

CONFIDENTIAL

DOCUMENT_ID: 177838532
INQNO: DOC43D 00002920
DOCNO: TEL 002361 97CO
PRODUCER: VILNIUS
SOURCE: STATE
DOCTYPE: IN
DOR: 19970815
TOR: 041254
DOCPREC: P
ORIGDATE: 199708150804
MHFNO: 97 8823824
DOCCLASS: C

HEADER

PP RUEAIIB
ZNY CCCCC ZOC STATE ZZH
MSI2931
PP RUEHC
DE RUEHVL #2361 2270804
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 150804Z AUG 97
FM AMEMBASSY VILNIUS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8372
INFO RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1099
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 2337
RUEHTL/AMEMBASSY TALLINN 3863
RUEHRA/AMEMBASSY RIGA 0235
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 1135
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN 1266
BT

CONTROLS

C O N F I D E N T I A L VILNIUS 002361

//C O R R E C T E D C O P Y -- CONFIDENTIAL CLASSIFICATION//

E.O. 12958: DECL: 8/14/07

TEXT

TAGS: PGOV, PINR, EPET, KCRM, LH
SUBJECT: PROSECUTOR GENERAL CHARGES MEMBER OF THE
LITHUANIAN PARLIAMENT WITH TAKING A BRIBE

1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE JOHN STEPANCHUK. REASONS 1.5
B AND D.

2. (U) MEMBER OF THE LITHUANIAN PARLIAMENT (SEIMAS)
AUDRIUS BUTKEVICIUS WAS ARRESTED ON AUGUST 12 FOR
ALLEGEDLY TAKING A BRIBE OF USD 15,000 FROM THE LITHUANIAN
ENERGY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY "DEGA". DEGA IS CURRENTLY
UNDER INVESTIGATION FOR ITS COMPLICITY IN THE FAILURE OF
LITHUANIAN INSTITUTIONS TO PAY A DEBT TO THE AMERICAN
MOBIL SALES AND SUPPLY CORPORATION FOR USD 2.7 MILLION.
AS A SEIMAS MEMBER, BUTKEVICIUS HAS LEGAL IMMUNITY, AND
WAS RELEASED IMMEDIATELY. PROSECUTOR GENERAL PEDNYCIA,
HOWEVER, QUICKLY TOOK THE ISSUE TO THE PRESS AND HAS ASKED

Declassified and Approved for Release
by the Central Intelligence Agency

Date: 2003 2005

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

FOR COORDINATION WITH

STATE
DoJ/OSI

CONFIDENTIAL

Page 1

CONFIDENTIAL

THE SEIMAS TO REMOVE HIS IMMUNITY.

3. (C) BUTKEVICIUS HAS A FAIRLY CHECKERED REPUTATION. WHILE CHARGES WERE NEVER BROUGHT AGAINST HIM, AS DEFENSE MINISTER IN 1991-93 HE WAS ACCUSED OF TAKING BRIBES IN CONNECTION WITH WEAPONS PURCHASES FOR THE MINISTRY FROM RUSSIA. DURING THE FALL 1996 ELECTIONS, HE WAS SUSPECTED OF BRIBING AND/OR MANIPULATING VOTERS IN A HIGHLY CONTESTED VILNIUS CONSTITUENCY -- HIS UNSUCCESSFUL OPPONENT IN THE SECOND ROUND OF POLLING WAS SEIMAS FIRST DEPUTY CHAIRMAN KUBILIUS. WHILE BUTKEVICIUS' VERSION OF THE OTHER DAY'S EVENTS (THAT THE USD 15,000 WAS A PERSONAL LOAN) SEEMS IMPLAUSIBLE, WE HAVE NO INFORMATION TO EITHER CONFIRM OR REFUTE THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL'S ASSERTIONS.

4. (C) FOR HIS PART, PEDNYCIA HAS TAKEN THE UNUSUAL STEP OF MAKING ALL OF HIS CHARGES IN THE PRESENCE OF THE MEDIA. CORRUPTION IS A NATIONAL PROBLEM HERE; PERPETRATORS RANGE FROM THE LOWEST RANKS OF THE TRAFFIC AND BORDER POLICE TO SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. IF PEDNYCIA SUCCEEDS IN INDICTING BUTKEVICIUS, HE WILL HAVE CAUGHT THE BIGGEST FISH TO DATE (FOR THIS GOVERNMENT) IN THE CAMPAIGN TO COMBAT CORRUPTION. PEDNYCIA, APPOINTED TO BE PROSECUTOR GENERAL LAST FEBRUARY, HAS ALREADY PROVEN HIS SKILLS AND SCORED SOME IMPORTANT SUCCESSES (SUCH AS FINALIZING THE CASE OF ALLEGED WAR CRIMINAL **ALEKSANDRAS LILEIKIS** FOR PROSECUTION) BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT HE HAS TAKEN HIS EFFORTS TO THE PUBLIC.

COMMENT

5. (C) AS DOMESTIC POLITICAL THEATER THIS IS AT BEST A ONE-ACT PLAY. IT IS BEING PLAYED UP BY THE MEDIA AS A NATIONAL SCANDAL; CONSPIRACY THEORISTS ARE INTRIGUED BY THE "AMERICAN ANGLE" THROUGH THE LARGE DEBT OWED TO MOBIL. HOWEVER, THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL HAS PUT HIS REPUTATION ON THE LINE IN TRYING TO BRING CHARGES AGAINST A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT. IF BUTKEVICIUS IS CONVICTED, PEDNYCIA WILL HAVE DEALT A MAJOR BLOW TO CORRUPTION. IF THE CASE FAILS TO STICK, THOUGH, PEDNYCIA MAY BE FORCED TO RESIGN. AND AS THE PERSON MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING PROGRESS IN CASES AGAINST ALLEGED HOLOCAUST PERPETRATORS, HIS LOSS COULD PROVE A SETBACK FOR SUCH CASES IN THE FUTURE.
STEPANCHUK

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

CONFIDENTIAL