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## Medal of Honor Presented to Member

The nation's highest decoration, the Medal of Honor, was presented recently to Air Force Col. George E. Day, a former prisoner of war and a DAV life member. Col. Day accepted the honor from President Ford in White House ceremonies.

Col. Day, released by the North Vietnamese after more than 5½ years of captivity, was awarded the medal "for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while a prisoner of war in North Vietnam."

On Aug. 26, 1967, Col. (then Major) Day was forced to eject from his aircraft over North Vietnam when it was hit by ground fire. His right arm was broken in three places, and his left knee was badly sprained. He was immediately captured, interrogated and severely tortured.

Col. Day later escaped into the jungle and began a trek toward South Vietnam. He was injured by fragments of a bomb or rocket, but survived on a few berries and uncooked frogs. He successfully evaded enemy patrols and swam across the Ben Hai River with the aid of a bamboo log float.

Due to delirium because of his injuries, he lost his sense of direction and wandered aimlessly for several days in the demilitarized zone. After several unsuccessful attempts to signal U.S. aircraft, he was ambushed and recaptured by the Viet Cong, suffering gunshot wounds to his left hand and thigh. He was returned to prison, and later moved to Hanoi after giving his captors false information.

Col. Day was finally released on Mar. 14, 1973. He has been vice commander of the 33rd Tactical



Col. George E. Day

Fighter Wing, Eglin AFB, Fla., since September 1974. He and his wife, Doris, have four children, Steven 20, George 13, and Sandra and Sonja 11.



**Jewish  
War  
Veterans of the USA**

*With best  
wishes,  
Pearl*

*Pearl D. Laufer, Ph.D.*

NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

1811 R Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20009

(202) 265-6280

# The Jewish Veteran

July/August 1987



Dear Editor:

The cover of your April/May/June 1987 issue showing a star above the flag of the United States is in very poor taste. If your magazine goes across the nation, you will find that the image you are making for the Jewish community in the USA is appalling.

Had a Catholic or Protestant publication used a cross in place of a Star of David, we all will want to be up in arms over it. We cannot let our religious feelings be so strong that it overshadows the glory of Old Glory.

Those Americans who are not Jewish will look with distaste on your cover and I must say that I cannot blame them. I don't think any emblem or religious design has the right in the United States to be shown above the flag of this nation.

When I was in the Air Force during World War II, this nation was the only beacon of hope for the Jews around the world. I shudder to think of what would happen to me and the rest of the Jews in this country had our flag been brought down.

I am proud of being a Jew but you've got to keep your eye on the grand old flag or, there won't be you and me and the people of our faith.

How about a mass array of USA flags on your cover next time you look for something to print?

Sincerely,  
Edward H. Silk  
Lakehurst, N.J.

*The National Executive Director responds: While we have received many positive comments on the cover, I should like to address the remarks of Mr. Silk and others.*

1. The Israelis do not have a patent on the Star of David symbol. The emblem on the cover was not the Israeli flag. It was a lone Star of David symbolizing the Jewish people and, in the context of the whole cover, Americans of the Jewish faith. Some people mistook the cover to mean Israel helped make the US free. That was a misinterpretation.

2. One caller commented, "If JWV complains that some ads, around Memorial and Veterans Day, show a cemetery scene of just crosses, how can JWV make a claim, on the magazine cover, that only Jews made America free."

The answer to that is that we made no such claim. The phrase used is "This Star (Americans of the Jewish faith) Helped Make These Stars (America) Free." No claim of "exclusivity" is inherent or apparent.

Dear Editor:

Do you realize what you've done with your article by Ellyce Field "Suffering the Pain" (April/May/June 1987)? You have given impetus to the old anti-Semitic lie that Jews won't fight for their country. Ms. Field could only find 12 Jews in the entire State of Michigan who fought in Viet-Nam; my experiences tell how wrong that figure is as an indicator of Jews who served in Viet-Nam.

To begin with, we probably had more Jewish Regular Officers serving in the Armed forces during Viet-Nam than any of our previous wars. Ms. Field notes a Jewish battalion commander in her article as but one example. Many of those Regulars are currently JWV members, including senior and flag rank officers. I'm sure JWV can find at least 12 of that category in our ranks alone.

I belong to the Viet-Nam Veterans of America Northern Virginia chapter 227 (as well as Post 589 JWV). I know of at least six Jews in that VVA Chapter and I've only met 20 or 25 of our close to 200 members. These six are people with obvious Jewish names who have identified themselves as Jews. I'm willing to guess we can match Ms. Field's Michigan dozen in our chapter alone.

When I returned from Viet-Nam and was assigned to Ft. Gordon Georgia (1967) I became very active in the Jewish Chapel. When our chaplain was sent to Viet-Nam, I became Lay Leader and I remember clearly that we had an average of 250 soldiers at services every Friday. We also ran a Kosher kitchen for the two dozen or so Orthodox soldiers, two of whom were sent to Viet-Nam as infantry-men. More than that, our 250 represented far less than half of those who were on record as Jews at Ft. Gordon during that era. My assistant Lay Leaders included a severely wounded helicopter pilot and a Special Forces Master Sergeant, both Viet-Nam veterans.

Last, but by no means least, I don't remember how many Friday nights our Chaplain in Viet-Nam asked the several dozen Jewish servicemen in attendance to stand for the Kaddish for a fellow Jew who had been killed, but there were too many such requests.

Ms. Field would have done far better to ask some of our known Jewish veterans to track down fellow Viet-Nam veterans than to have relied on her research ability. She may be a journalist but she is no demographic researcher. Admittedly, there are problems finding Viet-Nam veterans. Most of us are not joiners. Most of us are suspicious of outsiders, particularly journalists, and most of us do not talk about Viet-Nam. Jewish veterans are

like most American Jews of the 60's generation. We identify as Americans first and foremost. We may be conscious Jews, but we are not self-conscious. Whatever most of us experienced in Viet-Nam we experienced as Americans, not Jews. So sure, she had a problem finding us, but should her problem be accommodated by the JWV by printing an article that will be used against American Jews? Demand better research of your authors. You owe it to your members.

David G. Epstein  
Colonel USAR  
Alexandria, VA

*Editor's Note: Col. Epstein's comments, while interesting, failed to deal with the spirit in which the article was written and reprinted. Ms. Field and the JWV salute the patriotism of the American Jew.*

Dear Editor:

"Suffering the Pain," by Ellyce Field, in the April-May J.W.V. magazine, awakened long buried memories of being the only Jew in my outfit in Vietnam.

At first, my grunts could not understand what the hell I was doing there "In Country" with them. After all I was Jewish, which translated to rich, so I should at least have been an officer or doctor back at a desk in air conditioned Saigon.

How hard it was to explain at first—my immigrant father who loved this great country, and out of love and respect for him I went when called like all my other non-Jewish friends. I just did my duty.

I was with the 101st Airborne, and spent my time being Air Mobile. So we were in constant fire fights with "Charlies." Most of my time spent was in the central highlands, thick jungle, ambushed or setting ambushes. I still remember the cries of my friends being hit—wounded or killed.

Vietnam cost me a marriage, and the lost dream of almost 17 years. Only now, because of being accepted at last, have I been able to "Come out of the closet about Nam."

I have been a member of a Post, but never active. But now I live in Florida, and hope to join another post and start to become more active since I think the wounds have healed and I can face the future with good feelings about my service at last.

My country seems to finally be able to take the foot out of my backside, and welcome me back-home as it did other men from other wars.

And that is all we ever asked.

Yours truly,  
Steve Goodman  
Miami, FL 33133

Continued on page 20



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 20, 1983

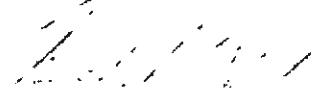
Dear Ina:

I am in receipt of your letter of April 14th requesting that I arrange a tea for the National Executive Committee of the Jewish War Veterans Auxiliary on May 20th.

While you are correct in that this has been done before, it is not a common practice. As much as I wish it could be done for more people, my request for such have been rejected, in addition to the request I submitted for your group.

I am sorry we are not able to accomodate you for your request for a tea, but you have my very best wishes for a successful meeting of your National Executive Committee on May 20th.

Sincerely,



Michael R. Gale  
Deputy Special Assistant  
to the President

Ms. Ina Halperin  
National Ladies Auxiliary  
Jewish War Veterans of the USA  
1712 New Hampshire Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20009



NATIONAL LADIES AUXILIARY  
*Jewish War Veterans of the U. S. A., Inc.*

1712 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE, N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20009

PHONE: (202) 667-9061

INA HALPERIN  
*Executive Director*

April 14, 1983

Mr. Michael Gale  
Office of Public Liaison  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Michael:

I called your office this morning and Beth suggested that I write. The National Executive Committee of The Jewish War Veterans Auxiliary will be in town May 20.

We would appreciate the opportunity to gather at the White House for tea, if possible, on that Friday afternoon. Inasmuch as other Jewish women's groups have been invited for such occasions, we should like to be accorded this honor, as well. I know you are aware of our distinguished service to American veterans in VA hospitals across the country.

I look forward to hearing from you on this, and to seeing you at future briefings. Let me also use this letter to express my appreciation for your invitations to the White House briefings.

Shalom,

Ina Halperin

IH/sdc

cc: Jeanette L. Shapiro, National President  
Frances S. Wapnick, PNP

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON 8/5/85

*file  
JWV*



TO: BOB REILLY



FROM: DEBBIE HUTTON

RE: The 90th Annual Convention  
of the Jewish War Veterans  
August 21, 1985

This was regretted for the President  
and they asked that we request  
Secretary Weinberger to speak on  
the 21st and he was unable to accept  
this invitation.

They were not interested in having  
anyone else speak to them in FL.  
I offered a message from the President  
but there was no interest in that  
either.

cc: Marshall Breger - FYI ✓







## *Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America*

1811 R Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009

(202) 265-6280

*Pearl D. Laufer, Ph.D.*

NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

0685130R

June 18, 1985

Mr. Robert Reilly  
Office of Public Liaison  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Reilly,

I am writing this letter as a follow-up to our telephone conversation of June 14, 1985. As I mentioned to you then, Samuel Greenberg, National Commander of the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A., would like to meet with President Reagan some time in early July. The President and the National Commander met at Arlington National Cemetery's Memorial Day Ceremonies, at which time they laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. National Commander Greenberg looks forward to an opportunity to discuss several substantive issues with the President.

Additionally, the National Commander had extended an invitation to the President to attend our 90th Annual Convention which will be held, from August 18-25, in Kissimmee, Fla. ( A copy of that letter is enclosed.) Would you please let us know whether or not President Reagan will be attending the Convention.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*Pearl D. Laufer*

Pearl Laufer  
National Director  
for Public Relations



*# 30 4986*

**Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America**

1811 R Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009  
(202) 265-6280



*Scheduling  
8/21/85  
Aug (21-24)*

**Harris B. Stone, PNC**  
National Executive Director

0585099NP

May 21, 1985

President Ronald Reagan  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The Jewish War Veterans of the USA would be deeply honored if you would accept this invitation to be the keynote speaker at the opening session of our 90th Annual National Convention at the Hyatt Orlando in Kissimmee, Florida. The opening session is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, August 21st at 10:00 a.m.

The convention delegates, veterans of the American armed forces include top ranking businessmen, professionals and community leaders from across the United States. This event will provide an excellent opportunity for your views to be heard by members of the "Patriotic Voice of the America Jewish community".

If the aforementioned date and time is inconvenient the convention will be assembled until Saturday evening, August 24. We will welcome your views anytime during this assemblage.

We would be honored to welcome you to our National Convention and look forward to your positive response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Harris B. Stone".

Harris B. Stone, PNC  
National Executive Director

