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Stand on

Amnesty

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Washington

For the second time in a week, President Nixon insisted yesterday that American draft dodgers and deserters must "pay a price" for evading military service.

Last Monday Mr. Nixon told a gathering of families of U.S. prisoners and men missing in action in Vietnam, it would be "the most immoral thing I could think of to give amnesty to draft dodgers and those who deserted."

Yesterday in a Veterans Day campaign speech broadcast live from his retreat at Camp David, Md., the President told Vietnam veterans and their families, "We are not going to make a mockery of their sacrifice by surrendering to the enemy, or by offering amnesty to draft dodgers and deserters."

"The 2½ million who chose to serve America in Vietnam have paid a price for their choice. The few hundred who chose to desert America must pay a price for their choice."

Mr. Nixon also appealed to Americans to give returning veterans "the respect which only you can give.

"They deserve it because they earned it," he said. "And they stand today just as tall as their fathers who

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fought at Normandy, Iwo Jima and Inchon."

The speech, which was carried over the NBC, CBS and Mutual radio networks and paid for by the Finance Committee to Re-Elect the President, contained no mention of George McGovern, though many of its references, such as that to amnesty, were aimed at the Democratic presidential nominee.

McGovern has said he favors amnesty for draft dodgers and would consider deserters on a case-by-case basis. He has also advocated cutting the defense budget substantially, and has said that if he were elected he would set a 90-day deadline for getting all U.S. military personnel out of Indochina.

REPLY

In apparent reply to these positions, Mr. Nixon said, "We must keep America strong, not out of some misguided pride or national vanity, but because, in the whole free world today, no other nation can take America's place."

"There is no such thing as retreat to peace . . . and if America were suddenly to slash away her defensive strength and abdicate her responsibilities as the major power of the free world, we would be retreating," the President said.

Calls "for a weak America," Mr. Nixon added, "are little more than echoes of past blunders. The same misguided thinking they espouse today led an unprepared America into two world wars in this century because it encouraged others to believe their aggressions would go unpunished."

The President cited gains for veterans under his administration, including the recently-signed GI bill and expanded VA medical, housing and job-training benefits.

He also pointed to an "unprecedented effort" to deal with treatment and an educational program "to prevent abuse before the damage is done."