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TEXT
SUBJECT: "MEDIA REACTION" NAZI GOLD/HOLOCAUST
ASSETS

SUMMARY: THE FOLLOWING TEXT IS A SELECTION OF
NEWSPAPER ARTICLES THAT HAVE APPEARED THIS PAST
WEEK ON SWISS "NAZI GOLD" AND DORMANT SWISS BANK
ACCOUNTS OF HOLOCAUST VICTIMS:

FBI COORDINATION WITH ^{ed} State

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BEGIN EXCERPTS:

1. HOLOCAUST ASSETS

THE WORLD JEWISH RESTITUTION ORGANIZATION (WJRO) AND SWITZERLAND DECIDED IN NEW YORK TO APPOINT A WORKING GROUP WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO ADMINISTER AND DECIDE ABOUT THE USE OF THE SPECIAL FUND FOR HOLOCAUST VICTIMS. THE WORKING GROUP WILL MEET IN TWO WEEKS IN BERN. THE HEAD OF THE TASK FORCE, THOMAS BORER, WILL CHAIR THE GROUP. BORER EXPLAINED IN NEW YORK THAT ISRAEL SINGER, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS (WJC), A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SWISS ISRAELI COMMUNITY (SIG), AS WELL AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GYPSY ORGANIZATIONS AND THE BANKING ASSOCIATION WILL BE MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUP.

THE FIRST COMPENSATION PAYMENTS FROM THE SPECIAL HOLOCAUST FUND MIGHT BE MADE IN THE SUMMER. (FRONT PAGE BERNER ZEITUNG, 2/15)

2. IS MEETING IN NEW YORK A CHANGING POINT?

"NEW SPIRIT," "HISTORICAL MOMENT," "NEW ATMOSPHERE." THE MEETING ON HOLOCAUST ASSETS BETWEEN JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS, SWISS DIPLOMATS, AND AMERICANS IS CONSIDERED A SUCCESS. EDGAR BRONFMAN, PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS, STATED THAT THE "ATMOSPHERE HAS IMPROVED." U.S. SENATOR ALFONSE D'AMATO REGARDED SWITZERLAND'S DECISIONS AS A HOPEFUL BEGINNING FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS. HOWEVER, IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE ROLE OF THE BANKS IS NOT BEING REVIEWED. STUART EIZENSTAT, WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE U. QION, WELCOMED SWITZERLAND'S NEW ATTITUDE. HE EMQ THAT IT WAS "NOT THE SWISS, BUT THE GERMANS WHO KILLED THE JEWS."

BESIDES EIZENSTAT, BORER, AND D'AMATO, THE HEAD OF THE INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE, PAUL VOLCKER, JEAN-FRANCOIS BERGIER FROM THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION, NUMEROUS REPRESENTATIVES OF SWISS AND NON-SWISS JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS, AS WELL AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE KNESSETH COMMISSION FOR RESTITUTION, AVRAHAM HIRSCHVON, PARTICIPATED IN THE CONFERENCE AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS IN NEW YORK. (BERNER ZEITUNG, 2/15)

3. PRIVATE FUND FOR HUMANITY AND JUSTICE

A COMMITTEE ANNOUNCED THE PRIVATE "FUND FOR HUMANITY AND JUSTICE." MANY PEOPLE ARE AWARE THAT SWITZERLAND DID NOT REMAIN AS INNOCENT AS

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ONE HAD BELIEVED, SAID THE INITIATOR OF THE FUND, SOCIALIST COUNCILOR OF STATE GIAN-RETO PLATTNER. THE COMMITTEE CALLS ON PEOPLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FUND "AS A SIGN OF GOOD WILL, OUR RESPONSIBILITY, OUR JUSTICE, AND OUR DEMOCRATIC OBLIGATION." BESIDES POLITICIANS SUCH AS FRANCOIS LOEB AND ROSMARIE DORMANN, ARTISTS SUCH AS THOMAS HUERLIMANN ARE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE. IN ADDITION, AUTHOR ALFRED HAESLER, TICINO ARCHITECT MARIO BOTTA, LAWYER JEAN-FRANCOIS AUBERT, AND BISHOP JOSEPH CANDOLFI ARE PARTICIPATING.
(BERNER ZEITUNG, 2/15)

4. BRITS DESIRE CONFERENCE ON LOOTED GOLD

BRITISH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS GREVILLE JANNER (WHO IS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS), DAVID HUNT, AND GLYN FORD (MEMBER OF THE EUROPE PARLIAMENT) MET FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH NATIONAL COUNCILOR FRANCOIS LOEB, THE HEAD OF THE TASK FORCE, THOMAS BORER, FEDERAL COUNCILOR FLAVIO COTTI, AND THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL BANK, JEAN-PIERRE ROTH. DURING THEIR DISCUSSION WITH FEDERAL COUNCILOR FLAVIO COTTI, THEY PROPOSED A CONFERENCE ON LOOTED GOLD BY THE NAZIS. THIS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE SHOULD FACILITATE THE INVESTIGATIONS ON NAZI GOLD DEALS. ACCORDING TO JANNER, THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY COUNCIL AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM, WHICH CONSISTS OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM 87 COUNTRIES, IS SUPPOSED TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE. COTTI SEEMS TO BE INTERESTED IN SUCH A CONFERENCE. AMBASSADOR THOMAS BORER EXPLAINED THAT BESIDES NATIONS, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, SUCH AS THE BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENT, SHOULD BE INVITED.
(BERNER ZEITUNG, 2/18)

5. SPECIAL FUND

ACCORDING TO VICE CHANCELLOR ACHILLE CASANOVA, THE SPECIAL FUND FOR HOLOCAUST VICTIMS MIGHT BE CREATED AT THE END OF FEBRUARY. DISCUSSIONS WITH ALL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN THE FUND TOOK PLACE THESE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS. THE FEDERAL COUNCIL IS PLEASED WITH THE REACTIONS.
(BERNER ZEITUNG, 2/20)

6. HITLER ARTICLE IN "TAGES-ANZEIGER"

DURING THE "ZISCHTIG-CLUB" DEBATE ON SWITZERLAND'S ROLE DURING THE NAZI ERA (BROADCAST ON SWISS GERMAN TV), THE PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS PEOPLE'S PARTY REFERRED TO AN ARTICLE BY ADOLF HITLER WHICH WAS PRINTED ON THE FRONT PAGE OF "TAGES-ANZEIGER" IN 1931.

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WAS "TAGES-ANZEIGER" NAZI-FRIENDLY DURING THAT TIME? IT WAS NOT. A BOOK BY HUGO WILD, WHICH WAS PUBLISHED IN 1993 ON THE OCCASION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PAPER, SHOWS HOW HITLER'S TEXT FOUND ITS WAY TO "TAGES-ANZEIGER." (TAGES-ANZEIGER, 2/20)

7. LOOTED GOLD AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

DANIEL THUERER (PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH) HAS ANALYSED THE DEALS REGARDING GOLD FROM CENTRAL BANKS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES DURING WORLD WAR II. WERE THE NATIONAL BANK'S GOLD DEALS WITH THE NAZI REGIME LEGAL OR NOT? IN THE WASHINGTON AGREEMENT OF 1946, SWITZERLAND AGREED TO PAY SFR. 250 IN GOLD TO THE ALLIES WHICH DECLARED IT WOULD NOT CLAIM ANYTHING MORE FROM SWITZERLAND'S PROFITS OF THE NATIONAL BANK'S GOLD DEALS. THUS, THE GOLD AS A LEGAL QUESTION WAS RESOLVED. HOWEVER, THE POLITICAL-MORALE JUDGEMENT OF THE GOLD DEALS REMAINS AND, FORMING THE BASIS FOR THE CURRENT QUESTIONS REGARDING A CONTRIBUTION BY THE NATIONAL BANK TO THE HUMANITARIAN FUND. (NEUE ZUERCHER ZEITUNG, 2/20)

8. ECHOES OF THE HOLOCAUST

THE FRONT PAGE STORY IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE U.S. "TIME" MAGAZINE WILL BE DEVOTED TO SWITZERLAND. HOWEVER, IT IS NOT A POSITIVE STORY AND IS OFTEN VERY EXAGGERATED.

"TIME" WRITES THAT THE IMAGE OF SWITZERLAND HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE ONE OF A PROUD, NEUTRAL COUNTRY; THE FOUNDER OF THE RED CROSS, DEFENDER OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES, AND AN OASIS OF PEACE AND MULTI-ETHICAL HARMONY. NOW, SWITZERLAND IS THREATENED BY A NEW DARK IMAGE - THE ONE OF A SELFISH DEALER NATION, WHICH PROFITED FROM ITS BUSINESS WITH HITLER AND SHOWED LITTLE SYMPATHY FOR ITS VICTIMS. IN THE ARTICLE, THE SWISS ARE CHARACTERIZED AS A BUNCH OF HEARTLESS, MISTRUSTFUL DEALERS. A "TIME" REPORTER VISITED THE HEADQUARTERS OF UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND AND DESCRIBES A LOT OF "COLD MARBLE AND A UNIFORMED MAN WHO WAS IMMEDIATELY AT HIS SIDE AND ASKED HIM WHO HE WAS, WHAT HE WANTED AND WHETHER HE HAD AN ID.

THE SWISS, IN REACTING TO THE U.S. ALLEGATIONS, APPEAR HELPLESS AND GIVE RISE TO NEGATIVE ASSOCIATIONS. CARLO JAGMETTI'S WORD "WAR" IS CITED WITHOUT PUTTING IT INTO CONTEXT. ALSO FEDERAL COUNCILOR DELAMURAZ'S STATEMENT OF

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"RAMSON AND BLACKMAIL" IS MENTIONED IN THE ARTICLE. THE HEAD OF THE TASK FORCE, AMBASSADOR THOMAS BORER IS THE ONLY ONE WHO COMES OFF WELL. ACCORDING TO "TIME," IT IS POSITIVE THAT HE IS FLUENT IN ENGLISH, LISTENS TO BUDDY HOLLY AND IS ENGAGED TO A FORMER MISS TEXAS.

ALTOGETHER, "TIME" CREATES AN IMAGE OF A COUNTRY THAT IS WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH ANY CROOK IF HE BRINGS MONEY. FROM THE FINANCIAL POINT OF VIEW, SWITZERLAND HAD A VERY GOOD WAR. LATER, THEY USED THE EXCUSE OF NEUTRALITY. "TIME" CONCLUDED THAT NEUTRALITY IS THE REAL ISSUE.
(TAGES-ANZEIGER)

9. SINGER IN BERN

THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS, ISRAEL SINGER, WILL MEET WITH FEDERAL COUNCILOR FLAVIO COTTI NEXT MONDAY IN BERN. SINGER ACCEPTED AN INVITATION FROM COTTI. THEY WILL DISCUSS SWITZERLAND'S PREPARATIONS FOR A SPECIAL FUND FOR HOLOCAUST VICTIMS.
(TAGES-ANZEIGER)

10. "SWISS JEWS MUST BE LISTENED TO"

THE PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS FEDERATION OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES, ROLF BLOCH, PARTICIPATED IN THE NEW YORK MEETING LAST WEEK. ALTHOUGH UNDERSTANDING THAT THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO HAVE THE BERGIER COMMISSION'S FINAL REPORT BEFORE TAKING ANY DECISION, BLOCH BELIEVES THAT, BECAUSE THE JEWISH STAMP ON PASSPORTS CARRIED BY GERMAN JEWS AND THE REFUSAL OF REFUGEES WERE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES, IT IS LOGICAL FOR THE CONFEDERATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FUNDS LIKE OTHERS. FOR BLOCH, SWITZERLAND MUST ASSUME ITS RESPONSIBILITIES. THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST, FROM ALL RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, SHOULD BE THE PRIORITY OF THE FUND, SAID BLOCH. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT, HE ADDED, TO WORRY ABOUT ANTI-SEMITISM IN SWITZERLAND AND TO MAKE OUR HISTORY KNOWN. HE SUGGESTS A UNIVERSITY CHAIR, A MEETING PLACE, A BOOK OR A FILM AS MEANS TO REACH THAT OBJECTIVE. FOR THAT REASON, SOME OF THE MONEY MUST REMAIN IN SWITZERLAND, SAID BLOCH. ALTHOUGH DETAILS HAVE NOT BEEN DISCUSSED BY THE SWISS JEWISH COMMUNITIES, THEY ALL AGREE THAT SWISS JEWS MUST BE LISTENED TO. HE FINALLY SAID THAT, LIKE WITH ANY INHERITANCE, IT WILL BE INEVITABLE THAT TENSION WILL ARISE.
LE NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN (2/17/97)

11. DAILIES SUED CONCERNING THE JAGMETTI AFFAIRS?

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"SONNTAGSZEITUNG" AND "TAGES ANZEIGER" RISK BEING SUED FOR PUBLISHING THE REPORT SENT TO BERN BY RESIGNING AMBASSADOR CARLO JAGMETTI. THE TWO DAILIES ARE THE OBJECT OF A LEGAL INVESTIGATION FOR PUBLISHING OFFICIAL SECRET DOCUMENTS. THE NECESSARY COMPLAINT WAS FILED FEBRUARY 4 BY THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENT FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT THE REQUEST OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL. AT THE MOMENT, THE INVESTIGATION HAS COVERED ONLY THE FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION, IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH WHERE THE LEAK TOOK PLACE.

LE NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN (2/17/97)

12. GYPSIES DEMAND THEIR SHARE

FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS WITH DIFFERENT OFFICIAL ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTING GYPSIES AND INDIVIDUALS DIRECTLY CONCERNED, THE SWISS ROMANI UNION, AN UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION FOR GYPSIES, HAS ADDRESSED A REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT TO FEDERAL COUNCILOR FLAVIO COTTI. THEY CLAIM THAT, SINCE GYPSIES HAVE SINCE LONG BEEN CONSIDERED NAZI VICTIMS, THEY SHOULD ALSO PROFIT FROM A FUND TO BE CREATED FOR HOLOCAUST VICTIMS. FUNDS SHOULD BE DEVOTED, IN PARTICULAR, TO RELIEVE THE MISERY OF GYPSIES IN EASTERN EUROPE, AS WELL AS TO REIMBURSE THE HEIRS OF THOSE WHO PERISHED IN THE HOLOCAUST. INDIVIDUALS AND ASSOCIATIONS WHO HAVE UNTIL NOW DEFENDED THE CASE OF GYPSIES IN THE WORLD SHOULD ALSO BENEFIT FROM THE FUND.

JOURNAL DE GENEVE (2/17/97)

13. BRITISH GOVERNMENT OPEN TO CONFERENCE

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS SAID "TO BE OPEN" TO THE IDEA OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NAZI GOLD, "AS LONG AS IT HAS A CLEAR OBJECTIVE AND IS CAREFULLY PREPARED." THE PROPOSAL FOR THIS CONFERENCE WAS MADE YESTERDAY IN BERN BY BRITISH PARLIAMENTARIAN GREVILLE JANNER.

LE NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN (2/19/97)

14. JEWISH AGENCY WANTS TO INVESTIGATE IN BERN AVRAHAM BURG, PRESIDENT OF THE JEWISH AGENCY, WILL SEND INVESTIGATORS TO THE SWISS FEDERAL ARCHIVES IN BERN. THE INVESTIGATORS HOPE TO FIND IN THE ARCHIVES COPIES OF THOSE DOCUMENTS THAT WERE DESTROYED AT THE UBS. "I AM AFRAID THAT THE BANK EMPLOYEE WHO MADE THAT DECISION WAS NOT THE ONLY ONE," SAID BURG YESTERDAY IN JERUSALEM. THE FEDERAL ARCHIVES, HOWEVER, CLAIM NOT TO HAVE ANY ARCHIVES DEPOSITED BY PRIVATE BANKS.

JOURNAL DE GENEVE - LE NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN
(2/20/97)

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15. JEWISH FUNDS: FOREIGN JOURNALISTS INVITED

THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENT FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS
INVITED ABOUT ONE DOZEN AMERICAN, BRITISH AND
ISRAELI JOURNALISTS TO SWITZERLAND NEXT WEEK.
THE OBJECTIVE OF THE VISIT IS TO EXPLAIN TO THEM
THE SWISS POSITION REGARDING JEWISH MISSING FUNDS
AND NAZI GOLD.
JOURNAL DE GENEVE (2/21/97)

END EXCERPTS. KOENIG

ADMIN

END OF MESSAGE

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Page 7