

THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

EXAMINED IN THE LIGHT OF

HOLY SCRIPTURES

BY Rev. A^{MIN} Roekle

at the request of the
Manitowoc Pastoral Conference

The V.F.W. was founded on September 23, 1899, at Columbus, Ohio, by a group of thirteen veterans of the Spanish American War. They incorporated with the name "American Veterans of Foreign Service."

In the same year (1899) a group of veterans living in Colorado and who had served in the Philippines, organized into a group known as "Colorado Society, Army of the Philippines."

Also in the year 1899, a group of veterans of the War with Spain organized a society in Pennsylvania, calling themselves by the same name as the one organized in Columbus, namely "American Veterans of Foreign Service". These three societies organized and incorporated without having knowledge that the others existed.

In 1905 the societies of Ohio and Colorado amalgamated, and finally in 1913, all joined together and became the V.F.W. Eligible to membership at its inception were soldiers who had served in the Spanish American War, the Philippine Insurrection and the Nicaraguan Campaign. With the coming of the World War I the eligibility rules were broadened as follows: Membership eligibility is restricted to veterans, campaign service, soldiers, sailors and marines who have served the United States in wars, campaigns and expeditions on foreign soil or in hostile waters. Only veterans who are entitled to receive the award of a Campaign Medal Badge from the Government of ^{the} United States are qualified for membership. At the close of 1944, the V.F.W. numbered 750,000.*

In order to recruit members for this organization, "field units" were established on 65 battle fronts over the world, during World War II.

*Britannica, Book of the Year, 1945

It is the intention of this investigation to show that the V.F.W. is a Lodge and, therefore, the same stand must be taken against it as against any other secret society which the Church opposes for Biblical reasons. I believe it is unnecessary to go into all the details in reference to why the Church opposes such organizations. The stand taken by our Church in opposing the Lodges has been reiterated time and again, and I feel there is unity in teaching and practice in our midst. Therefore, we shall dwell on only three major points. I wish to show

1. That V.F.W. is an oath-bound society
2. That V.F.W. is a secret society
3. That V.F.W. is a false unionistic religious organization.

I

The V.F.W. is an oath-bound society. The form of their oath is not as blood-curdling as the oaths of the Masonic order, yet it has all the qualities of an oath. In their ritual the word "oath" does not appear. Their oaths are called "obligations" and "promises". It matters not what they are called, they remain an oath pure and simple, for their obligation contains all the essential marks of an oath. The unchristian nature of it still remains--just because they call it an obligation does not remove the objectional^{ness} and poisonous contents from it. You could call a rattlesnake a harmless garter snake, yet that wouldn't make it less poisonous or dangerous.

Obligation of honorable members and regular members is the same--whether administrated in the Brief Ceremony or during the Ceremonial Ritual.

COMMANDER: "You will pronounce your name when called upon to do so, and repeat after me:

"In the presence of Almighty God and the members of this Order here assembled, I.....do, of my own free will and accord, solemnly promise and declare that:

"I will bear true allegiance to 'The Government of the United States of America,' and I will ever be loyal thereto, and will never bear arms, nor in any way use my influence against its Laws or Institutions.

"I will comply with all the Laws and Regulations of this Order: and I will ever be loyal thereto; that I will never wrong nor defraud this Organization, nor a member thereof, nor permit any wrong to be done to either, if in my power to prevent it.

"I will never propose for membership any person not eligible according to the Laws, nor one whom I know to be unworthy.

"I will never make known to any one not authorized, to receive it any of the work of this Order, secret or written.

"Should my affiliation with 'The V.F.W. of the U.S.' cease, in any way, I will consider this pledge as binding outside the Order as had I remained a member of the same.

"All this I promise and pledge upon the honor of a true Comrade and a citizen of our great republic."

The Obligation of the Commander-in-Chief is:

"In the presence of Almighty God, and the Officers and Delegates of this Order here assembled, I, (touch hand) do hereby solemnly promise that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of Commander-in-Chief of the V.F.W. of the U.S., to which I have been elected, according to the Constitution, By-Laws and Regulations of the V.F.W. of the U.S., to the best of my ability, and that I will at the close of the term to which I have been elected, or sooner, if so ordered by the proper authority, deliver the National Charter, all books, papers, money or other property belonging to this Organization in my possession, or under my control, to the proper person or persons, Officer or Officers, entitled to receive the same.

I do further solemnly promise, that I will be fair and impartial in all my actions toward all Comrades, and will always work for and further the best interests of the V.F.W. of the U.S."

These obligations, so called, are oaths in every sense of the word. They are oaths of the nature forbidden by the Lord. For in the first place, why must a person swear to this organization, before God Almighty that he will bear true allegiance to the Government of the U.S. --swear, to be loyal thereto. If the government would demand such an oath, it would be a different matter for they are "the powers that be", but for a society to make that demand, almost brands the prospective member as disloyal and as a traitor. At least it brands him as one who can only be trusted under oath. Our Savior expressly forbids such swearing when He says, "Let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil."

A man whose heart is true to God utters every statement he makes as though it were made in the very presence of God, before whom even his heart with its inmost thought lies bare. With a heart thus pledged to truth, his lips will find no need to add anything to his yea, and nay. Thus, for a disciple who always speaks the truth as though being in God's presence, all oaths are ruled out. "But I say, unto you, swear not at all." In daily, frivolous things, taking an oath is sinful and wrong. There is no need to swear to the things as demanded by the Obligation of the V.F.W. A Christian will avoid it.

Furthermore, the "oath obligation" of the V.F.W. is sinful and wrong because it demands an oath in uncertain things, "I will never make known to any one not authorized to receive it, any of the work of this order, secret or written." In other words, the organization could engage in the blakest crimes, darkest vices and hideous undertakings, and each member would be bound by oath not to reveal the character of it. There is the classic example of this type of uncertain oath and its dire consequences, recorded in Holy Writ, of Herod and his promise to his step daughter. It is sin, wrong to swear to hidden things, secrets to be revealed later. That oath must be taken by one joining the V.F.W. Certainly a christian, a Lutheran Christian, will avoid this evil. Lev. 5,4: "If a soul swear, pronouncing with his lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever it be that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth it, then he shall be guilty in one of these." The Pastor has been placed in his position as Pastor to guard his sheep from all evil, if a pastor fails to point out the evils of the V.F.W. to his members, he is guilty of neglect of duty, for Ezekiel says 3, 17-19: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel, therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me."

"When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and Thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

"Yet if Thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou has delivered thy soul." This admonition of the Lord must be followed in reference to the V.F.W., for they are an oath-bound society.

II

The second point which we wish to consider is that the V.F.W. is a Secret Society.

This can be seen first of all from the General Rules given to the Officers concerning the Ritual of the V.F.W. --Rule 6: "Officers are personally responsible for their Ritual and shall prevent any person from reading its contents, unless they are entitled to do so."

I have studied the ritual through quite thoroughly, yet have never found any great secret in it. Why the authors of the Ritual wished to keep the contents secret, is a mystery, unless it is that they knew it contained an anti-christian religion, and, therefore, wished to keep it out of the hands of those who would expose their false religion.

The rules to officers expressly forbids the Ritual from being exposed to those not entitled to receive it, the contents even being denied to those who participate in the ceremonies--except when presented publicly. The entire motive is deceitful. It wishes to create the impression on the members and prospective members, that there are deep, dark secrets to be revealed in the future--but which

secrets never are forthcoming. They make capital of man's desire to be hoodwinked and fooled. The promise, therefore, upon which the entire Ritual is based is false, misleading and deceitful, and gives the members an entirely false promise and hope. Certainly a Christian will have nothing to do with such out-right deceit and will therefore avoid membership in the V.F.W.

The Oath also which the members of the V.F.W. must take, binds him to secrecy. "I will never make known to anyone not authorized to receive it, any of the works of this order, secret or written." Why is it that the members should not reveal the work of their order? The first thing suggested when one is bound to secrecy, is that all things are not in order. That there are things which they are ashamed to have the public know. Things which are not honest and above board. If all things were honest and in order, why then must the members be sworn to secrecy? Peter tells us, "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak evil against you as evil doers, they may, by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." Our whole manner of life should be conducted openly and not hidden behind secret oaths. God tells us "to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works." The V.F.W. commands their members never to speak concerning any of the work of the Order.

In passing, it should be mentioned also that the secrecy of the Order is also manifest in that they have their secret grip and pass word.

Furthermore, that the V.F.W. is a secret society, can be seen from their Ritual, in that they tile the lodge before they undertake their business.

In the opening ceremonies:

COMMANDER: The Officers will take their respective stations, all persons not members of the V.F.W. will kindly retire, and the Guard will close the doors.

COMMANDER: By the power and authority vested in me, I am about to open.....Post No.....for the transaction of any business that may lawfully come before it.

COMMANDER: Officer of the Day, you will advance and give to me the semi-annual password.

(Officer of the Day does so.)

COMMANDER: (Gives two raps and says): Officer of the Day, satisfy yourself that all present are entitled to remain. (The Officer of the Day will examine each Comrade, assisted as directed by the Commander, and those found in possession of the password take seats, after giving same; the Officer of the Day then advances to the Altar and says, after saluting the Commander):

OFFICER OF THE DAY: Comrade Commander, I find all in possession of the password except those standing, or who have approached your station for instruction.

(Those not in possession will advance to the Commander, and if entitled will be instructed. This may be done while the Officer of the Day is collecting the password from the Comrades, if so ordered by the Commander, or when Officer of the Day has reported.)"

Again, why the secrecy? Are they ashamed of their deeds and words? All such actions certainly are the direct opposite of the Spirit of Christ and in direct contrast of the Great Commission:

"The V.F.W. says, "Stay! We have wonderful spiritual lessons, lessons that subdue the passions, lessons that inculcate charity and virtue, lessons to fit men for Heaven. But tell them to no one except lodge brothers, those who have paid for the right to hear. Tell not these lessons to your wife. Tell them not to your son. Only persons of certain age and certain qualifications may join your lodge, and that only by paying money or having others pay it for him. To these only, if they be in good standing, having paid their dues, you may reveal the wonderful secrets that bless mankind.

How different is the command of the gospel. The command of Jesus is given in Mark 16:15 as follows: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (Again He said, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations." (Matt.28:19). The last invitation in the Bible says, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev.22:17).

The contrast is great. The lodges say, "Keep the message secret." But Jesus says, "Tell it abroad." The message is not the same message and the spirit is not the same spirit, in the churches and in the lodges.

There are those who would make us believe that John the Baptist, the apostle John, and even Jesus himself and other disciples, were members of secret orders. But the idea that Jesus or His disciples had anything to do with secret orders is wickedly false. Jesus Himself said, "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue,

and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and
IN SECRET HAVE I SAID NOTHING." (John 18:20).

Jesus said nothing in secret. He did no secret teaching and had no part in secret rites such as the V.F.W. have. Secret things, hidden things, secret signs, passwords, grips, secret lessons--these are not for the church and the Christian. The Lodges in their secrecy are the very opposite of the spirit Christ commanded in Christian people. Christians are exhorted by the Saviour not to hide their lighted candles under a bushel, but rather, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt.5:15,16).*

A Christian will, therefore, avoid affiliation with the

V.F.W.

III

The V.F.W. is an organization in which a religion is taught. They must have in their Post Room, an altar, which signifies that acts of worship are to be held. The Bible is placed upon the Altar, and during the Ritual, when a new member is being initiated, the Commander points to the Holy Bible which is open on the Altar and says, "Behold, the Great Guide of all good citizens, and especially of comrades of this order, regardless of creed or birth. In it you will find the precepts of true comradeship and citizenship to which we all aspire."

"The meeting of V.F.W. is opened with prayer:

"O, Sovereign Ruler of the Universe, Who art the Lord of Hosts

*An adaptation from "Lodges Examined By The Bible" --John Rice

and God of Peace; without Thee our efforts are vain.

Continue Thy blessings upon us, we pray Thee, and guide us during our deliberations.

We beseech Thee, O God, to bless the dependents of our departed Comrades, and comfort all who gave their loved ones to our Nation's cause.

Bless and succor the sick, the needy, and the afflicted.

Continue Thy favor upon our Order, and help us to practice the spirit of true Comradeship, both in our councils, and with the world at large; and may the community in which we live be better because of our devotion to duty in the various branches of our Nation's defenses and as citizens.

At this time we bow our heads in reverence to our departed Comrades. (Short pause)

These and all other necessary blessings we ask of Thee, O Thou Mighty Ruler of the Universe. Amen.

(All respond--Amen).

and closed with the following prayer:

Almighty Commander, the hour has come when we must separate and return to the duties of life.

We commit ourselves to Thy care.

Thou, who art our strong tower of defense, and our protection, grant that in life's battles we may be strong and brave, living such lives of stainless integrity as shall reflect Honor upon our Country and the V.F.W. of the U.S., and glorify Thy great and Holy Name.

May Thy good Providence shield us from all harm,

and bring us together in true Comradeship and Peace.

Amen. (All respond--Amen)."

There are prayers used on every occasion, whether it be in inducting new members into the organization, installing officers, dedicating a building, memorial service, burial service. In all their prayers you will find they are praying to the Unknown God, to the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe, God of Peace, Almighty Commander, Our Great Commander, God of Battles, Father of All. Of course, nowhere in their Ritual or in their prayers will you find the name of Christ mentioned, nor will you find even a suggestion, that anyone has need of forgiveness of sins or need of a Saviour. The Religion of the V.F.W. is that of the Unitarians.

The false religion of the V.F.W. is so nicely stated in a letter which was written by the Adjutant General of the V.F.W., Mr. R. B. Handy, Jr. A group of pastors of Saginaw, Michigan, and vicinity wrote to the National Headquarters of the V.F.W. requesting that the religious element be omitted from the Ritual. Rev. Emil Voss of Saginaw acted as the secretary. The following letter was received in reply, *quote*

April 16, 1946

Kansas City (2), Missouri

Rev. Emil H. Voss

Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church

620 Court Street

Saginaw, Michigan

Dear Sir:

Acknowledgement is made of your letter of April 11, and I regret that there appears to be no way we can remedy the situation of which you complain without action of our

National Encampment which is scheduled to meet September 1, 1946, and then only if the National By-Laws thru due process or the Ritual changed to eliminate the "prayers" and all reference to Diety.

It seems too bad that any group that voices its desire for divine guidance so that its members may live lives of stainless integrity, should have to abandon these reverent petitions even though they are actually only recitations in a ritualistic ceremony.

I believe your church adheres to the Christian faith and that Trinitarianism is one of its tenets. You may be interested to know that all reference to Christ or the Trinity was eliminated to meet objections raised by non-Christian. It seems too bad that we should be asked to adopt a Godless as well as Christless ritual.

Sincerely yours,

(signed)

R. B. Handy, Jr. Adjutant General *ent quote*

Jesus said, John 5:23. "All men should honor the Son even as they Honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father, which hath sent Him." Certainly the utterance found in the prayers of the V.F.W. and in the above quoted letter cannot be harmonized with the previous Bible passage.

The religious activities of the V.F.W. are a must.

"General Rule 5: "All posts must hold a Memorial Service for their departed Comrades, at least once a year and use the Ritual Service. This should be held either in connection with public installation of officers or at a special meeting held early in the year. It is always well to invite the public to these Memorial Services."

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN: Commander-in-Chief, to whom should the true

soldier look for help in the battles of life?

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN: Senior Vice-Commander-in-Chief, what assurance have we of a prolonged stay among the scenes and activities of earth?

SENIOR VICE-COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: "For we are strangers before Thee and so-journers, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is no abiding."

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN: Junior Vice-Commander-in-Chief, have you a message of sympathy for those in sorrow?

JUNIOR VICE-COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: I have. The Book of Life tells us that "Like a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust."

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN: What message has the Chaplain of the Ladies' Auxiliary to bring us at this time?

CHAPLAIN OF THE LADIES' AUXILIARY: I have a message of hope that should inspire our Comrades at this solemn moment and all through life.

The message is from the Captain of our Salyation.

He says: "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN: Comrades, we should be thankful for these inspiring thoughts. Let us learn the lesson of the hour which is that we, too, are nearing the end of life's pilgrimage and sooner or later these services may be held in our memory.

Let us so live that when our summons comes we may depart with the testimony of a good conscience, in the comfort of a reasonable religion, and a Holy hope in favor with God, and perfect Charity with all mankind. Let us pray.

MEMORIAL PRAYER

Comrades, in commemorating the virtues of our dead heroes who gave their service, and their lives on foreign soil, or upon the hostile seas, we now offer our symbolic tributes.

I therefore deposit upon this shrine these Red Flowers which symbolize the fervency and zeal of our departed Comrades in the cause of Love, Truth and Justice.

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN: Comrade Past Commander-in-Chief, what tribute have you to offer at this time?

PAST COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: These White Flowers I deposit as a token of the purity of affection that we have for our departed Comrades.

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN: Commander-in-Chief, have you a tribute to offer upon this sacred Shrine?

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: The Blue of our National standard symbolizes truth and fidelity. I deposit these Blue Flowers from nature's bosom in token of the memory of our departed Comrades.

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN: Ladies of the Auxiliary, you will offer a tribute to the memory of our departed Comrades.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF THE AUXILIARY: This wreath, the emblem of Eternity, I place upon this Shrine. Its color symbolizes immortality. This emblem teaches that the deeds of our soldiers, sailors and marines, on land and on sea, are immortalized in the hearts of a grateful people. (Deposits Evergreen Wreath).

Here is an example of a Memorial Service held in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, in the spring of 1946:

VFW MEMORIAL SERVICE SUNDAY

"This is the Faith" was what the Rev. Noah Bess called the subject of his address at the Veterans of Foreign Wars memorial service at the Vets' club. The Rev. Bess, pastor of St. Paul's Methodist church, told the gathering that "the faith" for which men died in the war just ended and the first war is "the love of country--its brooks, mountains, trees, and everything that goes to make up this wonderful and beautiful land of ours." And he repeated the oft stated epigram: "These men shall not have died in vain." His address was inspiring.

The memorial ritual was conducted by officers of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post, No. 569, of which John Osieczanek is commander, assisted by the women's auxiliary.

Part of the second floor of the Vets' building, where the services were held, was given over to a replica of a grave guarded by a soldier and sailor while the program was in progress.

As the name of each of the members of the post who have died was called a rose petal was dropped onto the grave by a member of the ritual team, and the auxiliary placed a wreath on the mound.

The services opened with the playing of "Nearer My God to Thee" by the V.F.W. orchestra and closed with the sounding of taps outside the building.

Cold weather caused the attendance to be smaller than in former years."

The V.F.W. has definitely a religious element which is not the Religion of the Bible. It is idle mockery and dishonors Christ. Therefore, a Christian cannot belong to the V.F.W. and make himself responsible for their false misleading dreams. One cannot belong to an organization which treats the faith in Christ as an Article of Faith which may be omitted without injury. "Behold, I am against the prophets and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them and cause My people to err by their lies." Jer. ~~22: 31, 32.~~ ^{23: 31, 32.} "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Gal. 1:8.

The course of our action is clearly stated by our Lord, "Beware of false prophets" Matt. 7:15. "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." Rom. 16:17. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.....Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, " 2 Cor. 6:14-17. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful ^{works} world of darkness, but rather reprove them." Eph. 5:11. "We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which he received of us.....If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him that he may be ashamed." 2 Thess. 3:6,14. "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God.

saith the Lord that use their tongues

He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed; for he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds." 2 John 9-11. A Christian cannot be a promoter of a false religion as taught in the V.F.W.

The Religion of the V.F.W. as seen from the Burial Ritual is the very antithesis of the Religion of Salvation by Grace through Faith in Jesus Christ. "Our Comrade is in the hands of our Heavenly Father, and God giveth His beloved sleep. He will be laid to rest, but let us cherish his virtues and learn to imitate them, reminded by the place he fills no more, that our ranks are thinning. Let each one be so loyal to every virtue, so true to every friendship, so faithful to the remaining marches, that he will be ready to fall out and take his place in the Great Review hereafter; not in doubt, but with faith that the merciful Captain of our Salvation will call him to that fraternity which on earth and in heaven remains unbroken."

Pure work-righteousness, sincere Pharisaism, a pious fraud--passed off as religion.

But there seems to be a ray of hope expressed that the religious element of the V.F.W. may be omitted. Rule 2 of General Rules. "Commanders should use discretion as to when it is necessary to change Ritual so as to conform to conditions" --but this hope fades as we have already seen for the Memorial Service is a MUST, and furthermore, a resolution adopted at the 28th National Encampment at Providence, R.I. from Sept. 4-9, 1927. "Resolved that the National Encampment urge and insist that all departments and posts follow closely the New Ritual." The religious element in the V.F.W. is binding.

To show all the religious perversions of the Ritual of the V.F.W. would necessitate a page by page analysis of the Ritual, for on every page is something contrary to our Faith. Such an analysis is not necessary for the main objections are sufficient to show that a Christian must be warned against affiliations with this organization.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. II Cor. 6:14-18.

The V.F.W. is also a strong factor in unionism (by unionism is meant joint worship with those with whom we are not agreed as to scriptural doctrine and practice. John 8:31,32. Rom. 16;17. 2 Cor 6:14-18. This fact has been brought out already in the previous pages. Let me but call your attention to the Memorial Service, held in Manitowoc,* speaker being the Rev. Noah Bess. This year Methodist, next year Reformed, next Presbyterian, next Jewish, next Catholic--the beliefs of the clergyman make no difference--that the organization is unionistic can be clearly seen.

*quoted above

Also phrase "pointing to Bible and saying, Here is guide of all men, regardless of race or creed" brands it ultra-unionistic. The entire form of religion of the V.F.W. as brought out already proves beyond doubt--the unionistic nature--why waste more words. If we would be consistent in our stand on unionism, then we must oppose the Lodges--and specifically the V.F.W.

The V.F.W. is considered to be a lodge, not only in our midst, but in all places where the facts are known. Theo. Graebner, in his "Secret Empire", labels it as a Lodge. The Writers of the Confessional Lutheran considers the V.F.W. to be a lodge. In the January, 1946, issue Page 11

"The Lutheran Herald of the Norwegian Lutheran Church reports: "For the second year in succession the Veterans of Foreign Wars Scout Scholarship has been awarded to a Lutheran boy and member of our Church..... ..October Youth Issue, p.736. Not only is the V.F.W. (which made the award and passed judgment on the scouts fulfillment of the promise and law) an organization with the characteristics of a lodge, but the Scout organization as such encourages the worship of any God, as may be seen from the oath which it asks all scouts (Christian and non-Christian) to take. Any connection with such an organization is surely wrong and to be censured."

And finally, conservative pastors of Synodical Conference are taking a firm stand against the V.F.W.

No doubt this matter will bring a storm of protest on the Lutheran Church. We will be denounced as un-American, unpatriotic, bigoted and what not, yet I see no other course we can follow to be faithful to the teachings of God and consistent to our former position on anti-Christian organizations. Our course, is, therefore, clearly

defined by the Holy Scriptures. II Cor. 6:14 and 17

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with
unbelievers. Wherefore come out from among them,
and be ye separate, saith the Lord."

All quotations from Ritual are taken verbatim from The V.R.W. Ritual,
adopted September, 1927.