



American Legion Lithuanian Post 154
For God and Country



Legionnaire

January & February 2008

Commander's Message

This year is a general election year. Much political verbiage is in the media. During a discussion of the upcoming election, someone suggested I read a book with messages by Peter Marshall titled *"The American Dream"*. Below are some of his messages that I feel are appropriate for us at this time.

"The American Dream" (1)

"During the Second World War, I met on the train a lieutenant who had just returned from fighting in Italy. He had been in the North African campaign. He had fought in Sicily. He wore the Purple Heart ribbon with his campaign ribbons. 'What were you fighting for? Did anyone in North Africa ever ask you that question? If they had, what would you have said?'

I venture to say that deep down in the hearts of the men who fought the bitterest battles - of them who died - there was a glimmering of an understanding that the things for which they fought were somehow all tied up in one bundle of ideals of concepts of principles that we call the American Dream.

It is a Dream that has shone brightly at times and that has faded at other times.

World events today are forcing us, whether we realize it or not, to rediscover the meanings and the significances of the things that make America different from other nations ...the hope of a world weary of war, heartsick and hungry.

What is the American Dream?

What is it that makes our country different?

Do you know ... you who fought for it overseas ...who braved the sniper in the jungle, who flew through flak-filled skies, who waded through the mud of Italy, who knew the heat of the desert sun and the cold of the North Atlantic?

Do you know ... you who made your speeches in Congress and waxed eloquent on the stump?

Do you know ... you who boast of your ancestry and your membership in patriotic societies?

What is America?

Where is our country going?

Let no answer be lightly made....

We cannot speak with any truth or realism about the future unless we understand the past.

What has America to give the rest of the world?

If only grain or money or clothing or armaments ...then we have already lost the war and the peace ... and our own souls.

Ours is a Covenant Nation ...

The only surviving nation on earth that had its origins in the determination of the Founding Fathers to establish a settlement 'to the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith.'

Back to God Mass



Lithuanian Post 154 Color Guard at St. Alphonus Church

Lithuanian Post 154 visibly demonstrates our commitment to "God" in the "For God and Country" motto of The American Legion twice each year. Thanks to the support from Monsignor Bastress, pastor of St. Alphonus Church, we participate in the "Back to God Mass" and the "Four Chaplains Commemoration Service" at St. Alphonus Church each year.

The Back to God Mass was held in November and the Baltimore District Four Chaplains Service will be held on February 3rd at St. Alphonus Church. This will be the 45th consecutive year that this District has held this service. Rev. Anthony Dranginis started this remembrance in 1963 at the War Memorial. In 1978 it was transferred to St Alphonus Church. A highlight of the service for the past 29 years has been singing of patriotic and religious songs by the "The Balladiers" from Parkville Post 183. They are expected to sing for us again this year. If you attend, you will enjoy the service.

That was what William Bradford and George Carver had in mind when, beneath the swinging lantern in the cabin of the Mayflower, they affixed their signatures to the solemn declaration which established the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

They had come from the Old World and were seeking refuge in the New.

They had come from tyranny and oppression ...

They had come from fear and coercion ...

They had come from famine and from difficulty ... from wars and threats of wars

And they sought a new life in a new land.

Religious liberty to worship God according to the dictates of one's own conscience and equal opportunity for all men ...

Commander's Message - The American Dream - continued

These are the twin pillars of the American Dream.
 Now a Covenant Nation is one that recognizes its dependence upon God and its responsibility toward God.
 This nation was so born.
 God was recognized as the source of human rights.
 The Declaration of Independence says so.
 A Covenant Nation is one which recognizes that God and His purposes stand over and above the nation ...that the highest role a nation can play is to reflect God's righteousness in national policy.
 That is what Bradford and Carver certainly intended.
 That is what Roger Williams sought, when he set up his settlement in Providence, Rhode Island.
 That is what William Penn was striving after in Pennsylvania.
 That is what they wanted in Maryland, when, in 1649, the Maryland Act of Toleration set it down in writing.
 That is what Thomas Jefferson was striving after when he wrote the Declaration of Independence.
 That is what they fought for, too.
 You can trace it from Bunker Hill from Lexington and Concord down through Valley Forge
 They were concerned about rights. These free men who had burlap wrapped around their feet, as they marched through the snow, who carefully hoarded their gunpowder and clutched their muskets under their tattered uniforms to keep them dry
 They were concerned about the rights of free men.
 They made the first down payments there-down payments that have been kept up to this good day ... through Chateau-Thierry and the Argonne... to Anzio and Cassino ... at Saint-Lo and Bastogne ...at Tarawa and Iwo Jima at Saipan and Guadalcanal
 There have been periods in our history when the American Dream has faded and grown dim.
 Today there is real danger that the American Dream will become the Forgotten Dream.
 For freedom is not the right to do as one pleases but the opportunity to please to do what is right.
 The Founding Fathers sought freedom ... not from law but freedom in law; not freedom from government but freedom in government; not freedom from speech-but freedom in speech; not freedom from the press-but freedom in the press; not freedom from religion-but freedom in religion.
 We need to ponder these things today.
 Our standard of values is out of focus.
 We, in America, are today enjoying the greatest freedom the world has ever known - a freedom that staggers all who will consider it - *for we are free in these days to ignore the very things that others died to provide.*
 We are free to neglect the liberties we have inherited.
 Surely there can be no greater freedom than that!

The blessing of peace is not a product of politics-but a fruit of righteousness.
 Desperately we need a return to government by principles rather than by politics.
 But where are the principles evident in the events of this

present hour?
 Peace is not made by compromise.
 It does not grow out of expediency.
 Peace is not a flower growing in the world's formal garden.
 It is rather a product of the blacksmith's forge hammered out on the anvils of sacrifice and suffering ...heated in the fires of devotion to righteousness ...tempered in the oil of mercy and goodness ...
 Peace is a costly thing.
 We have already done a great deal for the rest of the world.
 Let no man minimize our gifts.
 But they are not enough.
 We have to give more, and I do not mean more dollars.
 I do not mean more tractors. I do not mean more guns.
 We have to give more of the only thing, after all, that makes our life different from theirs, namely, our ideals our faith our philosophy of life our concept of human dignity our Bill of Rights our American Dream.
 That is what we have to export

Three hundred thousand Americans did not die in the second World War merely to see conditions develop again that will make necessary another war. God forbid.

That is what we fought for, because we found out that if there is a denial of personal liberty in Athens or in Prague or in Amsterdam or in Edinburgh, there is a restriction of personal liberty in Boston and Charleston.

We found out that what happened on the banks of the Yangtze River affects the farmer over in Stark County or the man who makes shoes in St. Louis or Massachusetts.

It affects Joe Doaks, with a cigar stuck in his mouth, sitting out there in the bleachers in the ball park yelling for his club.

These are the things America has to export, and perhaps that is the reason why almighty God, with the hand of Providence, guided this nation.

He has made and preserved our nation ... maybe that is the reason ...in order that this republic, in a federal union, might save the rest of the world, by giving back to them the new life that was forged from the anvil of sacrifice and daring adventure in this country

America may be humanity's last chance.

Certainly it is God's latest experiment.

But we cannot fool God about our individual or national goodness.

Let us not be deluded into thinking we can fool ourselves."

(1) *The Best of Peter Marshall*, compiled and edited by Catherine Marshall. A Chosen Book, Fourth Printing 1993.

Dr. Peter Marshall (1902-1949) was Chaplain to the U.S. Senate during the last two years of his life. A Presbyterian Minister out of a working class background. He had a mechanics job in a Scottish iron and tube works, emigrated to America and attended Columbia Theological Seminary by way of digging ditches in New Jersey and newspaper work in Alabama.

Packages to Troops

A Right Hand Salute to Vice-Commander Vacys Laukaitis for volunteering to head the "Packages to Troops" project for the Post. He sent a package to the Lithuanian Military Mission serving in Afghanistan and to our Post members SFC Cherneski and Corporal Dillon serving in Iraq.



"Santa", Vacys Laukaitis

Vacys received a letter from the commander of the Lithuanian troops serving in Afghanistan expressing gratitude and surprise. They were not expecting to receive anything from a U. S. based veterans organization for Christmas. They were even more surprised that an active veterans organization with "Lithuanian" in it's name existed in the United States. Besides snacks and toiletries, Vacys included past copies of our Legionnaire newsletter, some of our DVDs and other Lithuanian publications from America.

Vincent Dulys received the following E-Mail from SFC William Cherneski expressing gratitude for his package.

"Hi Vince

Wanted to let you all know the package arrived this morning, Christmas Eve, what perfect timing. Thank you so much, great goodies, all is appreciated very much. I share most with our transient soldier area. They have up to 3,000 soldiers a night come through, either coming into country or going back home. Needless to say all the great things you all sent goes to excellent use. The troops really appreciate the snacks and the toilet items. I kept the calendar and the book and some of the goodies, thanks.

Again, thank you and please pass along to the post my gratitude and sincere thanks.

Respectfully

SFC William Cherneski
Force Protection NCOIC Striker"

Membership

Currently we have 92 members paid at Department for Fiscal Year "2008" with one new member and one transfer in progress. This still will not get us to the 3 - Star status we hoped to achieve for fiscal year "2008". We need to have 98 paid at Department Before March of 2008. We still have 4 Post members who have not responded to their fiscal year "2008" notices.

Membership Chairman
Vincent Dulys

Children's Christmas Party



Children danced and played games while waiting for Santa..

The annual Lithuanian Post 154 sponsored Children's Christmas Party was held at Lithuanian Hall on Sunday, December 16th. Approximately 60 children received stockings from Santa.

Sick Call



Edmond Bartas
8 Robins Nest Ct
Randallstown, MD 21133

Gintaras Buivys
804 Warwick Rd.
Baltimore, MD 21229

Richard Seymour
928 Rambling Dr.
Baltimore, MD 21228

Happy Birthday



January

Grant Dillon
Patrick Dohlus
Charles Gross
Edvins Kristapsons
Bernard Milosavich
Stephen Mueller
Ronald Price
Stanley Ruby
Kenneth Shillenn

February

Richard Jacobs

We need new members! If you know of any honorably discharged veterans that would agree with our motto "For God and Country", ask them to join us. Ask them to fill out the enclosed membership application and mail it with a copy of their DD214 and \$21 check to Vincent Dulys to his address on last page of this newsletter. The check should be made out to "The American Legion".

If they can't find their DD214, they can request a copy from The National Archives by filling out and mailing a Military Record Requests Form SF-180. The request form can be obtained on the Internet, by writing or by calling:

The National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, MD 20740-6001

Telephone: 1-866-272-6272
Internet: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/>

COMMANDER
John F. Maskavich
19 Locust Drive
Baltimore, MD 21228
(410) 747-9628

Lithuanian Post 154 web page is on: <http://www.lietuvis.net> - click on Lithuanian Post 154.

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SERVICE OFFICER
Patrick M. Dohlus
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Hanover, MD 21076
(410) 551-2369

Post Meeting
8 PM every 2nd Wednesday
of the month at
Lithuanian Hall
851 Hollins Street.
Baltimore, MD 21201

Executive Comm. Meeting,
7:30 PM on the 4th
Wednesday of the month at
J-Ray's Café
900 S. Carey Street
Baltimore, MD 21223

Please send your comments,
suggestions and articles to :

Joe Jankevicius
624 Oak Tree Rd
Westminster, MD 21157
JJankevicius@Comcast.net

Calendar & Reminders

January

Tue	01	New Year's Day
Wed	09	First drawing of Post 100 Club fundraiser
Wed	09	Post monthly general meeting at Lithuanian Hall 8 PM
Thu	10	Baltimore District meeting at General Haller Post 95 7:30 PM
Mon	14	Federal Holiday Observed, Martin Luther King
Wed	23	Post monthly executive meeting at J-Ray's

February

Sun	03	Four Chaplains Service at St Alphonsus Church 10 AM
Wed	06	Ash Wednesday
Thu	07	Baltimore District Oratorical Contest at Morrell Park Post 137
Sun	10	Department Executive Committee Meeting, Goldstar Post 191, Mt. Airy
Tue	12	Lincoln's Birthday
Wed	13	Post monthly meeting at Lithuanian Hall 8 PM
Thu	14	Valentine's Day
Mon	18	President's Day
Fri	22	George Washington's Birthday
Wed	27	Post monthly executive meeting at J-Ray's 7:30 PM

March

Sun	09	Lithuanian Independence remembrance St. Alphonsus 8:30 AM and Lithuanian Hall 2 PM
Sun	09	Start Daylight Saving Time
Wed	12	Post monthly meeting at Lithuanian Hall 8 PM
Thu	13	Baltimore District meeting hosted by Post 154, Lithuanian Hall
Sat	15	National Commanders Banquet, Dixon-Troxell Post 211, Funkstown
Sun	16	Post 154 fundraiser, 100 Club Party at J-Ray's 1-4 PM
Mon	17	St. Patrick's Day
Wed	26	Post monthly executive meeting at J-Ray's 7:30 PM
Sun	30	Baltimore District Reception honoring Commander Butch Haggard

100 Club



The American Legion Lithuanian Post 154 annual fundraiser "100 Club" will start on January 9th. Winning numbers will be drawn every Wed for ten weeks and will end with our customary party with food, refreshments and additional cash prizes on March 16th at J-Ray's. I would like to thank everyone who supported this annual fundraiser by purchasing a ticket. Any inquiries reference to 100 Club please contact chairman Vincent Dulys - e-mail Vincentas@juno.com or phone (410) 987-5275 .

Military Humor

Three men are sitting stiffly side by side on a long commercial flight. After they're airborne and the plane has leveled off, the man in the window seat abruptly says, distinctly and confidently, in a loud voice, "Admiral, United States Navy, retired. Married, two sons, both surgeons."

After a few minutes the man in the aisle seat states through a tight lipped smile, "Admiral, United States Coast Guard, retired. Married, two sons, both judges."

After some thought, the fellow in the center seat decides to introduce himself. With a twinkle in his eye he proclaims, "Master Chief, United States Navy, retired. Never married, two sons .. both Admirals."

An Air Force Chief Master Sergeant and a General were sitting in the barbershop. They were both just getting finished with their shaves, when the barbers reached for some after-shave to slap on their faces. The General shouted, "Hey, don't put that stuff on me! My wife will think I've been in a whorehouse!" The Chief turned to his barber and said, "Go ahead and put it on me. My wife doesn't know what the inside of a whorehouse smells like."