6, 1995 at 11:00 AM

DURATION: 1 Hour

LOCATION: The Sheraton Washington Hotel

PARTICIPANTS: Approximately 3,000 members from the Veterans of Foreign
Wars

OUTLINE OF EVENTS: Arrives at Sheraton Washington Hotel
Photo-op with designated leaders of the VFW
Introduced by National Commander Allen Kent
President delivers major address
President works rope line
President departs convention

REMARKS REQUIRED: Present a 20 minute keynote address

MEDIA COVERAGE: Open Press

1st LADY'S ATTENDANCE: Not Required

VICE PRES. ATTENDANCE: Substitute if the President cannot attend

2nd LADY'S ATTENDANCE: Not Required

Hank
Hester/Winter 9/21

RECOMMENDED BY:

Steve Hilton
Deputy Director of Public Liaison
(202) 456-5166

CONTACT:

Bob Curcio
Executive Director
Veterans of Foreign Wars
(202)-543-2239

cc: Dan Wexler, OPL

ROUTING SLIP

TE: 1/11/95

FROM: Billy Webster
Director of Scheduling and Advance

SUBJECT: FW Midwinter Conference pending March 6, 1995

Don Baer	<u>✓</u>	Abner J. Mikva	_____
Erskine Bowles	<u>✓</u>	Leon Panetta	_____
Rebecca Cameron	_____	John Podesta	_____
Rahm Emanuel	_____	Jack Quinn	_____
Mark Gearan	<u>✓</u>	Carol Rasco	_____
Jack Gibbons	_____	Bob Rubin	_____
Cindy Gire	_____	Steve Silverman	_____
Pat Griffin	_____	Patti Solis	_____
Marcia Hale	_____	G. Stephanopoulos	_____
axis Herman	<u>✓</u>	Ann Stock	_____
Nancy Hernreich	<u>✓</u>	Stephanie Streett	_____
Harold Ickes	_____	Jodie Torkelson	_____
Anthony Lake	_____	Kris Van Giesen	_____
Bruce Lindsey	_____	Melanne Verveer	_____
Mike McCurry	_____	Anne Walley	<u>✓</u>
Anne McGuire	<u>✓</u>	Maggie Williams	_____
Mack McLarty	_____	<u>Lee Satterfield</u>	<u>✓</u>

FILE: Pending March 6, 1995

FYI X

ADVICE _____

ACTION _____

REGRET POTUS, suggest a surrogate is needed: _____

COMMENTS: Per 4/11 meeting w/ Billy; Billy this
needs to call Hershel.

ROUTING SLIP

DATE: 1/5/95

FROM: Billy Webster
Director of Scheduling and Advance

SUBJECT: VFW Midwinter Conference March 6, 1995

Don Baer	☒	Abner J. Mikva	_____
Erskine Bowles	☒	Leon Panetta	_____
Rebecca Cameron	_____	John Podesta	_____
Rahm Emanuel	_____	Jack Quinn	_____
Mark Gearan	☒	Carol Rasco	_____
Jack Gibbons	_____	Bob Rubin	_____
Cindy Gire	_____	Steve Silverman	_____
Pat Griffin	_____	Patti Solis	_____
Marcia Hale	_____	G. Stephanopoulos	_____
Alexis Herman	☒	Ann Stock	_____
Nancy Hernreich	☒	Stephanie Streett	_____
Harold Ickes	_____	Kris Van Giesen	_____
Anthony Lake	☒	Melanne Verveer	_____
Bruce Lindsey	_____	Anne Walley	☒
Anne McGuire	☒	Maggie Williams	_____
Mack McLarty	_____	<u>Leg Satterfield</u>	☒

FILE: pending 3/6/95

FYI ☒ ADVICE _____ ACTION _____

COMMENTS: Pending per 1/5/95 mtg. Billy will speak to the President on this request.

923
memo

ROUTING SLIP

DATE:

9, 28, 94

pending

FROM:

Ricki Seidman

Assistant to the President

and Director of Scheduling and Advance

SUBJECT:

VFW Mid Winter Conference March 6, 1995

Joan Baggett

Anne McGuire

✓

Rebecca Cameron

Mack McLarty

Abner J. Mikva

Leon Panetta

Rahm Emanuel

John Podesta

Mark Gearan

Jack Quinn

David Gergen

Carol Rasco

Jack Gibbons

Bob Rubin

Cindy Gire

Patti Solis

Pat Griffin

G. Stephanopoulos

Marcia Hale

Ann Stock

Alexis Herman

✓

Stephanie Streett

Nancy Hernreich

Christine Varney

Harold Ickes

Joe Velasquez

Phil Lader

Melanne Verveer

Anthony Lake

✓

Maggie Williams

Bruce Lindsey

Tony Wilson

FILE:

✓ Pending March 1995.

FYI

✓

ADVICE

ACTION

COMMENTS:

Anne - send a pending letter

SCHEDULE PROPOSAL

DATE 9/21/94

_____**ACCEPT**

_____**REGRET**

94 SEP 23 10:09
PENDING

TO: Ricki Seidman
Assistant to the President and Director
of Scheduling and Advance

FROM: Alexis M. Herman
Assistant to the President and Director of
Public Liaison

REQUEST: The President deliver a keynote address to the Veterans of
Foreign Wars Mid Winter Conference.

PURPOSE: The purpose of speaking at their mid-winter conference is to
build a relationship with this Veterans Service Organization
and to recognize their efforts on behalf of the Administration.

BACKGROUND: The Veterans of Foreign Wars is the second largest Veteran
Service Organization of approximately 2.2 million members
and has supported the President on health care reform and
other significant legislative initiatives.

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION: The President has not participated in this event before.

DATE AND TIME: March 6, 1995 at 9:00am

DURATION: 1 Hour

LOCATION: The Sheraton Washington Hotel

PARTICIPANTS: Approximately 3,000 members from the Veterans of Foreign
Wars

OUTLINE OF EVENTS: Arrives at Sheraton Washington Hotel
Photo-op with designated leaders of the VFW
Introduced by National Commander Allen Kent
President delivers major address
President works rope line
President departs convention

REMARKS REQUIRED: Present a 20 minute keynote address

MEDIA COVERAGE: Open Press

1st LADY'S ATTENDANCE: Not Required

VICE PRES. ATTENDANCE: Substitute if the President cannot attend

2nd LADY'S ATTENDANCE: Not Required

RECOMMENDED BY:

Steve Hilton
Deputy Director of Public Liaison
(202) 456-5166

CONTACT:

Bob Currieo
Executive Director
Veterans of Foreign Wars
(202)-543-2239

cc: Dan Wexler, OPL

ROUTING SLIP

DATE: 2/10/95

FROM: Billy Webster
Director of Scheduling and Advance

SUBJECT: Hospitalized Veterans

Don Baer	<u>X</u>	Abner J. Mikva	_____
Erskine Bowles	_____	NEC	_____
Rebecca Cameron	_____	Leon Panetta	_____
Rahm Emanuel	_____	John Podesta	_____
Mark Gearan	<u>X</u>	Jack Quinn	_____
Jack Gibbons	_____	Carol Rasco	_____
Cindy Gire	_____	Lee Satterfield	<u>X</u>
Pat Griffin	_____	<u>J. O'Connor</u>	<u>X</u>
Marcia Hale	_____	Steve Silverman	_____
Alexis Herman	<u>X</u>	Patti Solis	<u>X</u>
Nancy Hernreich	_____	G. Stephanopoulos	_____
Kitty Higgins	<u>X</u>	Ann Stock	_____
Harold Ickes	_____	Stephanie Streett	_____
Anthony Lake	_____	Jodie Torkelson	_____
Bruce Lindsey	_____	Kris Van Giesen	_____
Mike McCurry	<u>X</u>	Melanne Verveer	_____
Anne McGuire	<u>X</u>	Anne Walley	<u>X</u>
Mack McLarty	_____	Maggie Williams	<u>X</u>

follow up
w/ Lee
Satterfield
(sent
e-mail
2-11)

FILE: X Accepted, which event TBD. per Billy 2/9/95

FYI X ADVICE _____ ACTION _____

REGRET POTUS, suggest a surrogate is needed: _____

COMMENTS: _____

see Mally's desk -
good idea
I'm Jima or VFW

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

09-Feb-1995 03:26pm

TO: Margo L. Spiritus

FROM: Jennifer M. O'Connor
Office of Cabinet Affairs

SUBJECT: Veterans Scheduling Memo for Billy

Margo -- please pass on to Billy. Thanks!

Billy --

I wanted to follow up on your suggestion that the way to accomplish the Hospitalized Veterans photo-op is to add it on to an already-scheduled veterans event.

To that end, could we add it on to the front or back end of the January 19 Iwo Jima anniversary event. We could do a photo in the Diplomatic Reception room before the motorcade leaves or as it comes back. What do you think?

Jennifer -
Billy suggests Iwo Jima or VFW. Talk
to her to see if it works better on
Feb 19th or for March 6th (no desk)
is assigned yet. Walley may know or
may not know how VFW is working. As I
more info I will pass to you. ASAP.

ROUTING SLIP

DATE: 2/6/95

FROM: Billy Webster
Director of Scheduling and Advance

SUBJECT: Photo Op for Hospitalized Veteran

Don Baer	_____	Abner J. Mikva	_____
Erskine Bowles	_____	NEC	_____
Rebecca Cameron	_____	Leon Panetta	_____
Rahm Emanuel	_____	John Podesta	_____
Mark Gearan	<u>X</u>	Jack Quinn	_____
Jack Gibbons	_____	Carol Rasco	_____
Cindy Gire	_____	Lee Satterfield	<u>X</u>
Pat Griffin	_____	<u>✓</u> Steve Silverman	<u>X</u> (J.O'Connor)
Marcia Hale	_____	Patti Solis	_____
Alexis Herman	<u>X</u>	G. Stephanopoulos	_____
Nancy Hernreich	<u>X</u>	Ann Stock	_____
Kitty Higgins	_____	Stephanie Streett	_____
Harold Ickes	_____	Jodie Torkelson	_____
Anthony Lake	_____	Kris Van Giesen	_____
Bruce Lindsey	_____	Melanne Verveer	_____
Mike McCurry	<u>X</u>	Anne Walley	<u>X</u>
Anne McGuire	<u>X</u>	Maggie Williams	_____
Mack McLarty	_____		

FILE: ✓ Accepted to be incorporated in a vet event
- Billy

FYI ✓ ADVICE _____ ACTION _____

REGRET POTUS, suggest a surrogate is needed: _____

2/6/95 mtg.
COMMENTS: Accepted to be fit in to a veterans event @
some point.



THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

January 27, 1995

Attach to
proposal
under
3/6/95
pending
Cab. affairs.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Billy Webster, Deputy Assistant to the President
and Director of Scheduling and Advance

FROM: Hershel Gober, Deputy Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs *HG*

SUBJECT: National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs submitted through Cabinet Affairs a schedule request for actor Charles Durning, the 1995 chair of the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans to pay a courtesy call to the President and have a brief photo-op on either February 21 or 22, 1995. I have been informed that this request has been rejected.

Charles Durning, a decorated World War II veteran and noted stage, film and TV actor, will visit hospitalized veterans during the period **February 12-18** and at various times throughout the year. He will serve as public spokesperson for VA Voluntary Services. Local celebrities, youth groups and veterans service organizations will visit VA medical centers, State Veterans Homes and other facilities for the sixth consecutive year. Newspaper Columnist Ann Landers has devoted her column in January to ask readers to send a Valentine to a hospitalized veteran. This tradition demonstrates the sentiments of caring and sharing while expressing honor and appreciation to hospitalized veterans.

Traditionally, the President has met briefly with the chair to express appropriate appreciation and the photographs of the courtesy call are utilized to promote the VA volunteer program. I recognize that there are numerous demands on the President and that his schedule is extremely busy. This is an important symbolic national event.

I recommend that you reconsider the decision to regret this courtesy call and invite Mr. Durning to the White House to meet briefly with the President.

01/24/95

TO:

William Webster
Deputy Assistant to the President and
Director of Scheduling and Advance

FROM:

Jennifer O'Connor
Special Assistant to the President, Cabinet Affairs

REQUEST:

For the President to do a photo op with the Chair of the 1995 Salute to Hospitalized Veterans and during the photo op place a call to a hospitalized veteran.

PURPOSE:

To show the President's commitment to veterans and his compassion for sick veterans in particular

BACKGROUND:

A description of the program is attached. Each year, Veterans Affairs selects a prominent person to chair the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans. It is usually an actor and s/he visits sick vets and chairs a program to encourage others to visit them and volunteer in their hospitals.

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION:

The President did a photo op last year. He did not do the phone call part of this request. Presidents participate in the photo op each year because the program has promotional materials that the photo is for. The phone call is a new idea.

DATE and TIME:

02/12/95

DURATION:

15 minutes

LOCATION:

Oval Office

PARTICIPANTS:

President, Charles Durning, the national chair of the National Salute to Veterans, Secretary Jesse Brown, Deputy Secretary Gober

OUTLINE OF EVENTS:

The President shakes hands and poses for a photo. He then places a call to a sick veteran. (Note -- Billy -- we can do the photo op without the call, but the call would be a nice touch.

REMARKS REQUIRED:

Brief talking points will be provided if he does the call.

MEDIA COVERAGE:

Pool press/ local press at the site of the phone call

PROPOSED ATTENDANCE:

☒	President
☐	Vice President
☐	1st Lady
☐	2nd Lady

RECOMMENDED BY:

Secretary Jesse Brown

95 JAN 24 P 3: 41

possible w/ VFW a part not as separate event. Billy 1/24/95

CONTACT:

Jennifer O'Connor 6-2572
Kathy Jurado -- 273-5750

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 24, 1995

Billy --

Per our conversation this morning, I am resubmitting the request for the President to do a photo op with Charles Durning, the national chair of the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans.

To add to your information about this, David Dreyer thinks the call on Valentines Day is a good idea. Given your interest in adding this to another vets event, we could do it Friday Feb 17, as part of the salute to African American veterans. Of course, Durning is not African-American. But that seems to be the next veterans event on the schedule.

Thanks!

-- Jennifer O'C

and
if we do VFW, we will
try this on the front end
3/6/95. but we will not do
a separate event

Billy
1/24/95

ROUTING SLIP

DATE: 1/23/95

FROM: Billy Webster
Director of Scheduling and Advance

SUBJECT: Photo-op w/ Chair of the 1995 Salute to Hospital Veterans

Don Baer	<u>✓</u>	Abner J. Mikva	_____
Erskine Bowles	<u>✓</u>	NEC	_____
Rebecca Cameron	_____	Leon Panetta	_____
Rahm Emanuel	_____	John Podesta	_____
Mark Gearan	<u>✓</u>	Jack Quinn	_____
Jack Gibbons	_____	Carol Rasco	_____
Cindy Gire	_____	Lee Satterfield	_____
Pat Griffin	_____	Steve Silverman	<u>✓</u>
Marcia Hale	_____	Patti Solis	_____
Alexis Herman	_____	G. Stephanopoulos	_____
Nancy Hernreich	_____	Ann Stock	_____
Harold Ickes	_____	Stephanie Streett	_____
Anthony Lake	<u>✓</u>	Jodie Torkelson	_____
Bruce Lindsey	_____	Kris Van Giesen	_____
Mike McCurry	<u>✓</u>	Melanne Verveer	_____
Anne McGuire	<u>✓</u>	Anne Walley	_____
Mack McLarty	_____	Maggie Williams	_____

Jennifer O'Connor ✓

FILE: Regret

FYI ✓

ADVICE _____

ACTION _____

'GRET POTUS, suggest a surrogate is needed: _____

COMMENTS: per mtg. w/ Billy 1/23

95 JAN 23 4 08:45

01/19/95

TO:

William Webster
Deputy Assistant to the President and
Director of Scheduling and Advance

FROM:

Jennifer O'Connor *me*
Special Assistant to the President, Cabinet Affairs

REQUEST:

For the President to do a photo op with the Chair of the 1995 Salute to Hospitalized Veterans and during the photo op place a call to a hospitalized veteran

PURPOSE:

To show the President's commitment to veterans and his compassion for sick veterans in particular

BACKGROUND:

A description of the program is attached. Each year, Veterans Affairs selects a prominent person to chair the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans. It is usually an actor and s/he visits sick vets and chairs a program to encourage others to visit them and volunteer in their hospitals.

PREVIOUS PARTICIPATION:

The President did a photo op last year. He did not do the phone call part of this request. Presidents participate in the photo op each year. ~~because the program is a national material that is planned for.~~ The phone call is a new idea.

DATE and TIME:

2/12-18/95

DURATION:

15 minutes

LOCATION:

Oval Office

PARTICIPANTS:

President, Charles Durning, the national chair of the National Salute to Veterans, Secretary Jesse Brown, Deputy Secretary Goyer

OUTLINE OF EVENTS:

The President shakes hands and poses for a photo. He then places a call to a sick veteran. (Note -- Billy -- we can do the photo op without the call, but the call would be a nice touch.

REMARKS REQUIRED:

Brief talking points will be provided if he does the call.

MEDIA COVERAGE:

Pool press/ local press at the site of the phone call

PROPOSED ATTENDANCE:

☒	President
☐	Vice President
☐	1st Lady
☐	2nd Lady

RECOMMENDED BY:

Secretary Jesse Brown

CONTACT:

Jennifer O'Connor 6-2572
Kathy Jurado -- 273-5750

NATIONAL SALUTE TO HOSPITALIZED VETERANS 1995

WHEN: Week of February 12-18, with special emphasis on Feb. 14, Valentine's Day

WHERE: All VA medical centers and many state veterans homes

WHO: National Chairman Charles Durning, a decorated World War II veteran and noted stage, film and TV actor, will visit hospitalized veterans during the week and at various times throughout the year and serve as public spokesperson for VA Voluntary Service. Local celebrities, youth groups (schools, Scouts, Campfire and others) and veterans service organizations will visit patients at VA medical centers, state veterans homes and other facilities.

WHY: To pay tribute to veterans hospitalized in VA and other facilities; to increase community awareness of VA's role of providing comprehensive medical care to the nation's veterans; and to encourage Americans to visit hospitalized veterans and work as VA volunteers.

BACKGROUND: The annual VA National Salute program began in 1978 when VA took over sponsorship of a program started in 1974 by No Greater Love, Inc., a humanitarian organization. Voluntary Service chiefs plan and execute a program of activities at local VAMCs. The traditional observance during the week of Valentine's Day is appropriate because the sentiments of caring and sharing match the Salute's purpose of expressing honor and appreciation to hospitalized veterans.

SPECIAL SUPPORT: For the sixth consecutive year, newspaper columnist Ann Landers will devote her column in January to asking readers to send a Valentine to a hospitalized veteran. Readers will be asked to send cards and letters to their nearest VAMC or to the Hines, IL, VA Hospital which distributes them to other facilities.

BACKGROUND ON "PT PHONE HOME" PROGRAM

VA medical centers in general do not provide telephones in patients' rooms. Patients who are not mobile must rely on nurses or volunteers to bring the telephones to them, or they must use pay phones. Generally, VA hospitals have not been wired for individual bedside telephones.

VA is currently replacing the telephone systems in VA medical facilities, and for the past 4 years wiring for patient (PT) bedside telephones has been included in the modernization effort. Of course, funding for bedside phones can compete for funding for direct patient care, so a number of volunteers have contributed time and equipment to make bedside telephones in VA hospitals a reality. This program is known as "PT Phone Home." By the end of 1996 all VA hospitals will have bedside telephones for patients.

The partnership between telecommunication unions and VA has brought dignity and hope to thousands of hospitalized veterans across the country. These veterans, who may be far away from their families now have an easy way to keep in touch with the people they care about most. The partnership has also meant a savings to VA of several million dollars in equipment and installation costs.

For the February 1995 telephone call, VA recommends that the President call a veteran at the Bay Pines VA Medical Center, near Tampa, Florida. Their telephone system has been operational for just over a month.

The President has participated in these calls before, and they are invariably covered by the local and state media. Calling during Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week will bring a great deal of attention to this program, and to the President.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 22, 1995

PERSIAN GULF VETERAN RECEIVES COMPENSATION

The President met in the Oval Office today with Michael T. Sills of Villa Park, Illinois, one of the first recipients of a compensation check awarded to Persian Gulf veterans under a new law signed by President Clinton in November. The law provides compensation for Gulf veterans with chronic disabilities resulting from undiagnosed illnesses. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jesse Brown presented the check to Sills, an Air Force veteran, who served in the Air National Guard in the war theater.

"Today, the country takes a long-overdue step to recognize the sacrifices of these Persian Gulf veterans," the President said. "We are taking an unprecedented approach to assisting these veterans by providing compensation for conditions that have defied conventional diagnoses. We encourage any Persian Gulf veteran who is sick to file a claim and we will automatically reopen previously denied claims as a result of this new law."

Approximately 700,000 men and women were deployed to the Gulf in the year following the Dessert Shield mobilization, and more than 364,000 have left active duty and become eligible for certain veterans programs. The prevalence of undiagnosed illnesses among Gulf veterans is uncertain, but an ambitious series of medical research studies is in progress to clarify health effects of Gulf service. DOD, HHS, and VA are working together to develop research initiatives which are designed to provide information that will give veterans the good health and peace of mind they deserve.

"I felt that we could not wait on science. For some Persian Gulf veterans like Michael Sills, medical science does not have answers today," the President said, "but we must not and will not give up."

While federal agencies have responded with medical care, research and now compensation, it is critical that veterans come forward for help. Both VA and DOD are providing specialized examinations of Gulf veterans who have health problems or concerns. In addition, both departments are operating toll-free information centers to answer questions and help veterans find needed health care or other services (VA, 800-PGW-VETS; DOD, 800-796-9699).

"Michael Sills and veterans like him who served their country honorably have earned our gratitude," said the President. "And when they are sick, we must do what is right."

Boorstin 6-5696

6-46409 $\Rightarrow$ fax

6-7150 + tell em to deliver it

9~~00~~ - speech prep + briefing time

10²⁵-10³⁰ photo w/ Durning

10³⁰ lines

greet gen mgr

greeting: Kent + Currie

$\Rightarrow$ pre-set room w/ voice of Durning kids photo

Other side same room

w/ 16 dignitaries of ~~V~~FW

holding - Sec. Brown, Cunningham
+ Potus

annexed into ballroom
ruffles + flourishes

dignitaries + vets fr. meet + greet

speech - and for resources

+ engagement

readers, accomps

*incl reference to VFW charter

Flotus calls Sunday
to a few folks

Montgomery
Rockwell
Dascher
Harkin
? Gephardt ?

Laurie } fact sheet
Julia }
 ↓
 VA document }

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

February 26, 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR DIANA ZUCKERMAN
JENNIFER O'CONNOR
LARRY CAVAIOLA
FRAN MURPHY
PETER BEACH

SUBJECT: Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses

There will be a meeting on Tuesday, February 28, 1995 at 11:00 a.m. in Room 180 of the Old Executive Office Building to discuss the President's forthcoming speech to the VFW. Please ensure that your agency is represented at this meeting, as one of the issues to be discussed is the announcement of a new Advisory Committee on Gulf War veterans' illnesses. Please have your agency representative call their name and date of birth in to Jennifer O'Connor at 456-2572 by OOB Tuesday, February 28.

Attached for your information is a list of the VA Persian Gulf Expert Scientific Committee members. Also attached is the latest draft of the Fact Sheets on ongoing and new initiatives related to Gulf War veterans' illnesses. Please provide me with any final line in/line out changes on the Fact Sheets by COB Tuesday, February 28.



Elisa D. Harris
Director for Nonproliferation
and Export Controls

Attachments

cc: Dan Benjamin
Bob Bell

**Chartered Committee
Department of Veterans Affairs
Persian Gulf Expert Scientific Committee**

Chairman:

Susan H. Mather, M.D., M.P.H.
ACMD for Environmental Medicine and Public Health
VA Central Office (116)
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Associate Professor of Medicine
Department of Medicine
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Eula Bingham, Ph.D.
Professor of Environmental Health
University of Cincinnati Medical College
Institute of Environmental Health
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General Ronald R. Blanck
Commander
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Executive Director for National Center for PTSD
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Associate Administrator for Life and Microgravity Sciences
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Executive Secretary:

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Special Assistant
Office for Environmental Medicine and Public Health
VA Central Office (116)
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20420

DRAFT
2/24/95

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

Date

FACT SHEET

Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses: Ongoing Initiatives

Shortly after returning from the Persian Gulf following Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield, some U.S. military personnel began to report a variety of symptoms, such as fatigue, muscle and joint pain, memory loss, and headaches. In order to address these Gulf War veterans' health concerns, the Administration has taken many steps, highlights of which are listed below.

COMPENSATION

To make sure that veterans with chronic disabilities resulting from Gulf War service are compensated, the Administration is moving quickly to compensate those with both diagnosed and undiagnosed illnesses.

- **Compensation for Diagnosed Illnesses:** Under traditional disability compensation programs, veterans receive monthly compensation checks for diagnosed disabilities connected to their service. As of January 31, 1995, 106,390 veterans are receiving this type of disability compensation, including 472 for disabilities resulting from exposure to environmental hazards.
- **Compensation for Undiagnosed Illnesses:** President Clinton strongly supported and signed legislation to allow for compensation to veterans suffering from undiagnosed illnesses. This is the first time ever that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has compensated veterans before their illnesses are diagnosed. The first compensation checks under this new program were sent in mid February 1995. All Gulf War veterans who have had disability compensation denied have been contacted to reapply under this new program.

TREATMENT

The Administration's first priority for Gulf War veterans is to provide them with the best possible medical care, even when diagnoses have not been made.

- **Priority Access to VA Health Care:** In 1993 and again in 1994, President Clinton signed legislation that changes standard eligibility rules to enable veterans to obtain free medical care for illnesses that may be related to service in the Persian Gulf. To date, more than 140,000 Gulf War veterans have received free medical care in VA facilities.
- **Free Specialized VA Health Examinations:** Under the VA Persian Gulf Registry Health Examination Program, every Gulf War veteran who has health concerns, whether or not the veteran is ill, is eligible for a free, complete physical exam. More than 40,000 veterans have participated in this program since it began in 1992. Since June 1994, veterans with unexplained illnesses, whose medical conditions require a more specialized approach, have access to a more comprehensive health examination, which is also provided without charge and is available in VA and military medical centers nationwide.
- **Specialized VA Diagnosis Centers:** For those veterans most difficult to diagnose, VA has established Persian Gulf Referral Centers in Washington D.C., Houston, TX, and Los Angeles, CA.
- **Special Treatment for Active Duty Military Personnel & Their Families:** Under the Defense Department's (DOD's) Comprehensive Clinical Evaluation Program, more than 13,000 Gulf War veterans still on active duty have registered for extensive free medical exams and treatment. Between 8,000 and 9,000 individuals have begun to receive these exams and treatment since the program began in June 1994. Military personnel register by hotline and are then examined and treated at local military medical centers and then, if necessary, at 16 major medical centers in the U.S. and Germany.

DECLASSIFICATION

In June 1994, DOD announced that it was declassifying all of the material related to the potential causes of Gulf War veterans' illnesses. The Department is proceeding with declassification efforts and releasing information as it becomes available. To date, DOD has reviewed more than 400 linear feet of records to declassify material that mentions the possible detection of chemical or biological weapons. By the end of 1995, DOD will have the capability to match the wartime locations of individual service members with these incidents, as well as the presence of various other potential environmental hazards, such as smoke from oil well fires.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Because one of the most frustrating aspects of undiagnosed Gulf War veterans' illnesses is the lack of medical knowledge about the cause or cure, the Administration is reaching out to military personnel and veterans to educate them about available medical exams, treatment and compensation, as well as about new findings as they develop.

- **Hotlines:** DOD, as of June 1994, and VA, as of February 1995, began operating hotlines to provide Gulf War veterans with easy access to medical examinations and treatment. Callers are referred to the appropriate DOD or VA medical treatment facility. In addition, the VA hotline provides information on all VA medical care, compensation and research programs for Gulf War veterans. The hotline numbers are: DOD, 1-800-796-9699; VA, 1-800-PGW-VETS. VA is also providing medical and compensation benefits information on an electronic computer bulletin board, available 24 hours per day. This number is 1-800-US1-VETS.
- **Defense Secretary and Joint Chiefs Chairman Letter to Veterans:** In May 1994, Secretary Perry and General Shalikashvili jointly sent letters to all Gulf War veterans, encouraging them to go to any medical facility for an evaluation and exam if they have experienced health problems since returning from the Gulf.
- **Staying Healthy Handbooks:** As part of the 1994 deployment to the Gulf, DOD published and distributed "Staying Healthy" handbooks to help troops protect themselves against health hazards. Similar books were provided to troops in Somalia and Haiti. These handbooks were developed to provide

safeguards that were not consistently available during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

- **Persian Gulf Review:** VA publishes a quarterly newsletter, Persian Gulf Review, which is sent to everyone on its registry, each VA Medical Center, and veterans' service organizations. It provides information relevant to the health and compensation concerns of Gulf War veterans and their families.

RESEARCH

More than thirty research projects are underway to try to determine the causes of Gulf War veterans' illnesses. The research projects include epidemiological investigations, environmental hazards research, psychological and neurological studies, studies of the effects of the anti-nerve gas drug pyridostigmine bromide, research on the tropical disease leishmaniasis, and on the effects of exposure to depleted uranium. A few of the more than thirty studies are highlighted below.

- **Environmental Hazards Research Centers:** VA Environmental Hazards Research Centers, located in Boston, MA, East Orange, NJ, and Portland, OR were opened in October 1994. The centers are carrying out fourteen research projects in such areas as: the effects of toxic exposures on behavior, memory, the immune and nervous systems; and the development of cancer and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Specific studies are examining chemical hypersensitivity, chronic fatigue syndrome, and risk factors for undiagnosed illnesses.
- **Mortality Study:** The VA Epidemiology Service is completing a study of death rates and causes of death of those who served in the Gulf War. Comparisons will be made with veterans who did not serve in the Gulf. Results are expected later this year.
- **Birth Defects Study:** The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), VA and the Mississippi State Health Department examined a report of increased numbers of birth defects in the children of two units of Mississippi National Guard members. The study, completed in December 1994, found no increase in major or minor birth defects.

- **Iowa Study:** At Congressional request, the Administration is conducting a pilot survey of Gulf War veterans from Iowa, comparing a random selection of those who served in the Gulf War with a random selection of those who served during the same period. This CDC study includes a detailed assessment of veterans' health concerns as well as those of their families.
- **Kuwait Oil Fires Study:** This ongoing study is examining health risks to military troops and personnel exposed to oil fire smoke in the Gulf. The study's initial findings, released in September 1994, concluded that the levels of toxic substances measured in May through December 1991 were well below United States regulatory limits.
- **Anti-Nerve Gas Drug Studies:** DOD is conducting studies of the effects of pyridostigmine bromide, an anti-nerve gas drug given to troops in the Gulf. The studies are examining the effects of this drug on women and men and also the effects of interactions between this drug and other environmental chemicals such as insecticides that were present in the Gulf. Results are expected later this year.
- **Tropical Disease Study:** DOD, VA and the Department of Health and Human Services are examining the occurrences of the tropical parasitic disease leishmaniasis in Gulf troops. These studies aim to develop better diagnostic tests and treatment for this disease.
- **Navy Studies:** Three large epidemiological studies, begun in October 1994, are being carried out by the Naval Health Research Center in San Diego. The studies are analyzing the health of Gulf War Construction Battalion (SeaBee) service members, hospitalization rates among all Gulf War veterans, and birth outcomes in all Gulf War veterans and their families. Preliminary results are expected in late 1995.

REVIEWS BY OUTSIDE EXPERTS

To ensure that all avenues for research on Gulf War veterans' illnesses are being aggressively pursued, the Administration has asked several panels of non-governmental scientists to review ongoing activities and make recommendations for further research. These reviews indicate a consensus in some areas. For example, there is agreement among reviewers that, rather than a single

cause or illness, there are likely to be several causes and illnesses among Gulf War veterans.

- **National Institutes of Health (NIH) Workshop:** In April 1994, the NIH hosted a panel of outside experts to examine research efforts to date and make recommendations for future research in areas such as epidemiology, stress related diseases, pyridostigmine bromide and leishmaniasis. Many of these recommendations are now being implemented.
- **National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine (IOM):** As directed by Congress, an IOM panel is reviewing and evaluating current efforts related to Gulf War veterans' illnesses. The group's first report, issued in January 1995, provided a number of recommendations for improving research in this area, many of which are being implemented. The IOM is also reviewing and evaluating DOD's Comprehensive Clinical Evaluation Program.
- **Defense Science Board Task Force:** This panel, headed by Nobel laureate Dr. Joshua Lederberg, was asked by DOD to examine intelligence and other information related to possible troop exposure to chemical or biological weapons, and potential health consequences resulting from low level chemical exposure, environmental pollutants, Kuwait oil fires and other health hazards. The panel's report, released in June 1994, concluded that there was no evidence of the use of chemical or biological warfare against US troops in the Gulf.

DRAFT
2/26/95

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

Date

FACT SHEET

Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses: New Initiatives

Various steps have already been taken by the Clinton Administration to respond to the health concerns of U.S. military personnel who served in the Gulf War. Today, the President announced a number of new initiatives aimed at further enhancing the U.S. government response to the needs of Gulf War veterans who are ill.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The [President] will establish an Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' illnesses to review and make recommendations on U.S. government activities related to the illnesses being reported by U.S. military personnel who served in the Gulf War. This Committee, which will begin its work in the spring of 1995, will review and make recommendations on Gulf War illnesses-related research, the activities of the Persian Gulf Veterans Coordinating Board, medical examination and treatment programs, public outreach efforts, the implementation of recommendations from external reviews, possible risk factors, and reports of the possible detection of chemical or biological weapons. The Committee is to provide an interim report within six months of beginning its work and a final report by no later than December 1996.

TREATMENT

The Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are enhancing their current programs for diagnosing and treating Gulf War veterans.

- **Specialized Care Centers:** DOD is establishing Specialized Care Centers in Washington, D.C. and San Antonio, TX, to provide care for patients who need additional testing or treatment after completing comprehensive medical examinations at other military medical facilities. These centers will open in March 1995.

- **Reproductive Problems:** VA and DOD diagnostic test programs for Gulf War veterans will soon include guidelines for testing individuals who have had reproductive problems since returning from the Gulf. Nationally recognized medical experts are being consulted for advice in developing these guidelines.

EXPANDED RESEARCH

In addition to the research that is already underway, VA and DOD are planning to spend \$8-13 million on new research on Gulf War veterans' illnesses in 1995. Most of these studies will be designed, peer reviewed and conducted by university researchers and other independent scientists or, in the case of VA research, by scientists at VA medical centers across the country.

- **Epidemiological Research:** For the first time, major epidemiological studies will be conducted to examine whether such things as exposure to medications and pesticides, the location of troops during the war, and the age and sex of such troops are associated with specific symptoms. The DOD-funded studies will be based on a random sample of Gulf War veterans and civilians employed by DOD. A VA study will compare the health of 15,000 Gulf War veterans and 15,000 veterans who served during the same years but not in the Persian Gulf. Miscarriages, birth defects, and other reproductive health problems and illnesses among spouses or children will also be studied by DOD and VA.
- **Anti-Nerve Gas Drugs:** New research is being conducted on the drugs provided to help protect U.S. military personnel in the Gulf against chemical weapons. This research will include further studies on the anti-nerve agent pill pyridostigmine bromide, alone and in combination with other medications or chemicals such as pesticides.
- **Medical Evaluations of Spouses and Children:** For the first time, VA will provide medical evaluations and diagnostic tests to spouses and children of Gulf War veterans. These tests will be provided as part of a research project on the possible relationship between the illnesses of Gulf War veterans and those of their spouses and children. Dependents of veterans who are enrolled in the VA Gulf War Registry will be selected for inclusion in this study.
- **Environmental Hazards:** DOD and VA will support new research to expand existing information on potential environmental hazards such as infectious and parasitic diseases and the

effects of exposure to petrochemicals, lead, depleted uranium and other toxic substances.

- **Improving Treatment:** Later this year, DOD will accept research proposals from scientists across the country designed to improve treatment for Gulf War veterans with diagnosed and undiagnosed illnesses and symptoms.

OPENNESS

In addition to the DOD declassification program previously announced, DOD and VA are taking other steps to make information available about issues of concern to Gulf War veterans.

- **Chemical and Biological Weapons:** Since the end of the Gulf War, some veterans have expressed concern about the possibility that they were exposed to chemical or biological weapons during the war. In response to these concerns, DOD will prepare and make available analyses of the most frequently cited reports of the detection of chemical or biological weapons and will continue to declassify and release documents bearing on these and other reports.
- **Data on Serious Illnesses:** Information regarding cancers and other serious illnesses among Gulf War veterans who have received care in VA and DOD medical facilities will be made available to the public. Reports, categorized by age group, sex and race, will be released every six months by the Persian Gulf Interagency Coordinating Board.

OUTREACH

VA Secretary Jesse Brown has recently sent letters to all VA Gulf War Registry participants informing them of new compensation regulations for undiagnosed illnesses.

FUTURE SAFEGUARDS

The Gulf War made clear the need for better training of U.S. troops on the health risks associated with overseas deployments, as well as for improvements in the medical records for such troops. In response, DOD is developing a comprehensive plan that will strengthen training on the risks of toxic exposure and make more information about such risks available to individual service members. The plan will also improve documentation of each service members' health, medical problems and exposures before, during and after deployment. This plan will be completed within the next few weeks.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

AN OVERVIEW OF THE ORGANIZATION



- History
- Membership
- Offices
- Organization
- Partners
- Media Contacts
- Ladies Auxiliary
- National Home
- Services
- Programs
- Publications
- Accomplishments
- Recent Projects
- Current Goals
- Year in Review
- VFW Symbol



HISTORY

FOUNDED

In 1899 the American Veterans of Foreign Service (Columbus, Ohio) and the National Society of the Army of the Philippines (Denver, Colo.) were organized to secure rights and benefits for veterans of the Spanish-American War (1898)

and the Philippine Insurrection (1899-1902). These two organizations merged in 1914, creating the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. The VFW was chartered by Congress in 1936.

MEMBERSHIP

CURRENT SIZE

2.2 million members.

ELIGIBILITY

All U.S. citizens with an honorable discharge from the armed forces who have earned an officially recognized overseas campaign medal.

WAR SERVICE

World War II - 52%, Korean War - 21%, Vietnam War - 24%; and the remainder from Somalia, Persian Gulf War, Grenada, Panama, Lebanon and other smaller expeditionary campaigns as well as occupation duty.

OFFICES

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 West 34th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64111
(816) 756-3390 Fax (816) 968-1169

WASHINGTON OFFICE

VFW Memorial Bldg.
200 Maryland Ave. N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 543-2239 Fax (202) 543-6719

STAFF SIZE

285

ORGANIZATION

The National Convention is the VFW's supreme governing body. Each August, thousands of VFW members gather to elect new officers, adopt resolutions and handle important business affairs.

National officers, who serve one year, are elected by delegates to the National Convention. The officers include the Commander-in-Chief, Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief, Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief, Quartermaster General (similar to a corporate treasurer), Judge Advocate General (provides legal counsel), Surgeon General and the National Chaplain.

Traditionally, at each National Convention, the Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief becomes the Commander-in-Chief, while the Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief assumes the role of Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief. For this reason, interest and activity centers around election of the new

Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief.

Appointed officials include the Adjutant General (similar to a corporate CEO), National Chief of Staff and the National Inspector General.

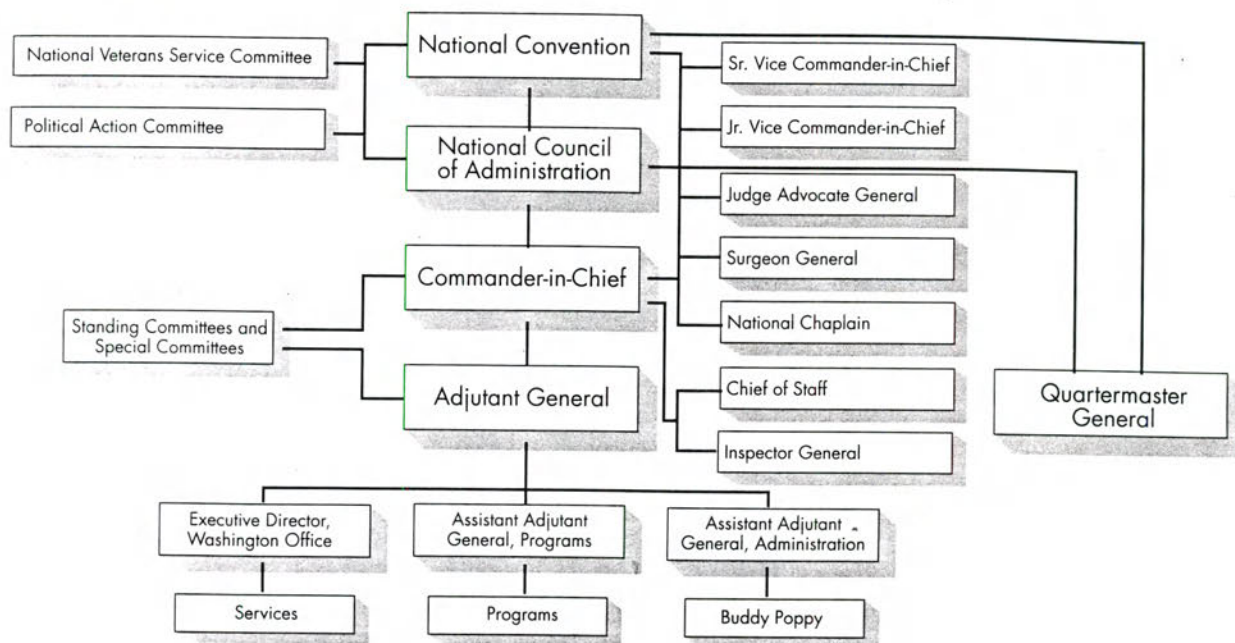
The National Council of Administration serves as the VFW's board of directors. It comprises elected national officers, the immediate past Commander-in-Chief, three appointed officials and elected members from each of 29 national districts comprising one or more Departments.

More than 10,700 Posts comprise 55 Departments in the 50 states plus Puerto Rico/Virgin Islands, Panama, the Pacific Areas, Europe and Washington, D.C.

The election, functions and titles of elected and appointed officers in Posts, Districts, County Councils and Departments parallel the national level.



STRUCTURE



MEDIA CONTACTS

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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 Vern Pall, Assistant Director, Public Affairs — Organization
 Kansas City, Mo. (816) 756-3390 FAX (816) 968-1169

WASHINGTON OFFICE

William G. Smith, Director, Public Affairs
 Washington, D.C. (202) 543-2239 FAX (202) 543-2746

PARTNERS

LADIES AUXILIARY

A national volunteer service organization, the Ladies Auxiliary of the VFW was founded in 1914. It includes more than 770,000 women, age 16 and over, who are close relatives of VFW-eligible veterans. The Ladies Auxiliary is the backbone of many VFW volunteer efforts.

In addition, the Auxiliary has its own volunteer programs in VA medical centers, as well as state and community hospitals.

Of high priority to the Auxiliary is aid to cancer victims and cancer research. Over the past 45

years, the VFW Ladies Auxiliary has raised more than \$45 million to treat and assist in the battle against this disease.

State Auxiliary organizations, known as Departments, are located in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and foreign countries where the U.S. military is stationed. Within the Departments are the 7,000 individual units that comprise the Ladies Auxiliaries of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. Like the national Auxiliary, they work closely with their VFW counterparts.

NATIONAL HOME

On 630-acres in Eaton Rapids, Mich. and established in 1925, the VFW National Home is open to children, grandchildren and single-parent children of VFW or Ladies Auxiliary members. The family-like atmosphere emphasizes traditional values such as respect for one another, patriotism, good work habits and sound moral character. The children enjoy many recreational activities and local community events.

Other features of the Home include a student job training program, 4-H, and scholarships for those desiring to further their education.

The VFW National Home is supported by gifts from VFW and Auxiliary members and friends, as well as funds from the annual Seals campaign, bequests, planned gifts, National Home Life Memberships and the VFW's Buddy Poppy program.

SERVICES

NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE

A network of more than 15,750 trained VFW service officers assist all veterans and their dependents in gaining federal and state entitlements. Their work includes military records correction, discharge upgrades, education benefits, disability compensation, pension eligibility and many other veterans programs.

The network includes volunteer service officers at the Post and District level, plus professional Department Service Officers (DSO) at each of

the 58 Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regional offices across the country. This network is supported by claims and appeals consultants, field representatives and office staffs in VFW's Washington Office and National Headquarters.

Inspection visits by VFW field representatives at VA medical centers, regional offices and national cemeteries ensure that the system designed to care for the nation's veterans is responsive to their needs.

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE

The National Legislative Service (NLS) represents veterans in Washington, D.C. in three areas. NLS staff members monitor all legislation to determine its affect on veterans. They alert VFW members to key veterans legislation being considered. And they actively lobby Congress and the Administration regarding relevant bills. NLS staff members are often called upon to assist congressional staffs in preparing legislation concerning veterans issues. Through the work of the NLS, the VFW has been at the forefront of every fight for veterans entitlements since the turn of the century.



NATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT

The VFW's employment staff monitors laws concerning veterans preference in federal employment and represents veterans in grievances regarding employment in both the federal and private sector. This staff works with a national network of volunteer employment officers to identify issues, keep veterans concerns before

employment councils and refer claims to the proper offices. A new feature of this effort is the Job Opportunity Board.

VFW's national employment awards program annually recognizes individuals, groups and employers who excel in providing employment services to veterans.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Tasked with dissemination of timely and accurate information on sensitive issues, the National Security and Foreign Affairs staff promotes VFW's commitment to a strong national defense and a sound foreign policy.

In recent years, priorities for this section have included resolving the fate of POW/MIAs from WWII, Korea and Vietnam, and appropriate reductions in defense spending resulting in a smaller yet efficient military.

PROGRAMS

AMERICANISM

The VFW's Americanism program provides information, sponsors events and promotes activities designed to stimulate interest in America's history, institutions of civic responsibility and patriotism. By promoting Loyalty Day, teaching Flag etiquette and good citizenship, conducting patriotic ceremonies and events, Americanism volunteers promote national pride and reverence for America's traditions.



VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

A national broadcast scriptwriting competition for high school students, the Voice of Democracy (VOD) program gives students the opportunity to study representative government.

Conducted by VFW and Ladies Auxiliary volunteers, VOD encourages 10th through 12th grade students to write a script on a patriotic theme (chosen annually by the VFW), and tape-record their script. The recordings are then judged at the Post level. Winners then move to the District level, Department (state) level and finally to the national competition held during the VFW Mid-Winter Conference in Washington, D.C.

Each year VOD winners receive more than

\$2.4 million in scholarships and prizes from the various levels of competition.



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

VFW Posts sponsor and provide leadership for a variety of youth activities. Approximately 1,200 VFW Posts sponsor Boy Scout troops for more than 29,000 boys. Sons of the VFW units develop parent-son relationships by providing opportuni-



ties for activities benefiting the entire family.

Working in cooperation with the National Rifle Association, VFW Junior Rifle Clubs promote competitive shooting and gun safety. VFW's cooperative effort with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes results in hundreds of multi-denominational and educational youth sports programs.

VFW's annual recognition of outstanding cadets in Jr./Sr. ROTC encourages high school and college students to achieve excellence in their chosen curriculum.

Every year, VFW sponsors and provides leadership to thousands of additional youth activities, including Junior and Special Olympics, child identification programs and nearly every kind of sporting endeavor.

SAFETY

VFW distributes a variety of materials and provides educational programs on individual and public safety throughout the year. Safety in many areas — home, automobile, bicycle and firearms — are all part of VFW Safety programs.

Thousands of drivers improve their driving skills each year through *Drive to Survive*. A separate program, held in conjunction with the American Association of Retired Persons, is called *55 Alive, Mature Driving*. It provides a classroom refresher course for older drivers.

Lite-a-Bike and *Lite-a-Tike* volunteers affix illumination tape to children's bicycles and backpacks, respectively, to ensure their safety on

America's streets and roadways.

Because of the rise in drug abuse, the VFW Safety program produces educational materials and teaches young people about the perils of substance abuse. VFW hopes to increase awareness and provide methods of countering drug abuse in the work place, school and home.

VFW provides recognition for outstanding public servants such as firefighters, police officers and emergency medical technicians from the Post to the national level. Personnel demonstrating exceptional dedication, courage or acts of lifesaving are publicly presented with various awards and citations.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Members volunteer their time, effort and money to raise the awareness of communities in such important areas as the environment, safety, schools, youth and community improvement programs.

Posts annually work with organizations such as the *March of Dimes* and *Keep America Beautiful*. Yearly contests are held to recognize outstanding

efforts by the Posts. Individual projects may also be submitted to National Headquarters for special recognition.

Working side-by-side with the Ladies Auxiliary, VFW members promote community projects to assist others and improve their towns and cities as a whole. In doing so, the VFW plays a constructive role and enhances its visibility.

BUDDY POPPY

Since 1922, this symbol of help has aided the most needy of war veterans and their families.

The annual sale of nearly 16.5 million Buddy Poppies brings in much needed funds to the VFW. Revenue from the sale of Buddy Poppies is used

to fund VFW veterans service programs, provide relief for needy veterans and support for the VFW National Home. Veterans are most visibly associated with the poppies on Memorial and Veterans Day.

PUBLICATIONS

VFW Magazine, publication of the oldest major veterans organization in the nation, dates back to the inception of *Foreign Service* in 1914. Today, it is the 29th largest magazine, with a circulation of more than 2 million.

Published monthly, except July, it also reaches millions of family members as well as influential groups and individuals in Washington, D.C. Criti-

cal issues are regularly featured, and various magazine departments cover fast-breaking current events of interest to veterans. Perhaps most importantly, *VFW Magazine* speaks to all generations of veterans. Other publications include the *Washington Action Reporter* (monthly) and the *Communicator* (9 times).

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Military pensions and compensation/training for disabled veterans after WWI.
- Establishment of the Veterans Administration in 1930.
- Promotion of the WWI Bonus.
- GI Bill of Rights in 1944.
- Development of the national cemetery system.
- Creation of the Senate Veterans Affairs Com-

mittee in 1970.

- Compensation for Vietnam vets exposed to Agent Orange (herbicide).
- Elevation of the Veterans Administration to cabinet-level department.
- Enhancement of the VA budget.
- Preservation of the exclusivity of the VA hospital system.

RECENT PROJECTS

1994 — VFW's co-sponsorship of the *National Veterans Golden Age Games* in 1994 contributed \$50,000 from Posts and Auxiliaries. A recent agreement with the VA cemented the VFW's support for this VA patient (55 and older) athletic competition for upcoming years.

1993-94 — VFW National Headquarters personnel provided logistical backing and coordination for homeless veteran "stand



downs" in the Kansas City area in 1993-94.

1990-91 — *Operation Hometown* raised more than \$500,000 from VFW Posts and Ladies Auxiliaries, allowing the VFW to ship 100,000 personal care packages to the troops during the Persian Gulf War.

At the VFW-sponsored "Heart of America Rally" in the Kansas City area, 75,000 turned out to say, "Welcome Home."

rials have been erected across the nation through the efforts and funds provided by individual VFW Posts. VFW has raised some \$612,000 for Korean War Veterans Memorial.

RECOGNITION AND REMEMBRANCE

In fulfilling its pledge to remember the nation's war dead, VFW promotes national memorials for veterans of WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam and other conflicts. In addition, thousands of memo-

CURRENT GOALS

LEGISLATIVE

- National Health Care Reform. Retain VA as a separate, independent and exclusive health care option for veterans.
- A budget providing sufficient funding for the VA medical system.
- Complete eligibility reform.
- Exclusive appropriation subcommittees for the VA in both the House and Senate.
- Maintain House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees.
- Concurrent receipt of military retirement pay

and full VA disability compensation.

- Oppose Transfer of Veterans Employment and Training Service. Keep the Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) as a separate agency of the Department of Labor. Oppose legislation that would merge VETS into the Employment and Training Administration.
- Retain veterans preference in public and private employment.
- "Reinventing" Government. Reject any proposal intended to "streamline" government that

- would reduce or diminish VA's ability to properly serve and care for the nation's veterans.
- Proper implementation of the Federal Unemployment Tax Account (FUTA) Trust Fund.

- Veterans Reemployment Rights. Enact the strongest measures to secure reemployment rights for veterans.

NATIONAL SECURITY

- Fullest possible accounting of all POWs and MIAs from WWII, Korea, the Cold War and Vietnam.
- Opposition to diplomatic recognition — exchange of embassies — of Vietnam until a full MIA accounting is attained.
- A viable defense budget coupled with strong armed forces and intelligence agencies.
- Full range of transition assistance for those discharged from the post-Cold War military.
- Oppose direct U.S. role in Bosnia.
- Tax relief for Somalia vets.
- Enact emergency measures to halt illegal immigration.
- Withhold refugee status for former Iraqi POWs.
- AFEM for El Salvador vets.
- Limited strategic defense system.
- Support for South Korea.
- Pressure North Korea to cease nuclear weapons production.
- Readmit Taiwan to U.N.
- Sale of modern weaponry to Taiwan.
- Adequate legislation to protect U.S. technology.
- Adoption of strong measures against terrorism.
- Retain ban on homosexuals in military.
- Service medal for unrecognized Korea vets.
- Full participation in NATO.
- Produce and deploy B-2 Stealth Bomber.

YEAR IN REVIEW

AUGUST 1993 – JULY 1994

1993

Highlights in organizational, veterans, civic and foreign affairs appear below in chronological order.

August: VFW's National Convention in Dallas attracts 13,123 delegates.

September: Trade embargo is extended against Vietnam.

October: Somalia. In the fiercest firefight since the Vietnam War, 18 GIs are killed in action and 84 are wounded in street battles in Mogadishu.

November: Legislation is passed to provide treatment for Persian Gulf vets suffering from illnesses contracted during *Operation Desert Storm*.

December: VFW challenges Clinton's policy in Somalia, calling it not in the nation's national interests.

VFW opposes Pentagon's policy on homosexuals known as "don't ask, don't tell" rule, which was officially adopted the previous July.

1994

January: VFW comes out against women in ground combat units after the Pentagon redefines the meaning of combat to open more positions to females.

February: The Clinton Administration lifts the trade embargo against Communist Vietnam. VFW opposes this move as unwarranted.

VA establishes presumptive service-connection for two additional Agent Orange-related diseases — Hodgkin's disease and porphyria cutanea tarda, a liver disorder.

First federal summit meeting on homeless veterans is convened in Washington, D.C.

March: Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. John Shalikashvili addresses Washington Conference.

For the first time ever, NATO forces engage in combat: U.S. aircraft shoot down two Serbian

planes over Bosnia.

Five Islamic terrorists bomb the World Trade Center in New York.

Last U.S. troops depart Somalia, ending *Operation Continue Hope*. U.S. casualties total 30 KIA, 14 non-hostile deaths and 175 wounded. 86,883 GIs serve there, making them eligible for the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and thus the VFW.

April: U.S. Air Force F-15 fighters shoot down two U.S. Blackhawk helicopters over northern Iraq, killing 15 Americans in the "no-fly" zone.

U.S. planes strike Serb targets around the besieged town of Gorazde.

Some 330 men of the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit from the *USS Peleliu* deploy to Burundi to support the evacuation of U.S. citizens from

Rwanda in Central Africa.

VFW delegation visits Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Korea on a POW/MIA fact-finding mission.

May: U.S. entanglement in the former Yugoslavia grows. GIs involved with *Operation Able Sentry* reach 520.

VFW opposes U.S. military intervention in Haiti as not in the national interest. U.S. Navy ships remain off the coast.

Medals of Honor are posthumously awarded to Master Sgt. Gary I. Gordon and Sgt. 1st Class Randall D. Shughart during a White House ceremony. They were killed in action in Somalia on Oct. 3, 1993. These are the first MOHs earned since 1972 in Vietnam.

Senate holds hearings on the causes of the so-called "Persian Gulf syndrome."

Presidential Decision Directive 25, which outlines U.S. military participation in U.N. operations, is signed by Clinton. Entire text is not released.

June: The 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit, stationed in the Indian Ocean, leaves the coast of Somalia. Only a 50-man Marine unit remains ashore to protect U.S. diplomats in Mogadishu.

Women in combat: The Army secretary withdraws his recommendations for opening more combat positions to females after opposition from senior Army generals.

Legislation is introduced that would make Persian Gulf vets suffering a chronic disability from an undiagnosed illness eligible for VA disability payments.

Tensions heighten on Korean Peninsula over sanctions and the North's refusal to allow nuclear facility inspections by the U.N. One month later the North's leader dies.

Russia enrolls in NATO's *Partnership for Peace* program.

Agent Orange compensation is approved for additional herbicide-related cancers: multiple myeloma and four respiratory diseases.

U.S. warships return to the Somalia coast.

July: U.S. diplomatic mission opens in Hanoi.

A delegation comprising five veterans organizations — including the VFW — visits Vietnam to assess progress on the MIA issue.

Four U.S. ships carrying 2,650 Marines take up positions off Haiti.

A and C companies, 2nd Bn., 15th Inf., 3rd Inf. Div., deploy to Macedonia.

Berlin Brigade is deactivated after nearly 50 years of occupation in the Cold War's symbolic battleground. Some 100,000 GIs served in the city during that period.

CROSS OF MALTA

Long a symbol of valor and aid to the sick and wounded, the Cross of Malta was the emblem of the Knights of Malta who cared for injured Crusaders and pilgrims to the Holy Land.

The emblem is an eight-pointed cross formed by four arrowheads converging in the center. Each point represents one of the Eight Beatitudes taken from the Sermon on the Mount.

In the VFW emblem, the center where the four arrowheads join contains a representation of the American eagle similar to the Great Seal of the United States. The eagle's beak holds a banner with the words *Pro Deo et Patria*, for God and Country.

In addition to being emblematic of the VFW, the Cross of Malta provides the organization with



a link to its three predecessor veterans groups formed in Colorado, Ohio and Pennsylvania after the Spanish-American War. Each of the three had the Cross of Malta as its insignia.

VFW founders believed the Cross of Malta embodied the spirit of love, duty and sacrifice which motivated them to form the VFW as a means of aiding veterans, their widows and dependents.

For more information contact:

Public Affairs

VFW National Headquarters

406 W. 34th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64111 816-756-3390 FAX 816-968-1169



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WASHINGTON ACTION REPORTER VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INDIVIDUAL INVOLVEMENT KEY TO SUCCESS

by
James R. Currieo

*E*ven as I wrote last month about some of the challenges which are to confront the VFW and America's veterans in the 104th Congress, I think it now appropriate to reflect on some of this great organization's accomplishments in the 103rd Congress.

I would only caution, however, that we must not lose sight of the fact that these accomplishments were only realized through the direct involvement of certain dedicated VFW members in advancing our legislative objectives.

And, as mentioned last month, if we are to prevail in the challenging times ahead, it is absolutely critical that even more of us play an active role in protecting veterans programs and entitlements.

prospect of these veterans receiving the care and compensation which was their due appeared bleak indeed.

VA is necessarily precluded by law from treating a given disability as service-connected unless some link can be established with active duty military service. Since "Persian Gulf Syndrome" has no known diagnoses or cause, such a link could not be readily demonstrated. This is where the VFW swung into action.

We quickly marshalled support in favor of the secretary of veterans affairs authorizing the provision of health care to veterans suffering from "Persian Gulf Syndrome." Much to his credit, Secretary Jesse Brown was quick and compassionate in his response and such veterans were authorized VA health care. But more help was needed.

Due to their illness, a number of these Persian Gulf veterans were either forced to work reduced hours or not at all. They and their families were desperately in need of financial assistance.

But the strict rules governing the awarding of VA compensation effectively prevented such payments from being made to veterans suffering from the undiagnosable "Persian Gulf Syndrome."

The VFW then waged an all out campaign on their behalf. Along with conducting an open symposium on "Persian Gulf

continued on pg. 7

Gulf Vet Victory

A key VFW victory in the 103rd Congress was on behalf of this nation's sick and disabled Persian Gulf veterans. Afflicted with a series of ill health symptoms for which there is still no known diagnoses or cause, the

The VFW waged an all out campaign for Persian Gulf War veterans. We quickly marshalled support in favor of VA Secretary Jesse Brown's authorizing health care to vets suffering from "Persian Gulf Syndrome."



NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE

VA PROPOSES REGULATIONS TO COMPENSATE PERSIAN GULF VETERANS

by
Frederico
Juarbe Jr.,
Director



VA Eliminating Micromanagement

Field representatives of your National Veterans Service recently attended the Department of Veterans Affairs Senior Management Conference held in Washington, D.C.

Jesse Brown, secretary of veterans affairs, and Kenneth W. Kizer, M.D., the new under secretary for health, indicated that their goal was to reshape the VA by eliminating micromanagement and to develop a new organizational plan based on management flexibility at the local level.

Dr. Kizer indicated that for the VA to succeed, it must have the decision-making process as close to the patient as possible, continue to minimize bureaucracy, and maximize responsiveness to those in their care.

The next few years will certainly be an interesting time for the VA as it continues to deal with personnel cuts and budgetary constraints. The VFW will continue to remind the Clinton Administration and Congress of their obligation to those who served this country.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has publicized proposed regulations which will authorize compensation for ill Persian Gulf veterans whose medical conditions elude a definable diagnosis.

The proposed regulations, published in the Dec. 9, 1994, *Federal Register*, will implement the provisions of the *Persian Gulf War Veterans Benefits Act*.

Congress enacted the legislation in response to the needs and concerns of Persian Gulf veterans. Several thousand Gulf veterans have applied for disability compensation since the end of *Desert Storm*. Although discernably ill, the overwhelming majority were denied compensation.

VA Secretary Jesse Brown asserted that he fervently desired to grant compensation to the ill veterans.

However, Brown felt he could not grant compensation because of a VA general counsel interpretation of the statute governing the authority to compensate for service-connected disabilities.

This appeared to bar compensation when the personal injury or disease lacked a diagnosis. Brown, supported by the VFW, requested legislation be enacted to remedy the situation.

This created a perplexing situation for the suffering veterans. Aside from speculation and innuendo, no diagnosis or even case definition of the now dubbed "Persian Gulf Syndrome" seemed attainable in the near future.

Although the Senate disputed the need for congressional action, legislation passed on the final day of the 103rd Congress. The new law, *Public Law 103-446*, overwhelmingly reflects the views of Brown and the VFW.

Provisions of the proposed regulations in *P.L. 103-446*, specify that:

- VA will compensate a Persian Gulf

veteran who exhibits objective indications of a chronic disability resulting from an illness or combination of illnesses manifested by one or more signs and symptoms.

- The disability must become manifest during service in the Southwest Asia theater of operations or to a compensable degree of at least 10% not later than two years after the last date the veteran performed active military service in the Persian Gulf.

- The disability cannot be attributed to any known clinical diagnosis.

- The disability is chronic if it has existed for six months or more.

- The disability will be rated using evaluation criteria for an analogous disease or injury from the rating schedule.

- Signs or symptoms which may exhibit an undiagnosed illness include, but are not limited to: fatigue, skin signs or symptoms, headaches, muscle pain, joint pain, neurologic signs or symptoms, neuropsychological signs or symptoms, respiratory system signs

or symptoms, sleep disturbances, gastrointestinal signs or symptoms, cardiovascular signs or symptoms, abnormal weight loss and menstrual disorders.

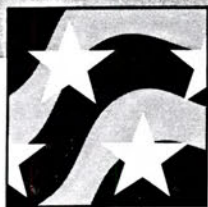
- Compensation will not be granted when there is affirmative evidence that the undiagnosed illness was not incurred during Gulf service, the illness was caused by a supervening condition or event that occurred between the last day of Gulf service and illness onset or the illness is a result of willful misconduct.

Brown has stated that all previously denied Persian Gulf claims will be reopened in light of the new law.

The VFW applauds the enactment of *P.L. 103-446*. We feel vindicated that the law essentially supported our original and consistent view that legislation was necessary to compensate Persian Gulf veterans with undiagnosed illnesses.



The VFW has fought hard to ensure VA health care for Desert Storm vets.



NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURES FOR VETERANS

by
Sid Daniels,
Director

Veterans have a new avenue available to ensure that federal agencies properly consider them for jobs in the competitive civil service. Using authority provided under the *Veterans Employment, Training, and Counseling Amendments of 1988*, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Department of Labor (DOL) have developed procedures to resolve certain kinds of federal employment complaints brought by veterans. The time limit for filing a complaint is 45 days from the date of the action.

Who May File a Complaint

A vet may file a complaint if he or she:

- served on active duty for more than 180 days, other than for training, and has other than a dishonorable discharge; or
- has a service-connected disability; or
- is a member of a Reserve component who: was ordered to active duty under 10 USC 672 (a), (d), or (g); or 10 USC 673 or 673 (b): served on active duty during a

period of war; received a campaign medal; and has other than a dishonorable discharge.

Where to File a Complaint

A veteran should discuss

concerns with a supervisor and/or the federal agency personnel office that took the action. If unable to resolve the matter with the agency, the veteran has two options:

- Contact the state employment service (local office) and speak to a veterans employment representative or a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program representative, who will make sure the complainant's information is complete and forward the complaint to the DOL; or
- File a written complaint directly with a DOL Veterans Employment and Training

Service (VETS) Office. The location of this office in your state may be obtained by calling 1-800-442-2VET.

What the Complaint May Cover

A veteran may file a complaint if a federal agency:

- fails to grant Veterans Preference in initial appointment. By law, preference is limited to veterans who are disabled or who served on active duty during specified periods or in a campaign for which a service medal was awarded;
- fails to list vacancies with the state employment service when the agency is considering "outside" candidates — i.e., people who are not eligible for noncompetitive appointment; and
- fails to establish a program to provide job opportunities for disabled veterans and veterans eligible for Veterans Readjustment Appointments.

What is Not Covered

A veteran may not use this special procedure for matters already covered by a formal appeal or grievance procedure. For example, if an agency fails to restore a veteran to duty after returning from military service, he or she may appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board. If not selected for promotion, the veteran may appeal through the agency's internal grievance system.

What Happens Next

After DOL accepts the veteran's complaint, a DOL representative will work with the agency to resolve the complaint, usually within 30 days. If the veteran is not satisfied, the DOL representative will ask the director of the local OPM service center to decide the issue on its merits and notify all parties within 30 days.

If still not satisfied with the decision, within 20 days the veteran may ask the OPM regional director to review the matter.

The ruling of the OPM regional director is final.

The federal government has established a grievance procedure for veterans who feel they've been denied a job in violation of Veterans Preference.



NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE

NEW COMMITTEES CONTROLLED BY REPUBLICANS

by
James N. Magill,
Director

For the first time in nearly a half century, Republicans now chair committees in both the House and Senate.

This change in control also gives the Republican Party the majority of the mem-

bership of each committee.

Following are the new committee heads and ranking minority members of the congressional committees of the 104th Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Agriculture

Pat Roberts - Chairman
E. "Kika" de la Garza - Ranking Democrat

Appropriations

Robert L. Livingston - Chairman
David R. Obey - Ranking Democrat

Banking and Financial Services

(formerly Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs)

Jim Leach - Chairman
Henry B. Gonzalez - Ranking Democrat

Budget

John R. Kasich - Chairman
Martin O. Sabo - Ranking Democrat

Commerce

(formerly Energy and Commerce)

Thomas J. Bliley, Jr. - Chairman
John D. Dingell - Ranking Democrat

Economic and Educational Opportunities

(formerly Education and Labor)

Bill Goodling - Chairman
William L. Clay - Ranking Democrat

Government Reform and Oversight

(formerly Government Operations)

William F. Clinger - Chairman
Cardiss Collins - Ranking Democrat

House Oversight

(formerly House Administration)

Bill Thomas - Chairman
Vic Fazio - Ranking Democrat

International Relations

(formerly Foreign Affairs)

Benjamin A. Gilman - Chairman
Lee H. Hamilton - Ranking Democrat

Judiciary

Henry J. Hyde, III - Chairman

John Conyers, Jr. - Ranking Democrat

National Security

(formerly Armed Services)

Floyd D. Spence - Chairman
Ronald V. Dellums - Ranking Democrat

Natural Resources

Don Young - Chairman
George Miller - Ranking Democrat

Rules

Gerald B. H. Solomon - Chairman
Joe Moakley - Ranking Democrat

Science

(formerly Science, Space, and Technology)

Robert S. Walker - Chairman
George E. Brown, Jr. - Ranking Democrat

Select Intelligence

Larry Combest - Chairman
Norm Dicks - Ranking Democrat

Small Business

Jan Meyers - Chairwoman
John J. LaFalce - Ranking Democrat

Standards of Official Conduct

(To be named by Speaker) - Chairman
(To be named by Min. Leader) - Ranking Democrat

Transportation and Infrastructure

(formerly Public Works and Transportation)

Bud Shuster - Chairman
Norman Y. Mineta - Ranking Democrat

Veterans' Affairs

Bob Stump - Chairman
"Sonny" Montgomery - Ranking Democrat

Ways and Means

Bill Archer - Chairman
Sam M. Gibbons - Ranking Democrat

SENATE

Aging

William S. Cohen - Chairman
David Pryor - Ranking Democrat

Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry

Richard G. Lugar - Chairman
Patrick J. Leahy - Ranking Democrat

Appropriations

Mark O. Hatfield - Chairman
Robert C. Byrd - Ranking Democrat

Armed Services

Strom Thurmond - Chairman
Sam Nunn - Ranking Democrat

Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs

Alfonse M. D'Amato - Chairman
Paul Sarbanes - Ranking Democrat

Budget

Pete V. Domenici - Chairman
James Exon - Ranking Democrat

Commerce, Science & Transportation

Larry Pressler - Chairman
Ernest F. Hollings - Ranking Democrat

Energy and Natural Resources

Frank H. Murkowski - Chairman
J. Bennett Johnston - Ranking Democrat

Environment and Public Works

John H. Chafee - Chairman
Max Baucus - Ranking Democrat

Ethics

Mitch McConnell - Chairman
Richard H. Bryan - Ranking Democrat

Finance

Bob Packwood - Chairman
Daniel P. Moynihan - Ranking Democrat

Foreign Relations

Jesse Helms - Chairman
Claiborne Pell - Ranking Democrat

Governmental Affairs

William V. Roth, Jr. - Chairman
John Glenn - Ranking Democrat

Intelligence

Arlen Specter - Chairman
J. Robert Kerrey - Ranking Democrat

Judiciary

Orrin G. Hatch - Chairman
Joseph R. Biden - Ranking Democrat

Indian Affairs

John McCain - Chairman

Daniel K. Inouye - Ranking Democrat

Labor and Human Resources

Nancy Landon Kassebaum - Chairwoman
Edward M. Kennedy - Ranking Democrat

Rules and Administration

Ted Stevens - Chairman
Wendell H. Ford - Ranking Democrat

Small Business

Christopher S. Bond - Chairman
Dale Bumpers - Ranking Democrat

Veterans' Affairs

Alan K. Simpson - Chairman
John (Jay) Rockefeller - Ranking Democrat



HOUSE VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE PICKS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Bob Stump (R-Ariz.) announced the committee's Republican leadership for the 104th Congress.

The committee will operate with three subcommittees, a reduction from five. According to Stump, "This will allow us to reduce staff numbers through consolidation without compromising our ability to get the job done."

Elaborating on the change, Stump stated, "The Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee functions would be absorbed by the three subcommittees as part of their responsibilities." The new House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee chairmen and ranking Democratic members will be:

Hospitals and Health Care

Tim Hutchinson, Chairman
Chet Edwards, Ranking Democrat

Compensation, Pension, Insurance and Memorial Affairs

Terry Everett, Chairman
Lane Evans, Ranking Democrat

Education, Training, Employment, and Housing

Steve Buyer, Chairman
Maxine Waters, Ranking Democrat



House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Bob Stump (R-Ariz.) meets with Commander-in-Chief Allen "Gunner" Kent, a fellow Arizonan.



FORMER SOVIET STATES COPE WITH COOPERATIVE THREAT REDUCTION PROGRAM

by
Kenneth A.
Steadman,
Director

Excerpted below is the unclassified portion of a General Accounting Office (GAO) review of the effort to reduce Russian strategic nuclear missile forces and other weapons of mass destruction. The study suggests countries of the former Soviet Union (Belarus, Ukraine, Kazakhstan) can meet the goals of the *Cooperative Threat Reduction Program* (CTR) only with U.S. assistance.

Background: In 1991, Congress authorized the Department of Defense to establish a *Cooperative Threat Reduction Program* to help the former Soviet Union:

- destroy nuclear, chemical and other weapons (including strategic nuclear delivery vehicles);
- transport and store these weapons in connection with their destruction; and
- prevent their proliferation.

Results in Brief: The CTR program stands at an important crossroad in its evolution. Over the past three years, it has evolved from a hastily established one year effort into a wide-ranging, multi-year program.

Currently planned CTR aid appears to be crucial to Ukrainian and Kazakhstani efforts to dismantle systems.

CTR officials appear to have overstated

the probable impact of similar CTR projects in Russia. Russia can meet — without CTR aid — its *Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty I* obligations and eliminate thousands of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles and

launchers over the next decade. Russia also does not want U.S. involvement in actually destroying its nuclear warheads.

Nuclear Warhead Dismantlement:

Russia appears able to dismantle tens of thousands of retired nuclear warheads by the end of the century without U.S. help. The total Russian nuclear stockpile is estimated to be 30,000 warheads.

According to Russian officials, they are dismantling the former Soviet Union nuclear stockpile at a rate of 2,000 to 3,000 weapons per year. If Russia can continue dismantling warheads at the highest rate, then as many as 24,000 warheads could be eliminated by the year 2001.

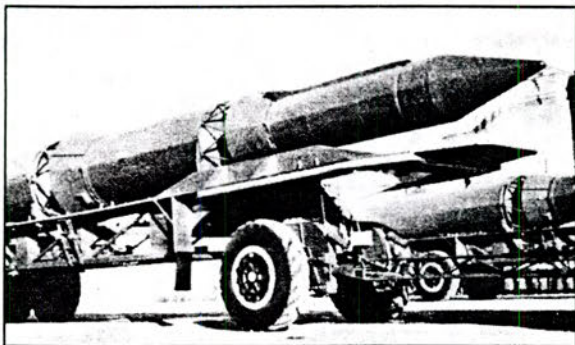
Furthermore, Russia does not want any help from the U. S. in actually dismantling these weapons.

Strategic Delivery Vehicles: The former Soviet Union states must still eliminate about 530 START-accountable nuclear delivery systems and destroy their launchers (e.g., silos, submarine tubes, and heavy bombers) to comply with START I limits.

Assuming that Kazakhstan and Ukraine eliminate the systems deployed on their territories, and Belarus returns its systems to Russia for redeployment as agreed in the *Lisbon Protocol*, Russia will be required to eliminate only about 200 delivery vehicles and their launchers.

Russia has been dismantling nuclear delivery systems in compliance with arms control treaties for decades without U.S. assistance.

According to Russian officials, Russia has already achieved 100% of START's three-year limits and nearly 50% of its seven-year limits for delivery vehicles. Russia could meet START delivery vehicle limits in five years — well within the allowed seven-year period that will begin when START enters into force. In the past four years, Russian officials have claimed to have eliminated over 400 launchers.



Under the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, the U.S. will help the former Soviet Union destroy its nuclear, chemical and other weapons, including delivery vehicles, such as this SS-13 Savage missile.



continued from pg. 1

Syndrome" which featured the head of Walter Reed Hospital – General Ronald Blank – the VFW brought a number of Persian Gulf veterans to Washington to serve as witnesses at the various congressional hearings addressing this issue.

Further, appalled by the paucity of information on the syndrome, the *VFW Action Corps* utilized our national magazine to conduct an independent Persian Gulf survey in order to shed some light on this urgent matter. With over 2,500 responses, this survey clearly demonstrated that providing VA health care compensation to afflicted veterans is very much in order.

Finally, members of the VFW's legislative team have testified before congressional committees and worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure that Persian Gulf veterans receive treatment and compensation.

This major VFW objective was finally realized with the enactment of *Public Law 103-446*, which among numerous other things, authorizes compensation on a presumptive basis to Persian Gulf War veterans suffering from chronic disability resulting from undiagnosed illnesses collectively known as "Persian Gulf Syndrome."

Other Battles Won

The VFW was busy on many other fronts as well. This organization was instrumental in achieving the enactment of laws providing for improvements in the provision of health care to women veterans by VA; extensions and enhancements in the care provided by VA to veterans suffering from dioxin and ionizing radiation related disabilities; as well as improvements in veterans housing and education and training programs. We were also successful in getting a law to protect the VA health care system from OMB-mandated staff cuts.

I would also mention here that the VFW played a key role in realizing a cost-of-living adjustment for this nation's military retirees which is to be paid in full and on time. As a cost-saving measure, this COLA

was to be paid Oct. 1, 1995, rather than April 1, 1995.

The VFW was shocked by this proposal and immediately brought its full force to bear on behalf of eliminating the delay. As a result, the effective date was rolled back and military retirees will now receive their COLAs at the same time as all other federal retirees.

VA Budget

The final issue I will address here represents what is on one hand a victory for veterans, but on the other a defeat. I am referring to the VA budget for fiscal year 1995.

In the face of an ever-tightening federal budget, the fact that we were able to realize an overall increase in VA funding of \$897.2 million over last year, with \$610.3 million more going to VA health care is a victory for all veterans.

But I can tell you that it is a meager victory, indeed. The increase in VA funding falls way short of keeping pace with inflation as well as other uncontrollable spending increases.

It is completely inadequate with respect to carrying out much-needed improvements and renovation to allow VA to compassionately care for its current charges while preparing for near future upsurges in patient workload.

One of the unfortunate consequences of the demise of the President's, and then the Senate's, national health care reform proposals is that money was lost to VA.

The VFW, among others, had been successful in having these legislative initiatives provide an addition \$4 billion for VA health care. Unfortunately, this money was forfeited with the death of these proposals.

Now, with the increased push in Congress to reduce federal spending, the going is even going to get much tougher.

Again, for the sake of the veterans of today as well as tomorrow, I urge all of you to get involved. The very fate of VA and veterans programs hang in the balance.



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WASHINGTON ACTION REPORTER VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

THE 104TH CONGRESS: CHALLENGES AHEAD FOR VETERANS

by
James R. Currie

If nothing else can be said of the sea change which has taken place in our nation's capital, it is that it clearly represents the American people's demand for change. And it's change in the form of a Republican majority in both the House and Senate, and support for their conservative agenda. What this precisely portends for veterans remains to be seen.

While certain aspects of the unfolding Republican agenda are in keeping with VFW objectives, especially as they pertain to national security and foreign affairs, proposed reductions in the federal government, as well as social programs, have the potential for trouble.

Couple this with the fact that both the

House and Senate Veterans Affairs committees will now be headed by chairmen who are relatively unfamiliar with serving in this capacity. Republicans have not held the majority in the House since 1954, so there is room for concern.

I believe the greatest danger to

the proper congressional oversight of veterans programs lies in two areas: First, House Republicans plan to dramatically reduce both the number and size of congressional committees. Second, despite the fact that the VA committees potentially touch the lives of approximately one-third of the U.S. population, lawmakers have shown considerable reluctance through the years to be assigned to them. I will speak more on this later.

Republican Contract

You are, of course, all familiar with the Republican's *Contract with America*, which was put before the American public sometime last August. The GOP leadership has promised to put the 10 points of this "contract" in legislative form and bring them up for a vote within the first 100 days.

Some of this plan's proposals enjoy the support of current national VFW resolutions. For example, language to restore essential parts of national security funding to strengthen national defense and maintain U.S. credibility around the world is in keeping with this organization's general positions. Similarly, the contract would preclude placing U.S. troops under U.N. command.

I believe, however, we must also recognize elements of danger in certain provisions of this plan and this Congress's initial

A sea change has taken place in our nation's capital, and it clearly represents the American people's demand for change... in the form of a Republican majority in both the House and Senate. What this precisely portends for veterans remains to be seen.

continued on pg. 7



NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE

DIOXIN LINKS TO CANCER: VA SECRETARY'S VIEWS

by
Frederico
Juarbe Jr.,
Director

In November a letter from our commander-in-chief to the secretary of veterans affairs urged him to add cancer of the throat, prostate cancer and peripheral neuropathy to those determined to be presumptive conditions linked to exposure to Agent Orange.

The Chief made the point that "this issue (had) dragged on long enough and that the EPA's conclusion that dioxins probably caused cancer in human beings (was) sufficient reason for (VA) to grant reasonable doubt to those veterans suffering from the cancers (and conditions) noted."

VA Secretary Jesse Brown subsequently responded to the Chief. He said, "The VA shares (the VFW's) interest in seeing that appropriate compensation is awarded to veterans." But, he added, "it would be premature to take action at this time."

Brown said, "The EPA study, although undoubtedly important, (was) just one document to be considered in determining the conditions for which we (the VA) should establish presumptive service connection on the basis of herbicide exposure."

He concluded: "I am awaiting the results of a second review by the National Academy of Sciences. At that time we (the VA) will make further determinations."

Your National Veterans Service staff will monitor this matter closely. If any changes do occur, members will be informed.

VA Adjudication Update

In December, I reviewed an exchange of views between the chief judge of the U.S. Court of Veterans Appeals and the VA secretary.

In brief, the judge alleged that the adjudication function of VA was out of control and largely unresponsive to the requirements levied upon it by the Court.

Jesse Brown understandably disagreed. Since then, an investigative panel has been formed. I am representing the VFW on that nine-member panel. This will afford opportunity for valuable input by the National Veterans Service (NVS) staff and VFW service officers nationwide.

BVA HOUSECLEANING

In late July 1994, two attorneys on the staff of the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) were under investigation for illegal removal of official documents from certain veterans appeals' files.

These two attorneys were removing documents from a veteran's file and then returning the packet with a request that these documents be obtained. This relieved them of any immediate responsibility to complete action on the appeal.

The VFW reacted to this news in a letter to the BVA chairman:

We (the VFW) hope there will be an exhaustive review of every case dealt with by the individuals concerned to determine whether there is a need to reconstruct the claims folder and/or re-evaluate any action.

BVA is identifying veterans whose cases were appealed to the BVA during and after 1990, and whose claims folders were reviewed by these two former BVA employees. These veteran appellants will be notified by letter (from the BVA) and given an opportunity to inspect their claims folders within 90 days and advised of options they may have. 1,800 files are under review.

In those cases where it has been determined by BVA that tampering has occurred, the letter will specify the nature of whatever tampering has been discovered.

Some of the options a veteran-appellant may have are reconsideration of any final adjudication on the merits of the claim; requesting a remand; or to present additional evidence, comments or arguments currently on remand.

BVA Chairman Charles Cragin stressed:

We at the Board abhor the egregious conduct of these former BVA employees and the affect this conduct may have on the lives of individuals who have selflessly served their country. The individuals responsible are being dealt with through this country's criminal justice system, and will never again be allowed to handle veterans' records.



Three more cancers have been linked to Agent Orange exposure among Vietnam vets.



NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

VFW PRIORITY GOALS: EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

by
Sid Daniels,
Director

In meeting the employment and training needs of veterans, it is crucial that a strong Veterans Preference policy remain in place, and that agency hiring authorities observe and respect the spirit and letter of these laws and policies. Due to attacks on Veterans Preference, detractors have succeeded in undermining many of the positive effects of these laws and policies.

In 1985, veterans comprised nearly 35% of the federal civilian workforce. In 1992, that number dropped to 28%. In the private sector, the drop-off in the number of veterans being hired is deplorable, even though many companies that receive federal contracts have a special obligation to consider veterans first.

In 1993-94, blatant abuses of Veterans Preference abounded throughout the federal government.

Unfortunately, those veterans who were the victims of those violations could only expect minimum assistance from the employing agency or the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the overall manager of federal personnel policies.

This total disregard of Veterans Preference is best illustrated by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), which carried out massive "reorganization" of its workforce, resulting in the displacement of over 47,000 workers. The reorganization failed to follow reduction-in-force (RIF) rules which, in part, gives "bumping" rights to veterans. Several of those veterans were reassigned to lower grade jobs in violation of RIF procedures. In subsequent rulings by the Merit System Protection Board (MSPB) the Postal Service has been admonished to (in effect) restore the veterans to their previously held

positions or reach an acceptable alternative.

We call upon Congress to strengthen laws for assuring that Veterans Preference is fully observed and implemented by all federal hiring activities and for reporting each agency's progress on an annual basis.

Veterans Preference

We support Veterans Preference in federal employment and oppose any effort to reduce or circumvent this hard-earned benefit. We call upon federal policy-makers to strengthen laws for assuring Veterans Preference is fully observed and implemented by federal hiring activities.

Enforce Veterans Affirmative Action in Federal Contracts

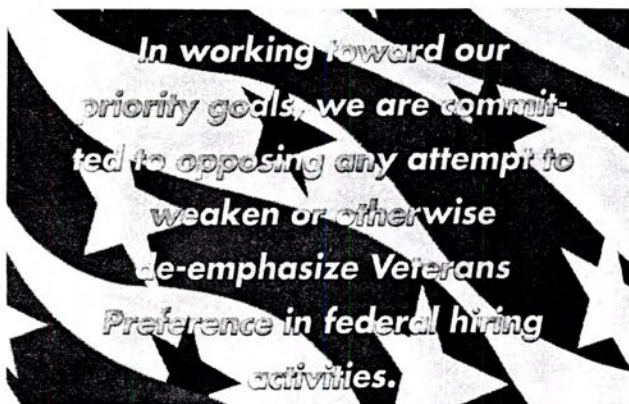
We call upon the U.S. Department of Labor, Office Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) to increase its vigilance of the veterans affirmative programs under 38 USC, Section 4212, and to vigorously enforce its provisions through which the employment of veterans in the private sector may be enhanced.

Oppose the Transfer of Veterans Employment and Training Service

We strongly support keeping the Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) as an independent agency within the Department of Labor. We urge Congress to oppose legislation that would merge VETS into the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) compromising its oversight role of ensuring veterans receive priority and preference in services provided by federally funded employment and training providers.

Reemployment Rights Protection

We urge Congress to enact the strongest measures that secures reemployment rights for veterans and all other individuals called to serve in the U.S. military service while not placing an undue burden on the employers of America.





NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE

REPUBLICANS SET AGENDA FOR FIRST 100 DAYS OF 104TH CONGRESS

by
James N. Magill,
Director

With the Republican Party taking control of Congress, there has been much debate over its *Contract with America*. The House will bring the contract points to a vote, during the first 100 days of the new Congress.

The Senate wants to take a slower pace. While not focusing on distinctly veterans issues, the contract will affect all U.S. citizens. Following are the provisions of the *Contract with America*:

Balanced Budget Amendment Line-Item Veto

Require the federal budget to be balanced by 2002 or seven years after enactment, whichever is later. Grant the President authority to veto individual line items in a spending bill without vetoing the entire bill.

Crime

Eliminate loopholes and limit appeals in death penalty cases. Increase appropriations for incarcerating violent felons.

Welfare

Stop benefits under the primary federal-state welfare program (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) after two years and require recipients to report the identity of a child's father before collecting benefits.

Children

Establish a national system to locate parents who fail to make child support payments. Strengthen laws against child pornography and establish a tax credit for people who care for elderly relatives.

Middle-Class Tax Cut

- Grant extra \$500 per child tax credit to families earning up to \$200,000 a year.
- Create a tax credit to lessen the effect of the marriage penalty.
- Provide that in contributing to an IRA account, individuals would pay income tax when they pay into the account, but not on the interest accrued upon withdrawal.

National Security

Limit the U.N.'s ability to command U.S. troops. Restore the discretionary budget "firewalls" that separated defense, domestic and international spending.

Senior Citizens

- Repeal the Clinton Administration's requirement that senior citizens who earn more than \$34,000 (single) or \$44,000 (couple) pay income tax on 85% of their Social Security benefits.
- Increase the amount senior citizens can earn from \$11,160 to \$30,000 without decreasing their Social Security benefits.
- Help senior citizens purchase long-term health care by allowing tax-free withdrawals from IRAs, 401(k) plans and other qualified pensions for purchasing insurance.

Capital Gains

The capital gains tax cut would:

- Reduce, by 50%, the capital gains tax.
- Permit taxpayers to adjust the purchase price of an asset for inflation that occurs after the effective date of the law, thus reducing the total capital gain and its tax.

Legal Reforms/Product Liability

Allow judges to require losers in lawsuits to pay the lawyers' fees of both sides. Limit the amount of "punitive" damage awards that juries can impose in product liability and medical malpractice lawsuits.

Congressional Term Limits

Limit House members to six years and senators to 12 years.

SOCIAL SECURITY CHANGES FOR 1995

The following Social Security changes will become effective in 1995. Should you have questions a toll-free number - 1-800-772-1213 - is available between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. EST.



STUMP ASSUMES CHAIR OF HOUSE VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

With the Republican takeover of the House of Representatives, Rep. Bob Stump (R-Ariz.) has been elected to chair the House Veterans Affairs Committee for the 104th Congress.

Stump, a WWII Navy vet, is serving in his 10th term; the last six years of which he has been the ranking minority member of the Veterans Affairs Committee.

Born in Phoenix, Ariz., on April 4, 1927, Stump was a member of the Arizona House of Representatives from 1959 to 1967; and served in the Arizona Senate from 1967 to 1976.

He is a strong advocate of generous benefits for veterans, and has indicated health care and the VA benefits claims system will be a top priority on the committee's agenda for the 104th Congress.

Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries will receive a 2.8% raise for 1995.

Benefits Increase

The average monthly Social Security benefit for a retired worker will increase to \$698. The average monthly benefit for a couple where both spouses are receiving benefits will be \$1,178 in January 1995. Average monthly disability benefits will be \$661 in January 1995. A young widow with two children will receive an average monthly payment of \$1,365 in 1995.

The maximum federal SSI monthly payment for one person will be \$458 in January 1995. For a couple, the maximum monthly amount will increase to \$687 in January 1995. Because some states add money to the federal benefit, total payment amounts will vary from one state to another.

Changes Mandated

The annual increase in Social Security and SSI benefits is based on the Consumer Price Index. Other changes that will become effective Jan. 1, 1995, are based on "automatic adjustment" provisions and the increase in average wages.

The combined Social Security and Medicare tax rate will not go up in 1995. Other changes include:

- The Social Security "wage base" for 1995 will be \$61,200. The wage base is the maximum amount of earnings taxed for Social Security.
- As was true in 1994, all wages and salaries will be subject to the Medicare portion of the Social Security tax — 1.45%. For the self-employed, the tax remains at 2.9% and it, too, applies to all their earnings. The changes were part of the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1993.
- The amount of wages needed to earn one Social Security "credit" will be \$630 in 1995. The maximum number of credits that can be earned each year is four. Thus, anyone earning at least \$2,520 in 1995 will

receive the maximum of four credits for the year. To be eligible for Social Security benefits, a worker needs a specific number of credits. The number depends on his or her date of birth and the type of benefit involved. Most people need 40 credits to be eligible for retirement benefits, but some younger people qualify for disability and survivors benefits with as few as six credits.

- The maximum that beneficiaries between the ages of 65 and 69 can earn in 1995 without reducing their Social Security benefits is \$11,280. For every \$3 a person earns over this limit, \$1 is withheld from his or her benefit.

• For people under age 65, the corresponding limit will be \$8,160. For every \$2 a person under 65 earns over this amount, \$1 is withheld from benefits. The benefits of people aged 70 or older who continue to work are not affected.

Future Tax Changes

For planning purposes Social Security beneficiaries need to be aware the tax rate on some of their benefits may have increased. Couples whose provisional income is more than \$44,000 and individuals with income exceeding \$34,000 may pay income tax on up to 85% of their Social Security benefits.

Couples whose provisional income is between \$32,000 and \$44,000 may pay tax on up to 50% of their benefits, as will be true for individuals whose income is between \$25,000 and \$34,000.

For those beneficiaries whose income is below these levels, Social Security benefits are not taxed.



Social Security beneficiaries will see slight increases in their monthly payments this year.



NATIONAL SECURITY & FOREIGN AFFAIRS

WILL THE ARMY BE 'HOLLOW' IN THE 21ST CENTURY?

by
Kenneth A.
Steadman,
Director

While downsizing at historic rates, the Army has never, in peacetime, been so heavily committed. Operations include fighting fires in Washington state, maintaining order following the Los Angeles riots, bringing emergency food and shelter to hurricane victims and missions overseas — Haiti, Guantanamo, Rwanda, Somalia, Bosnia and Kuwait. At present, the Army has 40,000 soldiers deployed around the world in some 90 countries — a number which is usually 16,000 to 18,000 soldiers.

In the past year, we have heard a great deal about "Bottom-Up Review" by the military services. However, the VFW is greatly concerned that such reviews may be "cutting too much meat from bone and not leaving us with enough muscle."

Resources

Maj. Gen. John Ellerson, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, said that resources (budget and manpower) are dropping to a point which would be the lowest since before the Korean War. Strict adherence to the Department of Defense

"Bottom-Up Review" may be threatening the readiness and capability of the armed forces. Especially at a time when they are asked to perform a multitude of roles and missions.

Currently, the effort and resources of the Army are directed toward the capability of fighting two major regional conflicts (MRC) simultaneously. However, a great deal of that capability, as we enter the 21st century, will be enhanced by the

strategic mobility of pre-positioned equipment and yet-to-be bought C-17 airlift aircraft and ships — Roll On/Roll Off — with a 24-knot capability.

Personnel

In the area of personnel, Maj. Gen. Wallace Arnold, assistant deputy chief of staff for personnel, said that as we move toward reshaping the Army, we must avoid a "hollow Army." He said that from the Army's perspective, America must:

- maintain full funding of Army recruitment and advertising programs to ensure a quality force;
- stop benefits erosion, ensure adequate compensation for America's Army and its retirees; and
- stabilize the Army's strength at 495,000 and civilian strength at 228,000.

Arnold noted the size of the Army is moving from an 800,000-man force in 1989 to a current force of 542,000. By 1996, it will be at a troop strength of 495,000. Similarly, the Reserve will move from a high of 776,000 in 1989 to 642,000 today and 575,000 by 1998.

Roles & Missions

Brig. Gen. Jack Costello, Roles and Mission Office, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, tracks the Army's participation in the Defense Department's Commission, which oversees the roles and mission of the armed forces. This office makes recommendations regarding how the respective services perform operationally and with one another. Its report is due in May of 1995.

The bottom line in this series of excellent discussions by senior Army planning officials is that these are difficult times.

We, as a veterans service organization, with a historic interest in and objective of promoting an active, firm foreign policy and strong national defense, must ensure that America remains committed to national security.

U.S. FORCE STRUCTURE — 1999

ARMY 10 Divisions (active)
5+ Divisions (Reserve, 15 combat brigades)
NAVY 11 Aircraft Carriers (active)
1 Aircraft Carrier (Reserve/training)
45-55 Attack Submarines
346 Ships

AIR FORCE 3 Fighter Wings (active)
7 Fighter Wings (Reserve)
Up to 184 Bombers

MARINE CORPS 3 Marine Expeditionary Forces
174,000 Personnel (active endstrength)
42,000 Personnel (Reserve endstrength)

STRATEGIC NUCLEAR FORCES - 2003

18 Ballistic Missile Subs
Up to 94 B-52 Bombers
20 B-2 Bombers
500 Minuteman III ICBMs (single warhead)



continued from pg. 1

legislative push. For instance, establishing an automatic mechanism to eliminate the entire national debt over a specified period of years in the form of a balanced budget amendment.

It may be appealing on the surface, but it is also fraught with problems. For one, once such a mechanism is established, it could compel reductions in federal expenditures even at a time when economic conditions would call for an opposite fiscal course to be pursued.

Thus, the entire American economy could be placed in jeopardy. Falling short of such a dire situation, this mechanism would nonetheless mandate draconian reductions in government programs, primarily those which are funded on a "discretionary basis." Veterans health care is one such program.

Further, eliminating the national debt may well require entitlement programs to be cut. In this event, veterans disability compensation would certainly be capped and perhaps even reduced. In fact, veterans programs and the entire VA system could be placed in jeopardy with a constitutional mandate to eliminate the debt in place. But this scenario is only prospective.

Cutting Committees

Neither the House nor Senate Veterans Affairs committees have enjoyed the extraordinary fiscal largess experienced by certain other congressional committees. Like the veterans programs they oversee, they have just been provided with sufficient tools to get the job done. Make no mistake, they have done an outstanding job in this regard.

But this is not due to a surfeit of staffing and funds. It is hard work that has allowed them to perform so well. So it is the VFW's position that the House Veterans Affairs Committee must not be subjected to House-wide cuts in staffing and funding.

Prestige Lacking

It is here that I will further address something I touched upon earlier. One of the

reasons the VA committees have not received the same financial blessings as some of the other committees is that they have consistently proven to be unpopular among our lawmakers with respect to committee assignments.

Another problem is that members of veterans committees simply are not in a position to steer federal dollars or other benefits to their respective home states and districts. Unlike members of such committees as Appropriations, Agriculture, Armed Services and Interior, just to name a few.

Contact Your Representatives

It is my grave concern that should the push to reduce committee size and numbers grow too extreme — unpopular may well equate to expendable. We must not allow such a situation to emerge.

While the Washington Office will, of course, continue to closely work with the Congress, to preclude any such eventuality, much more now needs to be done. VFW members must regularly correspond with their lawmakers to express our views on the affairs of veterans and the nation. It is critical that we pay special attention to the new Republican committee chairmen as well as the freshmen members of the House and Senate.

Let them know what we are about as an organization, and urge them to work to protect the entitlements and benefits which veterans have earned through special service to the nation.

In this way we will not only articulate our particular objectives and concerns, but also let them know that VA and veterans programs have a large and active constituency. We must bring across that the Veterans Affairs committees and, for that matter, the Department of Veterans Affairs, are not operating within some kind of public vacuum. Veterans and their supporters throughout the country are paying close attention. They insist that veterans programs not be sacrificed.

**VETERANS OF
FOREIGN WARS
OF THE U.S.**



**LEGISLATIVE
AND
SECURITY
PRIORITY GOALS
FOR 1995**

PRIORITY NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM 1994-1995



PREAMBLE

It (benefits) was a part of their hire . . . it was the price of their blood and of your Independency, it is therefore more than a common debt, it is a debt of honour. . .

--George Washington

That special segment of our society who were the FIRST TO SERVE when called upon to defend our Nation are now being faced with another battle. As this Nation struggles to reverse deficit spending, those benefits and entitlements that have been earned by our veterans are slowly being eroded and diminished. Ironically, the debt of honor owed our Nation's veterans is falling victim to the fiscal debt that is undermining the Nation's very foundation.

Today, with fewer veterans in Congress, it is becoming easier and apparently more acceptable to once again ask veterans to sacrifice. This time, not with their blood but with the benefits and entitlements they have earned. Veterans, like most Americans, do not want to pass along to their children an unmanageable debt. Veterans, as well as all citizens are being told that to reduce the national debt and balance the annual budget requires their sacrifice. We constantly hear that spending on entitlements must be reduced. What we do not hear is that America's veterans already know the meaning of sacrifice. Veterans have experienced sacrifice when they answered the call of our government in its time of need. While serving their Nation, veterans have lost months and years with their loved ones and have been forced to delay the pursuit of civilian careers. Many returned home disabled and far too many gave the supreme sacrifice.

Today, veterans are still no stranger to sacrifice. In the battle to reduce the deficit, more than \$10 billion in savings have been realized through reductions in VA programs over the past decade. As a result of deficit reduction, the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Care system has suffered greatly. Because of severe under funding, VA medical centers are being forced to delay much needed equipment replacement and plant maintenance, reduce staff, close wards, and, in some cases, delay or ration medical treatment.

The Congress must recognize and fully understand that veteran entitlements are not the cause of the economic problems facing our Nation. In fact, the cost of providing earned entitlements to our veterans is actually decreasing.

As the Department of Veterans Affairs faces a crisis in its health care system, so does America's medical care system. As the Nation moves toward national health care reform, it is imperative VA remain an independent and exclusive medical care system dedicated to serving our Nation's veterans. Any attempt to diminish VA's role as a primary provider of health care will not only be detrimental to veterans but will also undermine this Nation's position as the world's leader in medical research and greatly reduce our capability to educate future physicians.

Not only is reform in the health care arena mandatory, it is also essential VA reform its eligibility criteria so all veterans will have access to the full continuum of health care. In too many cases veterans are being denied care in one facility only to learn they would have been accepted for treatment in another facility. Veterans should not be subjected to the doubt and confusion which exists today in determining who will be admitted or will be denied treatment in the system created exclusively for them.

Of the entire veteran community, no single group was targeted for sacrifice more than the military retiree. One most recent attempt was the cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) cited in the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993, Public Law 103-66, that made 1 April the effective date for all federal civil service retiree's to receive their COLA and 1 October the effective date for military retiree's to receive theirs. If this scheme is not defeated annually over the next five years, it will have the effect of requiring the military retiree's to provide 80% of the total savings to be realized from the reduction of COLA payments.

Another long-standing issue is the fact that of all categories of federal employees only the military retiree is required under law to suffer a dollar-for-dollar reduction from his longevity retirement pension if that retiree is also in receipt of compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for a service-connected disability. Our military retirees have earned their retirement income and should not have to sacrifice a portion of it in order to receive the disability compensation to which they are entitled by law.

Also there is the important issue of veterans finally being awarded VA compensation for service connected illness/injury more than three years after filing their claim. Present law precludes filing an adjusted Federal Income Tax return with the IRS. Hence military retirees cannot recoup their previously paid retirement money which would now be offset with tax-free VA dollars.

In its attempt to reduce spending, Congress is also proposing to initiate reform within its own house. One approach under consideration is to reduce the number of standing congressional committees. Inconceivably, it has been suggested that the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees be redesignated Armed Services Subcommittees. With all the attempts to diminish or eliminate veterans benefits and entitlements, it is now crucial that veterans continue to have a strong voice in the form of a congressional standing committee.

In meeting the employment and training needs of veterans, it is crucial that a strong veterans' preference policy remain in place, and that agency hiring authorities observe and respect the spirit and letter of these laws and policies. Due to attacks on veterans' preference policy, detractors have succeeded in undermining many of the positive effect of these laws and policies.

This has had a dampening effect in the hiring of veterans. In 1985, veterans comprised nearly 35 percent of the federal civilian workforce. Based on a 1992 Report to Congress, that number has dropped to 28 percent. In the private sector the drop-off in the number of veterans being hired is deplorable, even though many companies that receive federal contracts have a special obligation to consider veterans first.

In 1993-94 blatant violations and abuses of veterans' preference abounded throughout the federal government and unfortunately, those veterans who were the

victims of those violations could only expect minimum assistance from the employing agency or the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the overall manager of federal personnel policies.

What appears to be total disregard of veterans' preference is best illustrated by recent actions of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) which carried out massive "reorganization" of its workforce, resulting in the displacement of over 47,000 workers. The reorganization failed to follow reduction-in-force (RIF) rules which in part gives "bumping" rights to veterans. Subsequently, several of those veterans were reassigned to lower grade jobs which is a violation of RIF procedures. In subsequent rulings by the Merit System Protection Board (MSPB-a federal agency which adjudicates personnel violations), the Postal Service has been admonished to (in effect) restore the veterans to their previously held positions or reached an acceptable alternative.

In working toward our priority goals, we are committed to opposing any attempt to weaken or otherwise de-emphasize veterans' preference in federal hiring activities. We call upon the Congress to strengthen laws for assuring that veterans' preference is fully observed and implemented by all federal hiring activities and for reporting each agency's progress on an annual basis.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY GOALS

1994-1995

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS BUDGET

We prevail upon the Congress to adopt a budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs that will assure the integrity of the entire VA system so no veteran will be denied or have delayed any benefit, entitlement, or medical treatment to which they are eligible.

NATIONAL HEALTH CARE

We call upon Congress to insist that any National Health Care plan retains the Department of Veterans Affairs' Health Administration as a separate, independent and exclusive health care option for veterans.

COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT FOR VA BENEFICIARIES AND MILITARY RETIREES

Full cost-of-living adjustments at least equal to the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) be provided annually and in a timely manner to all recipients of VA compensation and military retirement pay.

ELIGIBILITY REFORM

We adamantly support the enactment of legislation providing that all veterans have access to the full continuum of medical care provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

OPPOSE OFFSET OF MILITARY RETIRED PAY

We strongly support the amending of current law so as to allow the concurrent receipt of military retirement pay as well as VA compensation for those military retirees who have a service-connected disability.

ENTITLEMENT PROTECTION

We adamantly oppose any attempt by the Federal Government to cap or diminish those entitlements earned by our Nation's veterans or provided to their widows or orphans.

MAINTAIN HOUSE AND SENATE VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEES

We urge the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate to retain the Veterans' Affairs Committees as standing committees in both Houses of Congress.

ALLOW MILITARY RETIREES TO FILE AMENDED FEDERAL TAX RETURNS

Military retirees be allowed to file amended tax returns back to effective date of award of VA disability compensation regardless of period of time involved.

VETERANS' PREFERENCE

We continue our strong support of the provision of veterans' preference in federal employment and oppose any effort to reduce or circumvent this hard earned benefit. We call upon federal policymakers to strengthen laws and guidelines for assuring that veterans' preference is fully observed and implemented by federal hiring activities.

BETTER ENFORCEMENT OF VETERANS' AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN FEDERAL CONTRACTS

We call upon the U.S. Department of Labor, Office Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) to increase its vigilance of the Veterans Affirmative Programs under 38 USC, Section 4212, and to vigorously enforce its provisions through which the employment of veterans in the private sector may be enhanced.

OPPOSE THE TRANSFER OF
VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE

We strongly support keeping the Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) as a independent agency within the Department of Labor. We urge Congress to oppose legislation that would merge VETS into the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and thereby compromise its oversight role of ensuring veterans receive priority and preference in services provided by federally funded employment and training providers.

VETERANS REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS PROTECTION

We urge Congress to enact the strongest measures that secures reemployment rights for veterans and all other individuals called to serve in the U.S. military service while not placing an undue burden on the employers of America.

PRIORITY
NATIONAL SECURITY AND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS PROGRAM
1994-1995
★ ★ ★
PREAMBLE

Major political changes have reshaped our Nation and the entire world. Today, after four decades, the collapse of communism and the transformation of the Cold War have unleashed new forces for peaceful democratic changes. The Cold War has ended and freedom has advanced across Eastern Europe giving hope to millions. Democratic forces have redrawn the political map of the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe. In Western Europe, a reunified Germany remains a member of the NATO Alliance which is also redefining its security role. In Central America, dictators and communist juntas were deposed and democratic governments restored in Panama and Nicaragua. However, in Europe, Yugoslavia's internal problems threaten the stability of the region and in the Caribbean, Haiti and Cuba have vexed U.S. policy makers.

These changes came about because, for the duration of the Cold War, our country remained committed to a strategy of peace through strength. Our political leaders, actively supported by the VFW, were able to maintain a strong defense program and a firm foreign policy that set the example for other countries. American leadership, sustained by this example and, again, supported by the VFW, forged a collective defense that contained the challenge of an aggressive and repressive communist ideology.

Over the past decades, American leadership and its commitment to the strategy of peace through strength finally prevailed as millions threw off the communist yoke and embraced democracy.

The VFW endorsed and encouraged these democrat-

ic changes in Europe, Central America and the Soviet Union. But even as we applaud these peaceful changes, the lessons we learned from both Cold and Hot Wars remind us what must be done to preserve the blessings of liberty for posterity. Those lessons remind us that we must never again be unprepared, as we were fifty years ago, to meet aggression. An active, firm foreign policy and strong national defense are of vital importance in keeping the peace. It was the best policy yesterday. It is the best policy today and it will remain the best policy against future aggression.

Throughout its 95 year history, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States has met the challenge of sustained support for a firm foreign policy and strong national defense so long as there were serious threats to our survival. The recent events in Europe, in the Mideast and the Soviet Union confirm our dedication to remain committed to this and other priority goals described below.

PRIORITY SECURITY GOALS 1994-95

NATIONAL STRATEGY OF PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH

Our National Security Program for 1994-1995 reaffirms our commitment to a National Strategy of Peace Through Strength. Despite the major changes in the world, the lessons of the past half century of conflict serve notice that the United States must maintain defense forces that, in the judgment of our military leaders, are adequate to meet current and future threats. Our awareness of the dangers still ahead lead us to support the maintenance of effective security and intelligence capabilities to prevent strategic surprise from any quarter.

We also know that our freedom and security can best be achieved by remaining united in common purpose and defense with our allies and friends.

We recognize that the political changes that transformed Europe can be endangered or reversed unless our Nation maintains a firm foreign policy that nourishes a brighter future for the new democracies of Europe, Asia and of Central America. Within our hemisphere, Castro remains the communist dictator of an isolated and unsupported Cuba. The VFW believes it is time to increase pressure to force Castro out and that the U.S. should use all measures, short of violence or military action, to accomplish this. With regard to Haiti, the VFW opposes military intervention to bail out failed economic or diplomatic initiatives which are not in the national interest.

MISSING IN ACTION

With over 2,200 Americans still missing in Southeast Asia, another 8,000 missing in Korea, and 78,000 from World War II, the resolution of this heart-rending, humanitarian issue remains a priority issue for the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The VFW reaffirms its steadfast commitment to the goal of the fullest possible accounting of our missing men. For us, this issue will remain a non-negotiable matter of honor and a duty to be fulfilled for all our lost

comrades. In consideration of Vietnam, the VFW recognizes that at some point in time, but only after significant results in accounting for our POW/MIAs have been achieved, we should lift the constraints of the economic embargo and move towards normalizing diplomatic relations thereby encouraging even greater cooperation toward our goal.

In reaching this decision, the VFW will be guided by our own opinions, factual findings and judgments as determined by periodic visits to the region by our National Officers and on the best information available. During such visits to the region, our representatives will attempt to open a dialogue with local organizations in order to pursue our goal of the fullest possible accounting.

Among the changes we support is a thorough review and revision of the 1942 Missing Persons Act to better protect our POW/MIAs and their families. We also place on the record our conviction that in order to prevent future POW/MIA tragedies, the U.S. Government insist on ironclad guarantees that any future truce, peace or surrender agreements provide for the fullest possible accounting and that the U.S. Government retain and maintain POW/MIA intelligence archivists.

With regard to the over 8,000 Korean War POW/MIAs, the VFW, having seen new opportunities to account for our MIAs, urges the United States and Korean governments to seek more active efforts to recover and return our missing comrades.

Those still missing from World War II will not be forgotten. The VFW will continue to play an active role to recover our World War II and Cold War comrades and urge the retention of the U.S.-Russian Joint Commission to carry out this work.

The VFW endorses projects which foster a growing public awareness of the POW/MIA issue. We support the annual POW/MIA Recognition Day and flying the POW/MIA flag from state buildings as well as public businesses.

MILITARY POSTURE

The VFW supports a national defense posture which, in the judgment of our military leaders, is adequate to meet current defense requirements and more than equal to the current threats. We support a common

sense approach to the withdrawal and reduction of U.S. forces in Europe. The VFW believes the U.S. must retain such land, sea and air bases as necessary to support military operations in Europe and elsewhere. Also, we reaffirm our support for the continued existence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and for the U.S. Army's School of the Americas. However, we oppose a direct role for U.S. combat forces in the Yugoslav civil war.

STRATEGIC FORCES/STRATEGIC DEFENSE

Whereas the strategic bomber supports our national strategy of deterrence and increases our technological advantage over potential aggressors, the VFW endorses the production and deployment of the B-2 STEALTH bomber as a vital part of a strong strategic TRIAD. The VFW also strongly endorses and urges others to endorse the deployment of a ballistic missile defense as a first priority before the end of the century and we urge the President and the Congress to review their current priorities and reestablish strategic defense as a strategic priority with appropriate funding.

ARMED FORCES

The VFW expresses our highest regard and support to the men and women of the Armed Forces — active, reserve and National Guard — and salute those who have and are serving. The VFW is on record supporting the continued maintenance of the Selective Service System and urge Congressional support for full funding.

We support the award of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (AFEM) to those who served in El Salvador for 60 days or more and the Korean Service Medal to those who served in that country without recognition. We also support the AFEM for the Naval Medical Augmentation Team in Operation Urgent Fury.

The VFW opposes any plans or directives which would place U.S. military forces under the command of foreign military officers, including those who are operating exclusively under orders from the United Nations. Further, we call upon the Congress to reject any effort to surrender the United States military, our foreign policy or any sovereignty to the United Nations.

The VFW continues to oppose efforts by the

President and homosexual organizations to force the military services to accept and/or retain homosexuals and we urge this matter be taken before the Supreme Court to seek final judicial reaffirmation of homosexual exclusion from the Armed Forces. The Uniformed Code of Military Justice should be rewritten to dismiss any question of the denial of civil rights. We also oppose the current Administration's plans to assign women serving in the Armed Forces to jobs that call for them to aggressively seek out, close with and kill or capture enemy forces. We urge the United States Congress to exercise its responsibility and reexamine these personnel assignment policies with a view of restricting women from direct combat positions.

TERRORISM/IMMIGRATION

The VFW urges decisive action to punish terrorists and support for enactment of a full range of measures to deter, guard against and combat terrorism wherever located to include reviewing all procedures for screening and identifying possible terrorist groups in the U.S. We urge that other countries be reminded "there are no neutrals in the war against terrorism."

Recognizing that terrorism has been linked to illegal immigration, we petition for an expanded and strengthened Customs and Immigration Services and U.S. Coast Guard. We also support the enactment of emergency measures to prevent the smuggling of illegal aliens and to stop, detain and deport potential terrorists or those with ties to terrorist groups. We urge that military resources be employed, as necessary, to assist in stopping the flow of illegal aliens. Also, we believe the President and the Congress should carefully consider the results and recommendations of the Bipartisan Review of the 1986 Immigration Act.

However, we also support the Congress in urging the Administration to withhold refugee status to former Iraqi POWs and those foreign leaders who are guilty of acts of inhumanity against their people.

PROTECTING TECHNOLOGY

In recognizing that a sound and prosperous national economy is essential to our military power, the VFW urges measures be taken to protect our new technolo-

gies. We endorse legislation supporting and protecting new technologies to prevent erosion of our national economy and of our national security. Additionally, we urge Congress to pass legislation to limit foreign ownership of U.S. corporations, companies, businesses, industrial technologies or processes which are vital or sensitive to our national defense.

PACIFIC ALLIES

We urge the United States to continue its support for the Republic of Korea by providing modern weapons and technology, to vigorously respond to any aggression by North Korea, and bring pressure on North Korea to cease its nuclear weapons effort and comply with international safeguards.

The VFW continues its vigorous support for the previously approved sale of modern aircraft (especially the previously approved F-16s), weapons and technology to the Republic of China on Taiwan. We also urge the President and the Congress to support any bid by the Republic of China to rejoin the United Nations.



VFW NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
VFW BUILDING
406 W. 34TH STREET
KANSAS CITY, MO 64111



VFW WASHINGTON OFFICE
VFW MEMORIAL BUILDING
200 MARYLAND AVENUE, N.E.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20002

Through its programs and projects the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States honors the dead by helping the living. With over 10,800 Posts and over 2.1 million members, the VFW is a major force representing America's 27 million veterans and their families.

Founded in 1899 by veterans of the Spanish-American War, the VFW now has members from WWI, WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War, as well as actions like Grenada, Lebanon, Panama, Kuwait and Somalia.

Together these overseas wartime veterans bring a wealth of knowledge and dedication to the organization. Their interests and needs are the same as those of America. When you listen to the veteran you hear the voice of an entire nation.

VFW strength, power and influence is

derived directly from its membership. 1993-94 witnessed another strong year for the VFW. By joining, veterans send a clear message to Congress that they are involved. And the VFW continues to grow in numbers and strength as a result.

During the decade of the '90s, veterans must remain active to ensure hard-earned benefits. Activity is the organization's most potent weapon.

The VFW has 10 national services and programs, each designed to serve the needs of members and the communities in which they live. Let's take a look at them.



SERVICES

NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE

The VFW maintains a nationwide service network that provides assistance to veterans and their families seeking or determining eligibility for state and federal veterans benefits.

This great pyramid of service starts with the Post service officer who directs claimants to the trained and professional VFW Department service officers in each of the 58 Department of Veterans Affairs regional offices around the country. They are the focal point for any claim for an entitlement.

This network is supported by claims and appeals consultants, field representatives and other staff in the VFW Washington Office and National Headquarters. This core professional staff focuses on matters concerning the full range of services or entitlements available to veterans and their families which includes, but is not limited to, military records correction, discharge up-



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grades, education benefits, disability compensation and pension eligibility.

Field representatives make regular visits to VA medical centers, regional offices and national cemeteries. These visits ensure that the system established by the nation to care for its veterans is responsive to their needs. There is no fee of any kind for this representation and the VFW stands ready to assist any veteran or dependent requiring assistance. This service exemplifies the VFW's commitment to *Honor the Dead by Helping the Living*.

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE

Veterans entitlements and programs are the direct result of years of legislative effort. VFW has stood in the forefront of those efforts and has proudly led the fight for better treatment for all the nation's veterans.

Each year new challenges arise, and the VFW is there to meet them. VFW has been successful in fighting VA budget cutbacks and preserving the VA system. Specific health issues such as compensation for exposure to Agent Orange have been VFW priorities for many years.

Your VFW legislative team continually spearheads the drive to have veterans entitlements not only maintained but expanded. Our victories are the result of working with you — the members.

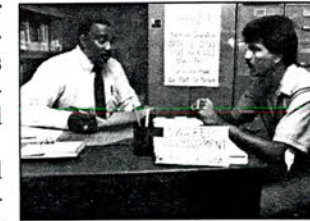
You provide the legislative team with the strength needed to win on Capitol Hill.

NATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT

VFW maintains a national network of volunteer employment officers who identify pertinent issues at the local level. They participate in various state and community councils to voice veterans employment needs. Referrals are made through the new Post Job Opportunity Boards.

VFW's Washington Office director of employment is responsible for the organization's veterans jobs and training program. He represents the membership before committees and public/private sector agencies, monitors programs and recommends appropriate action. Assistance also is provided in filing claims.

An annual national employment awards program is conducted by the VFW to recognize individuals, groups and employers who excel in providing job opportunities to veterans.



NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

VFW is committed to working for a strong national defense and firm foreign policy. America is more secure today than yesterday because organizations like the VFW have traditionally taken an unwavering stance on issues of preparedness.

The national security resolutions adopted at annual conventions represent the VFW's platform. Military superiority and a well-trained military force are the centerpieces of this platform. Arms reductions that protect U.S. security and reduce the risk of conflict are the goal.

International affairs resolutions support the need for a bipartisan foreign policy that places national interests above all else. Such support for allies and friendly countries advances com-

mon goals and defends vital interests. Wherever GIs are sent, they have VFW support. And the VFW believes American troops must be under U.S. command.

PROGRAMS

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

The Voice of Democracy program is a broadcast scriptwriting contest conducted annually in the nation's high schools by the VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary. Tenth through 12th grade students tape-record their script on a patriotic theme. The recording is then judged at the Post level. Winners then move to the District level, Department (state) level, and finally to the national competition held during the VFW Mid-Winter Conference in Washington, D.C.

Each state winner receives an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., where they witness government in action and visit national historic sites and monuments.

Voice of Democracy winners annually receive more than \$2.4 million in scholarships and awards from all levels in the VFW.



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Fully aware that the nation's future rests with its youth, the VFW actively promotes and sponsors a wide range of youth programs:

- **Boy Scouts of America** units are sponsored by 1,262 Posts accounting for over 36,000 boys.
- **Sons of the VFW** is designed to develop the parent-son relationship as well as provide opportunities to participate in activities benefitting the entire family.
- **Sports** sponsored by the VFW range from baseball to ice hockey.

- **Junior Rifle Clubs**, in cooperation with the National Rifle Association, promote competitive matches for individuals and teams. Safety is always a top priority.

- **Reserve Officer Training Corps** allows high school and college students to earn the VFW medal pendant and citation presented annually to outstanding cadets.

- **Special Olympics and the Jr. Olympics** programs are endorsed and supported by the VFW.

- **Child Identification** via both VFW Posts and the Ladies Auxiliaries distributes booklets to help communities fingerprint their children.

These are just a sampling of the varied youth activities sponsored or supported by the VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary. In fact, nearly any youth activity which encourages good health and builds character is supported by the VFW.



AMERICANISM

Americanism programs provide support for our democratic institutions.

- **Loyalty Day** is one of the highlights of the Americanism program. It is a national day for reaffirming allegiance to America and the ideals for which it stands. Through parades, speeches and other events, we have made Loyalty Day an opportunity to say, "I'm proud to be an American."

- **Patriotic Education Programs.** The VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary have always been among the leaders in advocating patriotic education.

Distributing patriotic literature, conducting patriotic ceremonies and parades and holding flag presentations are some of the ways the VFW ensures proper citizenship education, especially for school children.



BUDDY POPPY

VFW Buddy Poppy sales were 16,554,159 in 1993-94.

Since 1922, when the first Buddy Poppy sale was held, this program has raised millions of dollars to support the National Veterans Service, Department service programs and the VFW National Home in Eaton Rapids, Mich. Buddy Poppy ideally fulfills the VFW goal of honoring the dead by helping the living in a tangible way.

SAFETY

In conjunction with the Ladies Auxiliary, VFW has instituted numerous safety programs that benefit members and non-members alike. Here are some examples:

- **Home Protection** encompasses fire prevention and home security.
- **Drive to Survive** teaches drivers of all ages how to drive defensively.
- **Hunter Safety** promotes responsible, ethical hunter conduct, emphasizes importance of wildlife management laws and regulations, and teaches safe handling of firearms.

- **Bicycle Safety** covers bicycle selection, maintenance, developing cyclist's skills and knowledge of traffic rules and regulations.

- **Lite-A-Bike** entails bicycle inspections, testing of cyclists' riding ability and application of reflectorized tape.

- **Lite-A-Tike** provides reflective triangles and strips for illuminating backpacks of school children.

- **55 Alive Mature Driving** is a classroom training program offered to older drivers in conjunction with the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

- **Drug Awareness** is a method of attacking drugs in the work place, school and home. Through educational materials, we are teaching people of all



ages the perils of substance abuse.

- **Public Recognition**, through commendation certificates, is a way of saying thanks to law enforcement officers, firefighters and paramedics in local communities across the country.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Members give their time, effort and money to raise the consciousness of communities in such important areas as the environment, safety, schools, youth and community improvement programs.

Posts annually work with organizations such as the March of Dimes and Keep America Beautiful. Yearly contests are held to recognize outstanding efforts by the Posts. Individual projects may also be submitted to National Headquarters for special recognition.

Working side-by-side with the Ladies Auxiliary, VFW members promote community projects to assist others and improve their towns and cities as a whole. In doing so, the VFW plays a constructive role and enhances its visibility.

RECOGNITION AND REMEMBRANCE

VFW began promoting veterans memorials in a big way with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Members contributed in excess of \$200,000 to this worthy effort during the early 1980s.

VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary have contributed \$610,000 to the Korean War Memorial, due for dedication in July 1995.

VFW is on record in support of a WWII memorial in Washington, D.C., too.

Presently, the organization is also supporting the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project as well as the Women In Military Service For America Foundation.



Veterans In Action

VFW Services and Programs



Post 5752 in Mount Joy, Penn. presented a donation to the Donegal Youth Soccer organization to help purchase equipment.



Allen F. "Gunner" Kent
Commander-in-Chief
1994-95

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Together these overseas wartime veterans bring a wealth of knowledge and dedication to the organization. Their interests and needs are the same as those of America. When you listen to the veteran you hear the voice of an entire nation.

VFW strength, power and influence is

derived directly from its membership. 1993-94 witnessed another strong year for the VFW. By joining, veterans send a clear message to Congress that they are involved. And the VFW continues to grow in numbers and strength as a result.

During the decade of the '90s, veterans must remain active to ensure hard-earned benefits. Activity is the organization's most potent weapon.

The VFW has 10 national services and programs, each designed to serve the needs of members and the communities in which they live. Let's take a look at them.



SERVICES

NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE

The VFW maintains a nationwide service network that provides assistance to veterans and their families seeking or determining eligibility for state and federal veterans benefits.

This great pyramid of service starts with the Post service officer who directs claimants to the trained and professional VFW Department service officers in each of the 58 Department of Veterans Affairs regional offices around the country.

grades, education benefits, disability compensation and pension eligibility.

Field representatives make regular visits to VA medical centers, regional offices and national cemeteries. These visits ensure that the system established by the nation to care for its veterans is responsive to their needs. There is no fee of any kind for this representation and the VFW stands ready to assist any veteran or dependent requiring assistance. This service exemplifies the VFW's commitment to *Honor the Dead by Helping the Living*.



Veterans entitlements

You provide the legislative team with the strength needed to win on Capitol Hill.

NATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE AND EMPLOYMENT

VFW maintains a national network of volunteer employment officers who identify pertinent issues at the local level. They participate in various state and community councils to voice veterans employment needs. Referrals are made through the new Post Job Opportunity Boards.

VFW's Washington Office director of employment is responsible for the organization's veterans jobs and training program. He represents the membership before committees and public/private sector agencies, monitors programs and recommends appropriate action. Assistance also is provided in filing claims.

An annual national employment awards program is conducted by the VFW to recognize individuals, groups and employers who excel in providing job opportunities to veterans.



NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

VFW is committed to working for a strong na-

mon goals and defends vital interests. Wherever GIs are sent, they have VFW support. And the VFW believes American troops must be under U.S. command.

PROGRAMS

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

The Voice of Democracy program is a broadcast scriptwriting contest conducted annually in the nation's high schools by the VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary. Tenth through 12th grade students tape-record their script on a patriotic theme. The recording is then judged at the Post level. Winners then move to the District level, Department (state) level, and finally to the national competition held during the VFW Mid-Winter Conference in Washington, D.C.

Each state winner receives an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., where they witness government in action and visit national historic sites and monuments.

Voice of Democracy winners annually receive more than \$2.4 million in scholarships and awards from all levels in the VFW.

