

**The American Legion of Iowa**  
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## Department Commander Robert L. Mahon

“WE CAN ~ WE WILL.”

Greetings to my fellow Legionnaires of the great state of Iowa.

Needless to say, the past couple of months have been packed with a busy schedule and experiences that I would not trade. The Chrysler and I have been pounding the highways attending functions throughout the state and we appreciate the fine hospitality while visiting the many Posts and functions. We were not able to attend all to which we were invited but did the best we could and if we did not make yours, I hope you will understand.

I thank the Lord that my wife, June, has been feeling better and able to accompany me on many of my travels. She is always good company.

April in Washington, D.C. was a very valuable learning experience. The meeting with our elected officials in Washington went well and they were receptive to what The American Legion is doing and what we want to do to help our fellow veterans and their families. Of course, being elected by the citizens, they are always interested in how many veterans we represent; one of the reasons membership counts. The more members we have, the more clout. The American Legion is the largest veterans organization in the world and being in the business for 89 years is testimony that we must be doing something right and with the reputation we carry, we must remain strong. The veterans depend on us and we cannot let them down.

With this being an election year, may I stress that The American Legion does not get involved in politics through the endorsement of candidates. But, we do ask you to look at their records and find out where they stand on veterans' issues. In today's world, it is a much different outlook than it was years ago. Many of our elected officials today are not veterans and have different priorities. It is important we elect the ones that are friendly to the veteran. We have learned in the past that one vote can make a difference.

I believe The American Legion is doing a good job and with the many programs we sponsor, I still think we can do better. One example is getting our image out to the public sector. They help make our programs successful. My mail has hit a standstill since the first of the year on activities in various Posts. Let's get the news out. Consolidated Post Reports (CPR) are due June 15. Everyone has SOMETHING to report!

Reports show that many Posts have not sent any transmittals to Department for two, three, some even four, months. Please send in what you have as we are not that many short of leading the nation and every member counts. Send them in even if it is one or two. There are many Posts out there that only need that many to make target.

My project for this year has been to honor those in the military who have lost their lives, so we may continue the many freedoms we have. Thus far, eight from our state have given their lives during my year in office (see related photo/story on Page 1 of this issue). This is just a small token of gratitude for the sacrifices they made for us. My thanks to Marcia Hoch, Executive Secretary, and Department Vice Commander Raymond Dutton, for their help in designing and producing this plaque.

Now is not the time to give up. WE CAN AND WE WILL achieve our goals.

*Commander Bob*



## Department Adjutant John A. Derner

Throughout our history, the men and women who have worn the uniform of the United States have placed the security of our Nation before their own safety. America will

be forever grateful for their service and sacrifice. On Memorial Day, we honor those who have paid the ultimate price for our freedom. As Veterans, we know of their sacrifice and we gather to remember our fallen heroes.

Unfortunately, Memorial Day will come and go, and many Americans will not observe it as a day of honor for our veterans. After all, wartime veterans amount to little more than ten percent of the population. The majority of young Americans are not veterans. Many of our schools and universities focus on political correctness and historical revisionism. They seem to be placing less importance on military valor and its importance in American history. As a result, many Americans have little or no understanding of the real cost of freedom.

As the men and women in the Armed Forces continue to serve with dignity and honor, it is our duty to ensure that all Americans know, understand, and appreciate the sacrifice of their service. They all deserve our admiration and respect. They carry on the legacy of our Nation's fallen heroes and demonstrate that the United States Armed Forces remain the greatest force for freedom in human history.

Just remembering our fallen heroes this Memorial Day is not enough. We must honor their memory by taking care of their families. We must honor their memory by taking care of their comrades. We must also honor their memory by enlightening our fellow Americans of their sacrifice.

They have left behind countless family and friends who will never fully recover from their loss. They have left behind children who will miss them. Their sacrifice was noble. Their sacrifice was permanent.

We must never forget what they have done for us. We must also make certain that we remind all Americans of their sacrifice. We are reminded that our freedom is not free; it has been won and protected time and time again by Americans who have fought and died to ensure liberty.

This Memorial Day, make an effort to honor those who have given their lives in service to our Nation. Comfort the family of a fallen servicemember. Make a donation to a charity in honor of someone who has made the ultimate sacrifice. Provide assistance to the family of someone currently serving. Tell a friend about the price of freedom.

Anything you do will be small in comparison to those who have paid the ultimate price for freedom. To do nothing would be a dishonor to those who have given their all. Please remember all those who have answered the final call this Memorial Day.

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