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Concern raised over Israeli detained in raid

JOSH NELSON, Courier Staff Writer

WATERLOO - Two cellular phones, three hours of calling and Gabay Menahn wasn't getting anywhere.

Menahn, of Postville, paced nervously beside his SUV parked across from the National Cattle Congress fairgrounds as he attempted to get a hold of anyone who could help release Moshe Reinitz.

Reinitz, an Israeli national, was administratively arrested Monday along with 390 people at the Agriprocessors plant during a raid by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The raid is leaving many like Menahn trying to find out ways to lend help to the arrestees while coping with their own problems.

Reinitz's arrest caused his wife to be hospitalized for a nervous breakdown and left Postville's Jewish community to care for their children, Menahn said.

He questioned the ICE stance that agents were taking humanitarian concerns into account during their actions.

"This is one humane case they're ignoring," he said.

Reinitz was visiting the plant when the raid occurred, Menahn said. Reinitz was in the midst of applying for a green card based on a special expertise with glass, he said.

ICE officials told friends and family members that because he was in the plant, he was working.

"He was not working," Menahn said. "... It's a big plant, a lot of people visit."

The agriprocessor plant re-opened Tuesday, and company officials said they hoped to hire workers to cover the shortage caused by the raid. Arnold said ICE agents finished executing their warrant Monday night and planned no further law enforcement actions.

Menahn and a friend spun their wheels for hours trying everyone they could talk with, then a breakthrough. They began talking with a sympathetic ICE agent named Don Robinson. He told the pair that if they could get Reinitz an attorney, he'd be out in an hour.

"That's good news, huh," Menahn said.

By 9:30 p.m., Moshe Reinitz was released. But many more still waited to hear their fates.