

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
October 5-6, 2005**

Resolution No. 14: Support Medal Of Honor For Sgt. Henry Johnson

Origin: 2005 NC Resolution No. 135 (NY)

Submitted by: National Security Commission

WHEREAS, Sgt. Henry Johnson was a member of the 369th Infantry Regiment known as the “Harlem Hell Fighters” during WW I; and

WHEREAS, Sgt. Henry Johnson was an ex-porter from the Albany, NY railroad station; and

WHEREAS, Sgt. Henry Johnson and his buddy, Pvt. Needham Roberts, were both wounded in a raid by the Germans and Pvt. Needham Roberts was unable to move; and

WHEREAS, Sgt. Henry Johnson chose to stay with his buddy, with Germans coming at him from two sides and his French rifle holding only three rounds, Sgt. Johnson, screaming and swinging his rifle like a club, blunted the attack with sheer energy. Pvt. Needham Roberts who, up to this point had been resting on one elbow and tossing grenades outside the enclosure, became the target of a German “snatch” team who picked him up and started out of the perimeter. The nearest German had Roberts by the feet, Sgt. Johnson leaped on the man’s back like a wildcat and creased his skull with a bolo knife. Both men crashed to the ground. Johnson quickly jumped up, slashing and stabbing at the milling shadows on all sides. Despite the close quarters, one German had enough of the wild man. He charged, firing a burst from his automatic pistol. Three bullets ripped into the American. Johnson fell to his knees, fighting to stay conscious. He lunged awkwardly forward, his momentum driving the heavy knife into the German’s stomach, disemboweling him. The relief party found Sgt. Johnson in the midst of the dead still kneeling over the turf he fought so hard to keep; and

WHEREAS, Sgt. Henry Johnson returned to New York a hero, garlanded with flowers. He rode in a special car up Madison Ave. to Harlem before returning to the Albany Railroad Station; and

WHEREAS, Sgt. Henry Johnson was the first American to win France’s highest medal for valor, the “Croix de Guerre with Palms;” now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 5-6, 2005, That it urge Congress to posthumously award the Medal of Honor to Sgt. Henry Johnson.