

Atlanta Anglo-Jewish Editor Gives "First Hand" Report From Israel

By Adolph Rosenberg

Adolph Rosenberg, editor and publisher of the Southern Israelite, was in Israel attending a convention when hostilities erupted between the Arabs and Israelis. He has just returned to Atlanta and this is his account of his experiences in the Middle East.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: THE CONVENTION HE ATTENDED WAS FOR THE AMERICAN JEWISH PRESS ASSN., AT WHICH ROSENBERG WAS RE-ELECTED PRESIDENT. JACK TELL)

Middle-age is a bit late to become an active war correspondent. But I did.

I am a bit too old to skip through the streets of Jerusalem dodging bullets. But I had to.

The mid-fifties is a time for comfort and not for spending a rugged, sleepless night in a shelter to escape falling bombs. But it was necessary.

With the insouciance of a World War II veteran who always had foxholes on such dimly remembered island names as Guadalcanal and Saipan and never once used them, I had expected to pass up the shelter. I went to bed at 8 p.m. in a blacked-out hotel. The few other guests retired to the basement shelter.

Neighbors on both sides of the border were making too much noise for sleep to come.

When the wall outside my hotel room in Jerusalem took a direct mortar hit, I knew somebody up there liked me. I decided to heed the advice of Mayor Kolleck's municipal civil defense. I fumbled in the pitch black and retreated to the shelter for 11 hours.

I am a bit old for pushing a charoot (bus) through the mine-studded and fluid desert sands near Gaza and El Arish with 37 other journalists. But I did my share and trudged with them for a quarter mile until the terrain was firm enough for a heavily loaded bus.



Adolph Rosenberg

I am a bit too old to stumble around in a blacked-out city of Tel Aviv, even if the shelter warning is not on. But there is no other way to get to sources of press information at night.

But no American ever is too old to feel his heart breaking over the

sight of a thousand children in their school shelters, courageously keeping up their spirit while outside explode the fearful bombs and mortars from Jordanian fighters and reciprocal Israeli positions.

No Jew or non-Jew in America is ever too old to fail to sense bitterly the feeling of needless war terror of a civilian population he sees scurrying through the dangerous street fire to reach home and security of family and makeshift shelters.

I was marooned in Jerusalem the day war broke out. The Jewish newspaper convention I had come to Israel to preside over was finished. All the delegates except myself had gone home. I had unfinished business. I wanted to leave behind a pint of blood as a gesture of solidarity although I prayed it would never be needed.

Breakfast in the all but deserted hotel where I had stayed overnight was interrupted by a strange sounding air shelter warning. It sounded more like a stuck horn. The manager hustled us into the shelter and then rounded up four wide-awake kids passing on the sidewalk on the way to school. This was the first shelter warning and lasted only a few minutes. Just a test, the manager said. Later, it was learned the all-clear had been sounded through error at first instead of the banshee wailing call.

In a half hour I heard the radio announcement "We are now fighting."

My visit to Jerusalem now took on an entirely different term from the sight-seeing I had wanted to achieve.

A writer finds himself under such conditions editorializing and the exhilarating Jerusalem air is a help and the historicity of this Holy City with biblical significance in every cranny for the three major faiths of my own country.

And you have to be outraged that the people of Israel who went

through the persecutions of the Nazis now should have to be subjected to this. They know the consequences.

Only now they were united in a land of their own with fellow Jews in a fantastic saga of religiosity such as the world has never seen.

And now they could fight together in self-preservation.

I saw them fight for self-preservation in the streets of Jerusalem—in the dimness of night and the fullness of day. I saw where civilian and military blood had been shed. I saw the damage to buildings.

As a souvenir, I picked up a Russian bullet that did not have any name on it Wednesday morning as I wandered around the rubble. Overhead a squadron of planes was dive bombing over the Jordanian part of Jerusalem to silence gun emplacements.

In the several hour calm that followed I returned to Tel Aviv because this is the press center of Israel and here is where the chiefs of staff and government sit in emergency sessions at times like this.

On Wednesday I accompanied two bus-loads of journalists to El Arish and Gaza where a decisive battle had raged a few hours earlier. I saw a part of the mopping-up action.

I saw the prisoners, the captured Egyptian and Russian tanks, some scarred by explosion and Israeli tanks, too, that had taken direct hits.

I saw dozens of bodies of Egyptian soldiers strewn over the sand dunes where they had fallen, many in grotesque positions and not yet relaxed in the eternal communion of death by the privacy of their graves.

And I am not too hardened a newsman to avoid bitterness over such grim realities of war, even if the dead are enemy dead.

I saw at El Arish the rust-blackened faces of Israeli warriors who

had fought this fight in the Sinai Desert. When newsmen talked to them, they wanted most to hear about the war in Jerusalem or Haifa or the Kibbutz where they left their families.

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A tribute to Mr. Rosenberg's leadership during the past year and to his tremendous effort in arranging the convention in Israel was expressed by Philip Slomovitz of Detroit, on behalf of the Association.

Chosen to serve with Mr. Rosenberg were:

Vice presidents: Jimmy Wisch, Texas Jewish Post, Dallas-Ft. Worth; Conrad Isenberg, Jewish Civic Leader, Worcester, Mass.,

and Milton Firestone, Kansas City Jewish Chronicle, Kansas City, Mo.

Honorary vice president: Leo Frisch, American Jewish World, Minneapolis-St. Paul.

Treasurer: Martin Korick, Jewish Record, Atlantic City.

Secretary: Albert Bloom, Jewish Chronicle, Pittsburg.

Executive Board: Philip Slomovitz, Jewish News, Detroit; Fred K. Shochet, Floridian, Miami; Jacques Back, Observer, Nashville; Jack Fishbein, Sentinel, Chicago; Joseph Weisberg, Jewish Advocate, Boston; Morris J. Janoff, Jewish Standard, Jersey City, (past presidents) and Arthur Weyne, Cleveland Jewish News, Cleveland; Milton Pinsky, Ohio Jewish Chronicle, Columbus; Charles Shapiro, Jewish Exponent, Philadelphia; Joe Cummins, B'nai B'rith Messenger, Los Angeles, and Leo Goldberger, Hebrew Watchman, Memphis.

100,000 at Wailing Wall on Shevouth

JERUSALEM (WNS) A spectacle that moved even hard visaged soldiers to tears occurred on Shevouth, when more than 100,000 Israelis trekked to the redeemed Wailing Wall in joy and in prayer.

Ever since the severance of the old city of Jerusalem from its source in 1948, Jews in Israel and all over the world have been hopeful that the Wailing Wall, whose symbolism has been a mystique in Jewish life ever since the destruction of the second Temple by the Romans, would someday be returned to Jews. Now for the first time in almost twenty years it had become available to Jews and there was untold rejoicing among all elements of the population, religious and irreligious. Most came to pray at the Wall from distant areas of the country wearing prayer shawls, some on foot, others by car and still others perhaps by donkeys. The young came and the old, the bearded the clean-shaven, the religious and the impious, and when they left they were bound as if by one thought, the thought of the Israelite release from bondage in Egypt more than 3,000 years ago, the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai, which is at the very significance of the Shevouth holiday, and of Sinai conquered anew.

When the pilgrimage was over most of the marchers returned to their homes,

some saddened by the tragedy of the war, and others prepared to go on struggling for the life of Israel and

its people, determined that Israel and Jerusalem shall live in peace in conformity with biblical injunction.



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