

Issue: The War And Sovereignty In Iraq

Message points:

- The American Legion applauds the turnover of sovereignty and responsibility for the governing of the Iraqi people to its indigenous authorities and urges that those responsibilities for infrastructure rebuilding in Iraq be maintained in partnership with the United States until the ministerial apparatus and bureaus are able to fully administer these areas of development.
- The American Legion urges the involvement of all Iraqi citizens and groups in the formation of a the government and expresses the expectation that all elections be free, fair, and inclusive for Iraqi citizens of all ethnic backgrounds.
- The American Legion encourages efforts by the United States to continue to involve as many nations as possible under the appropriate multinational alliance umbrella to support the rebuilding efforts in Iraq and to deploy military forces to provide security as to lessen the burden for United States forces in Iraq and reduce potential resentment toward the international security force.

Issue: American Legion Statement of U.S. Foreign Policy Objectives

Message points:

- We believe U.S. foreign policy should embody 12 principles as outlined in Resolution "Principles of U.S. Foreign Policy". These principles are:
 - 1) Recognition of U.S. responsibilities as a leader of the Free World;
 - 2) Achievement of world peace by a peace through strength posture;
 - 3) Support for a global effort on multiple fronts to eliminate terrorism;
 - 4) Support the promotion of democracy and human rights around the world especially in those countries with repressive regimes and those ethnic and religious minorities who have sought peaceful political change in those countries.
 - 5) Participation in collective security alliances;
 - 6) Negotiation and implementation of equitable, verifiable arms control agreements, which improve U.S. national security;
 - 7) Opposition to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means including ballistic missiles;
 - 8) Opposition to terrorism and drug trafficking;
 - 9) Support for international organizations, which support U.S. interests;
 - 10) Participation in an increasingly interdependent world trading system;
 - 11) Recognition that the President is the chief architect of U.S. foreign policy and that Congress performs important oversight functions.
 - 12) Support for the appropriate resources to promote and protect U.S. vital national interests worldwide.
 - 13) Support international press freedom and the protection of the media to report unbiased news from countries with repressive regimes.

Issue: Terrorism

Message points:

- The American Legion condemns all forms of terrorism domestic and international, especially the brutal and cowardly attacks on the U.S. on September 11, 2001. For decades The American Legion has strongly opposed terrorism in resolutions calling for the U.S. Government to not make concessions to terrorist and to use all available means to punish terrorists and terrorist group.
- We urge the U.S. Government, in concert with allies and friendly nations, to embark on a campaign using military, diplomatic, economic, intelligence and other resources to systematically and completely eliminate terrorism.
- The American Legion also urges the public and elected officials to learn and understand the nature of the current trend in international terrorism. That apart from the traditional radical politically motivated movements, the current iteration of Islamic Fundamentalist Jihad movements is seeking not just political change but rather social change to a theocratic Caliphate that transcends modern notions of political terrorist driven movements. These movements are not confined to traditional Islamic populated countries but seek a world that is Islamic at the base and shuns the ideals of western, secular, representative government.

American Legion POW/MIA Policy

Message points:

- The POW/MIA issue is of paramount concern to The American Legion. The Legion's Mandate on this issue commits us to keep the spotlight on securing the full accounting for all POW/MIAs from the Gulf War, the war in Southeast Asia, the Cold War, the Korean War and World War II. Full accounting means the return of live POWs, the repatriation of their remains, or convincing evidence why neither of these is possible.
- With regard to Vietnam in particular, The American Legion has always believed that the Vietnamese have the knowledge and the capability to account for the fate of many more of our POW/MIAs from the War in Southeast Asia. Moreover, only Vietnam, by taking unilateral actions to repatriate remains and to provide relevant information from wartime records, documents and the oral history program, can help account for many still missing Americans.
- The American Legion continues to oppose the normalization of diplomatic relations with Vietnam. We remain unconvinced that Vietnam is cooperating in full faith on POW/MIA issues. We are also concerned about the poor state of human rights in Vietnam, especially for ethnic groups such as the Montagnards that were American allies during the war.
- The American Legion supports the continued declassification of all POW/MIA information, the strengthening of joint commissions with Russia, North Korea and China, and adequate resourcing of investigative efforts and field operations to resolve POW/MIA issues. The American Legion has also worked continuously with both Congress and the Defense Department to improve the policies and programs for the accountability of missing persons. For years The American Legion supported a National POW/MIA Recognition Day, which is now recognized annually on the third Friday in September.
- The American Legion will continue to speak out and exert maximum pressure on both the Administration and on the Congress to fully account for America's POW/MIAs.

Issue: Support for the U.S. Department of State

Message points:

- The American Legion is a strong supporter of the U.S. State Department and the various functions it performs for the American public overseas. The United States Department of State is the first line of defense of the nation in combating the myriad of security threats that face America from abroad. The State Department and its affiliated organizations are charged with a number of important missions; managing diplomatic coalitions with other countries and international institutions, promoting peace and stability in regions of vital interest, bringing nations together to address global challenges, creating jobs at home by opening markets abroad, and helping developing nations establish stable economic environments that provide investment and export opportunities.
- The State Department has historically been allocated just little more than 1% of the total federal budget to accomplish all of these tasks in contrast to the approximately 16% spent on defense. However, in recent years the State Department's responsibilities have expanded enormously to include combating threats from terrorism, international crime, and narcotics trafficking.
- The American Legion vigorously supports funding for the United States Department of State in order that it can maintain a credible initial deterrent to international threats to the United States and effectively promote American interests abroad.

Issue: Selected other Foreign Relations issues

The United Nations

- The American Legion remains supportive of the United Nations from its inception however; ongoing reforms must make the UN more effective. In addition, we are concerned with certain UN policies that affect the US directly. An equitable fiduciary relationship between the UN and the U.S., UN programs or policies do not infringe upon ensuring U.S. sovereignty. And the ineffectiveness of recent UN peacekeeping missions due to the lack of coherent force engagement policies.

The War on Drugs

- The American Legion is extremely concerned about the destruction caused by the infusion of illegal drugs into our communities. Realizing that much can be done to reduce demand here at home, we also support robust efforts to stem the production and flow of illegal drugs from their source and transit zones in Latin America and in Afghanistan.

Taiwan (Republic of China)

- The American Legion has vigorously supported Taiwan and its right to self-determination since 1949. Since that time we have also supported the sale of armaments to Taiwan so they can maintain a credible self-defense capability.

Human Rights in Vietnam

- The American Legion supports Congressional legislation that would highlight the human rights situation in Vietnam and seek to compel the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to improve the treatment of ethnic and religious minorities, especially in the Central Highlands, in order that they can enjoy the basic freedoms that all humans deserve.

Cuba

- The American Legion urges the U. S. Government to continue to maintain control of Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, continue intelligence overflights over Cuba, remain firm in opposition to export of revolution by Cuba, continue broadcasting true news and information to the Cuban people, and encourage the development of democracy and a free market economy in Cuba.

Africa

- The American Legion supports The U.S. military new Africa Command (AFRICOM), which will offer aid and military training and increase our political and diplomatic presence in a region long overdue our attention.