

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

### Message Points:

We believe US Foreign Policy should embody the following 12 principals as outlined in Resolution "Principals of US Foreign Policy". These policies are:

- Recognition that the US has great and multiple responsibilities as a leader of the Free World
- Dedication to achievement of world peace with freedom, secured by a peace through strength posture
- Support for a global fight on multiple fronts to end the scourge of terrorism
- Support for democracy and human rights in other countries when such is consistent with US national interests and national power
- Participation in essential collective security alliances, provided our allies contribute their fair share
- Negotiation of equitable, verifiable arms control agreements, which improve US national security
- Opposition to the spread of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons or long-range ballistic missiles which may be used by terrorists, terrorist organizations, communists or aggressor nations
- Determined opposition to international terrorism and drug trafficking
- Support for responsible international organizations that are consistent with US sovereignty and serve US national interests
- Participation in an increasingly interdependent Free World trading system based on fair and equitable trading practices
- Recognition that the President must be the chief architect of US foreign policy as envisioned in the US Constitution, while Congress performs important functions of advice, oversight and funding
- Support for the appropriate resources to promote and protect US vital national interests world-wide.

## **Issue: American Legion Foreign Policy on Terrorism**

### Message Points:

- The American Legion supports a global fight on multiple fronts to end the scourge of terrorism.
- The American Legion supports policies and legislation that will enhance funding for the US Agency for International Development (USAID) within the Department of State and seeks use of that funding towards targeted states whose failure to provide for its people could result in the expansion of international terrorism.
- The American Legion believes that the US Government should support African nations that clearly demonstrate open democratic reforms, human rights protection, and cooperation in the fight against international terrorism.

## **Issue: 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: Other Select Foreign Relations Policies**

### **Environmental Treaty**

#### Message Points:

- The American Legion urges the President and Congress to establish a worldwide plan to significantly reduce carbon-based emissions.
- A model similar to the Montreal Protocol of 1988 which 191 countries, including the United States, agreed to limit the harmful production of chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) to include equal standards and enforcement applying to all participating countries should be used to reduce carbon-based emissions.
- The American Legion urges the President and the Congress to reduce demand for fossil fuels through improved efficiency, diversified energy suppliers and fuel choices, and manage geopolitics in resource-rich areas that currently account for the majority of the United States' fuel imports.
- The American Legion urges the President and the Congress to take the lead within the international community to establish common principles for energy security and sustainability.

### **“Smart Power” Support**

#### Message Points:

- The American Legion urges the President and Congress to continue to pursue this strategy concerning foreign policy and international programs for the purpose of protecting United States national interests and internationally improving its strategic posture.
- The American Legion applauds the President and the Congress for modifying foreign policy by returning to an emphasis on strengthening established alliances and cultivating new allies with the aim of improving security and defense the United States and free societies around the world.

## **Expand Foreign Service Officer Corps**

### Message Points:

- The American Legion urges the President, Congress, and the Department of State to significantly increase the number of Foreign Service Officers in its ranks.
- That The American Legion urges the President, Congress, and the Department of State to implement a veterans' preference policy with the aim of recruiting more veterans into the Foreign Officer Corps whose experience may be an essential enhancement of the nation's diplomatic mission.