

THE
Jewish Veteran

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43rd NATIONAL ENCAMPMENT

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DETROIT, MICHIGAN—SEPT., 2, 3, 4, 5

JULY



1938



ON TO DETROIT

OUR 43rd NATIONAL ENCAMPMENT

SEPTEMBER 2nd to 5th, 1938



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Friends of the Signers

They Knew The Jews of 1776

By J. GEORGE FREDMAN, Past Commander-in-Chief

ON July 4, 1776 when the Continental Congress, meeting in what is now Independence Hall, Philadelphia, adopted the Declaration of Independence, the Jewish population of the thirteen colonies was hardly more than 3,000. Yet of this handful many were destined to distinguish themselves in the war that was to make the Declaration of Independence the theoretical basis of the United States Government. None of the Jewish patriots of those days served in the Continental Congress but many of them enjoyed close personal and business relations with some of those who signed the Declaration of Independence.

Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration, was the first to propose a Jew to the cabinet. Shortly after his election to the Presidency in 1800 he sought to make a Philadelphia lawyer by the name of Moses Levy his attorney-general, but as advised against it on political, not religious grounds. But Jefferson did name Reuben Etting of Baltimore, United States marshal for Maryland at a time when under the statutes of that state Jews were still disqualified from public office. There is also a tradition that the Philadelphia house in which Jefferson wrote the first draft of the Declaration was owned by Hyman Gratz, from whom Jefferson rented rooms.

Next to Jefferson the best known of the signers of the Declaration was Benjamin Franklin. Franklin's first employer was Samuel Keimer, an English Jew who was a printer. Many of Philadelphia's leading Jews were numbered among Franklin's friends. Notwithstanding the recent attempt by Nazi propagandists to brand Franklin an anti-Semite by attributing to him a mythical attempt to prevail upon the Constitutional Convention to exclude Jews from the United States, the fact is that he thought so highly of them that he contributed to fund for the new building of Congregation Mikveh Israel in Philadelphia.

Robert Morris, the financier of the Revolution, had in Israel Moses, a Philadelphia Jewish merchant, his earliest business partner. Even before Morris had resort to the financial help of Haym Salomon, Morris had received valuable assistance from Moses, who helped Morris found the first bank in the United States. As for Morris' relations with Salomon it is enough to cite the many references to the Jewish broker in Morris' journal to indicate how dependent he was on Salomon. On a number of occasions Morris also had important business relations with Col. David S. Franks, who was on the staff of George Washington. Another signer who had good cause to be thankful to Haym Salomon was James Wilson of Pennsylvania. Wilson was for some time a regular recipient of substantial aid from Salomon. Wilson, who later became governor of Pennsylvania, was also a close friend of Michael and Bernard Gratz, with whom he had been in partnership in land deals, and was associated with Aaron Lopez, who lost a fortune in privateering.

Honored perhaps above all other great Americans is that group of 56 patriots who signed the Declaration of Independence. At least 16 of the signers knew the Jews of Colonial America, having had intimate business and often personal relations with them. Comrade Fredman here tells the story of the Jewish friends of the signers.

THE EDITOR

Benjamin Rush, who also signed for Pennsylvania, was associated in western land purchase with Col. Isaac Franks, one

Doherty Attacks Nazis And Reds in N. Y. Talk

A vigorous attack on Communists and Nazis was made by Daniel J. Doherty, national commander of the American Legion, in an address before the Advertising Club of New York City. He denounced both as enemies of democracy. "At a recent convention of the Communist Party," he said, "the organization confessed a love of democracy. In truth the aims of this group are the antithesis of democracy. The Communists have stamped out religion wherever they found it possible."

Without mentioning the Nazis by name, he went on to say "there is another organization in this country which has the avowed purpose of eliminating a certain race. The weight of public opinion should be thrown against such an organization. We in America are not going to allow any single race to be singled out for persecution. Who knows but that tomorrow the race from which you spring may be singled out. Our youth is being taught that democracy has failed. Our youth is being told that nothing can be accomplished without the iron hand of dictatorship. They are being taught to deny God. Under such circumstances it becomes our responsibility to become leaders."

After pointing out that subversive groups concentrate on the youth of the nation because they recognize that youth bears the future of America, Mr. Doherty added: "the right to freedom of speech has never been upheld where it endangers or threatens the welfare of the government."

4 German-Jewish Officers Aiding Chinese Forces

Although the German Government has ordered the score of German officers who have been acting as military advisers to the Chinese high command in the war with Japan to return home at once, four of them have refused to go. They are the four Jewish officers, whose names for good reason cannot be disclosed. All four have announced their intention to remain and continue helping the Chinese.

of his closest friends. In his diary Rush noted "that many of the children of Tory parents were Whigs. So were all the Jews in all the states. Edward Rutledge, one of South Carolina's signers, was a colleague of Francis Salvador, "the Jewish Paul Revere", having served with him on various committees in the colonial legislature. Arthur Middleton, another South Carolina signer, also knew Salvador well, having been a fellow member of his on a committee to investigate the Tories. Carter Braxton, one of the Virginia signers, was a partner with Michael Gratz in some privateering enterprises as well as in other business deals.

Button Gwinnett of Georgia, whose signature is the rarest of all the signers of the Declaration of Independence, enjoyed extensive business dealings with Mordecai and Levy Sheftall. Once he owed them \$6,000 and consigned a whole island to them as security. Mordecai Sheftall, one of the outstanding patriots of the South, maintained an extensive correspondence not only with Gwinnett but the other Georgia signers, Lyman Hall and George Walton. All three were his intimate friends and later they pressed his claims for reimbursement upon Congress. It was Walton who obtained for him the appointment as agent for buying and issuing of supplies to the army in Georgia.

Although there were but a handful of Jews in the New England colonies, there is some evidence that the signers from Massachusetts also knew the Jews. John Hancock, who was president of the Continental Congress, was the first to sign the Declaration, had good reason to be grateful to Isaac Moses for it was upon him, that was drawn the bill of exchange to pay for the cargo of corn that came from Virginia to Hancock and Samuel Adams, another signer, to relieve the suffering caused by the British siege of Boston. After the outbreak of the Revolution, Hancock, then governor of Massachusetts, commissioned Col. Isaac Franks, who was not a Massachusetts man, an ensign in the 7th Massachusetts regiment. Elbridge Gerry, also a Massachusetts signer, was the one who moved in the Continental Congress to send Col. David S. Franks to Paris with copies of the ratified treaty that ended the Revolutionary War.

Thus it appears that at least sixteen of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence had more than a passing acquaintance with some of the leading Jewish patriots. The evidence shows that at least two of the signers from five states—Virginia, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Georgia and Massachusetts had close personal or business relations with Jews.

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The Bund And The Spies

One phase of the sensational disclosures involving the indictment of 18 persons as Nazi spies in this country has not, it seems to us, been sufficiently stressed. We refer to the connection of the Nazi German-American Bund with the espionage ring. For years it has been charged that the Bund has been engaged in spying in this country for Germany. Repeatedly this has been denied by spokesmen who insisted their organization was 100% American. The indictments handed up by the Federal Grand Jury in New York named several persons who are members of the Bund and one who was formerly national president of the Friends of the New Germany, the Bund's predecessor.

Other evidence against the spies which has not yet been made public is said to establish a definite link between Bund leaders and the spy ring. It is also a fact that one of those indicted, Dr. Ignatz Griehl, was until recently a member of the Medical Reserve of the United States Army while two others indicted were members of the army. It also happens to be a strange fact that virtually every Nazi camp and every branch of the Bund are situated uncomfortably close to an army post, a flying field, an aviation factory, a navy yard or some other key point in the nation's defense machinery.

We believe the time has come for Uncle Sam to speak out plainly and call a spade a spade. As veterans we feel that the time is past when the government can tolerate the continued existence of organizations whose members stand exposed as spies and whose naturalized members are accused of what is tantamount to treason.

The Good Isms

In an article in the Ohio American Legion News of June 9th, Commander-in-Chief Harry Schaffer raised a question that to us appears to hit at the heart of a problem concerning all Americans. He pointed out that we have all been militant in denouncing all alien isms such as Communism, Fascism, Nazism, radicalism, atheism, racialism, totalitarianism, anti-Semitism, anti-Catholicism, and anti-Protestantism. He emphasized that we have been denouncing these isms day in and day out

and standing foursquare for democracy. That, he said, is all to the good. But, he asked, is our defense of democracy anything more than a negative attitude. Are we doing anything about democracy besides just being "for" it, he asked.

And he answered it by pointing out that we are not putting sufficient stress on the good isms that we are for. He then went on to cite list of good isms which ought to have our wholehearted support—Americanism, patriotism, idealism, capitalism, fraternalism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism and tolerationism. As an Independence Day thought we think C.I.C. Schaffer said a mouthful. We can't preserve a democracy simply by being against the things that threaten it. We have to be zealous in defending and maintaining the things that are implicit in democracy. We can't afford to squander our energies simply in fighting the bad isms. We have to devote more time to practicing and preaching the good ones.

The founding fathers of America who drafted the Declaration of Independence created democracy. They bequeathed it to us. But they didn't hand down a formula for maintaining it against the assaults of new and strange ideologies that are abroad in the world today. That's our job. It's up to us to dedicate ourselves to keep democracy a going thing by showing the world that it works and will continue to work. No one can take democracy from us. We can only lose it by being blind, lazy, and self-satisfied. The times call for bold and brave action. We have it in our hands to see that the democracy that was born in 1776 is handed down inviolate to succeeding generations.

Unity

The big push for Jewish unity in this country to deal with the problem of defending and safeguarding Jewish rights has finally reached its objective. The June 13th meeting in Pittsburgh between representatives of the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, the B'nai Brith and the Jewish Labor Committee succeeded in drafting an agreement for coordinating the activities of these four organizations dealing with safeguarding Jewish rights. Now that the Pittsburgh resolution has been ratified by the Jewish big four the next step is to implement it by creating the united agency it envisaged.

J.W.V., which has been a member of the Committee on Cooperation, representing the B'nai Brith, Congress and Committee, was for some reason unknown to us not invited to the Pittsburgh Conference. But although we were ignored it would be churlish on our part to withhold our support from the new united front movement. Provision is made in the agreement for the admission of other national Jewish organizations into the councils of the proposed agency. We take it for granted that should J.W.V. decide to seek membership in the council that its election would be a matter of course. But regardless of what J.W.V. decides we are happy to see that the long fight for coordinating Jewish resources in the struggle against

anti-Semitism has at least been crowned with success. We hope that out of the new era of good feeling engendered by the Pittsburgh meeting will come constructive action and harmony. Too long have our efforts been stymied by sniping and mutual recrimination. We now have the opportunity of presenting a united front to the enemy.

Reminders

During the past few months the Jewish Veteran has on several occasions made a number of seemingly constructive proposals. Among these were that J.W.V. begin the compilation of the record of American Jewry's share in the world, that J.W.V. make plans for being represented in the Veterans Peace Palace at the New York World's Fair and that measures be taken to have the names of posts now identified only by a number or a geographical designation changed so that they will bear the names of distinguished American Jewish patriots. So far little or nothing has been done about these matters. Another convention will soon be here.

And while we are complaining it is also timely to sound once more the warning we have issued for two years to national convention committees to make the word "Jewish" in Jewish War Veterans mean something. Not enough of our convention programs deal with problems of concern to us as Jews. So many anti-semitic groups yapping at our tails only because we are Jews should spur us on to emphasize our Jewishness.

Pride in J. W. V.

Are you proud of being a Jew? Are you proud of J. W. V.? There is a saying that if you don't respect yourself, others never will. What happened to those German Jews who joined a Christian church, or intermarried? They met the same fate as other German Jews.

We recently attended two J. W. V. department conventions. Invitations had been sent to a number of J. W. V. dignitaries, and they were present, some from long distances and at personal expense and sacrifice. Some of these comrades have been active not only in J. W. V. but in other organizations, and probably had important messages to deliver. They were presented to "take a bow."

At these same conventions, were several public officials. Each was called upon, NOT to take a bow, but to address the convention. As in most cases, the speeches were complimentary and platitudes, and served little beneficial purpose.

We also attended recently an American Legion dinner. Many public officials and dignitaries of other veteran organizations were present. The public officials and the visiting dignitaries were presented for a bow. Only the local mayor was permitted to deliver a short greeting. All other speeches were by American Legion officials.

The picture and the contrast is before you. Nothing more need be said.

Jefferson Said.....

.....The Father of the Declaration of Independence Speaks

IN these days when religious and civil liberties are denied to millions in totalitarian nations it is pertinent to recall that the man who wrote the great Declaration of Independence was also the father of religious liberty in America and one of the greatest champions of equal rights for all regardless of race or creed. Thomas Jefferson correctly estimated his own place in history when he deposited in his private papers a document containing his own epitaph: "Here lies buried Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for religious freedom, and father of the University of Virginia."

From the writings, speeches, letters and other documents of Jefferson we have extracted a number of utterances dealing with religious and civil liberty. Though they are more than a century old, some going back 150 years, they are still vital, meaningful and timely as if they had been written yesterday.

The following are direct quotations from Thomas Jefferson:

"I am for freedom of religion and against all manoeuvres to bring about a legal ascendancy of one sect over another."

"Bear in mind the sacred principle that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will to be rightful must be reasonable, that minorities possess their equal rights, which equal laws must protect and to violate would be oppression."

"The proscribing any citizen as unworthy the public confidence by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to offices of trust or emolument unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion is depriving him injudiciously of those privileges and advantages to which in common with his fellow citizens he has a natural right."

"We have no right to prejudice another in his civil enjoyments because he is of another church."

"Bigotry is the disease of ignorance, of morbid minds; enthusiasm of the free and buoyant. Education and free discussion are the antidotes of both. We are destined to be barriers against the return of ignorance and barbarism."

"It is our sacred duty to suppress passion among ourselves, and not to blast the confidence we have inspired that a government of reason is better than one of force."

"The difficulty between a free government and a despotic one is indeed great."

"And shall we refuse the unhappy fugitives from distress that hospitality which the savages of the wilderness extended to our fathers arriving in this land? Shall oppressed humanity find no asylum on this globe?"

"All men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience."

"Our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions."

There are some who will dispute the claim that Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, was the greatest American, but all are agreed that he was the father of religious liberty in America. Here we have extracted from his papers, speeches, documents and other writings a number of important utterances on religious and civil liberties which have a special timeliness today. All of them are as true today as when Jefferson first gave them voice.

THE EDITOR

"After so many ages during which the human mind has been held in vassalage by kings, priests and nobles . . . it is honorable for us to have produced the first legislature who had the courage to declare that the reason of man may be trusted with the formation of his own opinions."

"Having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little if we countenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked and as capable of bitter and bloody persecution."

" . . . With the regret I have ever felt at seeing a sect, the parent and basis of all those of Christendom, out by all of them for a persecution and oppression which prove they have profited nothing from the benevolent doctrines of Him whom they profess to make the model of their principles and practice."

"Your sect (the Jews) by its suffering, has furnished a remarkable proof of the universal spirit of religious intolerance inherent in every sect, disclaimed by all while feeble, and practiced by all in power. Our laws have applied the only antidote to this

vice, protecting our religious, as they do our civil rights, by putting all men on an equal footing. But more remains to be done, for although we are free by the law we are not so in practice; public opinion erects itself into an inquisition, and exercises its office with as much fanaticism as fans the fires of an auto-da-fe. The prejudice still scowling on your section of our religion, although the elder one, cannot be unfelt by yourselves. It is to be hoped that individual dispositions will at length mould themselves to the model of the law . . . Nothing I think would be so likely to effect this as to your sect particularly than the more careful attention to education . . . which, placing its members on the equal and commanding benches of science, will exhibit them as equal objects of respect and favor."

After reading these remarks of Thomas Jefferson we can understand how he came to open the immortal Declaration of Independence with the deathless words: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and endowed by their creator with inherent and inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Frisco Vet Groups In Attack On Nazi Bund

The Radical research bureau of the American Legion, Department of California; San Francisco County Council of the American Legion, the San Francisco chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution and the California Crusaders were among the organizations signing a joint statement containing a vigorous denunciation of the German-American Bund. Taking the form of a declaration of American principles, the statement, while attacking the Nazis, pointed out that there was no essential difference in their program and that advocated by the Communists and Communist-inspired groups.

The statement, which was also signed by the C.I.O. and the A.F. of L. and the B'nai Brith, reads in part as follows: "There is no place in American society for these silver-shirted Nazis. Everything in their imported creed is repugnant to the American people. The German-American Bund is therefore doomed to defeat in its attempts to use San Francisco as a sounding board for the preaching of intolerance and persecution, or for the glorification of dictators with their relentless regimentation of human lives and destinies. American democracy, however, will endure long after the evils of Nazism, Fascism, and Communism have gone. We issue this statement in order to help Americans recognize these destructive forces and to fortify every democratic principle against such menaces so that 'this government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth.'"



COMRADE SQUAWKER — HE BELLY-ACHES ABOUT EVERYTHING, AND EVERYBODY — AND "THREATENS" TO RESIGN EVERY TIME HE'S REMINDED HE'S DELINQUENT IN DUES — WHICH HE USUALLY IS.

—American Legion Monthly