

The Jewish Veteran®



Israeli POWs JWV Demands an Accounting

National Commander Kicks-Off Letter Writing Campaign

by Michelle Spivak Kelley

National Director of Communications and Programs

For months our attention has been drawn toward the turmoil of the Middle East. Now is not the time to turn away. We **were** needed and **are** still needed. We are needed in the effort to free Israeli POWs.

First, America's Jewish war veterans were needed to support the efforts of U.S. Armed forces to free Kuwait and to protect the Persian Gulf region from the tyranny of Iraq's Saddam Hussein.

Then, when it became clear Hussein had Israel in his sights, the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A.

was needed to appeal to President George Bush and the Congress. JWV urged them to assist in Israel's defense with manpower, military equipment, and money. In our Capitol Hill contacts JWV emphasized the sacrifice made by the State of Israel by *not* responding to the Iraqi threat.

Regarding allied and American POWs held by Iraq, the Jewish Veterans of the U.S.A. was needed to speak out against inhumane treatment. JWV urged Red Cross

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National Commander Presents JWV Priorities to Congress

Honors for Senator John Warner in Evening Reception

by Howard Metzger

Associate Editor

Emphasizing the need to upgrade veterans care facilities, prevent further cuts in the VA budget, care for homeless veterans, and increase funding for medical research, JWV National Commander Alfred Schwartz of Atlanta, Georgia, presented the organization's legislative priorities before a joint session of the House-Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee on April 17.

"JWV strongly believes it is an absolute necessity that Congress provide a VA health care budget which will ensure adequate staffing and funding of VA hospitals and other medical facilities to provide for the future health care needs of veterans," National Commander Schwartz told the Committee. Addi-

tionally, the National Commander outlined JWV support of a commission to examine the future structure of the VA, and continued JWV support for increased staffing at the Veterans Benefit Administration (VBA).

During his testimony, National Commander Schwartz announced JWV opposition to the proposed reduction in the VA burial allowance, as provided for in the Congressional Reconciliation Act of 1990 which eliminates the headstone and marker allowance. "JWV strongly opposes this reduction in benefits and asks for legislation which will immediately restore all burial benefits," proclaimed Schwartz.

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Don't Support Japan's Protec- tionism and Elitism Declares JWV Commander

by Michelle Spivak Kelley,
National Director of Communications
and Programs

"America's biggest trade partner operates outside of the family of nations, side-steps its obligations as a democracy, advocates a policy of protectionism, and promotes anti-Semitism", says the National Commander of the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. (JWV).

The angry comments of National Commander Alfred Schwartz came on the heels of various media reports describing the Japanese decision to cutback on trade with Israel and reports describing an increase in the publication and promotion of anti-Semitic books in Japan.

Japanese banks are reportedly halting many transactions with Israel in response to the Gulf War. All trade and financial matters would be affected. "But, Israel was not a party to this war, neither the aggressor nor a member of the alliance," stated Schwartz. "Israel was one of the aggrieved, a victim."

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NC Alfred Schwartz testifies before the Joint House-Senate Vet. Affrs. Cmte. Rep. Ben Gilman (R-NY), JWV Legislative Officer and Herb Rosenbleeth offer guidance.



Sen. John Warner accepts JWV Medal of Merit from NC Schwartz.

LOOK AT
Atlanta
NOW see page 11

Commander Schwartz
Announces Winners
see page 14

Strained Vet Hospitals
see page 8

FORUM

Letters To The Editor

Dear Commander Schwartz,

I wish to write this letter of commendation and gratitude to you and JWV. I am a recipient of magnificent guidance from JWV field officers who have gallantly championed my cause. Their persistence and dedication have salvaged my emotional and financial well-being, and have allowed me and my family to pursue our lives despite overwhelming odds.

Twenty or so years ago, Mr. Stanley Rosenberg initiated my service-connected disability claim, acquiring equitable awards over a fifteen year period, while I underwent intense VA in and out-patient therapy. Mr. Rosenberg dealt with my fits of irrational behavior and convinced me to finish my college education. However, as I regressed and became increasingly depressed, I met Mr. Bernard Lewis, the JWV Philadelphia representative, who immediately submitted my claim for a higher disability rating and assumed the same compassion to my plight as did Mr. Rosenberg. Mr. Lewis never wavered in his support and reinforced my confidence as my file was forwarded to the Board of Veterans Appeals.

I attended the Appeal proceedings and met Mr. Harry Chernikoff (JWV National NSO), who eloquently presented my claim before the Board. He gently, yet firmly, guided me through the hearing and convincingly proved my claim. He is a remarkable individual.

My only regret is that I never formally recognized these individuals sooner. Now, as I look back on their dedication to duty and purpose, I realize how fortunate I was to be in their midst. I shall always be grateful and ever-obliging to you and them, and the great organization which they represent.

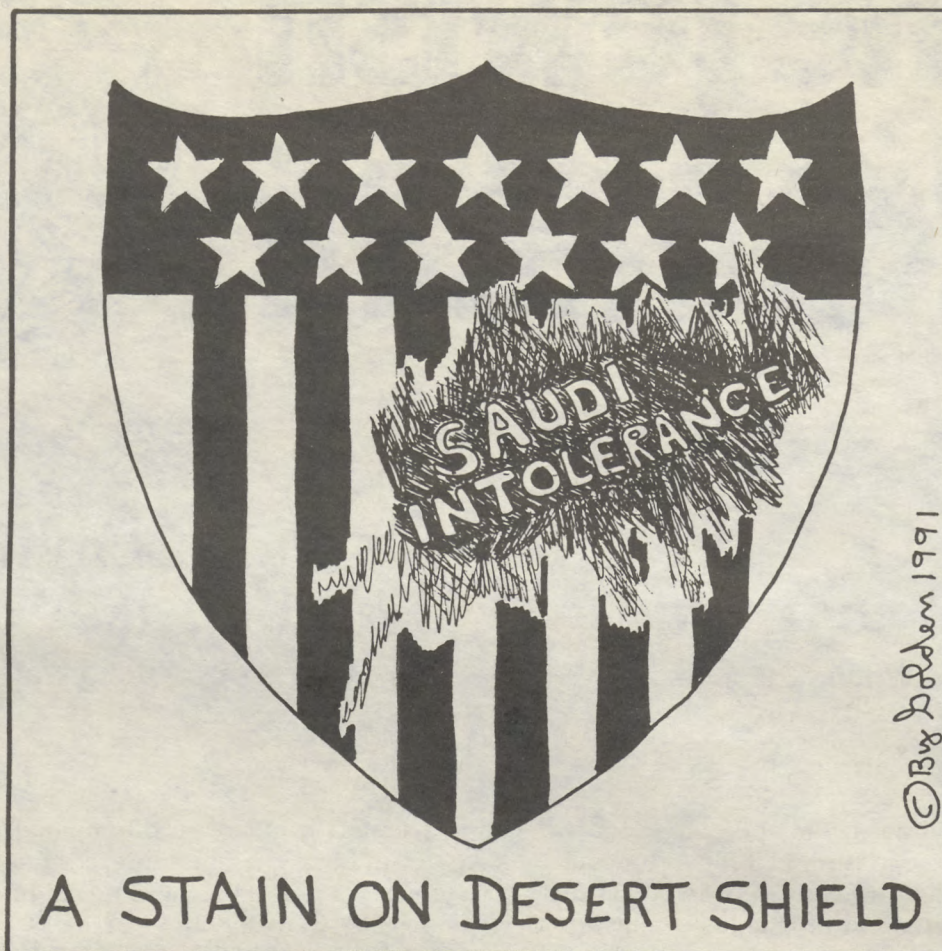
Very truly yours,
"Grateful"
West Chester, PA

Dear Editor,

In the Fall, 1990 issue of *The Jewish Veteran*, you published a letter from Gila Gerzon, Director of the USO in Haifa, expressing her appreciation for the help of JWV Israel Post 180 in supporting the activities of the USO in Israel.

As a member of that Post, and a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy in 1945, a U.S. veteran of World War II, and as the first commanding officer of the Israeli Navy, I can attest as to the importance of this work, and the appreciation of U.S. sailors and Marines who are receiving home hospitality.

I think it is also important to note that Post 180 also supports the activities of the Roof Organization for



Discharged Israeli Veterans, an all volunteer organization that provides housing, meals, tuition and pocket money for underprivileged Israeli veterans, male or female, who seek to continue their education after their discharge. Post 180 has been providing financial and material help in this worthy organization. Contact Post 180 for further details on how you can help.

Sincerely,
Paul N. Shulman
LT (jg) U.S.N. (Ret)
RADM, (Ret) Israel Navy
Israel Post 180

Dear Editor,

We all know that tourism to Israel has been adversely affected as a result of the events in the Persian Gulf. An industry that ranked first in generating income for the country and that accounted for \$1.8 billion in foreign currency income in 1989, fell short of that number by \$700 million in 1990. Now that peace has arrived, I call on you, my friends, to visit Israel.

Israel is a country that has always prided itself on having one of the world's most developed tourism infrastructures, and indeed, has been recognized by the world as such. Because it is a nation blessed by being the cradle for the three monotheistic religions, it has been given the moral mandate and obligation to care for these religious sites. Had it not been for the unfortunate sequence of events which began on August 2, 1990, Israel would have posted 1990 as a record year for tourism.

The tourism industry supplies jobs for 100,000 workers and approximately 400,000 dependents. It has also been discussed that with the arrival of 200,000 new immigrants arriving from the Soviet Union in 1990, and possibly 400,000 in 1991, the country desperately needs a healthy economy. In fact, the tourism industry has been coun-

ted on to provide jobs for thousands of Soviet immigrants.

Those who arrive at Ben-Gurion Airport are being presented with flowers, not gas masks. Major European carriers are resuming flights to Israel, and El Al continues its schedule of uninterrupted service from many points in the United States.

I urge you to include Israel in your vacation plans. Come experience the beauty of Spring in Israel, and now that school is almost over, a summer family vacation is just perfect. Come back to Israel. We missed you.

In closing, let me just say that you will never forget the experience of being in Israel. Nor will Israel forget you.

Hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,
Raphel Farber,
Israel Consul and Tourism Commission for North America

Dear Editor,

Please accept my appreciation for the excellent article regarding my affiliation with JWV that appeared in the Fall, 1990 issue of *The Jewish Veteran*.

My family and I are grateful for your efforts and you have their, and my, thanks. It pleases me to be remembered by JWV. I have been honored to be affiliated with this fine organization.

Best wishes,
I. Bernard Rotberg
Philadelphia Post 13
Philadelphia, PA

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit submissions for publication in *The Jewish Veteran*.

Where We Stand

by Albert Schlossberg, National Editor

Most Americans do not know that the United States established a U.S. Air Force base in Daharan, Saudi Arabia in 1946. The operation continued for more than two decades, until the Saudis asked the air force to leave.

Even less known is the quid pro quo which the U.S. government made with the Saudis to obtain Saudi acceptance of the base. High on the list of strings attached to the authorization were provisions stipulating that the U.S. Air Force would not station any, repeat, **any** Jewish military or civilian personnel at the airbase!

Equally disturbing to many Americans was the Saudi restriction which forced the air force to instruct Christian chaplains to remove from their uniforms their insignia of the Chaplaincy Corps - the Roman cross. Chaplains were also ordered not to conduct open, public religious services at the base. Instead, our air force personnel had to surreptitiously sneak into hidden areas for church services or religious comfort.

The Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. was the only American veterans' organization to publicly challenge the Department of Defense's (DoD) willingness to enter into such an unconscionable agreement! JWV, regrettably, because of its lonely position, failed to right that wrong.

When it became apparent that Operation Desert Shield would result in positioning large numbers of U.S. military men and women in Saudi Arabia, the Jewish War Veterans notified the Department of Defense that we would not stand idly by if the Saudis once again insisted that our military units in the Gulf be *Judenrein*. This time we succeeded. DoD policy stipulated that "units", not individuals, would be ordered to the Gulf to serve in Operation Desert Shield.

Regrettably, the restriction which applied to the Chaplaincy Corps - Chaplains were renamed "Morale Officers"- remained in effect. No Roman cross on the lapels of Christian chaplains, no tablets of the Commandments on a Jewish chaplains uniform, in public.

Ironically, the Saudis had no problem allowing religiously observant American men and women to shed their blood or die in defense of Saudi Arabia, as many Americans did, but non-Islamic religious comfort for our men and women of the U.S. military forces in Saudi Arabia, had to be "out of sight" of followers of Islam!

JWV considers the willingness of our government to accept that restriction on the religious freedom of our men and women who have served, and are serving in the Persian Gulf, to be a stain on the American escutcheon, and an infringement of their constitutional

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