

Anti-Semitic Letter Puts Heat on Jersey 'Journal'

Paper Is Busy Trying To Let Go of Tiger's Tail It Grabbed Friday

The Jersey Journal, owned by Jersey City's high-and-mighty Dear family, grabbed a tiger by the tail last week and has been trying to let go ever since—but gradually.

The tiger is an attack on Jewish members of the armed forces, published anonymously last Friday as a letter to the editor. The letter, signed by "Sgt. T. K., USMC," appeared under the caption *A True Soldier*. The author purported to be preparing to return to battle after convalescing from wounds suffered twice in action.

The letter said the author had been confronted everywhere at home with the same question: "Why don't you apply for your discharge like your neighbors, Sammy and Julius?" and went on:

"They have never seen either smoke or fire, but through some ruse have been discharged as incurable, or should I use the word *unfit* . . .

'Yellow Star'

"The more I think of this un-American way of life the more I believe the FBI should investigate these discharged 'veterans' and when they ascertain that they have evaded their right and duty to live in and fight for these United States, see to it that legislation is enacted to compel each one of these shirkers

to wear a yellow star (obviously a reference to the yellow Star of David which Jews are required to wear in Nazi-occupied countries) on his outer garment, conspicuous to everyone. . . ."

Letters—the number is unspecified by the *Journal*—and telephone protests began coming in. On Monday, J. Albert Dear, Jr., executive editor, requested permission to explain to a group of Jewish leaders.

He said the letter got in inadvertently—yes, even the caption, *A True Soldier*, written in the newspaper office.

By coincidence, it happened that the Jersey City newspapers sent reporters to interview Marine Cpl Ben Robinson, a Jewish boy home on furlough with his parents after going through the Guadalcanal and Munda campaigns. Ben, who is 20 and enlisted immediately after Pearl Harbor, had read the letter and was boiling mad. So when the reporters arrived, he said:

Statement

"I don't want to talk about myself. I'd rather have you print this."

He handed them a statement decrying attacks on Jewish soldiers, such as that printed in the *Journal*.

The *Jersey Observer* printed his protest. The *Journal* didn't. It published merely an interview about his experiences. In the same edition it ran an editorial apologizing for publication of the letter. It acknowledged many protests that "the writer intended to cast aspersions upon the Jewish people." It added:

"In defense of the letter writer, the *Jersey Journal* doubts any such intention. He is a bonafide veteran and has undoubtedly fought side by side with Jewish Marines."

One Letter of Protest

Contrast this with a letter Dear wrote to Robinson the same day, saying the letter never should have got into print "and it never would have if the editor who handled it had realized the significance of the phrases used."

Subsequently the *Journal* has published one letter of protest.

But the storm hasn't ended. Today the newly organized Jersey City Inter-racial Council for Good Will issued a resolution deploring publication of "this most reprehensible letter" which, it said, "gave publicity to a pattern of untrue and vicious anti-racial and anti-Semitic literature now unfortunately circulating in many quarters. Such a letter, if circulated by mail as a personal note, would undoubtedly be a fit subject for investigation as an act of open sabotage against unity and the war effort."