

The American Legion and Its Relation to Community Work

(Address delivered by Henry C. Morarity, of Chester L. Thompson Post No. 23 of Fort Bayard, N. M., at Tri-County Fourth of July Celebration, Park's Ranch, New Mexico July 4, 1921.)

GOVERNOR MECHEM AND CITIZENS OF NEW MEXICO—

It is indeed an honor to be asked to say a few words to this audience, on this the 145th birthday of our nation. And I am happy to convey to you a message from the American Legion, as a representative of Chester L. Thompson Post No. 23 of Fort Bayard, composed of disabled ex-service men and women of Hospital 55, battling back to health under your beautiful skies.

Organized less than three years ago, the American Legion today boasts of over 11,000 posts in the United States, and a membership of over 1,300,000. Mighty force, banded together for one purpose and one only. And that is in the development of sound, aggressive Americanism and citizenship in its members and in other citizens of our grand and glorious Republic. So long as the true spirit of citizenship remains alive in the country, its citizens as a whole will secure honest, capable service from their public officials and sound provisions in legislation. Therefore the Legion's task is confined to the development and maintenance of the universal Americanism and good citizenship. Particular decisions on questions of public policy it leaves without comment to the judgement of the individuals concerned.

The American Legion is absolutely non-political. There is no class, no creed, no party, no color. No holding public elective office can hold an office in any post of the Legion. Every national convention of the Legion has summarily squelched any idea of politics. We defy anyone to attempt to line up any American Legion Post on any political question. We won't allow it and it couldn't be done if we would.

It is today the most powerful force in existence for constructive American citizenship-nationalism-law and the form of government of our forefathers. It will continue to wield that force for good so long as men who have those ideals at heart join the Legion, support it and put their shoulders to the wheel to keep that spirit alive. The Legion can do more good with you in it than with you out. Therefore if there are any buddies in this audience today who has not yet joined the Legion, I ask you now, to come in with us and keep up the same fight for democracy and right that you did in 1917-18 and 19. We want you and need you, and in turn I am sure that you will receive benefits in proportion to just what you put into the Legion.

What is the relation of the American Legion and the community? In which it exists? It is, or should be, a constructive force in every sense of the word. Formed as is of men used to team work, organization and the spirit of service it cannot, even if it would, escape its responsibility for a large share in the promotion of activities which count in the training of the community at large, its questions and problems of everyday life and the setting of an example for our future American citizens, the boys and girls of today. The American Legion MUST be an organization composed of workers interested in all phases of community life, assisting their neighbors in carrying out a peace time program of activities that will assure a high degree of community welfare. With a definite organization their worth and the degree of usefulness depend upon two things, to my mind. First and foremost the amount of energy that the Post as an organization, and the members individually, put into the work. Secondly, the extent to which the particular community puts responsibility upon the post and the opportunity which is given them to assist. If you business men, and citizens gathered here today will only give a job to the American Legion Post in your community and then assist them in the work, I believe, and I say it without any sense of egotism, that I think they will carry it out to your satisfaction. You gave us a pretty big job to do April 6, 1917 and how we handled it will be written in the pages of history, or we refer to Kaiser Wilhelm as to the way the task was handled.

We only ask an opportunity to show that we have the interest of our country and our own particular community at heart. Give us a chance to work for the common good and I am sure that you will find us willing if you have no post in your particular town or country settlement, organize one. It only takes 15 ex-service men and women to form a post. I have in mind at this time, a post in a sparsely settled township in Southern Indiana, who are as vital an asset to that community as any one factor in the country. And yet they have only a total membership of 29, but it is composed of every eligible man and woman in that section.

To illustrate the stand of the American Legion, I am going to take a moment of your time to quote the preamble of our Constitution: "For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our Association in the Great War; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the activities of both the classes and the masses; to safeguard and transmit to posterity, the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good-will on earth; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

Ladies and gentlemen, this is our platform. Upon it we stand, and we will at all times try to live up to its ideals. Banded together, they are simple tasks; service to our country and service to our comrades. It is unnecessary for me to remind you of what has been done along this line by the American Legion all over the United States in the past three years. During the wave of wild radicalism which swept certain sections of this Republic of ours a few months ago, it was the virile stand of the ex-service man, that was the greatest single factor in curbing the activities of those who were seeking to tear down the very foundations of this country and that glorious flag for which so many of our comrades gave up their lives on the battlefields of Belleau Woods, of The Marne, at Chateau-Thierry, just three years ago this day, and many other spots in France. For their sacrifice for that flag, today thousands lay on beds of pain throughout the United States. In your own fair state at Fort Bayard, 1,000 of us are fighting to regain our health. Do we regret it? No! A thousand times no! And should occasion arise, which God forbid, you will find every man who is ready to answer to the call and take his place in the ranks, there to do his part, to the best of his ability.

The spirit of the American Legion is universal. In it there is no East or West; no North or South; There is no Protestant or Catholic; There is no Gentile or Jew; no capital or labor; no Republican or Democrat. We claim and justly so, I feel, to have within our membership every single element and feel that our organization is the nearest approach to a consensus of public opinion that exists in America today.

Also, just as the Legion must work for good, so must it work against evil. Its program calls for determined effort to eliminate corruption and faithlessness to duty in public office, attempts to break down our fundamental democracy or to limit or deny the proper human right to any man or group of men. The future of the American Legion is whatever the individual members, banded together in its 11,000 posts make of it, and the measure of support, confidence and sphere of usefulness that the individual community assign to it. Let the Legion members as individuals throw in to the work the same unselfishness, devotion and earnest work that they gave in their service and its mission will be accomplished.

Unfortunately, there has in some localities, been misunderstanding as to the attitude of the Legion towards Union Labor. This is a mistake. We are proud to number among our members thousands of the staunchest Union men of the country. I am proud to say that I carry a Union card in my pocket now and intend to continue doing so. The Legion has not and WILL not take part in any industrial disputes between employers and employees. Our attitude towards organized labor is exactly the same as the attitude toward all maintenance of law and order and the protection of the institutions handed down to us by our forefathers. A great deal of this misunderstanding has been due to hasty statements of radicals; garbled misquotations and the deliberate intention on the part of a few designing politicians to break the ranks of the Legion for their own selfish purposes. I will grant that there has been, and I individually trust, there always will be, dissention between the Legion and the Industrial Workers of the World, better known as the I. W. W. And why? Because this organization of men does not represent real Union labor, but has taken a stand against all the things for which the Constitution and laws of the country stand. But here is no enemy, and no reason for any, between members of the American Legion and the members of that real American organization, the American Federation of Labor, which organization has always stood up and fought for law and order, and Democracy and Americanism in its highest sense.

Before closing I wish to pay a tribute to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, which is represented here by my friend and comrade Jimmy McInteer. Many are of the opinion that The American Legion and The Vets are not working together. In this you are sadly mistaken. I have the honor to be a member of that organization, also, and am strong for it. It is organized exclusively of men who have seen overseas services in any war, and originated in 1899, at the close of the Spanish-American War. It has done a world of good for the country and the ex-service man in particular. The past few years has

seen its membership grow by leaps and bounds and it, also, will be a big factor in the future of the country. A few mistaken politicians thought that it would be a smooth trick to try and put these organizations against each other. But they did not account for the true spirit of the soldier. They quickly found that while the Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion might differ in ideas and methods that when it came to principles, they stood shoulder to shoulder, as they did in France. And so they will continue to stand, ready to fight in the battles of civil life as they did on the battle field, against anything that was opposed to the principles of good government and Old Glory.

In conclusion, I desire to again thank you for this opportunity of placing before you a few of the things that the American Legion stands for, and I may add, with Mr. McInteer's permission, that The Veterans of Foreign Wars, stand for the same general principles. The creed of these organizations, and that of all ex-service men and women is:

"I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed—a democracy in a republic—a sovereign nation of many sovereign states—a perfect union, one and inseparable—established upon those principles of Freedom, Equality, Justice and Humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I believe it is my duty to my country to love it—to support its Constitution to obey its laws—to respect its flag—and to defend it against all enemies."

FINIS.

STATE SIFTINGS

Wilcox—General Copper Company takes over holdings of Mascot Copper Company.

Chandler—Contract let for completion of high school.

Tempe—Hassayampa Creamery Company to operate Pacific Creamery plant.

Holbrook—Breckenridge-Holbrook Syndicate completing plans for active drilling.

Linden—Local men developing asbestos property on Apache Indian reservation.

Holbrook—Approximately 60,000 lbs. of wool shipped to Boston market.

Tucson—Tumacacori Mission excavation work unearths ruins of first mission.

Chandler—4 acre fruit crop on local ranch brings \$66.00.

Florence—Highway to Chandler to be repaired during summer.

Holbrook—Prominent eastern oil men inspecting local field.

Phoenix—Agricultural department of government strongly recommends Salt River Valley for poultry and dairy industry.

Bisbee—Signing work along Bankhead highway route to start at once.

Warren—to get modern garage and services.

Nogales—Fresh vegetables totaling 22,000,000 lbs. imported through port since January 1st.

Globe to contract with Old Dominion Company for city water supply.

Payson—several old mines west of Single Standard being developed.

Tucson—Auto stage company to operate line to Twin Buttes.

Jerome completes plans to export 100 Mexicans to native land.

Tucson—Airplane fire patrol for Chiricahua mountain range established.

St. Johns—California capitalists lease 200,000 acres of Long H. ranch for oil prospecting.

Phoenix—Los Angeles banks to back Arizona cotton crop for six months.

Holbrook—Campaign launched to re-open Holbrook State Bank.

Ajo—Assessment work uncovers good silver-lead ore on Clark claims.

Secret Pass—Nancy Lee Mining Co. to launch big development campaign.

Oatman—United Eastern lets contract for one mile overhead tramway.

Kingman—Catherine mine reports new strike averaging about \$500 ton.

Oatman—United Mining Co. taps good vein of commercial ore.

Yuma—150-ton mill to be installed at Tumaco mine to work tailings.

Parker—Rainbow Mining Company incorporates with capital stock of \$1,000,000.

Ajo—Dundee Arizona Copper Company makes successful experimental run of new plant.

Benson—Big plant of Apache powder Co. to be ready for operation September 1st.

Oatman—Gold Peak Mining group to be developed by Highland Chief Gold Mining Co.

Tombstone—Reported oil strike on Wolfgren ranch near the Whetstones attracting hundreds of oil men.

STATE SIFTINGS

Yuma—Many companies organizing to develop mineral deposits.

Holbrook—Several new oil companies to enter local field.

Casa Grande—Hydro-electric power project at Post being planned.

Oatman Amakamated mine closed to install large compressor.

Phoenix—Applications to lease 10,000-acre land filed in May.

Benson—Work started on Charlton dam to irrigate 47,000 acres.

Flagstaff—Work on boulevard to San Francisco Peaks progressing.

Florence—Plans under way on Florence Superior highway.

Nogales—Drilling for water in Weststone Mountain strikes oil.

Mayer—Old Cumberland gold mine to be re-opened.

NOTICE TO MOTOR TRUCK OWNERS

The International Harvester Company Road Engineer will be at our Service Station at Clifton, Arizona, from

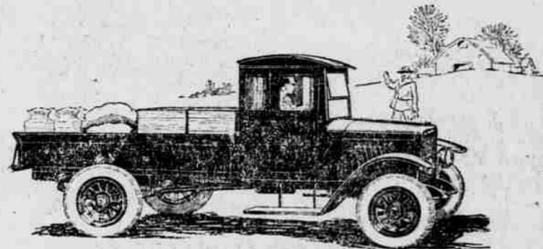
July 26th to July 30th

for the purpose of inspecting any International Motor Trucks that are in this vicinity.

This Inspection is without charge to the owner and the Road Engineer will be glad to make any suggestions that may be necessary for the operation of the truck at its maximum efficiency.

If you have not already made arrangements for the inspection of your motor truck we suggest that you get in touch with us at once and arrange for an inspection either on this trip or on the next trip of the Road Engineer.

Pickens Anderson International Motor Truck Dealer



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Some are going away in their cars to different points of interest both east and west---others are going up into the mountains and from all reports they are having the time of their lives--There is this much about it--One can go up into the mountains and live just as cheap, if not cheaper, as to stay in Clifton, besides one will be up where the breezes from the pine trees are blowing, grass and water is good and fishing is fine.

We have good things in all departments for fitting folks out who are contemplating any kind of trips away from Clifton.

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