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FEBRUARY, 1968

ISRAELIS PREPARE WELCOME FOR JWV-NEC CONVOCAATION

First NEC Meeting Ever Held Outside the United States

One of the most memorable happenings in the history of the Jewish War Veterans will take place this month when the National Executive Committee of JWV opens its Convocation in Tel Aviv on February 28th, and JWV's top leaders meet with the government and people of Israel.

The Israeli Government, aware of the outstanding, militant and devoted support of JWV for Israel's fight-for-freedom, has made unprecedented preparations to receive the NEC, the other JWV members and their families who are making this journey back to the ancient land of their ancestors.

This Convocation is a dream come true for many who are making the trip . . . something that will make February, 1968, the most historic occasion, not only in the annals of the organization, but on a personal basis as well.

Based in Tel Aviv, the NEC will be guests at receptions in both Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Leaders will be received by the Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, who just recently met with President Lyndon B. Johnson at the LBJ ranch in Texas to discuss sub-

jects of great and grave importance to both countries.

Plans are made for Israeli President Shazar to receive the NEC in his private residence in Jerusalem, the newly reunited capital of Israel.

An important person making this trip is NEC Chairman Bernard Abrams, PNC, who will "chair" the NEC meeting. Like everyone, Mr. Abrams is looking forward to JWV's most important convocation.

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Samuels Found GI's Inspired By LBJ's Trip to S. Vietnam

National Commander Samuel Samuels felt that one of the most memorable and touching experiences of his recent official visit to South Vietnam was the deep and warm impression that was made upon our GI's there by the recent visit of President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Commander Samuels, who reached the big U. S. Base at Camranh Bay just one day after the Chief Executive had been there, was heartened by the way our fighting men reacted to the visit of the President.

As Commander Samuels stated on reporting his Vietnam trip in the last issue of The Veteran, "You could actually feel the enthusiasm and warmth everywhere you went." He felt there hadn't been one person who hadn't been heartened by seeing, shaking hands with, or just

knowing that his President had been in Vietnam.

When he returned home, Commander Samuels felt sure that the President would like to know how these heroes of our country had felt about the Chief Executive's visit . . . he knew the President would want to hear the things the Commander had heard from the GI's. "He actually shook hands with me and I'm not going to wash this hand for a long time," to "It just made you feel somehow real good to look at him."

Accordingly, Commander Samuels wrote the President to this effect . . . and as you can see, was immediately sent a warm reply from Mr. Johnson who, as he says, "carries the memory of our courageous and compassionate sons in my heart and mind each day."

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 11, 1968

Dear Commander Samuels:

I was heartened by your report of my visit to Vietnam.

For all the good influences that you found, there were far more that accompanied me home. I carry the memory of our courageous and compassionate sons in my heart and mind each day. I am more than ever resolved to reward their sacrifices and your unwavering support with the peace that is our single-minded goal.

You have my best personal wishes for a glad New Year.

Sincerely,

Mr. Samuel Samuels
National Commander
Jewish War Veterans
of the United States of America
1712 New Hampshire Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20009

FLASH! A Visit to JWV National Forest in Israel Will Be Included in Our Tours

Editorially Speaking

UNCONDITIONAL NEGOTIATION— A BOOBY TRAP

In the heat of the passionate appeals from varied quarters for an immediate cease fire, and an unconditional halt in the bombing of North Vietnam, perhaps it would be worthwhile to take a short refresher course in history—the history of the Korean War.

In June, 1951, the Communists of North Korea requested a Truce Conference. One month later in July, the first of five hundred and seventy-five (575) frustrating, ambiguous, humiliating meetings began.

What kind of a Truce was it? Did the War stop? Did the killing and mutilation end? You know the answer if you have taken the time and trouble to look at the record! NO!

Twenty thousand six hundred and twenty (20,620) Americans lost their lives in Korea AFTER THE TRUCE TALKS STARTED — MORE THAN HAVE BEEN LOST IN ALL THE FIGHTING IN VIETNAM!

On the 27th of July, 1953 a Cease-Fire was signed and the war was presumed to have come to an end, **BUT TO DATE, FIFTEEN YEARS LATER, A PEACE TREATY IS STILL UNSIGNED DESPITE DAILY MEETINGS BETWEEN THE COMMUNISTS AND THE UNITED STATES, AND THE SOUTH KOREAN DELEGATES.**

And "the talks go on" at Panmunjon while Americans are wounded and killed on their lonely patrols.

THAT ISN'T ALL THAT GOES ON: AS THIS IS BEING WRITTEN, THE NORTH KOREAN PIRACY OF AN AMERICAN SHIP IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS, CONTINUES FURTHER TO JEOPARDIZE WORLD PEACE.

As our President has stated many, many times, we would stop the bombing if North Vietnam halts its infiltration of South Vietnam.

LET'S WORK FOR PEACE IN VIETNAM, BUT LET'S NOT BE BOOBY TRAPPED!

JEWISH VETERANS AND ISSUES

Is there a special concern, a special point of view, on the part of Jewish veterans towards certain issues? We think so.

Anti-discrimination. Equal rights and equality of opportunity would seem to concern the average Jewish non-veteran fully as much as it concerns us. We all hate to be discriminated against, to be denied opportunities because we are Jewish.

But the reaction to such maltreatment differs with the veteran. We remember we fought in time of war for our country "the land of equal opportunity," and we more vigorously refuse to abide by discrimination based on our Jewishness.

So we'll picket, we'll protest, we'll litigate, we'll boycott, we'll fight militantly to reject and repeal discrimination practices, not genteel, perhaps, but determined and effective!

Soviet anti-Semitism. As American veterans, who fought side by side with Russian, British, French and other allied soldiers against the bestial Nazis, we can neither understand nor tolerate anti-Semitism on the part of our former allies. Russian cultural and religious genocide grimly directed at the tenacious Jews behind the Iron Curtain, is as cynically ruthless and unprincipled as Russian political and military hostility to Israel. Both are directed at Jews as Jews, solely because they are Jews, and thus sturdily God-fearing and resistant to Communist dictatorship.

Yes, Jewish veterans have a special stake in fighting Soviet anti-Semitism because we were, and are, fighters and will always fight rather than temporize or surrender.

Israel. A shining beacon of courage and faith, a tribute to man's fortitude and indomitable determination to survive in freedom—that's the new-old democracy in the Middle East.

Jewish war veterans, with special pride and empathy, identify with such militant, confident courage.

And, based on our solid concern as patriotic, loyal Americans for the welfare and security of the United States, as well as that of its democratic, anti-Communist ally, Israel, we say: "Let us continue to support Israel, freedom and Shalom!"

Israel Trip Will Start With Prayers

Rabbi Samuel Silver has written a most inspired Memo that will go to all JWV members and their families who are going to Israel this month, to that history-making JWV Convocation in the land of their forefathers.

A Message for All Members

However, since the Memorandum was directed only to those members who were making the trip, the message of the Memo is written here for all members of JWV to read—because it has so much to say to each and everyone.

Kennedy Airport Synagogue

Before departure to Israel, no matter which flight, all travelers will have the wonderful opportunity of a visit to the new Synagogue of inspirational and historic importance at Kennedy International Airport. It is the very one visited by Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol before his recent meeting with President Johnson in Texas. It is also the one many dignitaries visit when passing through Kennedy International Airport. These illustrious names include those of Vice President of the United States, Hubert H. Humphrey, as well as former Prime Minister of Israel, Ben-Gurion. There will be brief services, reciting of prayers and greetings by one of the officiating Rabbis, including JWV's National Chaplain, Rabbi Samuel Silver.

Services Before Take-Off

Services and inspection tours of the International Synagogue will begin approximately two and a half hours before each flight. The International Synagogue is next to the International arrival building . . . and it's just a brief walk of four minutes (or one can cab or bus it) to the El Al Airlines section after the tour and services.

Thanks to Former Chaplain

The prayers and visits have been graciously offered and made available by the former JWV National Chaplain of the Jewish War Veterans, Rabbi Harold H. Gordon, Executive Vice President of The New York Board of Rabbis and Secretary of the International Synagogue.

The Synagogue— The Holy Land

Rabbi Gordon worked closely with JWV's National Chaplain Silver who had the idea, as he said, "I feel it would be both fitting and inspirational to begin a visit to the Holy Land by starting with prayers at the International Synagogue."

Thinking Out Loud



By Albert Schlossberg
National Editor

Let's Talk, Not Tough, But Honest

Each month my thoughts in this space have reflected my personal support of the position of the United States viz-a-viz the conflict in Vietnam. My position has not changed despite the plethora of discussion that has enveloped the country and the world, for the raging debate seems only to have further clouded the basic issues. We are in Vietnam. With rare exceptions all of us would like to see the war over with—but the solution seems hard to come by.

Of late indications seem to project the image that militarily we have turned that famous corner, we are within reach of a military victory. Upon his return from Vietnam our National Commander told us that all of the responsible officials he had been in contact with indicated that military victory is within sight. Let us hope so while we continue to support our forces engaged in the struggle, but in the meanwhile, I, along with many thoughtful observers of the dilemma of Southeast Asia (including the last convention of the Jewish War Veterans), are troubled by problems that seem no closer to solution now than they were prior to our involvement.

At the last convention of the Jewish War Veterans, in Washington, D. C., it was resolved that JWV called upon the government of South Vietnam to lower its draft age to 18 to correspond to the draft laws of the U.S.A., and to institute land reforms that would do away with the feudal system that saw over 80 per cent of the arable land controlled by a miniscule number of "land barons." In the considered judgment of the Jewish War Veterans these inequalities had to be remedied before a real lasting victory could be established in Vietnam.

The policy positions adopted by the Jewish War Veterans at the Washington, D. C. convention were not arrived at easily. A great deal of thought and discussion in the Resolutions Committee and at the plenary session preceded adoption. We, the Jewish War Veterans, saw a glaring defect in the policies of the government of Vietnam and we felt obligated by our friendship to share our concern with the people and government of South Vietnam.

Soon after the JWV convention

we were gratified to note that the South Vietnamese agreed with us. Their draft age was lowered to 18. We thought the tide had turned in the struggle for civil reform. Alack and alas, it just didn't work out that way. A law is of no value if the government opts to avoid enforcement or is unable to make it stick. Recent photos of the bustling streets of Saigon attest to the fact that somehow, the 18 to 21 year-olds just aren't serving in the Vietnamese armed forces. The status seems to be quo. Unlike their American counterparts, the young men of South Vietnam are staying out of the struggle to save their country.

For the record, the present government in South Vietnam is filled with the most stable and most democratic in the history of that troupe of land. But unless it moves quickly, and the sooner the better, to do something about land reform to equalize the benefits of the productivity of the land and to bring their country truly into the 20th century, the people of South Vietnam will continue to cast a jaundiced eye at its protestations of democracy.

This is not an American War. America seeks no gain for herself in Vietnam, yet we suffer the barbs of calumny heaped upon us by friends and enemies at home and abroad because of our involvement in a struggle to aid an emerging democracy.

When a Vietnamese mother, on television, said, "Why should my son have to die for America?" she pinpointed a major roadblock to final victory and peace in Southeast Asia, the people of South Vietnam are not convinced that it is their war, not our war. Military victory alone will not be enough in Vietnam.

JWV-JWVA Accord In Sight

National Committees, concerned with restoring JWV-JWVA harmony have reached an agreement in principle, with all major points of difference included in the consensus. The language of the final agreement is now being drafted, and when the respective NEC's of the JWV and JWVA approve of the agreement we will inform you of the results.