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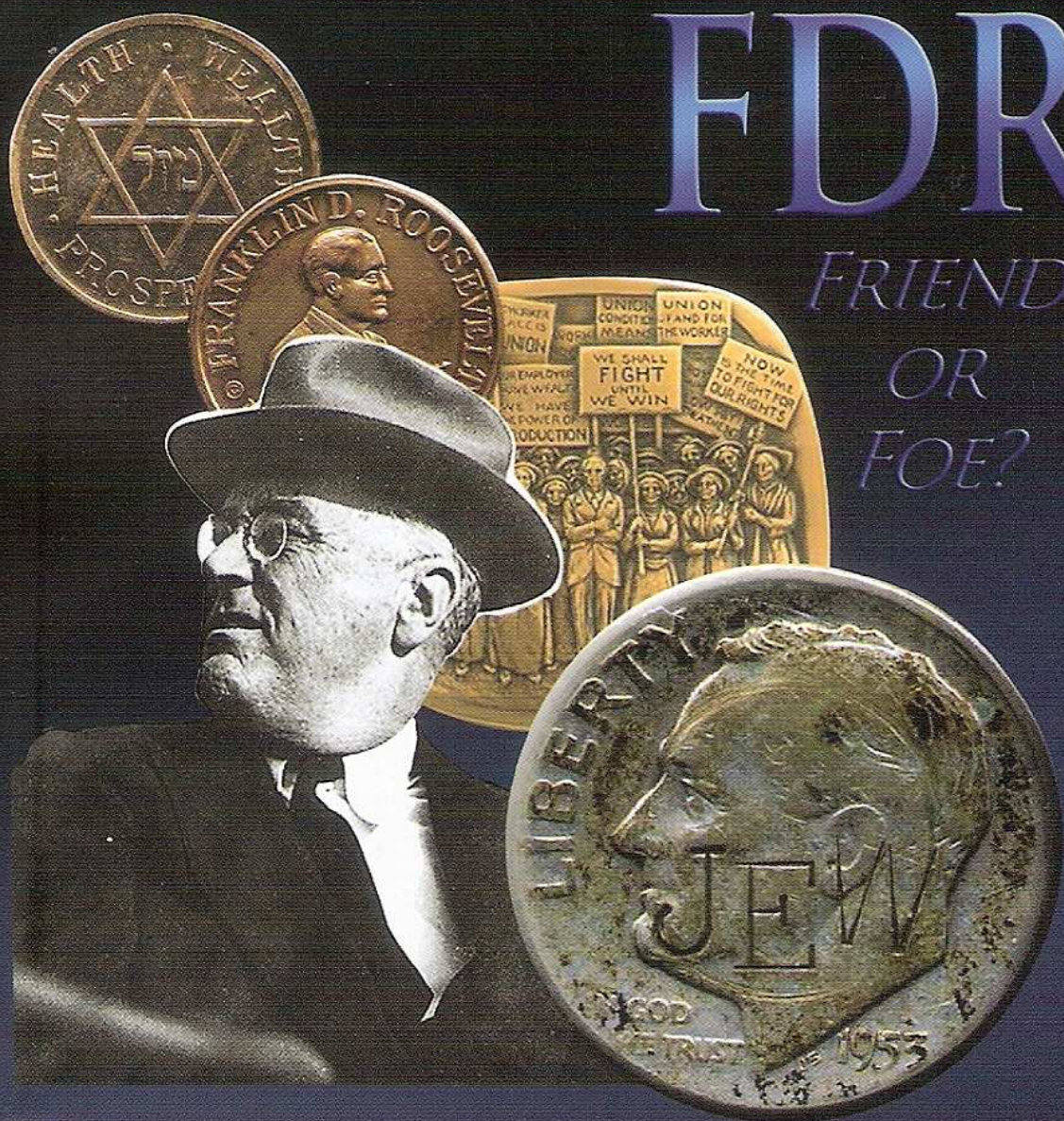
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Medals of the Great War

*Issued after collapse of Soviet Union
by Russian Jews to remember the fallen*

A BY VLADIMIR BERNSTAM

fter the collapse of the USSR communist regime, Jewish life began to revive on the territory of the former Soviet Union. Associations of Jewish communities appeared.

Some of these communities produced badges and medals which are still not described and cataloged. The information in this article was obtained from research on the Internet and directly from people involved in the establishment of five medals issued by Jewish organizations in Russia to commemorate the anniversary of victory in WWII.

The Salvation Medal, shown at top, was presented on May 5, 2005 at the Moscow Jewish Community Center. This medal was established by the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia (FJC) to mark the 60-year anniversary of Victory over Nazi Germany.

The medal was made at the Moscow Mint from .925 fine silver in the form of the Star of David (Magen David). Only 63 copies of this medal were made. The obverse of the medal is engraved with the dates 1945 - 2005. On the reverse side, the medal is the inscription in Hebrew and Russian, "Remember".

This medal honors distinguished persons, regardless to their ethnicity –

Continued

UNLISTED MEDALS HONOR UNKNOWN

Continued

World War II veterans, Holocaust victims, former ghetto and concentration camp inmates, people named as “Righteous of Nations,” leaders of major veterans’ organizations and active members of Jewish organizations and communities that have made outstanding contributions to ensure the continued memory of those who fought for victory.

In 2005, the World Congress of Russian Jewry released a medal dedicated to the 60-year anniversary of Victory.

The medal was created in Israel in the town of Sderot at the company’s “RAVDA CANADA ISRAEL—LTD” with 1,000 copies made. The medal was designed by the “Studio Yigal Rosenthal,” from Rishon Lezion city.

The medal has a diameter of 60 millimeters and a thickness of four millimeters. It is cast in tin and covered with hand-polished brass. The medal was designed to be worn, pendant style, with a blue and white cord around the neck.

Two other medals for the 60-year anniversary of Victory were issued by order of Jewish communities of Omsk and Sochi by the Moscow firm “Dialogue-Conversion.”

They are made of brass and covered with soft enamel. The inserts were worked out specifically for the Jewish communities of Omsk



The World Congress of Russian Jewry issued this 60-year Anniversary of Victory medal in an edition of 1,000. The medal was designed and created in Israel, and is 60 mm in diameter.

and Sochi. The medal of the Jewish community of Omsk was released in an edition of 100 copies on the initiative of Rabbi of Omsk and the Omsk Region Osher Krichevsky.

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OMSK MEDAL AWARDED TO ONLY 100



Above, left: The Omsk medal was released in an edition of only 100 copies. Middle: The Victory commemorative medal of the Jewish community of Sochi is inscribed on the reverse FROM THE JEWISH COMMUNITY TO THE 60-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF VICTORY. At top right, the 65-year Victory anniversary commemorative of the Irkutsk Jewish community is of silver and was created by Irkutsk jeweler Dmitry Korsehnboym.

Continued

This medal was awarded to all veterans and workers of the Omsk Jewish community who were alive on May 9, 2005. All the awarded persons also received a special certificate.

The medal of the Jewish community of Sochi [2] is shown in Figure 5. On the reverse side of the medal is the inscription: "From the Jewish community to the 60-year anniversary of Victory."

Unfortunately the number of medals issued is unknown, but it likely was not issued in great numbers.

For the 65-year anniversary of victory in World War II, the Irkutsk Jewish community issued a silver medal. The sponsor and designer

of this medal was a member of the community - jeweler Dmitry Korsehnboym.

Without doubt, there are other Victory commemorative medals issued by Russian Jewish communities to commemorate the historic impact of WWII on the region's Jewish communities. It is still necessary for collectors of Judaica to find and describe these medals and badges. □

The author thanks the Rabbi of Omsk and the Omsk Region Osher Krichevsky for a productive cooperation, as well as Natalya Alexandrovich - an employee of the firm "Dialogue-Conversion" and Valeria of the RAVDA CANADA ISRAEL-LTD for their assistance.