

New Year's

Greetings

from

Rubin Saltzman

Dear Friends:

May I take this opportunity to extend to you and your family my very best wishes for a Happy New Year. May this year indeed be one of peace, freedom and security for all.

The enemies of our Order are not extending any good wishes to us at this time. Despite the difficulties they have placed in our path we face the future with confidence and optimism. Our association with the Order throughout the years has proven to us that the fight that we are involved in is in reality a people's struggle for justice.

It is with a deep sense of pride that we recall our twenty years of fruitful activity. It is with joy that we remember the happy years made possible by our Order. We are proud of the fraternal aid we extended to our members in time of need. We are mindful of the distinctive contributions we made in building Jewish culture and in enhancing the cultural sphere of activities of our membership. We take pride in the help we provided to our brothers and sisters in the Jewish communities abroad. And above all, we are proud of the fact that we always allied ourselves with the causes of the oppressed. We have truly associated ourselves with the hopes and aspirations of the common man.

For more than 20 years now, we have been under the direct supervision of the Department of Insurance of the State of New York. The Insurance Department has periodically carried through exhaustive examinations of our records. They invariably praised the manner in which we conducted our fraternal benefit business. This praise was well deserved. We have already paid out over 15 million dollars in benefits. Our membership helped accumulate a reserve fund of close to 7 million dollars to guarantee the payment of all benefits, despite the fact that our dues are at the lowest possible rates. Whenever the Insurance Department made recommendations for improvements and changes we very willingly complied.

As we grew stronger and stronger, and as we became more

effective in advancing the welfare and culture of the people, the keener was the desire of our enemies to destroy us. The vicious forces in our country who are driving to plunge the world into the flames of another war, those who would have us forget that six million Jews perished at the hands of the fascists, those who would drown freedom and democracy, have now united in an all-out effort to annihilate the Order, to wreck the organizational home which our members built with so much care, devotion and love.

It is apparent that the New York Insurance Department has taken the responsibility to effect the desires of the most reactionary forces in American life. They have secured a court order restraining us from conducting our business. The aim of this court order is obvious. They seek to liquidate our organization and to turn our seven million dollar treasury over to the commercial insurance monopolies. This is undoubtedly a clear violation of civil liberties. If they are successful, they will be able by ukase to determine which fraternal organization an American may or may not belong to. This is contrary to every American tradition of democracy and freedom.

Will this plan of our enemies be successful? I can say with the utmost confidence, and I know I am speaking in the name of our membership, that you will never permit our enemies to vent their destructive vengeance on our Order. You who have put your hearts and your lives into the building of the Order, you who have stood guard against those who would destroy it, you and you alone will not allow it. You have the right to say where funds accumulated for safeguarding the security of our families shall be placed and who shall be responsible for them. You have every right to associate yourselves with an organization that sponsors cultural activities of your liking.

They call us "subversive." But they lie. They say we advocate "force and violence" but they are guilty of slander. We hurl back these accusations. Our twenty-year-old history refutes this frame-up. Truth shall determine the final decision. And we shall triumph, for we have nothing to hide—truth and justice are on our side.

We shall resort to every possible court action in order to safe-

guard our organization. We shall present our case to the American people. As long as we have strength we shall fight to preserve our home, our Order, the organization which gives us fraternalism, friendship and security.

It is not easy to ruin an organization built by the people. Your telegrams of protest, your letters of confidence, and your pledges of support are eloquent testimony to the esteem in which our members hold the Order and to their willingness to fight for its preservation. And these telegrams, letters and pledges have been pouring in.

Our fight has only now begun. We have before us the task of smashing the conspiracy against the Order. Silence will not help us. Constructive action will help us attain our victory. A warm response awaits you in your community. The people have learned to know the true activities of our organization, the fact that we never practice discrimination, our deeds in helping every just cause, from the relief we provided to striking workers to our contributions in the war against fascism.

I can now inform you that the court order restraining us from paying benefits has been modified. We can now pay sick, death and accident benefits as we did in the past. With your help we will be able to invalidate the entire court order which seeks to liquidate our organization.

My dear brothers and sisters, during the last twenty years we have created a magnificent organization which belongs to us. Is it possible that they really believe that they can take it from us? It is the beginning of a New Year. I speak to you with faith, with hope and with a firm belief that we shall be triumphant. How can I feel otherwise when I know of the devotion of members like you, devotion which will be translated into struggle for the organization that you love.

With warmest fraternal greetings,

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