

*THE JEWISH*

# **Veteran**



# **IMPEACHMENT?**

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# THE JEWISH Veteran



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AINSLEE R. FERDIE

*National Commander*

JEROME N. NISMAN

*National Editor*

FELIX M. PUTTERMAN

*National Executive Director*

1712 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20009

Phone: 202-265-6280

JEROME D. COHEN, PNC

*Consultant*

WARREN ADLER

*Executive Editor*

LINDA DECKARD

*Managing Editor*

ANDY CONRAD

*Asst. Managing Editor*

JEAN TOLSON

*Administrative Editor*

EDITORIAL OFFICES

5225 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20015

Phone: 202-362-2257

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# commander-at-large

By Ainslee Ferdie  
*National Commander*



The headlines in Television Closeups breathe out the word impeachment. "Impeachment" is the means and manner in which a Federal official, whether elected or appointed, is removed from office. As one hears the charges and countercharges, opinions and counter-opinions, and watches the circumstances sway very often with the Gallup, Harris and other polls, we as Americans of Jewish faith who have fought to preserve and protect this country, must think individually and of course collectively what it means to us.

I think that we must recognize that impeachment is not essentially a judicial process. It is not the same thing as being charged with a crime and tried by a jury of one's peers or by a Judge who has no interest in the outcome of the litigation. Indeed all members of the House of Representatives and the Senate bear a political label.

Many have aspirations to the highest office themselves. Others hope to win favor and promotion by elected or appointed office. Many are conscious of their involvement and dependency upon their own party and so it is not surprising that one finds members of the House or the Senate who have not heard or seen or reviewed the evidence nor announced that they favor impeachment or that they oppose impeachment or reflecting other shades of opinion. After

all, impeachment is by majority vote of the House to prefer the charges and then after trial requires a two-thirds vote of the members of the Senate present and voting in order to impeach the President.

This commentary does not pass upon the question of whether our President has been guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors but rather on the fact that the jury and the prosecutors are not completely disinterested. But indeed there are other factors to be understood.

If the House Committee does vote impeachment and if the House concurs, then the trial should be presided over by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, a man who owes his present position to a determination and patronage of the President. While the Chief Justice does not vote on the result, certainly one has to question what effect it would have, particularly if in final analysis the question of the impeachment of the President rests not so much on what he has done but on whether the acts for which he is to be impeached do not fall within that generally characterized as high crimes and misdemeanors as recognized by the common law but rather to that class of actions that we so often refer to as abuse of office.

However, one can say that the great strength of the United States and of

Israel and Great Britain and all other free democracies is that whether there is a division within the government, whether the governing party is strong or weak, whether indeed the leadership is under attack for abuse of office or nonfeasance or misfeasance, still the government goes on. Those in totalitarian governments do not understand that the people of a democracy, even when divided over the thought of the propriety of their leadership, will nevertheless stand together and serve against any foreign intrusion or action.

We, as veterans, have paid a high price for the privilege of democracy. We, as Jewish War Veterans of the United States, prefer to hear the evidence and to judge for ourselves as to whether the President or any other person accused is guilty of the offenses of which he is charged. But one cannot escape the fact that too often the President listens only to those who extol his virtues and isolates himself from criticism or support. The country is in greater danger from what may occur during the process of impeachment than it is from the impeachment process itself.

Political corruption is not new in the history of the United States. Political espionage is not new in the history of the United States, and scandal at the  
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# VETERANS' BENEFITS:

## what the veteran gets . . .

by Linda Deckard

The Vietnam veteran gave what every soldier gives—he risked his life to serve his country; left home and family to wage war and suffer hardships in a foreign land; learned the business of war and following orders; and sacrificed some of the prime years of his life to protect and preserve our way of life.

What did he get in return?

He came home to a cold welcome. He found his peers had taken the available jobs, his elders regarded him with suspicion, and his government was interested only in cutting veterans' benefits.

In medical care, education, job opportunities, and all the "extras" that we customarily heap upon war veterans, the Vietnam veteran is being shortchanged. Late checks, inadequate benefits, and high unemployment are among

the most publicized problems the new veteran faces as he attempts to readjust.

### No Heroes' Welcome

The Vietnam vets were not individually less heroic than any other category of war veterans, but they are not heroes generically, because they did not save us from anything. The only Vietnam veterans to be treated as heroes were the returning POW's, and after the initial fanfare, even these men have been pretty much forgotten as far as the Veterans' Administration is concerned.

Because of inadequate and poorly managed programs, Vietnam veterans have been effectively denied their earned benefits and have suffered grievous problems in trying to resume their civilian lives.

"In medical care, education, job opportunities, and all the 'extras' that we customarily heap upon war veterans, the Vietnam veteran is being shortchanged."



*Linda Deckard is a freelance journalist and writer who formerly worked for newspapers in California and Ohio and most recently was a Washington, D.C. correspondent.*

Protesting inadequate medical, educational, and employment benefits, several Vietnam veterans occupied the Washington Monument March 28. The veterans, many in wheelchairs as those shown leaving here, occupied the monument for a short while after they were denied entry to the White House where they went to air their grievances against Veterans' Administration hospitals.