

FAMOUS RINGMASTER CLARENCE HOFFMAN DIES



THE LATE CLARENCE HOFFMAN, (LEFT), AS THE CONSTABLE, WITH LUTHER ADLER AS TEVYE IN THE NATIONAL PRODUCTION OF "FIDDLER ON THE ROOF."

Clarence Hoffman, known to thousands of Las Vegas children and adults as the original Circus - Circus ringmaster, died March 26. Mr. Hoffman had been undergoing treatments over the past two years for bladder cancer, and he succumbed in the end to a heart seizure brought on by his weakened condition. He was at home with his wife of 37 years, Frances, and his son Neil age 36, the editor of the Las Vegas Mirror entertainment newspaper.

Hoffman first came to Las Vegas in 1968 with the national company of "Fiddler On The Roof," which played at Caesars Palace. His show business career extends back to the 1930's, when he studied voice with the late diva Anna Fitzhugh in his native Chicago.

Following a stint with Special Services in India and China during World War II, Hoffman returned to Chicago and for the next five years sang with wife Frances in the Chicago Opera Company.

In 1951, the Hoffmans moved to New York City, and Clarence was soon appearing on the Broadway stage (in "Can-Can" and "Silk Stockings") and on national television during that medium's "golden age." He toured with "Fiddler" from 1966 to 1968 when he moved to Las Vegas to take the position of ringmaster. He remained in that role through 1973 and in recent years appeared as Santa Claus on Television, did character roles in various films shot here and managed several major art galleries.

A Message For Passover 5741

BY HERSCHEL W. BLUMBERG
NATIONAL CHAIRMAN,
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The first day of Passover this year coincides with the first day of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in 1943. As we gather at our seder tables to celebrate the historic Exodus of our people in their flight to freedom more than three millennia ago, there will be an added measure of pride in remembrance of the heroic fight for freedom waged by a small, courageous band of our brothers and sisters in our own time.

Jews have always chosen freedom. When we have been able to win a struggle for release from oppression, we have chosen to make our way to our promised land or to other lands which respect and support our rights as individuals and as a people. When we have been hemmed in by oppression we have chosen to fight back: no matter the odds, no matter the consequences.

The first day of Passover also coincides, as always, with the fall of Masada. A major media event early in April will remind us - and millions

of our fellow Americans - of that tragic event twenty centuries ago.

The lesson to be drawn from what we view on our television screens does not lie in the clash of personalities and viewpoints we will see in the course of the drama, nor in the tragic choice at its climax. Rather, it is contained in the fiery Hebrew words ablaze at the end - words that express our choice, our determination today: Masada Shall Not Fall Again.

The Jewish choice is to serve as a model of what free men and women can achieve when they strive for a society of the highest quality, shaped with compassion and brotherliness, a deep sense of community, an enduring faith in God and a firm belief in the worth and dignity of the individual. This can be done only in freedom.

Our Exodus as a people will not be complete until every Jew everywhere can emerge from bondage...whether that bondage be defined by fear or want, despotism or despair...to live full free Jewish lives.

In that movement toward freedom and fulfillment the American Jewish community has a major vital role to play.

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