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Rosenwasser Returned To Israel In Exchange For A Notorious Terrorist

TEL AVIV, Feb. 28 (JTA)--Shmuel Rosenwasser, a 52-year-old Israeli watchman who was kidnapped by terrorists from his post at Metullah on New Year's Eve, 1969 to spend 424 days in captivity, was returned to Israel today, tired and bedraggled but delighted to be reunited with his family. Rosenwasser was released by his captors in exchange for a notorious terrorist, Mahmoud Hidjazi, who was serving a life sentence in an Israeli prison and who had originally been sentenced to death. The prisoner exchange was effected at the Lebanese border post of Ras el Nikura under the auspices of the International Red Cross. Rosenwasser, who had been moved from Jordan recently to a guerrilla encampment near Damascus, was escorted to the Israeli lines only after Hidjazi was placed in a car and driven into Lebanon. The Israeli was taken to a police station for a medical check-up and was then taken home to his wife and daughter who now live near Haifa. He told newsmen that he had no complaints about the conditions of his imprisonment and that all he wanted now was to rest and be with his family.

Rosenwasser's release followed prolonged negotiations during which the terrorists insisted that Israel negotiate directly with them through the Arab Red Crescent. Israel maintained that it would deal only with the authorities in Lebanon where Rosenwasser was taken initially by his captors before being moved to Jordan. Israel also insisted that it would only negotiate through the Red Cross. The first inkling that a "deal" was in the offing came last week when Israeli authorities advised Rosenwasser's wife and teen-age daughter to postpone a trip to the United States where they planned to seek public support for Rosenwasser's release. Freedom for the Hungarian-born Rosenwasser was purchased at a high price. Hidjazi, who was wounded and captured by Israelis in 1965, was considered one of the worst terrorist offenders. He was the first terrorist ever sentenced to death by an Israeli military tribunal. The change of sentence to life imprisonment came about after the death sentence was pronounced and Hidjazi agreed to cooperate with the authorities in exchange for a second trial.

Egyptian Air Force Resumes Reconnaissance Flights Over Israeli Positions

TEL AVIV, Feb. 28 (JTA)--With expiration of the current Suez cease-fire extension only seven days away, the Egyptian Air Force has resumed reconnaissance flights over Israeli positions and lofted several observation balloons to observe and photograph the Israeli lines. Two overnight Egyptian Sukhoi-7 bombers yesterday were the subject of a new Israeli complaint to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). The first overflight occurred at 1 p.m. local time over the southern sector of the canal and the second 90 minutes later over the central sector. Israelis reported spotting an Egyptian observation balloon at an altitude of about 600 feet in the Port Said area last Wednesday. Two more balloons were seen yesterday over the southern and central sectors of the canal.

The consensus of opinion here and abroad is that Egypt does not wish to resume fighting when the current cease-fire expires and is seeking a face-saving device to keep the truce going after March 7. Some reports said the Sadat government is satisfied that the Jarring talks are making sufficient progress to allow it to agree to some sort of open-ended cease-fire extension. Sadat's problem will be selling the idea to his restless Army officers and to Egypt's closest neighbors and allies. Representatives of Libya and the Sudan, in Cairo for a meeting over the week-end, reportedly took a dim view of Egypt's offer to make peace with Israel and may be pressing Sadat to look for a solution by force. The Palestine Liberation Council, consisting of representatives of the 12 major guerrilla groups, is also meeting in Cairo. Some Council members have reportedly accused Egypt of "selling out" the Palestine liberation movement.

Fulbright Says He Continues To Support Nixon's Mideast Policy

WASHINGTON, Feb. 28 (JTA)--Sen. J. William Fulbright, a bitter critic of the administration's Indo-China policy, said today that he continued to approve President Nixon's Middle East policy in light of the President's State of the World message to Congress last week. The Arkansas Democrat, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, offered this view on the CBS television program, "Face the Nation."

Allon, Foreign Ministry Circles Offer Differing Assessments On Nixon's Policy

JERUSALEM, Feb. 28 (JTA)--Government circles made no attempt today to conceal their disappointment with President Nixon's statement on the Middle East in his second annual foreign policy message to Congress last week. The disturbing aspects were his reiterated backing of the Rogers Plan calling for no substantial changes from Israel's pre-June, 1967 boundaries and the stress he placed on a solution of the Palestine refugee problem. On the positive side, from Israel's point of view, was Nixon's firm statement that peace can be achieved only by agreement between the parties to the conflict and his rejection of a settlement imposed by the Big Powers. Israel also regarded as favorable Nixon's assertion that while the Big Powers were prepared to guarantee a peace settlement, they would not intrude until such a settlement is achieved. Nixon, in his address to Congress, reiterated that the Middle East continues to be the "most dangerous" trouble spot in the world. Israel meanwhile will wait for Egypt's response to its latest note which was in the hands of United Nations mediator Gunnar V. Jarring last Friday. The Cabinet met today and heard a report from Foreign Minister Abba Eban. No details were released.

It was disclosed that the note contains no references to future boundaries but makes it clear that Israel will not return to the borders that existed before the June, 1967 Six-Day War. Addressing a

group of British settlers in Tel Aviv today. Foreign Minister Abba Eban said the gist of the Israeli note was that Israel is prepared to discuss all points at issue with Egypt as long as Cairo is ready to discuss peace with Israel but that there could be no pre-conditions to such discussions. Eban hinted that the movement toward peace was being hindered by the indirect nature of the Jarring talks. Conflicting assessments of the Nixon speech and future relations with the United States emerged today. Deputy Premier Yigal Allon intimated in a radio interview yesterday that the government does not feel that Israel has been "let down" by the U.S. But Foreign Ministry circles took the view that Nixon has abandoned his policy of all-out support of Israel which he adopted six months ago, while the late Egyptian President Nasser was alive. The circles said that Nixon is anxious to improve American relations with Cairo and believes this to be possible under the Sadat regime even if there is no chance of ousting Soviet influence. One observer said today, "Don't be surprised if you hear talk of negotiations for an American loan to Egypt in a few months."

Eban: Israel Can Soon Expect U.S. Pressure; Allon Discloses His Boundary Plan

Allon agreed that the U.S. wants to "get its foot in the door" of Cairo but argued that this was possible only with a strong Israel. This being the case, he said, it was still possible to persuade Nixon to abandon the Rogers Plan. Foreign Ministry circles said however that Nixon's speech indicated that he stands squarely behind the Rogers Plan, even knowing that the Israel government rejects it categorically. They said that in the negotiations which preceded resumption of the Jarring talks in January, the U.S. promised not to raise the Rogers Plan on its own initiative. But by reiterating his insistence on a "substantial" changes from the old boundaries, Nixon has in fact re-introduced the Rogers Plan. Eban reportedly said privately yesterday that American pressure on Israel can be expected soon. He said what the U.S. wanted at this stage was not a concession by Israel but a map. Secretary Rogers was said to have told Israeli Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin in Washington last Friday that an appropriate counter-move by Israel to Egypt's explicit offer to make peace would be a map stating Israel's minimum territorial claims. Israel appears determined to resist this. Government sources conceded that several committees are working on the "border question" but insisted that no maps have been drafted. However, observers here said it was not certain how long Israel could hold out against Washington's demands for specific boundary proposals to Egypt.

Government sources said Israel was not opposed to a solution of the Palestine refugee problem but was perturbed by Nixon's stress on it in his foreign policy message and feared that the Arab concept of a solution might somehow filter into the U.S. approach. In his radio interview yesterday, Allon referred for the first time in many months to the so-called Allon Plan for Israel's future boundaries. He disclosed for the first time that his plan also deals with the Golan Heights and the Sinai. In Allon's view, Israel must retain the Sharm el-Sheikh strong point at the southern tip of Sinai to control navigation to and from Eilat and must have a connecting land strip along the western shores of the Gulf of Aqaba. These boundaries are considered to be more or less the same envisaged by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan although Allon presented the plan in his own name only. Some observers said that he might have been launching a trial balloon at the government's request to test reaction in Washington without committing Israel. The Israel government, no less than the Egyptian government, is aware that only the U.S. is in a position to exert any influence on Israel's actions, one source said today.

More U.S. Businessmen On Way To Israel To Give Israeli Businessmen 'Know-How'

TEL AVIV, Feb. 28 (JTA)--Nine top flight American businessmen have visited Israel as volunteers over the past two years to give Israeli businessmen the benefit of their "know-how" and another group is expected here shortly for the same purpose, it has been reported by the International Executive Service Corp. The I.E.S. was organized to send American executives abroad for short periods to advise foreign companies. According to William L. Finger, vice president for the Middle East and Africa, it plans to expand its activities in Israel. The nine executives who have already been here came as part of an experimental pilot project. Finger said the I.E.S. activities in Israel would be sponsored by the Israel-American Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber announced that it will dedicate a new 15-story "American House" in Tel Aviv during Israel Independence Day celebrations in April.

Two Scientists Announce Apparatus Capable Of Reaching Closest To Absolute Zero

JERUSALEM, Feb. 28 (JTA)--Two American scientists who settled in Israel recently have constructed a refrigeration apparatus at the Haifa Technion that has come closer than any other to reaching absolute zero. The apparatus was designed by Dr. Judah Landau, a 28-year-old former resident of Albuquerque, New Mexico and Dr. Ralph Rosenbaum, 31, formerly of New York City. Both joined the staff of the Technion physics department in 1969. The temperature reportedly achieved by the device is minus 532.67 degrees on the Fahrenheit scale which is 55 thousandths of a degree, F. above absolute zero. Landau and Rosenbaum say their machine may reach one thousandth of a degree above absolute zero on the Centigrade scale which is used in Israel and throughout most of Europe. According to the Haifa Technion, the laws of physics make it impossible ever to reach absolute zero, the coldest possible temperature in the universe at which all matter is at rest.

The refrigerating apparatus is used to study the fundamental physical properties of solids and liquids at extreme cold. It employs isotopes of helium, some of which are rare and have become available only recently. Prof. Charles Kuper of the Technion explained to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that "at the present time, the frontiers of knowledge in physics are high energy physics and ultra low temperature physics." He said the Technion is working in both areas. The invention of Drs. Landau and Rosenbaum puts it in the forefront of experiments to reach the lowest possible temperature. Other laboratories working in the same field are at the University of California, San Diego; Argonne National Laboratories, Illinois; Ohio State University and the Technical University of Helsinki, Finland.

Soviet Jewry Conference Assessments: 'Cruel Hoax,' Beneficial For Russian Jews

NEW YORK, Feb. 28 (JTA)--Differing assessments of the achievements and the conduct of the world conference on Soviet Jews which closed in Brussels Thursday emerged today from various Jewish sources. Zev Yaroslavsky of Los Angeles, chairman of the California Students for Soviet Jewry, called the conference a "cruel hoax on the Jewish community" because it allegedly barred in advance any delegate likely to make "any concrete proposal for action." But David Ben-Gurion, Israel's former Premier who was a delegate to the conference, but due to illness was unable to attend any but the final session, said in Tel Aviv that as a result of the gathering, "more Jews will be able to leave Russia now than before." Yaroslavsky referred specifically to the conference action in barring Rabbi Meir Kahane, national chairman of the Jewish Defense League, who was arrested and expelled from Belgium after he turned up at the conference and demanded the right to speak. Yaroslavsky, himself an activist though he has not supported JDL tactics in the past, said the barring of Rabbi Kahane was of "the same type of dictatorial character for which the conference supposedly was called to condemn the Soviet Union." He said it "clearly indicated" that the 800 delegates in Brussels represented "a very small cross-section" of world Jewry. Ben-Gurion himself conceded that no mass migration of Jews from Russia could be expected from the conference results.

In Jerusalem, the youth section of the National Religious Party adopted a resolution protesting Rabbi Kahane's exclusion from the Brussels conference. Another delegate to the conference, film producer and director Otto Preminger who arrived in Tel Aviv from Brussels on a business trip, reiterated his objections to the ban on the JDL leader. Preminger said that while he did not endorse Kahane's tactics, the latter's aims were the same as the conference's. "How could one not let this Jew attend the conference?" Preminger asked. The film-maker who produced the movie version of "Exodus" aroused a storm at one conference session when he likened the refusal to permit Kahane to speak to the repression of free speech by the Nazis and Communists. He told newsmen in Tel Aviv that at a recent visit to Moscow he was asked by Russians to exert influence on Kahane to "soften his tactics." One of the major criticisms of the conference was that it took no specific actions to implement its stated aim to end the repression of Jewish cultural and religious life in the USSR and to persuade the Kremlin to grant emigration rights to all Jews who wish to leave. There was no decision to constitute the conference as a permanent body to follow through on its aims. A conference spokesman told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that the closing in Brussels on Thursday was merely an adjournment and that the conference would be kept in session even though the participants have dispersed. The spokesman said a proposal for a month long vigil on behalf of Soviet Jews had been left pending for further consideration.

Mrs. Hauser Asserts USSR Practices Widespread Discrimination Against Jews

The conference's political committee adopted a suggestion by Mrs. Raya Yaglom, president of the world Wizo, to appoint a delegation to visit Russia for discussions with Kremlin leaders and Soviet Jews. The committee was said to be giving "careful consideration" to the timing and implementation of the proposal. The vagueness on this and other proposals led to disappointment by many delegates and observers. New York Times correspondent Henry Gruniger who covered the Brussels conference from its outset, remarked in his round-up story published today that "the conference ended with more of a whimper than a bang." Conference charges of Soviet mistreatment of Jews were echoed in Geneva on Friday when the U.S. delegate to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, Mrs. Rita Hauser, declared that the Soviet Union practiced widespread discrimination against Jews. She urged the Soviet government to allow them to leave if they wished. Mrs. Hauser spoke at a meeting of the Commission dealing with racialism and racial discrimination. She said it was "disturbing that any interest shown by a (Russian) Jew in Israel makes him suspect in the eyes of the Soviet authorities." Mrs. Hauser's remarks angered the Soviet delegate, Nikolai Terassov who accused the U.S. of discriminating against "Mexicans, Indians and Jews" and of "practicing genocide" against blacks and in Vietnam.

A five-member delegation from the Brussels conference was denied permission by the Human Rights Commission to read the conference's appeal to the Soviet Union to grant Jews cultural and religious rights and the right to emigrate. Dr. Andres Aguilar, of Venezuela, president of the Commission, explained that only non-governmental organizations accredited to the Human Rights Commission had the right to take the floor. But he promised to submit the appeal to Secretary General U. Thant for circulation as a UN document. Two delegates to the Brussels conference representing the Assirei Zion (Prisoners of Zion) charged yesterday that Israel was not doing enough for Jews who suffered exile or imprisonment in the Soviet Union for their Zionist beliefs and who eventually managed to reach Israel. Yehezkel Pularevitz and Abraham Stukarevitz told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency correspondent at the conference that little interest is being shown in the problem in Israel. They said that even allowing for the tensions and pre-occupation with Israel's conflict with the Arabs, it was disturbing that the Assirei Zion had been almost forgotten. They said that some of them lost their health and capacity to work as a result of imprisonment in Soviet labor camps and some have died, leaving their widows and children in Israel. They said everybody was making speeches but proposals from various quarters to give the Assirei Zion the status and support that Israel gives to its war veterans and war invalids were not being acted upon.

Plans Underway To Restore One Of Oldest Jewish Cemeteries

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, Feb. 28 (JTA)--Plans are now being made for the restoration of the Jewish cemetery here, one of the earliest Sephardi burial grounds in the New World. Rabbi Isidoro Aizenberg of Caracas, Venezuela, who was instrumental in the recent restoration of the Jewish cemetery in Coro, visited the island in order to help the local Jewish community draw up a project to save this historic monument from its present state of decay. He met Prime Minister Errol Barrow, who expressed his government's interest in this endeavor as well as in any future work on the old synagogue building, now used for offices. The oldest identifiable stone in the Barbadian cemetery dates from 1660 and belongs to Aaron de Mercado, a Portuguese Jew, like most of the 350 people buried there. The cemetery is located at the site of the original synagogue, Nidhe Israel, built in 1679.

Minority Of Left, Right Jewish Youths Threaten To Destroy Jewish Social Fabric

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 28 (JTA)—Senator Jacob K. Javits tonight urged "responsible organizations and individuals" on and off the campus, "both inside and outside the Jewish community," to combat the "minority of American Jews on the extreme left and extreme right." The New York Republican, in a text prepared for delivery at a community-wide rally of the Jewish Welfare Federation of San Francisco - Marin County area, warned that unless these twin dangers "are brought to reason, their passionate rhetoric and destructive ways could tear apart the heretofore indestructible fabric of American Jewish life." Such a development, he told the rally being held in behalf of the United Jewish Appeal annual campaign at the Fairmont Hotel, "would carry perilous implications for fellow Jews in Israel, the Soviet Union and other troubled areas throughout the world." Javits, who together with Senator Abraham Ribicoff, Connecticut Democrat, was unable to attend the world conference on Soviet Jewry in Brussels last week due to a heavy Senate schedule, told the audience that for the Soviets to permit massive emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel, "there first must be achieved the most elusive of all goals: a permanent peace in the Middle East. Worldwide protest alone is not likely to bring the ultimate relief being sought for Soviet Jews," he stated. Referring to prospects for Mideast peace, Javits cautioned that Israel faces "a most difficult period immediately ahead" as it approaches the crucial period of hard bargaining with Egypt and other Arab states in the indirect talks under United Nations special envoy Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring.

Javits observed that "there is still the danger that the United States could become too eager and too impatient for a Mideast settlement, with the result that we could pressure Israel into making damaging security concessions." At the same time, the Soviet Union makes no similar demands on its Arab clients and "there is still no clear sign that the Soviet Union is prepared to ease up in its military and diplomatic presence in the Middle East." Discussing the dangers the minority of Jewish Left and Right extremists pose for the Jewish community, Javits excoriated the Jewish Defense League as "brand of extremism" from "the far right." He said that the JDL discredits the cause that "never again" will persecutors be permitted to spill Jewish blood by its tactics of violence. "The irony is that the JDL has forsaken the real lesson of the Nazi persecutions: namely, the sanctity of nonviolence." Directing his fire against the New Left, Javits noted that its alliance with Arab propagandists leads to a campaign of vilification against Israel and Zionism, "often with clear overtones of anti-Semitism." He noted that one of the most distressing aspects of student New Left extremism is that some of the organizers and volunteers for the Palestinian terrorist groups have been Jews. Observing that at the root of this problem "is a growing alienation among our youth from middle class society," Javits declared: "At the community and family level, there is a special responsibility to bring Jewish youth into the mainstream of Jewish life; to teach them the lessons of the holocaust and of the precious quality of Israel."

1,000 Nigerians, Who Consider Themselves Jews, Prepared To Undergo Ritual Conversion

NEW YORK, Feb. 28 (JTA)—A Conservative rabbi declared here today that he had been in correspondence with leaders of some 1,000 Nigerians who considered themselves Jews and who had informed him that they were prepared to undergo conversion to assure their acceptance as Jews. The report was made by Rabbi Lester Hering, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Jacob, of Merchantville, N.J., at a meeting of Hatzaad Harishon, an organization seeking to aid black Jews. The meeting was held at the 92nd Street Y, in one of its regular monthly meetings. This one was open to the public. Rabbi Hering told the meeting that his discovery of the Nigerian would-be Jews started with a letter he received in 1967, from one of the leaders of the group, reporting they had discovered Judaism on their own and that they wanted help and recognition as Jews. Rabbi Hering said that the Nigerian leaders had learned about the existence of a worldwide Jewish community from a Christian missionary who happened to be carrying a Camden County (N.J.) yellow-page telephone directory. One of the Nigerians, identified by Rabbi Hering as Jacob, looked through the directory and found Beth Jacob Congregation. Rabbi Hering said he suspected that the Nigerian chose his congregation because of the similarity between its name and his.

He said that in response to a letter from the Nigerian leader to his synagogue, he had replied in 1967, starting a correspondence which was interrupted by the Nigerian civil war and then resumed. In July, 1970, he reported a member of the Nigerian group came to California for a university course and wrote to him from there. He said that he had learned from his correspondence that the Nigerians "have truly discovered the philosophy of Judaism" independent of any previous knowledge of Judaism. He said the Nigerians had no Jewish background and that the three original founders were Christians who had decided to reject Christianity. He quoted a letter from U.E. Umoren, which said, "we are not Christians but Israelites. Teach us about Judaism." Rabbi Hering said that the group has "five or six" synagogues and that the members were missionizing in the southern section of Nigeria. He reported they call their houses of worship synagogues, although the structures have none of the usual components of a Jewish house of worship.

Rabbi Hering reported also that the Nigerians have only the Jewish materials he had sent them—some prayerbooks and Jewish history textbooks. He added that he wrote to them in English, since they do not know Hebrew, and that they replied in an "understandable" pigeon-English. He also reported that the Nigerians had called their leaders "rabbis" until he suggested, in one of his letters, that the term was limited to individuals who had taken specific training. Accordingly, he reported, the Nigerians started calling their leaders teachers. Asked by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency for his views on their status as Jews, Rabbi Hering said that, in terms of Jewish Religious Law, they could not be considered Jews, but that they were "sincere" in their desire to do whatever was necessary for that status, including conversion under acceptable Halachic direction. He said they observe such rituals as they know about and can observe, including rest on Sabbath and the Holy Days. On that basis, he said, he felt American Jews should assist the Nigerians by providing them with necessary ritual materials, educational aid, and similar help. He said he thought some American Jews should visit Nigeria for a direct contact and observation of the Nigerians and their needs.