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Report Cabinet Members Differed On Prisoner Exchange For Rosenwasser's Release

JERUSALEM, March 1 (JTA)--Sharp differences appeared in the Cabinet recently when the government was asked to approve a prisoner exchange for the release of Shmuel Rosenwasser, the 59-year-old watchman who was returned to Israel yesterday after being held captive by Arab terrorists since he was kidnapped Dec. 31, 1969. According to today's disclosure, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, Transport Minister Shimon Peres and Police Minister Shlomo Hillel reportedly thought the price demanded for Rosenwasser's freedom was too high. But they were outvoted by a majority of their Cabinet colleagues. Rosenwasser was exchanged for a notorious terrorist, Mahmud Hijazi, who was serving a life sentence in an Israeli prison. Sources disclosed that Rosenwasser could have been freed much sooner had Israel agreed to El Fatah demands to negotiate with it through the Arab Red Crescent and to free several dozen terrorists in exchange. Israel offered to release only one terrorist and insisted on negotiating through the International Red Cross.

But even that offer was opposed by Dayan, Peres and Hillel on grounds that any exchange with the kidnapers would look like a surrender and could lead to more kidnappings. They argued that as long as Israel is at war, some individuals were likely to fall into enemy hands and this could not be prevented. Minister of Religious Affairs Zerach Warhaftig however took the view that it was in the Jewish tradition to "redeem captives" and his pleading apparently moved a majority of the Cabinet to approve the deal. The modest Rosenwasser home near Haifa was jammed with well-wishers and flowers last night as hundreds of people came to greet Rosenwasser after his 14-month captivity in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. The former watchman at Metullah was re-united with his family yesterday. Their teenage daughter, Ounika, went to school today as usual and later distributed some of the flowers they received to neighbors. Sources here indicated today that ten Lebanese soldiers captured in an Israeli raid shortly after the Rosenwasser kidnapping may soon be returned to Lebanon. The soldiers are being held as prisoners of war.

Israelis Confident They Can Cope With Egyptian Military Force Should Cease-Fire End

TEL AVIV, March 1 (JTA)--Israeli troops manning the Suez Canal line will face the strongest Egyptian forces in history should the current cease-fire extension end on the March 7 deadline, it was reported today. But the Israelis are confident that they can cope with anything the Egyptians can throw at them and would retaliate massively if shooting resumes next Sunday. One Israeli officer on the Suez front recalled a recent remark by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan: "I do not know if the Egyptians will or will not open fire on March 7, but if they do, I know what will happen on March 8." The most formidable weapons facing Israel's Bar-Lev line across the canal are massed Soviet artillery and Frog-7 ground-to-ground missiles. Israeli intelligence places at 1,000 the number of artillery pieces deployed along the waterway, including the huge Soviet 203 mm. cannon. The Frog-7 is known to have deadly accuracy. It can hurl a half-ton missile almost 60 miles with a range of error of less than 500 yards. Israelis consider the introduction of the Frogs to be an escalation in military deployment along the canal. Israelis expect continued overflights of their positions by Egyptian reconnaissance planes. One source noted that the Egyptian Air Force engaged in intensive reconnaissance during the week leading up to the last cease-fire deadline on Feb. 5. The canal zone was quiet today. The Egyptians were seen working on their defenses but soldiers continued to walk freely along the canal; some went swimming and others fished.

Bush; New U.S. Envoy To UN, Rejects Imposed Mideast Settlement, Backs Rogers Plan

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., March 1 (JTA)--George Herbert Walker Bush made his debut as United States ambassador to the United Nations today by rejecting a Big Four-imposed Middle East settlement but backing the Rogers territorial plan of Dec. 9, 1969. The 46-year-old Massachusetts-born Texan, a Republican Congressman from 1966 to 1970, met the UN press corps this morning in his first official act as ambassador after presenting his credentials to Secretary General Thant. The subject of the Mideast dominated the 40-minute session, at which Bush exhibited an extroverted, freewheeling style in contrast with the taciturnity of his ousted predecessor, Charles W. Yost. "The Four have a useful role" in the Mideast deliberations, Bush remarked, but they should not "superimpose" a settlement or in any way "impede" the very sensitive balance that now exists in the Jarring negotiations. He added praise for the Swedish intermediary, commenting: "I personally have the greatest respect for what Dr. (Gunnar V.) Jarring is trying to do, and I know our government does." But Bush stated that President Nixon's position on the Rogers plan was "clearly the position our Mission is going to take." Nixon, reaffirming that plan last Thursday in his "State of the World" message, said the U.S. "has recognized that any changes in the pre-war borders should be insubstantial."

Israel opposes both Big Four imposition of a settlement and the Rogers plan. The new envoy added that the matter of minor territorial adjustments was "under consideration at the highest councils of our government." Bush, flanked by U.S. Ambassadors Christopher H. Phillips and Seymour Maxwell Finger, said he was "willing" to have a special Big Four meeting this week to help save the cease-fire, which expires March 7. He said the four--the envoys of the U.S., the Soviet Union, Britain and France--"continue to play an important role." But as to whether they should make a public statement in support of a truce extension, Bush commented that "it would depend on the nature of the statement," whether it "enhanced the quest for peace." In this latter connection, he said "any fair-minded observer would say things have come a long way." But he admitted that this was "a very critical time" for the Mideast, and that the U.S. must "keep our cool in a heated-up situation." Bush said the U.S. desired "a lasting peace," and that toward that end "we're not writing off any approach," including a

Big Power force in the Mideast. Regarding his personal philosophy, Bush said he wanted to be a "strong" and "forceful" diplomat, though not so strong and forceful that he would "disturb the progress." He declared: "I will feel no inhibition whatever in presenting my views forcefully to the President and the Secretary of State."

Bush, who was given the UN ambassadorship after he lost a Senate race urged on him by President Nixon, added: "I have a close relationship with the President. I think I have his confidence." The newcomer to Turtle Bay, who divested himself of his presidency, chairmanship and shares in Zapata Off-Shore Co. of Midland, Tex., before running for Congress in 1966, gave a carefully worded reply to a question about Mideast oil by the correspondent of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. Asked "What role should America's oil interests in the Mideast play in its policy in that region?" he said that while oil was "of fundamental importance...tremendously important" there, U.S. oil interests were "not going to dictate" Washington's Mideast stance. He added that in being prepared for his new job over the past several weeks, the matter of American oil interests was never mentioned to him. In the course of his comments this morning, Bush used the phrase "even-handed"--the kind of Mideast policy recommended to President Nixon by fact-finder William W. Scranton, former Republican Governor of Pennsylvania, and reacted to bitterly by defense-conscious Israel. Bush clarified his use of the phrase by remarking: "What I'm talking about is fair play. I mean not superimposing our will on others, I mean a lasting peace--that sort of stuff."

Big Four Peace Force Unworkable; Insubstantial Changes Not Same As Unimportant

JERUSALEM, March 1 (JTA)--A highly placed Foreign Ministry source stated categorically today that a Big Four peace-keeping force in the Middle East would never work because it was unthinkable that Soviet troops would fire on Arabs violating a peace agreement or that American troops would fire on Israelis. Referring to the United States' insistence that border changes must be insubstantial, a phrase reiterated last week by President Nixon in his "State of the World" message, the source said that insubstantial is not necessarily the same as unimportant. The source noted that he would easily imagine changes in the Golan Heights or Sinai that might fit the definition of insubstantial while still being important for Israel's security. According to the source, Israel's difficulties with Egypt could be ironed out "if we had face-to-face talks with the Egyptians" but even though it was hard to see how peace could be achieved without direct contacts, Israel was not making this point a condition for its continuation with the Jarring talks.

The source was most emphatic on Big Power guarantees which Israel insists cannot be a substitute for secure and defensible borders. "The Big Powers would be ineffective if called to act," the source said. "I cannot even think of Soviet troops firing on an Arab soldier in order to vindicate Israel, nor could I imagine France withdrawing oil interests ordering her soldiers to open fire on Arab troops and the same applies to Britain who has told us of her interests in the Arab world." The source said that if he were "an Arab I would raise the argument that United States soldiers would not fire on Israelis." The effectiveness of a peace-keeping force composed of the smaller powers was also discounted. The source noted that countries like Finland and Yugoslavia would have to make major decisions as to whether to leave their troops in the combat area. He recalled that Yugoslavia pulled its troops out after Nasser's threat on the eve of the Six-Day War. The source disclosed that Egypt was still adhering to "vague formulas" in its replies to United Nations mediator Gunnar V. Jarring on the critical question of free navigation for Israel. These formulas were the same that excluded Israel from the Suez Canal for more than 20 years. Similarly, he said, Egypt has offered Israel navigation through the Straits of Tiran "in accordance with the principles of international law," a formulation that has been used against Israel in the past.

The source said that the "ideal" peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors should follow the pattern of the Franco-German settlement after World War II which not only established diplomatic relations but created a complex network of trade and cultural relations and mutually interlocking economic interests that made war unthinkable today. He also expressed optimism regarding the outcome of the current differences between Israel and the U.S., and said that he was certain the U.S. would come to realize that where Israel's security was concerned it was Israel's view that should carry the greater weight.

U.S. Rejects Soviet Bid For Earlier Big Four Meeting; Terms It Premature

WASHINGTON, March 1 (JTA)--The State Department rejected today a Soviet attempt to have Thursday's scheduled Big Four meeting in New York held today instead. Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey said a meeting today would be "premature." The USSR, with the tacit support of Britain and France, tried over the weekend to persuade the lone dissenter, the United States, to agree to the session rescheduled. The Soviets are eager to engineer a Big Four statement emphasizing Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab areas. One State Department official, reacting to charges in the Soviet press that the U.S. supports Israeli "intransigence," retorted: "That's nonsense, and they should know better." Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin was to meet today with Secretary of State William P. Rogers. Yesterday, United Nations negotiator Gunnar V. Jarring summoned Egyptian Ambassador Mohammed H. el-Zayyat to show him Israel's most recent statement--the one submitted to Dr. Jarring last Friday, in which Israel insisted she would not give up all the occupied territories. Dr. Zayyat had not been scheduled to confer again with Dr. Jarring until today. In a related development, there were reports this morning that the Nixon administration has been pressuring Israel to delete the no-total-withdrawal passage from her letter to Dr. Jarring. But a State Department official, asked if the U.S. has done so, replied: "I think I'm certain in saying 'no.'"

Report Soviets May Review Emigration Rights; Drabkin Reported On Way To Israel

LONDON, March 1 (JTA)--Reports from Moscow today indicated that Soviet authorities might be reviewing their policy toward Jews and their demands for emigration rights. A top level policy decision on emigration was expected today. It was promised five days ago to a group of 24 Jews who

staged a sit-in at the Supreme Soviet building in downtown Moscow, a rare, almost unprecedented act in the USSR. Meanwhile, according to information reaching here, David Drabkin who has been actively campaigning for emigration rights, and who was told by Soviet authorities last month that he could keep his exit visa as long as he didn't try to leave the country before the world conference on Soviet Jewry in Brussels ended, has left for Israel. During his almost two-year campaign for emigration rights, Drabkin declared that he did not consider himself a Soviet citizen but a citizen of Israel. According to sources, Alexander S. Dumin, deputy chief of the Supreme Soviet, promised the sit-in Jews last week that a decision on emigration rights would be announced March 1. The decision "will cover not only the common problem of all Jews but your personal desire to leave," Dumin reportedly told the group after a nine-hour confrontation. He said, "This is the decision of very high government officials." According to one report, one of the demonstrators has since received an exit visa and another was told to complete the application procedure.

Sources in Russia reported today that judicial authorities of the Russian Republic are reviewing the documents in the cases of nine Jews facing trial in Leningrad and five in Riga on charges growing out of an alleged plot to hijack a Soviet airliner last June. Nine Jews are serving prison terms imposed after a hijack trial in Leningrad last December. A second Leningrad trial opened on Jan. 6 but was adjourned immediately because one defendant was said to be ill. It never re-opened. The long delayed Riga trial was supposed to begin this week but sources said they had learned unofficially that the trial documents were being reviewed in Moscow. Lev N. Smirnov, chairman of the Supreme Court of the Russian Republic reportedly told relatives of five of the Leningrad defendants that he was reviewing the papers which came to 40 volumes and that reading them might take another three weeks. Observers here noted that it was unusual for the Supreme Court to review trial documents of a lower court before the trial opened. They said the higher authorities could order the cases dismissed, ask that the charges be reframed, call for further investigation or order the trial to proceed. Sources said the Leningrad relatives were promised that they would be notified by the high court as soon as a decision was made.

38-Year-Old Murder Case Revived In Libel Suit; Case Dealt With Arlozoroff's Murder

TEL AVIV, March 1 (JTA)--A 38-year-old murder case that once shocked Jews around the world and caused a near bloody confrontation between the Labor and Revisionist factions of the Zionist movement, was revived in a libel suit filed today in a Jerusalem magistrates court. The suit names Prof. Edwin Samuel, of the Hebrew University, son of the late Lord Herbert Samuel, the first British High Commissioner of Palestine, and Ted Lurie, editor of the Jerusalem Post. The suit charges libel in excerpts from a book by Prof. Samuel, published in the Jerusalem Post. The book holds an extremist group of the Revisionist faction--the Brit Habryonim--responsible for the murder on July 16, 1932 of Chaim Arlozoroff, a Labor Party leader and head of the Jewish Agency's political department at the time. In 1933, the Jewish Agency was the defacto government of the "yishuv," the Jewish community in Palestine. The suit was filed by Tzvi Rosenblitt, an employee of the Tel Aviv municipality, who is the sole survivor of the three defendants tried for the Arlozoroff murder, all of whom were eventually acquitted. He is supported by Yacob Orenstein and Chaim Deviri, founding members of the Brit Habryonim.

Rosenblitt claims that the Samuel book was a "repetition of a blood libel" of which he was cleared. His lawyer is Knesset member Shmuel Tamir of the Free Center faction. Arlozoroff was killed under mysterious circumstances while strolling with his wife along the Tel Aviv beach. Revisionist zealots were accused of the act. Rosenblitt along with Abba Achimeir and Abraham Stavski, both now deceased, were tried for the murder. Achimeir was released after the preliminaries and Rosenblitt was acquitted after a trial that lasted almost a year. Stavski was found guilty and sentenced to death but the High Court later reversed the verdict and acquitted him. A generation later, the Arlozoroff murder is still a sensitive point between old timers of the Labor Party and Revisionists who adhere mainly to the opposition Herut faction. According to Samuel's book, Revisionists murdered Arlozoroff and threatened the life of the late Dr. Judah Magnes, president of the Hebrew University, whose advocacy of a bi-national Jewish-Arab state in Palestine offended nationalist extremists.

Woman Air Traffic Control Officer Charged With Negligence In Lydda Accident

TEL AVIV, March 1 (JTA)--A Petach Tikva Magistrate today charged a woman air traffic control officer at Lydda Airport with negligence in a fatal accident which occurred on the main runway during the night of last Nov. 29-30. The magistrate held Sylvia Mayer's, the duty officer in the control tower at the time, responsible for the collision of a TWA cargo plane with an Israeli military transport plane which took the lives of two ground crew employees. The judge found that Miss Mayer had cleared the TWA jet for takeoff while the military transport was being towed across the main runway by a tractor. An investigation that followed absolved the TWA pilot of responsibility for the crash. It also brought to the surface long standing charges of negligence, incompetence and lax procedures at Lydda Airport which were said to have been responsible for a series of near accidents over the airfield. Minister of Transport Shimon Peres promised a tightening up of procedures and a major program to provide Lydda with the latest navigational aids and safety devices.

Terrorist Activities Up; Rise On Syrian Border, Gaza Strip

TEL AVIV, March 1 (JTA)--Terrorist activities increased last week compared to the previous week, according to statistics released today by security authorities. During the week ending yesterday, 23 incidents were reported compared to 13 the previous week. The rise was on the Syrian border where eight incidents occurred compared to three the week before, and in the Gaza Strip which had 12 compared to six earlier. Incidents along the Jordan and Lebanese borders were the same for both weeks--one and two respectively. There was a total of 70 incidents during February compared to 79 in January. Two Israeli soldiers and one civilian were killed during February and four civilians were killed in January as a result of terrorist acts. There were no military fatalities in January.

