Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

The American Battle Monuments Commission wishes to thank you for the opportunity to present its views on S.1223, a bill to erect a national memorial on federal land in the District of Columbia or its environs, honoring members of the Armed Forces of the United States who served in the Korean War, particularly those who were killed in action, listed as missing in action, or were held as prisoners of war. The Veterans of that war commend you for holding this hearing, as it has been thirty-five long years since the unprovoked attack in force by the North Koreans across the 38th Parallel on 25 June 1950. If the 5,000,000 veterans of that war who are still living and the immediate members of the families of those who died in Korea are going to have an opportunity to view for themselves this nation's appreciation of their service, their achievements and most of all their sacrifices, then erection of a memorial should commence without delay.

A few statistics to put the Korean War into perspective -- 5,720,000 Americans served in the military forces during the three-year period of the Korean War (1950-1953). Of that number, 103,000 were wounded and of the wounded 33,600 died; an additional 21,400 died of non-battle causes for a total of 55,000 service deaths in the Korean War. During the ten-year period of the Vietnam War, there were only three thousand more service deaths. This will give you some idea of the intensity of the fighting in Korea during its relatively short duration.

Title 36, Section 123 of the U.S. Code prescribes in part that the "American Battle Monuments Commission shall prepare plans and estimates for the erection of suitable memorials to commemorate the services of the American Armed Forces, and shall erect and maintain memorials in the United States and at such places outside the United States where the American Armed Forces have served since April 6, 1917 or shall hereafter serve, as the Commission shall determine." Accordingly, the Commission has had a Korean War Memorial high on its list of planned projects for a number of years. Unfortunately, the great cost of the Vietnam War and subsequent budget deficits mitigated against appropriation of the necessary funds.

In this regard, Title 36, section 128 of the U.S. Code states in part that "The (American Battle Monuments) Commission is authorized to receive funds from any state, municipal, or private source for the purposes of Sections 121, 122b, 123 to 125, 127, 128, 131, 132 and 138-138b of this title, and such funds shall be deposited with the Treasurer of the United States and shall be kept by him in separate accounts and shall be disbursed upon vouchers approved by the Chairman of the Commission." It is the Commission's strong belief that a federal agency should erect the Korean War Memorial with funds obtained through private donations and appropriations. This would preclude the major...
portion of funds collected through private donations going to a commercial firm hired for that purpose, as was the case with the Vietnam Memorial. During the past few months, the American Battle Monuments Commission has received 55 unsolicited donations for the erection of a Korean War Memorial, for a total of $1,455.00. If for any reason this Commission does not erect the memorial, then the money will be returned to the donors.

Regardless of whether the Korean War Memorial is built with privately donated funds, appropriated funds, or a combination of both, should you and your distinguished colleagues so determine, the American Battle Monuments Commission would be most honored and privileged to be designated the agency authorized to erect the memorial.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present the Commission's views.
General. The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) is a small independent agency of the Executive Branch of the government. Oversight of its operations is performed by the Committees on Veterans Affairs; appropriation oversight is by the Appropriations Subcommittees on HUD and Independent Agencies. The enabling legislation for ABMC is contained in 36 U.S.C. 121-138b.

Functions. The principal functions of ABMC are to:

a. Commemorate American Armed Forces through construction and maintenance of memorials in the United States and such places outside the United States where American Armed Forces have served since April 6, 1917 or shall hereafter serve, as the Commission shall determine;

b. Design, construct, administer and maintain permanent American military burial grounds in foreign countries;

c. Control design and construction on foreign soil of U.S. military monuments and markers by other U.S. citizens and organizations, public and private; and,

d. Encourage U.S. government agencies and private individuals and organizations to maintain adequately the markers and monuments erected by them on foreign soil.

Operations. ABMC administers, operates and maintains twenty-four permanent American military cemetery memorials and fourteen separate monuments in eleven foreign countries and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and four memorials in the United States. Examples of them may be found in the enclosed material. No other memorials shrines anywhere combine such fitness of design, beauty of landscaping and memorial features and immaculate care. Interred in the cemeteries are 124,910 U.S. War Dead — 30,920 of World War I, 93,240 of World War II and 750 of the Mexican War. Additionally, 5,642 American Veterans and others are interred in the Mexico City and Corozal American Cemeteries. All of ABMC cemeteries are closed to burials except the one in Corozal Panama. In addition to burials, the World War I and II cemeteries together with three memorials in the United States commemorate individually by name the 94,091 U.S. servicemen and women who were Missing in Action or lost or buried at sea during World War I, World War II, Korean and Vietnam.

b. The policy-making body of the Commission consists of eleven prominent American citizens appointed by the President for an indefinite term who serve without pay. The appointive members meet with the professional staff of the Commission semi-annually.
c. ABMC is staffed by 387 full-time civilian employees and 6 military officers who work for it on a reimbursable basis with the Department of Defense. Fifty of its full-time civilian employees are U.S. citizens; all but twelve of them are cemetery superintendents or assistant superintendents. The remaining 337 civilian employees are foreign nationals of the countries in which our installations are located.

d. The Washington Office of eleven employees oversees operations worldwide. Two small field offices supervise operations in Europe and the Mediterranean. The superintendents of the cemetery memorials in Mexico City, Mexico; Corozal, Panama and Manila, Philippines report directly to the Washington office.

Appropriations. In fiscal years 1984 and 1985, $10,462,000 and $11,065,000 respectively were appropriated by the Congress for ABMC operations. $11,004,000 is under consideration for fiscal year 1986. ABMC is authorized to accept donations in furtherance of its work.

Maintenance. Adequate care and maintenance of the Commission's shrines to American War Dead require a sizable program of repair and maintenance of facilities and equipment, and grounds maintenance. This care includes upkeep of 131,000 graves and headstones; 44 memorial structures; 41 sets of quarters; utility and maintenance facilities at each cemetery and major memorial; 67 miles of asphalt roads and paths; 909 acres of flowing plants, fine lawns and meadows; shrubs and hedges with a surface area of 3,000,000 square feet; and 11,000 ornamental trees. The estimated replacement costs of improvements are $240,120,000. All of the plantings including the lawns and fine meadows must be cut or shaped, fed and treated with insecticides and fungicides at regular intervals during the growing seasons. The plantings also must be replaced when their useful life has expired or if they receive major storm damage.

Services to the Public. ABMC provides information and assistance on request to relatives and friends of the War Dead interred in or commemorated at its facilities. These services include providing information of or confirming burial and memorialization locations; providing letters of authorization for fee-free passports to members of the immediate family travelling overseas primarily to visit the cemetery; providing general travel and accommodation information; placing floral decorations at grave and memorial sites utilizing funds made available by the requester; providing a color polaroid photograph of the decoration in place to the requester; furnishing a color lithograph of the cemetery or memorial where a serviceman or woman is buried or commemorated by name and a photograph of the headstone or section of the Tablets of the Missing where the individual's name appears; and escorting relatives within the cemetery to the grave or memorial site.
FACT SHEET

It has been thirty-five years since the North Koreans attacked south across the 38th Parallel during the early morning hours of 25 June 1950. If the veterans of the Korean War and the immediate members of the families of those who died in Korea are going to have an opportunity to see for themselves this nation's appreciation of their service, their achievements and most importantly their sacrifices, then erection of a Korean War Memorial must commence without delay.

During the late 1960's and early 1970's, the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) has included funds for a Korean War Memorial in its budget request to OMB on five separate occasions. Each time the request was disallowed either on the basis that all of this country's resources were needed to prosecute the Vietnam War or that the annual budget deficits at the time were already too large. The latest turn down by OMB was a request for design funds contained in ABMC's fiscal 1986 budget submission. Basis for the turn down was this country's estimated budget deficit for fiscal 1986 of 200 billion dollars.

Early in 1981, ABMC was approached by a representative from an organization entitled: "The National Committee for a Korean War Memorial." Its representative informed the Commission that the Committee has been incorporated in the District of Columbia as a non-profit organization for the purpose of soliciting funds by private subscription to erect a Korean War Memorial in the Washington, D.C. area and asked that it be given an opportunity to do so. ABMC interposed no objection at the time to the Committee attempting to erect a Korean War Memorial with funds obtained through private subscription. In 1984, a check of the Committee's fund raising efforts revealed that it had collected over $300,000 but that none remained for construction of the memorial. This summer, a check of the resources of Korean War Memorial Inc. (the new name of the Committee) by Rick Bowers of the Miami Herald (dated 7 July 1985) revealed the following:

Mailings..................3 million
Contributors...............23,000
Receipts...................$600,000
Expenditures...............$642,000
Debt.....................$42,000
Funds available for the memorial.....None

(Source: Korean War Memorial Inc. financial reports and statistics as provided by its officers.)

The American Battle Monuments Commission is opposed to the erection of a national memorial by a non-federal organization such as Korean War Memorial Inc. for the following reasons:
a. 30%-70% of all funds collected goes to the firm hired to solicit them. In the case of the Vietnam Memorial, over $10,000,000.00 was collected for a $3,500,000.00 memorial. The lion's share of the funds collected went to the commercial firm hired to solicit them.

b. The tax break by the federal government on such donations would defray most if not all costs of constructing the memorial. Therefore, whether the funds are obtained by appropriation or by private subscription, the federal government pays for the memorial.

c. As a national memorial giving recognition to and proclaiming our country's gratitude for the sacrifices and achievements of those who fought in Korea, it certainly would be more appropriate for the federal government, which represents this great nation as a whole, to erect the memorial.

The most viable alternative is for a federal agency to erect the memorial with funds obtained by private donation or a combination of private donations and appropriations. This would eliminate the major share of the funds received through donations going to a soliciting organization such as is presently employed by Korean War Memorial Inc.

This summer Senator Denton introduced S.J. Res. 184 which authorizes the Korean War Memorial Inc. to erect a Korean War Memorial utilizing funds obtained through private subscription. One of the other three bills to erect a Korean War Memorial currently in the Congressional hopper would not only be more cost effective but more appropriate. They are S.1223 by Senator Armstrong, H.R. 2205 by Mr. Florio and H.R. 2588 by Mr. Parris. All three provide for the American Battle Monuments Commission to erect the memorial with funds obtained from private donations and/or appropriations and for the Department of the Interior to provide the site.

S.1223 was referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Reserved Water. It presently has 50 co-sponsors. Senator Armstrong, its sponsor, would like to obtain 70 or more co-sponsors so that an attempt could be made this year or early next year for passage under suspension of the rules.

H.R. 2205, like S.1223 and H.R. 2588, provides for ABMC to erect the memorial and the Department of the Interior to provide the site and become responsible for the memorial when it is completed. Additionally H.R. 2205 places a limitation of $5,000,000 on the memorial's cost, authorizes ABMC to accept donations to erect the memorial and/or reimburse the federal government for appropriations used to erect it, and requires construction of the memorial to commence within five years of enactment of the enabling authorization, which means that the entire $5,000,000 would have to be on hand at that time. H.R. 2205 should pass the House either before the November recess or shortly after Congress returns.