

many Americans, but not for the men who carried with them permanent battle scars, prolonged illnesses, and other grim reminders of war.

Absent a single Government agency possessing responsibility for veterans, and facing neglect, these brave men banded together to establish a handful of local organizations intended to help secure medical care and pensions for their military service. These original foreign service organizations, located in Ohio, Colorado, and Pennsylvania, gradually grew in number and influence and in 1914 came to be known collectively as the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Mr. President, it was several years later, on June 24, 1921, when the VFW's chapter in my home State of Maine was chartered. Today, there are 84 VFW posts in Maine to which over 16,000 veterans belong.

Those small groups of veterans who organized in 1899 have today grown to over 2 million strong. VFW members have fought and died in every war, conflict, and military intervention in which the United States has been engaged during this century. From factory workers to occupants of the White House, the VFW members and its Ladies Auxiliary have come to represent a cross section of American society, and each new generation of veterans has brought renewed strength and dedication to the VFW's founding principles.

As the 21st century approaches, the VFW's members continue to live by the organization's creed of "Honor the dead by helping the living." They do so by representing the interests of veterans across the Nation through an established network of trained service officers who, at no charge, help millions of veterans and their dependents secure the educational benefits, disability compensation, pension, and health care services that they are rightfully entitled to as a result of their distinguished service to our Country.

The VFW also has a long and proud tradition of supporting troops deployed overseas. From letter-writing campaigns in World War I, to "Welcome home" rallies after the Persian Gulf war, to providing care packages, to USO shows and, more recently, to providing free telephone cards enabling servicemen and women to call loved ones from their posts in Bosnia, the VFW continues to provide comfort and a touch of home to those men and women stationed far away.

The endeavors of the VFW, however, go well beyond the realm of "veterans helping veterans." In fact, service to the broader American community has always been a pillar of the VFW foundation.

Through the VFW's Community Service Program, members of its 10,000 posts serve local communities, States, and the Nation with all of the integ-

rity, ingenuity, and loyalty that have characterized the organization since its inception. During the past program year, for example, the VFW, working side by side with its Ladies Auxiliary, contributed nearly 13 million hours of volunteer service and donated nearly \$55 million to a variety of community projects. Commitment to worthy causes such as the March of Dimes, the Keep America Beautiful campaign, and many other volunteer organizations also continues to be a hallmark of service among VFW members.

The promotion of patriotism is another hallmark of the VFW's history. Since the beginning of its Americanization Committee in 1921, the VFW has actively taught traditional values to Americans both young and old. Today, teaching respect for the flag is a primary activity, as is educating children in the classroom about the critical role that veterans have played throughout our history.

The interests of today's youth are also met by VFW posts around the Nation through active support for drug prevention programs, the Boy Scouts of America, the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, and sponsorship of competitors in both the Junior and Special Olympics. The VFW has also recently commemorated 50 years of helping high school students attend college. Because of VFW support, in fact, America's young people annually receive more than \$2.6 million in scholarships.

The VFW deserves public national recognition for these efforts and for its many other contributions to improving the lives of our Nation's veterans and enhancing American society as a whole. Although as a country we can never fully repay the debt we owe to these brave men and women, we can certainly strive to honor the vision which led them into battle to protect the principles America holds dear.

We must uphold the memories of their heroic acts with respect, with reverence, and with our heartfelt admiration. By requesting that the U.S. Postal Service issue a commemorative stamp honoring the VFW's 100th anniversary, as was done for its 50th and 75th anniversaries, we can take a small step toward remembering their service and showing our deep appreciation for their unwavering commitment to our country, both in peacetime and in times of conflict. This, I believe, would be a much-deserved tribute to the VFW and its more than 2 million veterans of overseas service.

Mr. President, I am very pleased to note that you are a cosponsor of this important measure.

• Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, the resolution before the Senate today requesting that the United States Postal Service issue a commemorative postage stamp for the 100th anniversary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the

United States will honor our veterans who have so courageously fought in every war, conflict, police action, and military intervention since the Spanish-American War in 1899.

Members of the VFW have helped millions of veterans secure the education, disability compensation, pension, and health care benefits that veterans are rightfully entitled to receive as a result of their military service.

With over 2 million members the VFW has also been deeply involved in community service projects designed to encourage service in the local community benefiting education, the environment, health services, civic pride, and community betterment. For example, the VFW's Voice of Democracy essay competition provides over \$2.7 million in college scholarships annually to promising young students. The VFW's Safety Program conducts programs in home, auto, and bicycle safety, as well as programs dealing with drug awareness and substance abuse. Clearly, the VFW with over 10,000 posts continues to make valuable and significant contributions to our communities across the country.

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the VFW I urge my colleagues to support this resolution to commemorate our veterans for their service. •

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED

SOLDIERS', SALIORS', AIRMEN'S, AND MARINES' BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 1999

ROBB AMENDMENT NO. 7

(Ordered to lie on the table.)

Mr. ROBB submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill (S. 4) to improve pay and retirement equity for members of the Armed Forces; and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 28, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

SEC. 104. AVIATION CAREER OFFICER SPECIAL PAY.

(a) REPEAL OF EXPIRATION OF AUTHORITY.—Subsection (a) of section 301b of title 37, United States Code, is amended by striking “, during the period beginning on January 1, 1989, and ending on December 31, 1999.”.

(b) REPEAL OF REQUIREMENT FOR SERVICE IN CRITICAL AVIATION SPECIALTY AND LIMITATION TO CERTAIN YEARS OF CAREER AVIATION SERVICE.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended—

- (1) by striking paragraphs (2) and (5);
- (2) in paragraph (3), by striking “grade O-6” and inserting “grade O-7”;
- (3) by inserting “and” at the end of paragraph (4); and
- (4) by redesignating paragraphs (3), (4), and (6) as paragraphs (2), (3), and (4), respectively.

(c) REPEAL OF LOWER ALTERNATIVE AMOUNT FOR AGREEMENT TO SERVE FOR 3 OR FEWER

YEARS.—Subsection (c) of such section is amended by striking “than—” and all that follows and inserting “than \$25,000 for each year covered by the written agreement to remain on active duty.”.

(d) PRORATION AUTHORITY FOR COVERAGE OF INCREASED PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY.—Subsection (d) of such section is amended by striking “14 years of commissioned service” and inserting “25 years of aviation service”.

(e) TERMINOLOGY.—Such section is further amended—

(1) in subsection (f), by striking “A retention bonus” and inserting “Any amount”; and

(2) in subsection (i)(1), by striking “retention bonuses” in the first sentence and inserting “special pay under this section”.

(f) REPEAL OF CONTENT REQUIREMENTS FOR ANNUAL REPORT.—Subsection (i)(1) of such section is further amended by striking the second sentence.

(g) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such section if further amended—

(1) in subsection (g)(3), by striking the second sentence; and

(2) in subsection (j)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3); and

(B) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (2).

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would like to announce for information of the Senate and the public that a hearing of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will be held on Tuesday, February 23, 1999, 8:30 a.m., in SD-430 of the Senate Dirksen Building. The subject of the hearing is Education Reform: Governors' Views. For further information, please call the committee, 202/224-5375.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 24, 1999, at 9 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the President's budget request for FY2000 for Indian programs. The hearing will be held in room 485 of the Russell Senate Office Building. Those wishing additional information should contact the Committee on Indian Affairs at 202/224-2251.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would like to announce for information of the Senate and the public that a hearing of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will be held on Wednesday, February 24, 1999, 9:30 a.m., in SD-430 of the Senate Dirksen Building. The subject of the hearing is Privacy Under a Microscope: Balancing the Needs of Research and Confidentiality. For further information, please call the committee, 202/224-5375.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Senate Com-

mittee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry will meet on Wednesday, February 24, 1999, in SR-328A at 9:30 a.m. The purpose of this meeting will be to review the proposed FY2000 budget for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would like to announce for information of the Senate and the public that a hearing of the Subcommittee on Public Health, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will be held on Thursday, February 25, 1999, 9:30 a.m., in SD-430 of the Senate Dirksen Building. The subject of the hearing is Antimicrobial Resistance: Solutions to a Growing Public Health Threat. For further information, please call the committee, 202/224-5375.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs will meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 3, 1999, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a joint hearing with the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on American Indian trust management practices in the Department of the Interior. The hearing will be held in room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. Those wishing additional information should contact the Committee on Indian Affairs at 202/224-2251.

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I wish to announce that an oversight hearing has been scheduled before the Subcommittee on Water and Power of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The purpose of this hearing is to review the President's FY2000 budget request for the Bureau of Reclamation and the Power Marketing Administrations.

The hearing will take place on Wednesday, March 3, 1999, at 2 p.m. in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

Those who wish to testify or submit a written statement should write to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510. For further information, please contact Ms. Julia McCaul, Howard Useem, (PMA's) or Colleen Deegan (BOR) at (202) 224-8115.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Subcommittee on Forests and Public Land Management. The hearing will take place on Thursday, March 11, 1999, at 2 p.m., in SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC. The purpose of this oversight hearing is to receive testimony on the FY2000 proposed budget for the U.S. Forest Service. Those who wish to sub-

mit written statements should write to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510. For further information, please call Amie Brown or Mark Rey at (202) 224-6170.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Subcommittee on Forests and Public Land Management. The hearing will take place on Tuesday, March 16, 1999, at 2 p.m., in SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC. The purpose of this oversight hearing is to receive testimony on the FY2000 proposed budget for the U.S. Forest Service. Those who wish to submit written statements should write to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510. For further information, please call Amie Brown or Mark Rey at (202) 224-6170.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEE TO MEET

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be permitted to meet on February 22, 1999, at 1 p.m., in Dirksen 628 for the purpose of conducting a hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

LORENZO DA PONTE, 1749-1838

• Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, among the paintings hanging in the Blue Room of New York's City Hall is a full-length portrait of General Lafayette by Samuel F. B. Morse. The father of the telegraph (and noted member of the anti-Catholic “Know-Nothings”), began his career as a portrait artist. For his commission, Morse received \$100 and earned a reputation as a gifted painter. Before turning to invention, he would paint the portraits of a galaxy of New York worthies.

The subject of one such portrait is known to opera lovers the world over—Lorenzo Da Ponte. He was, of course, the librettist of Mozart's masterpieces Don Giovanni, Nozze di Figaro, and Così Fan Tutte. What makes his life especially intriguing to an American is his career in New York. In a preface to a 1959 edition of his Memoirs (first published in 1830) Thomas G. Bergin observes

By tradition, education, and experience, this European sophisticate would seem to be far removed from the American Psyche; but his deeper nature—eager, adventurous and basically evangelical—was well-adapted to the New World.