

William Nakash Deported To France, Ending Two-Year Extradition Battle

TEL AVIV (KTA) — William Nakash, an Algerian-born Jew, was deported to France after losing a two-year battle against extradition that raised the passions of nationalist elements in Israel and pitted the rabbinical authorities against the secular courts.

Nakash, under heavy guard, was taken handcuffed from prison to the ramp of an El Al plane at Ben Gurion Airport, where he was handed over to two French police officers sent to escort him to France.

He will stand trial there for the Feb. 22, 1983 murder of Abdelali Hakkar, an Algerian Arab in Besancon, a city in southern France near the Swiss border.

Nakash, 26, who fled to Israel nearly four years ago to escape an arrest warrant, was tried in absentia for the crime, convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment. The French authorities agreed recently to give him a second trial.

Although Israel's Supreme Court ruled last summer that Nakash should be extradited and the Justice Ministry signed the order, its implementation was delayed when the rabbinical court in Jerusalem banned his departure from the country.

The rabbis insisted Nakash could not leave unless he granted a divorce to his pregnant wife, Rina, who otherwise would become an aguna -- abandoned woman -- prohibited from remarrying under religious law.

The rabbinical court withdrew its ban last month after Nakash signed a "conditional bill of divorce." His wife was not at the airport to see him off. She told reporters she does not intend to go to France for the trial.

Nakash came to Israel in 1983 under an assumed name and was granted automatic citizenship under the Law of Return. His identity

was revealed when he was arrested here for armed robbery. In the interim he had become a baal teshuvah -- a Jew who returns to the religious fold -- and embraced Orthodoxy.

His cause was taken up by Orthodox leaders, Notably Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz, head of the Shas party. Right-wing nationalists opposed his extradition on the principle that no Jew should be extradited to a gentile country.

They maintained that Nakash had killed the Arab in self-defense and that his life would be endangered if he were forced to serve his sentence in a French prison. Appeals were made to France to allow him to do his time in an Israeli jail.

Liberal and left-wing circles noted that a French court found Nakash to have committed a criminal act that had no bearing on the fact that he is a Jew and his victim was an Arab. They argued that Israel should not be turned into a "haven for criminals just because they happen to be Jews."

Israeli jurists and reporters who studied the case in France agreed with the French authorities that the murder was the outcome of a quarrel between underworld elements in Besancon and had no political overtones. Nakash's accomplice in fact was another Algerian Arab, presently serving his sentence in France.

WASHINGTON (JTA) — More than 200,000 people packed the National Mall recently to demonstrate support for Soviet Jewry, in the largest Jewish rally ever held in Washington.

Jews and non-Jews, from throughout the United States and Canada, as well as Israel and other countries, urged Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to allow all Jews who wish to leave the Soviet Union to emigrate.

The demonstration came just 24 hours before Gorbachev was due to arrive in Washington for a two-day summit with President Reagan.

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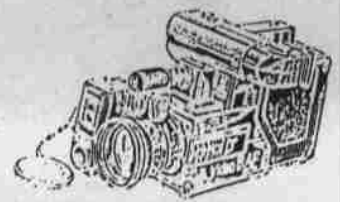
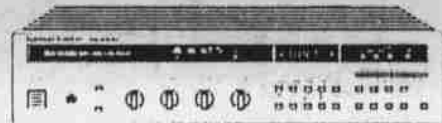
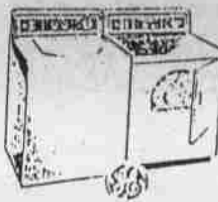
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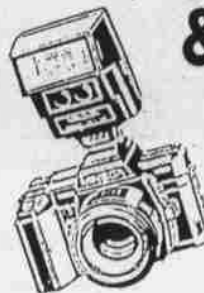
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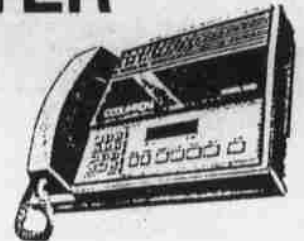


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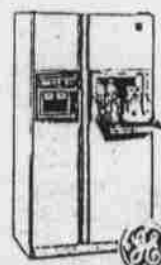
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