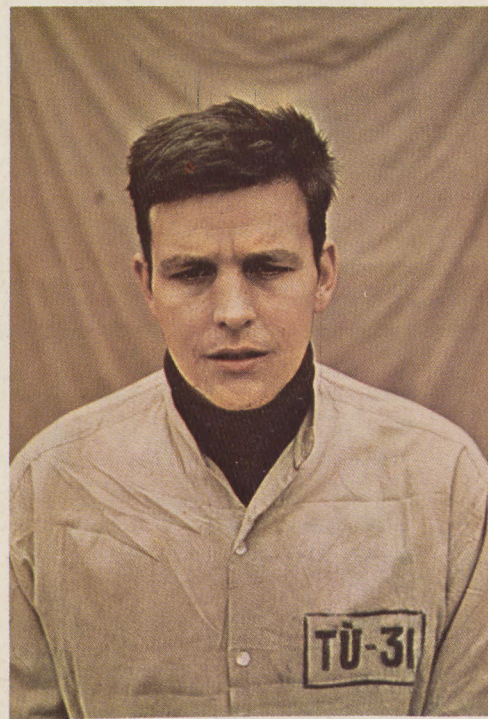
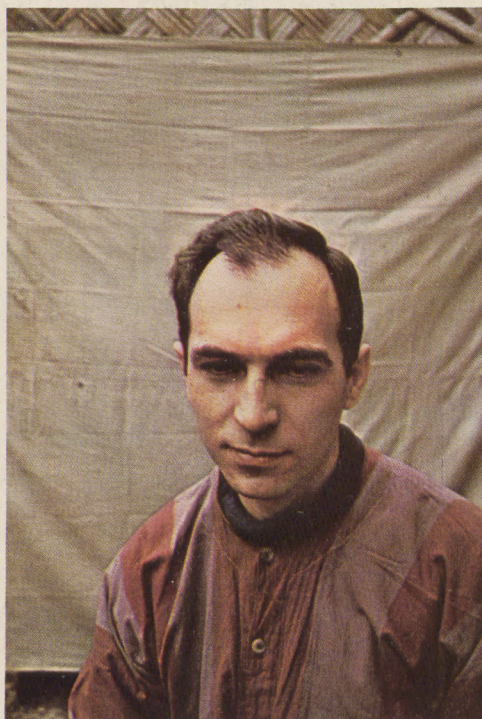
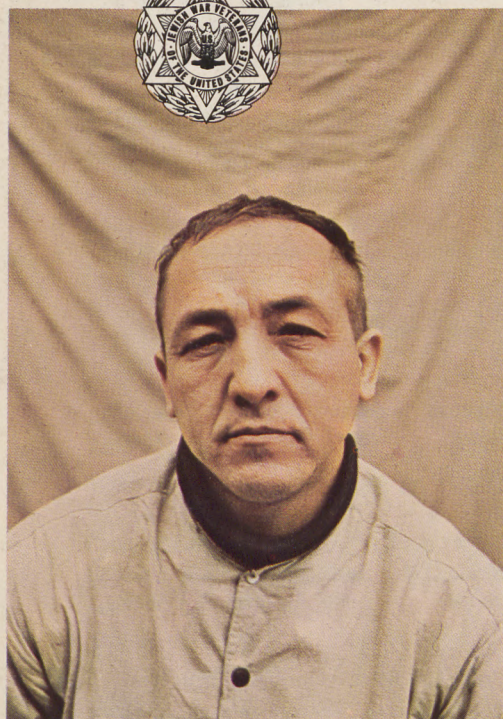


# THE JEWISH Veteran



## AMNESTY FOR WHOM?

*National Commander Reports — See Page 3*



The pictures on the front cover are all American prisoners of war in North Viet Nam taken by Lee Lockwood (Black Star). We have no idea whether these prisoners are still alive, but we think it appropriate that the issue appearing on Memorial Day should carry these pictures. The prisoners have been identified as follows: Capt. Edward L. Hubbard, USAF (reported missing July 22, 1966), 1st Lt. Joseph Crecca, Jr., USAF (reported missing Nov. 25, 1966), A1/c William A. Robinson, USAF (reported missing Sept. 21, 1965), Capt. Murphy N. Jones, USAF (reported missing June 30, 1966), Lt. Col. Robinson Risner, USAF (reported missing Sept. 17, 1965), A3/c Arthur N. Black, USAF (reported missing Sept. 20, 1965), Capt. Glendon W. Perkins, USAF (reported missing July 22, 1966).

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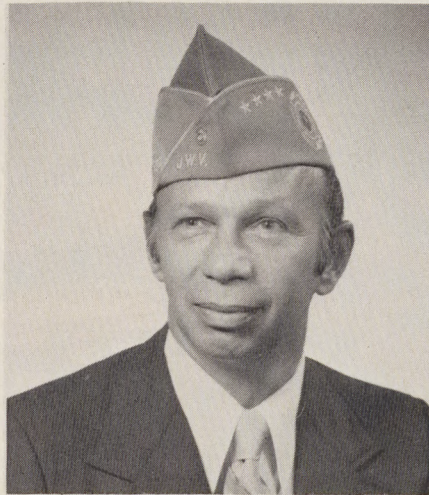
On April 15th in Boston, after an extensive discussion pro and con, the National Policy Committee and the National Executive Committee took the following position in reference to Amnesty. It represents the initial expression on this subject by the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. The JWV of the USA will not take a position on Amnesty proposals for Draft evaders or deserters from military duty while U.S. military personnel are in mortal combat in Vietnam and while young men at home are still subject to the Draft. The effective end of military activity in Vietnam and the phasing out of the Selective Service System are a precondition to serious consideration by our organization of a program if enacted could make a mockery of an evenhanded system of military conscription and raise serious morale problems among those whose lives are on the line in combat.

At this writing at least six bills have been introduced into Congress calling for the granting of either full or partial Amnesty. In addition, a Senate Subcommittee looking into the operations of the Draft heard conflicting testimony on the subject of Amnesty. The first piece of legislation was introduced by Ohio's Senator Robert Taft, Jr. in the Senate and by Congressman Edward Koch of New York in the House. In essence it would grant amnesty to Draft resisters but not to deserters with a provision that would require three-year service in military or civilian federal service.

Sentiment in Congress has crossed political lines and emerged as a purely moral question as to whether or not a grant of amnesty is justified under the circumstances of the Vietnam conflict. Proponents argue that there is significant precedent in our

own history and even quote the President as having indicated that it was granted by George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Harry Truman without pinpointing or defining the kind of amnesty granted.

Our nation's first President, General Washington, pardoned the participants in the Whiskey Rebellion; President Lincoln pardoned lower ranking members of the Confederacy as well as Union deserters provided the latter returned to their units within 60 days and served out their enlistment periods, if not, they would



lose their citizenship. President Truman established a three-man Amnesty Board rather than grant a blanket amnesty. The Board considered individual requests amounting in all to more than 15,000 of which approximately 1,500 men were pardoned, mainly on religious grounds.

Although many Americans, in the past as well as during the war in Vietnam have opposed war in principle, only very few have been willing to place their lives and careers in jeopardy in order to back up their stand.

Surveys indicated that there are approximately 70,000 men who have

evaded the war as compared with those who answered the nation's call of whom over 50,000 have died in combat. This begs the sobering question as to whether it would be fair to those who paid the price of life itself by forgiving others who have refused to serve. The question is further compounded by the burden on the American conscience of the prisoners of war and those missing in action in Vietnam. Moreover if we were to grant amnesty now, could we still continue the Draft and what effect would that have on the decision to move to a volunteer army?

Another challenging aspect of the problem is the consideration of the deserter vis-a-vis amnesty. By contrast to middle class, better educated conscientious objectors or Draft evaders who fled to Canada or Sweden, the deserters are, by and large, less educated and unsophisticated who may have reached deeply-held convictions only after exposure to the service and the war. Would we discriminate against the uneducated youngsters?

Proponents who rely on the Nuremberg trial decisions, claim that evaders and deserters served the law of morality which is certainly higher than the Selective Service Act. They often refer to St. Thomas Aquinas who said that human law does not bind a man in conscience; if it conflicts with the higher law, human law should not be obeyed. On the other hand, Socrates said "In war, and in the court of justice, and everywhere, you must do whatever your state and your country tell you to do or you must persuade them that their commands are unjust."

Thoreau, Ghandi and Martin Luther King, Jr. all said that a law could be disobeyed but that the law's penalty must be accepted. If we are to admire the courage of those who violate a law it can only be for those who are willing to accept the consequences of breaking the law.

At this time we are not certain whether it would be wise to temper justice with mercy and if so to what extent the mercy would apply. There

*(Continued on page 26)*