

Reich Union of Jewish Frontline Soldiers

(Reichsbund Juedischer Frontsoldaten, RJF), Union of German Jewish War Veterans, created in February 1919 by 40 Jewish soldiers who had served on the frontlines of the German army during World War I. One of their main purposes in forming the union was to disprove the popular belief that during World War I, Jews had either only held desk jobs or had avoided serving in the army altogether. One of their proofs of Jewish service was the fact that 12,000 Jewish soldiers had died fighting for Germany. The members of the RJF wanted to assimilate completely into German society, and thus considered the Zionists, who emphasized their uniqueness as Jews in their desire for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, to be their political enemies.

By 1933 the RJF had grown to include 30,000 members in 360 local union branches. After Hitler rose to national power, the RJF tried to avoid being affected by the Nazis' anti-Jewish policies and attempted to win themselves a privileged status. They were able to maintain their unique status until the racial Nuremberg laws were passed in 1935, at which point they lost their preferential treatment and were considered to be Jews, just like the rest.