National Security Division Report

Week ending 4 September 2020

American Legion commemorates 75th anniversary of VJ Day

(Legion.org) American Legion Past National Commander Daniel Dellinger and National Security Commission Chairman Steven Brennan presented a wreath commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Allied Forces Victory in the Pacific at the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 2.

On Sept. 2, 1945, Japan surrendered to the Allied Powers, when documents were signed aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, officially ending the deadliest military conflict in human history. An estimated 30 to 35 million people died during the war, including 400,000 Americans.

“When America entered the war, they were ill-prepared for what was to come,” Dellinger said. “Only through the leadership exhibited by civilian and military leaders were we able to work together as a nation for the common goal of preserving our democracy.

“The Greatest Generation … through their shared grit and determination, were able to defeat two of the most powerful militaries in the world and preserve the freedoms that we enjoy today.”

Military leaders lauded World War II veterans during the day’s events hosted by Friends of the National World War II Memorial.

“The Greatest Generation took up arms against tyranny,” Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley said. “From the ashes of destruction, death and bloodshed of that war, you established a rules-based global order rooted in political and economic liberty that has maintained Great Power peace for over seven decades."

Milley was joined by representatives from the Embassies of Pacific Theater Allied Nations marking the occasion at the “Freedom Wall,” which is adorned by 4,048 sculpted gold stars, each representing 100 American military deaths during World War II.

Pandemic raising awareness for need for global 'health security'

(Legion.org) While the components of foreign policy include trade, economics and national security, the coronavirus pandemic has brought another component critical to developing and maintaining policy into the limelight: health, defined by experts as health security – a developing but critical part of global relations.

That information was shared during an August 29 National Security Forum conducted through Zoom and open to members of The American Legion’s National Security Commission and Committees, as well as department National Security chairpersons. American Legion National Commander James “Bill” Oxford also took part in the forum. The forum featured guest speakers from the National Security and Foreign Affairs community discussing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on National Security and Defense Global Affairs.

A recording of the forum is available at the link. Use Passcode: 9Q^K^ZFk

https://legion.zoom.us/rec/share/19J6M5HwxlxLQ7fNxED6fPYYLpnMeaa82yAc-vQPnUvob0EuzdSY6HewqC9o33jb

A panel discussion with representatives of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency/Defense Institute for Medical Operations (DIMO) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) discussed the need for health security, especially during the coronavirus pandemic…

The forum's viewers also heard from former U.S. Ambassador (Ret.) Robert M. Beecroft, whose foreign service included serving as U.S. ambassador in Bosnia, as well as postings in Sarajevo, Brussels, Belgium, Paris, Amman and other stops…

Beecroft said there are three definitions of diplomacy he prefers. "Diplomacy is the art of letting someone else have your way," he said. "Diplomacy is the art of saying 'nice doggy' until you can find a rock. And … more seriously, diplomacy is disguised war in which states seek to gain by barter and intrigue the objectives they would have to gain more clumsily by means of war."…

U.S. diplomats are tasked with being able to think on the fly and look at a wide range of possibilities. "Diplomats appreciate nuance. Instead of an automatic 'can do', we're trained to ask "what are our options and how can we exploit them in the U.S. interest?'" Beecroft said. "To some, asking probing questions at times of crisis and confusion may seem like a weakness. Diplomats see it as a strength. It's sometimes necessary to talk to adversaries, not only friends."…

The forum's viewers finally heard from Dr. Alton Frye, Presidential Senior Fellow Emeritus at the Council on Foreign Relations, an independent, nonpartisan member organization, think tank and publisher. He said the United States is best served in advancing its own interests by "understanding and taking account of the interests of other (countries). Not by always agreeing with them. We do not expect identical interests or common interests in every case. But the first task that I find before us … is to define a compatible interest among (nations). The objective is not to defer to the interests of others, but to identify those interests that we can accommodate, rather than to assume that we have to be incompatible."

Frye said the coronavirus has served to divert attention to what he called "the most protracted, long-term threats that we face. There's a familiar list: China becoming a global strategic power. Russia. (North) Korea. Iran. Others fall into lower categories."

Frye said the over-arching danger remains the "nuclear menace." Great clarity, he said, is needed in the essential goals of managing the nuclear danger. "Mutual assured destruction … is not a rational policy," he said. "It is a caricature. It is a technological condition that if nuclear warfare breaks out, the destruction will be on a historic scale."

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Pompeo Tries Starting 'Snapback' Clock To Restore Sanctions Against Iran By U.N.

(NPR) Six days after the Trump administration saw its effort to extend expiring U.N. weapons sanctions on Iran collapse in an embarrassing defeat, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo went to U.N. headquarters on Thursday to try again.

This time, Pompeo went even further, pushing for a reinstatement by the U.N. Security Council not just of the arms restrictions set to expire Oct. 18, but of all the Iran sanctions that were terminated five years ago by that 15-member body. That suspension of sanctions was part of U.N. Resolution 2231, which endorses the multination agreement — known formally as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA — that restricts Iran's nuclear program.

Pompeo informed reporters that he had just delivered letters to U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres and the Security Council president, Indonesian Ambassador Dian Triansyah Djani. The notifications are meant to start the clock on restoring the punitive measures against Iran the United Nations lifted in January 2016.

"This process will lead to those sanctions coming back into effect 30 days from today," Pompeo declared. "Our message is very, very simple: The United States will never allow the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism to freely buy and sell planes, tanks, missiles and other kinds of conventional weapons."

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POW/MIA Update

This week, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency released the following announcements. Click on the links to read more:

August 27, 2020: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Nicoles, F.)
August 27, 2020: USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Banks, L.)
August 31, 2020: Marine Accounted For From World War II (Johnson, T.)

Legislative Issue Tracker

Below is legislation the National Security Division is tracking in Congress. New bills are highlighted in yellow. Click on the bill numbers to see more information about the bills.

Bill #	Short Title
S. Res. 510/H. Res. 910	A resolution commending the people of Taiwan on holding free and fair democratic presidential and legislative elections, and congratulating Madame Tsai Ing-wen on her re-election to the presidency of Taiwan
H. RES. 1012	Recognizing the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War
H.R. 3508/ S.1634	South China Sea Sanctions
H.R.367	Pay Our Coast Guard Parity Act of 2019
S.2297	Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2019
H.R. 4710	The bipartisan Pharmaceutical Independence Long-Term Readiness Reform Act
H.R. 303	Retired Pay Restoration Act
H.R. 4890	The Veteran Deportation Prevention and Reform Act
H.R. 5151	Honoring the Oath Act

S.2794	Bring Our Heroes Home Act
H.R.6395	FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act
S. 3393	A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for concurrent receipt of veterans' disability compensation and retired pay for disability retirees with fewer than 20 years of service and a combat-related disability, and for other purposes.
S. 1041	Veterans Visa and Protection Act of 2019
S. 3732	A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to further protect officers and employees of the United States, and for other purposes
S 1218/HR 2249	World War I Valor Medals Review Act
H.R.4807	Cold War Service Medal Act
H.Con,Res 10	Authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol to honor the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient of the Second World War upon death.
S. 3258	SHIPS Implementation Act
H.R.3233	National Defense Strategy Implementation Act

Click on the link below to open an Excel spreadsheet to see the full legislative tracker:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KgPaIfx04RA13m20qLDh5br8dyxiupVX5Dc5ByZteRQ/edit?usp=sharing

Staff Activity:

- On Monday, August 31, National Security staff attended the virtual VA&R Screening Committee meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to organize and allocate VA&R resolutions to the proper VA&R committees meeting later in the week. National Security staff participated in the VA&R meetings during the week for the purpose of observation in preparation for the National Security Committee and Commission virtual meetings scheduled to take place the week of September 14-18.
- On Tuesday, September 1, staff participated in a webinar hosted by the Middle East Institute and the Foundation for Middle East Peace on the topic: "Implications of the Israel-UAE Deal." The webinar explored what the Israel-UAE does (and doesn't) mean, the political context that led to its achievement, and its implications for the future. Background: On August 13th, President Trump announced that Israel and the United Arab Emirates had agreed to "finalize a historic peace agreement" that would involve full normalization of relations between the two nations. Trump stated: "Not since the Israel-Jordan peace treaty was signed more than 25 years ago has so much progress been made towards peace in the Middle East." More information and vide of the event is available here.
- On Wednesday, September 2, staff participated in a ceremony commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Allied Forces Victory in the Pacific at the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. See the story above for more.
- On Wednesday, September 2, staff participated in VA&R's Health Administration, National Cemetery, and Veterans Benefits Committee meetings.
- On Friday, September 4, staff participated in the VA&R Commission meeting.

Rhonda Powell, Director, National Security Division