

Few Parades Honor Veterans

Veterans Day was celebrated in the state Monday with quiet ceremonies and parades. But some towns, including Hartford, had no observances, putting off the celebration day until closer to the traditional Nov. 11.

It was the second year that Veterans Day has been designated for the fourth Monday in October, instead of Nov. 11, the day when the armistice ending World War I was signed in 1918. Many veterans are opposed to the change in date, feeling that the day has become commercialized.

But throughout the nation and in Connecticut, there were formal remembrances of servicemen.

In New London, a parade of some 2,000 marchers, including veterans groups and Boy and Girl Scouts, was watched by an estimated

See MANY, Page 27, Col. 1

Many Vets Resist October Parades

(Continued From Page 1)

4,000 spectators Monday afternoon.

About the same number lined the marching route in Enfield to see a parade of school bands, veterans groups and beauty queens. Ceremonies honoring war dead were conducted at the war memorial in front of Town Hall after the parade.

Waterbury held a 45-minute parade on Sunday, culminating it with the placing of wreaths on the war monument.

More typical of the Veterans Day observances Monday was the memorial service in Middletown at the World War I monument on Washington Street. Gold Star mothers placed wreaths on the monument and a speaker, William Pomfret, past commander of the Veterans Council, said "No one hates war more than war veterans."

There were no celebration in Hartford, West Hartford or Wethersfield.

Hartford's Veterans Day parade will be held on Nov. 12, a Sunday, and memorial services will be held the following day in the Colonial Room of Bushnell Memorial Hall.

Veterans here are opposed to observing Veterans Day in October, said Robert Gosselin, a member of American Legion Rau-Locke Post 8. "There's a feeling that the holiday shouldn't have been changed,"

he said.

Curtis McLeod, commander of American Legion Bourne-Keehey Post 23 in Wethersfield, said it was his feeling the day, being set in October, has become "too much commercialized." The Wethersfield post, he said, will decorate all graves on Nov. 9 and have a guest speaker and dinner with the auxiliary that day.

Memorial ceremonies will be held at Fairview Cemetery on Nov. 12 by West Hartford veterans, said John Silvay, past commander of American Legion Hayes-Velhage Post 96 and also past country commander and past state commander.

He, too, said that "most all veterans" are opposed to the October date for Veterans Day.

Shelton Ceremony

Milton Moritz of Deep River, American Legion state commander, spoke at a wreath-laying ceremony in Shelton Monday and guessed that there may have been 100 or more services held by various veterans' groups in the state.

At the same time, he expects a large number of parades and services on the weekend of Nov. 11. About 35 to 40 posts are planning special dinners for the night of Nov. 11.

Moritz noted that Veterans Day is "not a day of mourning such as Memorial Day." It's a remembrance of a day when "there was a great outpouring of relief, of jubilation that the war was over and the boys were going to come home."

He said the American Legion has opposed the change in the date of Veterans Day because of "the disregard for historical fact." The change also "diminishes the importance" of the day, Moritz feels.

Armistice Day Nov. 11 was first declared by Congressional resolution in 1926, became a national holiday in 1938 and was called Veterans Day for the first time in 1954. Last year, the historical date of Nov. 11 was changed to the fourth Monday in October.

The result Monday seemed to be part confusion and part annoyance and determination to honor veterans on Nov. 11—not on a day that was chosen "solely to create a three-day weekend," said Moritz.