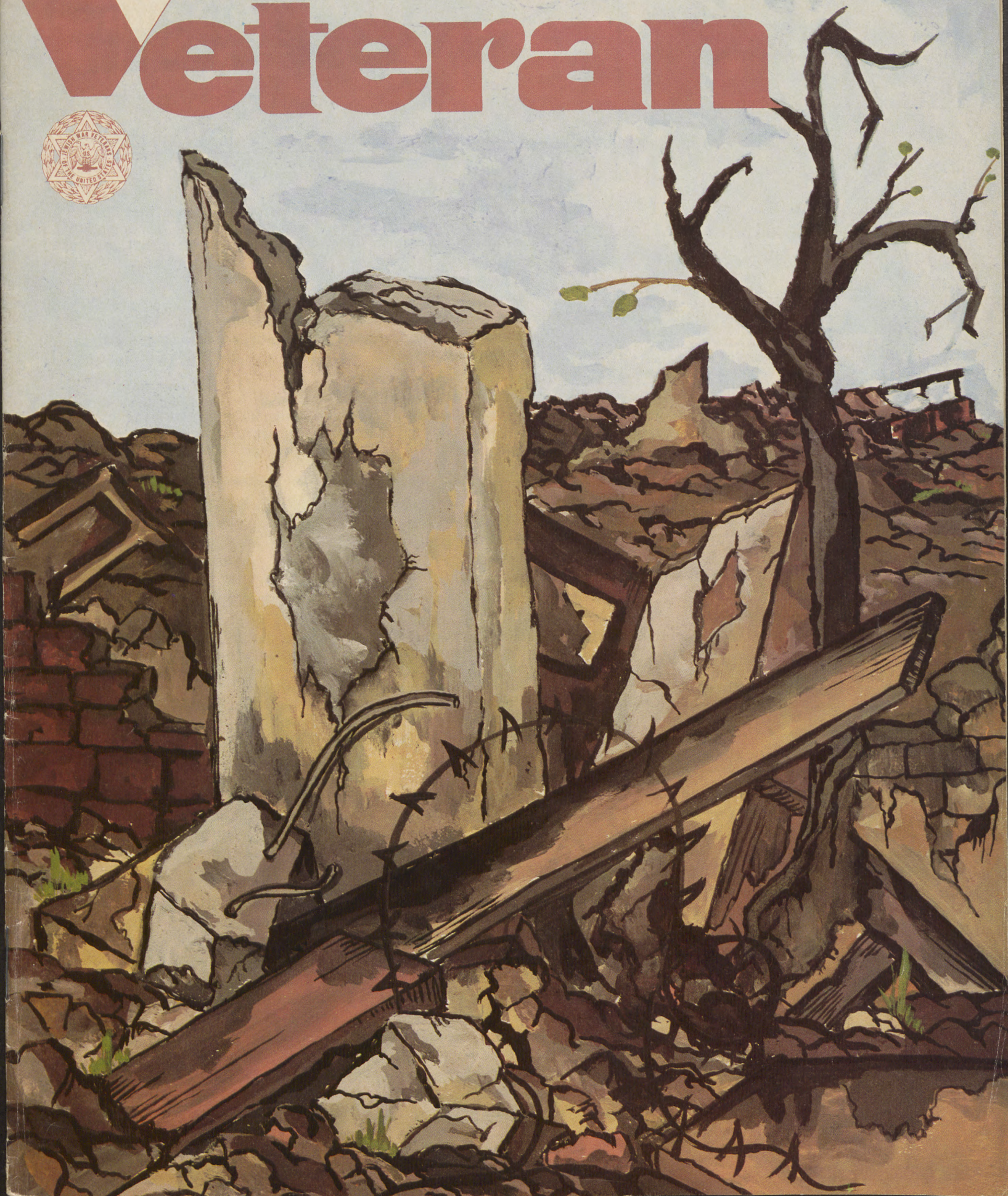


THE JEWISH

Veteran





The desolate landscape on the issue's cover is a symbolic picture of war's ultimate waste, questioning whether we in this generation did anything constructive for the human condition in Vietnam. But perhaps there is a faint hope that the world might one day understand that death and destruction can never be the final solution . . . upon closer observation, one can see that artist Penrod Scafield has painted a tree that is not dead . . . the return of life symbolizes peace.

The Jewish Veteran

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Organized 1896

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By Norman D. Tilles, *National Commander*

When the surge of returning Vietnam veterans became a challenging and disturbing reality in the national employment picture, JWV, in national convention, adopted a policy position that looked to the federal government as the employer of last resort for those returnees unable to find employment. In effect, the enactment of the Emergency Employment Act of 1971, in part, represented just such a commitment by our government since an essential portion of the bill designated public service employment for veterans.

Public service employment as a concept is generally considered to be dear to the hearts of liberals, who traditionally look to the federal government for assistance to the unemployed and underprivileged. To conservatives, it is generally considered a "do-gooder" program, something to be equated with socialism or worse. To the veterans community, there should be little concern for labels since first and foremost we are interested in aiding veterans.

The organized veterans community is often considered by many to be conservative. As a confirmed liberal, myself, this posture seems strange, since neither JWV nor its highly respected peer organizations would, under any circumstances, turn from veterans less fortunate than most of us who require support and sustenance from federal funds. In our own organization, we have been long committed to veterans' preference, an expression of "preferential treat-

ment," a liberal notion if there ever was one.

Liberals are under attack everywhere on the political spectrum. The liberalism that implied moral justice and equality of opportunity also implied that the nation had an interest in perfecting the technology and application of freedom. It implied that all men, as the Constitution so ringingly affirms, are created equal. It implied a dedication to a free press, free speech, free access to our government, free and open debate on every issue anywhere within the shadow of the Stars and Stripes.

There are many still guided by those ideals, regardless of how much grey has crept into our world or how the infirmities of age are slowing us down. Somehow, for us, the light of liberalism becomes brighter every day despite present short-run dangerous developments in our nation's history. When the freedoms for which we have fought so long and so hard are being steadily eroded, I am appalled.

I am appalled, for example, at the strong impetus for further regulation of radio and television through a kind of thought control that implies that if radio or television station owners "behave," they will be rewarded by license renewals for longer periods of time. I am appalled at what appears to be the ready acceptance of the notion that a newspaper reporter's sources must be made public, especially by anyone who disagrees with what the reporter has written. The



prevalence of wiretapping has now reached a climactic point in the Watergate revelations. And so it goes, on and on.

These grievances are against an entire fabric of what we in this country loosely refer to as "free speech." It is appalling to discover that these ugly pressures are met in large measure by an indifferent American people. Sometimes, I wonder who gives a damn. These are not popular issues, especially in our own organized veterans community, where the veterans' role is often misunderstood and misinterpreted as one of abject obedience to higher authority. We who claim to speak as patriots have an obligation to ensure that our free society is not just a meaningless jumble of words on a yellowing piece of paper exhibited for visiting tourists. We are not only the land of the brave; we are the home of the free.

My father arrived here seeking the dream of freedom, while my mother, as a native, assumed it as a birthright of every American. Both know exactly what that means. Perhaps we have taken those freedoms for granted so long that we hardly realize their very existence is being threatened.

In my NEC report, I expressed my worries about this land we love. But lest my expression be misunderstood, I am confident that liberals and conservatives soon will join to heal the damaging effects of an eroding freedom. □