SLI VETS PLAN FIGHT FOR BETTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

State's Effort to Advance Serviceman's Educational Opportunity Too Meager, Group Charges

LAFAYETTE, La., June 14. (Sp) — An irate and adamant veterans' organization of over 1,000 members today called upon the populaes of Lafayette and southwest Louisiana to institute immediate demands on the Louisiana legislature for the advancement of education in Louisiana.

At a special meeting of the Southwest Louisiana Institute Veterans' club this morning, it was revealed that a special delegation of 15 members, appointed by that organization to attend Tuesday's meeting of the house appropriations committee, was not allowed to present its views.

Delegations, resolving, in their determination to be heard in the protest that "The state of Louisiana has done too little to further this great veterans education program so far," the college, veterans' organization turned its appeal to the individual members of the legislature and to the citizens of Louisiana.

Marine Veteran Speaks

Proposed by Reuben Bienvenu, Jr., a marine veteran of Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, Okinawa and Task Force, 58, and seconded by Gordon Van Nest, a veteran parachutist of the European theater, the declaration pointed out that "From the observations we have made, nothing worthwhile will be done for elementary or higher education at this session of the legislature."

Considerable effect was noted here today, shortly after the appearance of the veterans' resolution in the local daily paper. A Dennis Landry, Lafayette First National Bank president and SLI Alumni association head, declared tonight that "Predictions indicate that college facilities are inadequate to accommodate the tremendous number who will want to enter college this fall, estimating that 500,000 World War II veterans will not be able to gain admittance due to lack of facilities." Mr. Landry continued:

"The education system and the people have a definite responsibility to provide the facilities needed for the training these veterans desire."

Fletcher Contacted

Contacted by telephone tonight, Joel L. Fletcher, president of SLI, was reluctant to take any part in the issue. He did resist, however, his declaration of this afternoon that "unless the legislature moves to increase our appropriation, we are powerless to do anything to hold our faculty together, and what is a college without a trained, competent coaching staff?"

Members of the Veterans' club planned tonight their next move in the fight for a hearing and for action from the state legislature. Said club president, Adam Bonnier, "We are determined to secure adequate funds for education in Louisiana from the primary grades through the college level. We call upon all Louisiana veterans' organizations to join us in this effort."