

THE
Jewish Veteran

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
JEWISH WAR VETERANS OF THE UNITED STATES

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 31, 1937

Dear Commander Schaffer:

On the occasion of your 42nd Annual Encampment, I send my hearty greetings to those assembled and a message of remembrance for all those Jewish veterans who have served our country.

Since the earliest days of the American colonies, down through the years, we have record of patriotic participation by Jewish citizens in the establishment and maintenance of the United States both in peace and war. I am glad to recall and commemorate that service at this time.

Very sincerely yours,

Franklin D. Roosevelt

NATIONAL ENCAMPMENT ISSUE
ASBURY PARK, N. J. SEPT. 23 - 26, 1937



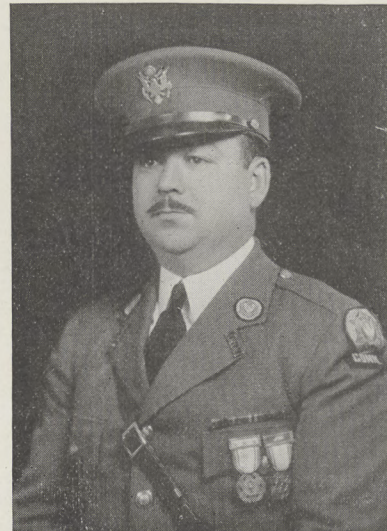
National and Co-Chairmen of 42nd Encampment



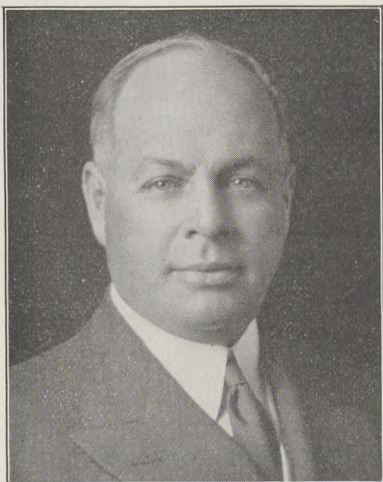
LOUIS FREEMAN



MICHAEL WEINSTEIN



MARTIN HORWITZ



CLARENCE E. F. HETRICK
Mayor

To the Officers and Members of the
Forty-second National Encampment of the
Jewish War Veterans of the United States
and the Ladies Auxiliary.

It is a great honor to have the privilege and on behalf of
the citizens of the City of Asbury Park to greet your honorable
body and bid you welcome to our resort city.

I realize that I am greeting an organization of American
citizens who, when needed, rallied to the defense of our nation
with honor and glory to it and to themselves.

I, therefore, take great pleasure in officially welcoming the
Forty-second National Encampment of the Jewish War Veterans
of the United States and the Ladies Auxiliary.

May Providence guide and speed the accomplishment of the
ideals of your organization.

CLARENCE E. F. HETRICK,
Mayor

WE WON'T RETREAT

Why Veterans Are For Democracy

By HARRY W. COLMERY

*National Commander of the
American Legion*

On the eve of the convention of the American Legion, which opens in New York on September 18th, we present the second of a series of two articles by the Legion's national commander.

THE EDITOR.

TO uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States is the first obligation of the American Legion. It should be the first obligation of every American citizen, and I confidently believe it is so accepted by the great majority. It is the firm foundation upon which our form of government rests, and as such it is the basis of true Americanism. Take the first words of the Constitution, add to them the first article in the Bill of Rights, which, as we all know, consists of the first ten amendments to the Constitution, and we have an Americanism program which for completeness, clarity and common justice has never been equaled. I think it never will be.

Let us read those two brief paragraphs. Thus the Constitution begins: "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." The first article of the Bill of Rights, which is a part of the Constitution, says: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

"What is Americanism," has become a much discussed subject in recent times, and I think the answer is to be found in the foregoing words. To me, and I believe to most citizens, Americanism means at least the preservation of our perfect Union, of our form of democratic government, dedicated to the principles of individual liberty, with one code of justice for all. Americanism means the preservation of peace at home and abroad. True Americanism also means individual and collective observance of those cardinal American principles as set forth in the Constitution, which guarantees to every citizen of the United States the uncontrovertible and inviolable right to worship God according to the dictates of his or her conscience, freedom of speech, a free press, and peaceable assembly. When these rights die, liberty dies with them and democracy passes from existence. Because we have adhered to these things, our country has progressed and prospered more rapidly and to a greater extent than any other nation in all history. Our standard of living is higher, our home life is more abundant; we have achieved a cultural, educational and social status that is not surpassed by nations having centuries more of experience and tradition behind them.

No where in the world are these advantages enjoyed by the great mass of the people as they are in America. There is a reason. It is because we have exalted the individual while other governments have exalted groups, classes or families. Here we have made government the servant of the

people and not the people of government. These are priceless heritages and we must never forget that they belong not alone to us but to our children and posterity for generations to come. We are but the custodians of American freedom for the moment, and it is our sacred duty to pass it on untarnished to those who shortly will take our places. How best may this be done? By succumbing to momentary passions and throttling freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of the press and freedom to peaceably assemble? I think not, and in that statement I am confident The American



HARRY W. COLMERY

Legion stands with me. By closing our minds to the voice of experience and following some will-o'-the-wisp expediency, particularly when expediency is offered at a time unsuited to a calm, dispassionate consideration of the need? I think not. Let us remember the admonition of George Washington, in his farewell address, when he said:

"Towards the preservation of our government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the Constitution, alterations which will impair

the energy of the system; and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing Constitution of a country; that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion."

It has been said that while the people are informed the Republic will be safe. Never before in the history of our country has there been greater need for a well-informed public. We are living in a time of social unrest, we probably are witnessing a major social mutation in the evolutionary cycle of civilization. Our country has scarcely been affected compared with other governments. In Russia it appeared in the form of violent revolution and mass murder, and has settled down momentarily into an iron-clad dictatorship which has enslaved the Russian people. In Germany it is rampant in the form of class hatreds, racial persecutions, and the vestment of power over life and death itself for the entire nation in the hands of an individual who acts from exuberance rather than wisdom. The Italian manifestation is the military mania and dictatorship of Fascism.

The American Legion, by formal action of its last three national conventions—held in Miami St. Louis and Cleveland respectively—has declared its determination to combat any effort to introduce Communism, Hitlerism or Fascism into the United States. Alien in concept and despotic in practise, they are all repugnant to the principles of democracy and the opposite of everything for which our government stands. We have taken our stand and from it no pressure can be brought which will cause us to retreat. No true American can behold the enslavement of the Russian worker and farmer, the destruction of all forms of religion, the studied elimination of home life, and the rule of despotism in Russia without a feeling of complete revulsion. No true American can witness the class and racial persecutions that continue in Germany under the Nazi rule without noting the marked contrast with American ideals. No person can read about the militarization of mere children and the frenzied sabre rattling of Fascism in Italy, with the complete collapse of representative government there, without being conscious of the fact that America does not grid for war nor possess a greed and lust for power, covets no territory, entertains no jealousies, and indulges in preparedness as an adequate national defense.

Under these governments of absolutism, liberty and freedom have perished. There is no freedom of speech, no free press, no freedom of religious worship and no right of peaceable assembly. Government changes

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42nd National Encampment

As we write this, arrangements are in full swing to welcome you to Asbury Park, and to give you the most enlightening and enjoyable convention you have ever attended. As you read this, we hope you are making final arrangements to be with us from September 23d to 26th.

Each year our organization and auxiliary have shown a steady healthy growth. The past year has been no exception. Our conventions have mirrored our progress—bigger and better each year.

Aside from the renewing of friendships, the making of new ties and personal enjoyment, out of our conventions must evolve J. W. V. policy and a program for the ensuing year, as well as the officers to carry out our plans.

No one can prognosticate what next year will bring. At this time, a World War is a possibility. The past year has been one of the blackest in Jewish history. Will the next bring any lightening? Democratic government is being pushed aside in all parts of the world, and alien propagandists are seeking a foothold in the United States. Will they make progress here next year? These and many other questions give us serious pause.

As American ex-servicemen and descendants of the ancient Maccabeans, we look forward to any fate, without fear. We are proud of our American heritage and Jewish faith. We will go down fighting battling our enemies, and for the cause of justice and eternal freedom.

We are positive such will be the decree of our National Encampment.

The New Year

At sundown September 5th another year passed into history. The end of the Jewish year 5697 and the beginning of 5698 have been duly observed by Jews throughout the world. Everywhere Jews bade farewell to the old year with no regrets and welcomed the new with the deathless optimism and buoyancy that have kept the Jewish people alive in the face of century after century of persecution. One would have to be totally unrealistic to find any reason for regretting the end of 5697. Everywhere it brought

with it tragedy and suffering. In Poland 3,000,000 Jews ushered the year out with an almost audible sigh of relief that the twelve months they have left behind them are over. For it was a year of hell for them. No less terrible was 5697 for the Jews of Germany and Roumania. Elsewhere in Eastern and Central Europe and even in parts of Western Europe the year was marked by new trials for the Jewish people. The crisis affecting the future of Palestine, the relentless closing of one avenue of escape after another for the harassed victims of economic and political conditions in other lands—all created chaos and confusion in Jewish life overseas. Only in our free land and in a few of the democratic states abroad could 5697 be said to have brought any cheer, although there were occasional moments of doubt here too.

No year since 1914 has been greeted with such deep-felt hope as 5698. Casting a fleeting glance backward at 5797 is enough to make us feel that the new year cannot be any worse but may be better. There have been other years like 5697 in the age-long history of the Jewish people. Tragedy and suffering are no strangers among us. We have known them in all ages and in all lands. One might say the Jews have almost become hardened to them as we veterans became inured to the discomforts of life in the trenches. And as so many of us survived the war, with all its brutalities and horrors, so the Jews have survived their oppressors. Yesterday it was Pharoah, Haman, Antiochus, Titus and the Czar. Today it is Hitler and his ilk. But just as the Jews remain a strong and virile though dispersed people today when the Hamans and Czars are long since gone, so the Jews will outlast those who would destroy them today.

The Jews' will to survive is one of the great triumphs of mankind. To employ a military term, we may compare the lot of the Jews throughout history to a city besieged by an army of millions. But instead of the beleaguered city being conquered, it outlasts its enemies who ultimately vanish into the darkness while the city resumes its customary life and goes on to renewed greatness. So with the Jews. Ever since recorded history we have been besieged by enemies. But they have been routed while the Jews are still here.

One need not be endowed with the magical powers of the seventh son of a seventh son to risk the prediction that 5698 will not see the end of Jewish suffering and persecution. Nor would it be rash to foretell that the next twelve months will not bring with them surcease for Jews in Poland and Germany and wherever Jews are being hounded and harassed. But we can predict that come what may the Jews everywhere, in lands where they are free as well as in nations where they are not, will continue to stand erect, proud of their past, determined to meet the present bravely and with fortitude, and still hopeful of a better future. The Jew is no militarist but neither is he a coward. He knows how to die but he also knows how to live.

In a certain sense the story of the Jewish people is comparable to that of a soldier in the ranks. He marches under orders to an

unknown destiny. He goes forward, never backward. So with the Jews. Occasionally they look backward and wonder about the past but at the same time they turn their faces proudly to the future to tomorrow. Their marching orders are, forward.

And so we go into 5698. We know not whence it leads. We know not what it will bring. But we welcome it bravely. For to be a Jew has always required supreme courage and heroism. And the contemporary breed of Jews is not lacking in either quality.

Make It Mean Something

An Editorial in our June issue was entitled as above. Among other things, we said:

"We should see to it that the 1937 encampment sets a new standard. We should invite a few prominent Jewish leaders to address us on vital questions of concern to all Jews. We should set aside one session, or part of a session, for a round table discussion of Jewish problems of particular interest to Jewish War Veterans with qualified experts as leaders. We should see to it that the report of the resolutions committee is rendered at a time when it can be given the mature and thoughtful consideration it merits but seldom receives. In short, we believe it essential that our encampment program be so devised as to justify our name. It is not intended hereby to in any way minimize the purely veteran program of our conventions."

This Editorial elicited favorable comment. We wonder if the Encampment Committee has given it heed in their program. If not, we wish to call it to their attention again, with the hope that it will be given proper consideration.

A Permanent Executive Secretary

Previous administrations and many comrades have ventured the opinion that JWV should have a paid Executive Director or Secretary at National Headquarters. Our organization has grown to the point where this matter merits serious consideration. The increased duties of our National office requires the full-time attendance of a high-class experienced official. It is too much to ask or expect a voluntary Adjutant General to make such sacrifice.

A more important reason is the valuable time lost in getting started by every new administration. Running the routine affairs of National is a huge business undertaking. Stoppage for even a short period retards our progress. Our Commander-in-Chief has sufficient other important duties and should not be worried about the operation of Headquarters.

Aside from these, we have no doubt that the investment would produce dividends in the form of a great many new posts, increased revenue, and more accomplishment.

Every other major organization has such a permanent official, and we can find no good reason why J. W. V. should be an exception.