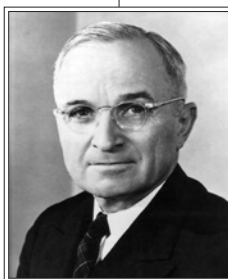


CHAPTER 4

THE MOST COSTLY WAR



*The debt to the heroic men and valiant
women in the service of our country
can never be repaid.*

~ Harry S. Truman ~

THE TREMENDOUS INCREASE IN FUNDRAISING POTENTIAL BROUGHT ON BY THE 1941 INTRODUCTION OF THE IDENTOTAG PROGRAM WAS WELL TIMED. WHEN WORLD WAR I SERGEANT LAURENCE R. MELTON WAS ELECTED COMMANDER AT THAT YEAR'S NATIONAL CONVENTION, NO ONE COULD FORESEE THE SERIES OF WORLD EVENTS THAT WOULD LEAVE HIM IN OFFICE FOR THE LONGEST TERM IN DAV HISTORY.

World War II was coming. Soon thousands of veterans would need DAVWW assistance.

Before he settled into his new duties, Melton was called to active duty as an Army captain. Most of his time as National Commander would see him on active duty, eventually being promoted to major. His frequent travel afforded him several unique opportunities to serve the DAVWW.

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor thrust America into World War II, and the 1942 National Convention was canceled due to lack of gasoline, hotel accommodations, transportation, and other war-related problems. It was the only time in DAV history that a National Convention was canceled.

For four heartbreaking years, the war raged on. Newly wounded veterans from the European, Pacific, and China-India-Burma Theaters began swelling the ranks of the DAVWW. The organization began to prepare for another post-war era by reviewing all the legislation and provisions that would be required for the returning veterans.

With the prior year's National Convention canceled, the 1943 Convention in New York was a time to catch up. The work over the past two years was taking on added importance because of the disturbingly large number of disabled veterans returning from World War II.

HENRY J. KAISER



FIORELLO LaGUARDIA



CLAUDE PEPPER AND DAV COMMANDER
MILLARD RICE





*"THANK GOD FOR THE DAVWW:
IN TIMES LIKE THESE WHEN WE
NEED THEM THE MOST!"*

~ FIORELLO LA GUARDIA ~

ASSEMBLY PLANTS DURING WORLD WAR II AND AFTER

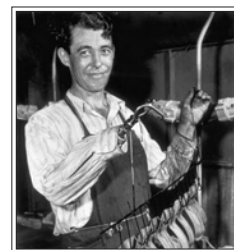
The 1943 delegates were treated to one of the best collections of speakers to date. VA Administrator Frank Hines, Kaiser Shipbuilding Corporation President Henry J. Kaiser, U.S. Civil Service Commissioner Arthur J. Flemming, and New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia all sounded a similar theme: "Thank God for the DAVWW: in times like these when we need them the most!"

Because Commander Melton resigned just before the 1943 National Convention, the Convention was run by William J. Dodd, who moved up from Senior Vice Commander. Dodd held office only 36 days, the shortest term of any National Commander, and his report to the 1943 Convention was also unusually short:

"Now comrades, although the hour is late, I believe that you are interested in hearing a report from your National Commander. I submit it as follows: I have had an awfully good time working with and for you. That's all."

Due to the sheer volume of service work required by veterans returning from the war, emphasis at the 1943 Convention was placed on the National Service Program. Past National Commander Owen Galvin eloquently delivered the nominating speech for James L. Monnahan, a National Service Officer (NSO) from Minneapolis. With 20 years in the DAVWW's service program, Monnahan would return to the NSO ranks when his term was up.

DISABLED VETERANS AT WORK



Responding to a New Generation

With the world again at war, the National Executive Committee felt it was time to update the name of the association, and the DAVWW became the Disabled American Veterans—the DAV.

Except for the new name, there was no change in the organization's official seal or logotype. Still today, it features Columbia knighting a World War I soldier in a picture taken from the disability certificates awarded to the sick and wounded World War I veterans. More importantly, the organization's commitment to serving and representing disabled veterans remained the same.

Because the number of those who served in World War II was four times that of World War I, the organization soon had to prove the mettle of that commitment. In 1944, the DAV moved on a variety of fronts to make sure the organization responded



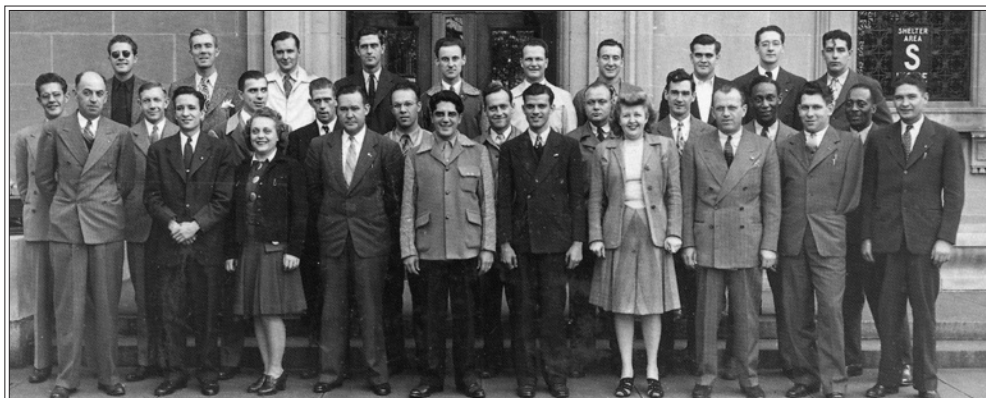
WILLOW RUN DORM



effectively to the rising number of veterans disabled in the Second World War.

October 16, 1944, saw initiation of a new National Service Officer Training Program at American University in Washington, D.C. There, Millard Rice, William Tate, and others, including VA Central Office officials, taught a new generation of disabled veterans what they would need to know to help their fellow veterans returning from the war. Denvel D. “Dale” Adams was one of the students. “It was really a lot of fun because we were all World War II disabled veterans and I guess it was like any other college setting, but it was a very constricted course in that we had to learn

THE FIRST CLASS OF THE NEW NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER TRAINING PROGRAM AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN WASHINGTON, D.C., IN 1944. FROM THE 10 CLASSES CAME THE CORE OF THE DAV NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAM, AS WELL AS THE STAFF LEADERSHIP



anatomy, psychology, public speaking, English, typing, and filing. We had a legal course as well — a view of veterans' law. From there we went out and trained for a two-year period under supervision of other service officers."

When completed 354 people were trained and employed. More importantly, it provided an exceptional base of National Service Officers with the knowledge and expertise to ensure that disabled veterans got their earned benefits under the VA laws.

Each prospective National Service Officer was required to be eligible for the VA Vocational Rehabilitation program, a requirement that continues to this day.

Coursework included counseling, guidance, legislation, adjudication, law, physiology, psychology, and presentation of medical evidence. This program had complete cooperation from the VA, then headed by General Omar Bradley. Upon completion of studies, each graduate would spend a week at National Headquarters to learn about the business end of the DAV.

Following the academic portion of this regimen, new DAV NSOs were assigned to train in the field under the guidance of an experienced National Service Officer. Often the newly arrived graduates had a superior knowledge of the legal and medical aspects of their

responsibilities, but they needed to learn the practical side of their new profession from those already in the field.

From the ten classes and 354 men and women who graduated from this program by 1948 came the core of the DAV National Service Program, as well as the management team that led the organization for the next several decades. The DAV depended on the fraternal side for the political muscle to get the things done in Congress and to recruit members, but it was the service officers



ADMIRAL NIMITZ, 1942

who, in addition to being attorneys-in-fact were also leaders within their own states and communities. It created a powerful and more cohesive organization in the sense that although the DAV operated on national, state, and local levels, everything was dedicated to a single purpose.

By September 2, 1945, when the Japanese signed the Instrument of Surrender on the USS *Missouri*, 16.3 million Americans had served in World War II; 407,000 had died; and 671,000 had come home wounded.

With 105,000 disabled veterans in its ranks, the DAV reached record membership in 1946, and the National Convention elected Lloyd R. Oleson as the first World War II



**PRESIDENT TRUMAN, GENERAL BRADLEY AND
GENERAL GEORGE C. MARSHALL**



**GENERAL OMAR BRADLEY
OFF THE FRENCH COAST**



FRED R. BRISTOL

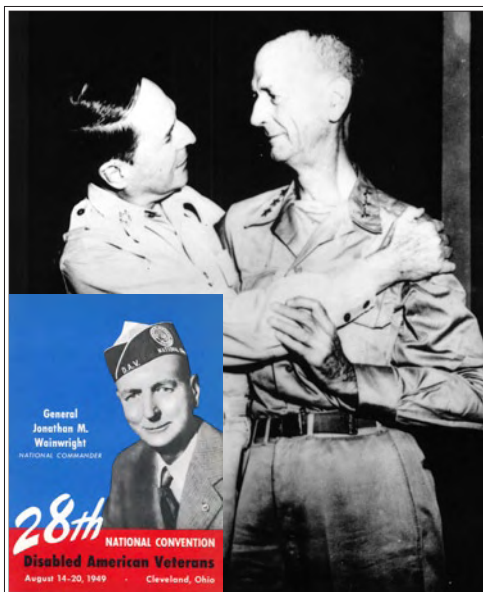
veteran to serve as National Commander. At first there was some dissension among the more senior members who felt this younger veteran wasn't quite ready, but a changing of the guard was taking place.

"The younger veterans began to refer to those senior members as 'one-ies,' to note they were World War I veterans," said Fred R. Bristol, a disabled World War II veteran who later rose to become the DAV's Assistant National Adjutant. "That was said with affection, and I suppose each generation of disabled veterans in the DAV will refer to the previous generation with some affectionate nickname."

In 1947, Minnesota's John H. Golob was elected National Commander. Though he remained active in DAV leadership for many years to come, Golob is most remembered for convincing General Jonathan M. Wainwright to run for National Commander.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN WITH A GROUP IN FRONT OF A B-24 BOMBER





GENERAL JONATHAN M. WAINWRIGHT

Famous for his defense of Corregidor and his 39 months as a prisoner of war, General Wainwright was elected in 1948. He had a busy year as the DAV's National Commander. And the organization benefited immensely as he traveled the Nation, presented speeches, gave media interviews, and participated in countless events.

In 1949, when Director of Claims Bill Tate passed away, General Wainwright appointed Captain Cicero F. "Cap" Hogan to take his place.

A popular DAV leader, Hogan wore many hats during a DAV career that spanned from 1933 until 1960. As National Service Director, Hogan was instrumental in the

passage of a great deal of legislation that benefited vast numbers of disabled veterans and their families.



ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

FORD MOTOR COMPANY DONATES CARS AT 1940 CONVENTION



THE MEN, LEFT TO RT. ARE: P.D. JACKSON, JOSEPH R. HAROLD, BONIFACE MAILE (BGRD), UNK, FRANCIS BEATON, CHET HUBER, DC STAFF MEMBER, NATIONAL COMM. WILLAM G.DWYER, DC STAFF MEMBER, WAYNE SHEIRBON, FRANCIS BUONO, AND TWO DC STAFF MEMBERS.



SAILORS KNEEL BEFORE MEMORIAL MARKERS HONORING THOSE WHO DIED DURING THE JAPANESE ATTACK AT PEARL HARBOR ON DECEMBER 7, 1941

