DEAR EDITOR:
Journey end ...
Be it known that I have been following the saga of John Demjanuk, a Ukrainian who was accused of being “Ivan the Terrible,” a guard at the infamous Solibar death camp. He was a retired auto worker in the Cleveland area, a taxpayer and an American citizen. He himself had been wounded as a Soviet soldier, fighting German forces, then captured and held by the Nazi’s under cruel conditions. He was extradited to Israel for trial due to a picture ID that witnesses from the death camp identified him as “Ivan the Terrible.”
He was found guilty. During an appeal following the trial, witnesses rescinded their testimony and he was exonerated and told he could return home to the United States.
The U.S. Justice Department would not accept his return and he was handed over to the German court system to start trial there. He was found guilty on circumstantial evidence, was sentenced to five years in prison and was held over in appeals.
While high-ranking German officials were acquitted of terrible crimes, lowly guard Demjanuk was convicted on circumstantial evidence based on an unrecognizable photo ID.
He died at the age of 91 in Germany at a nursing home alone, they say, but not. His family and church defended him to the end.
“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

Edward J. Zalar, SFO
Delphos