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DOCUMENT_ID: 178952685
DOCNO: 000507
PRODUCER: BERN
SOURCE: STATE
DOCTYPE: IN
DOR: 19980206
TOR: 143042
DOCPREC: P
ORIGDATE: 199802061621
MHFNO: 98 0457605
DOCCLASS: U

HEADER

PP RUEAIIB
DE RUEHSW #0507 0371621
ZNR UUUUU ZOC STATE ZZH
MSI0711
PP RUEHC
DE RUEHSW #0507/01 0371621
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 061621Z FEB 98
FM AMEMBASSY BERN
TO RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHIA/USIA WASHDC PRIORITY 4199
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5509
RUEATRS/DEPTTREAS WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1030
RUEHOL/AMEMBASSY BONN 2620
RUEHLI/AMEMBASSY LISBON 0517
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 2513
RUEHRL/USOFFICE BERLIN 0062
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0158
BT

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SOURCE METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2001 2007

CONTROLS

UNCLAS BERN 000507

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USIA FOR R/MR, AR, I/RW, I/GEU, I/GWEU, WEU (DENIG)
SECSTATE FOR E U/S EIZENSTAT, EUR/DAS WAYNE, IO/P, EUR/PPA,
EUR/AGS (VAN HEUVEN), ARA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TEXT

TAGS: KNAR
COMBINE: COMPLETE

SUBJECT: "MEDIA REACTION" NAZI GOLD/HOLOCAUST ASSETS

SUMMARY: THE FOLLOWING TEXT IS A SELECTION OF NEWSPAPER ARTICLES
THAT HAVE APPEARED THE PAST TWO WEEKS ON SWISS "NAZI GOLD,"
DORMANT SWISS BANK ACCOUNTS OF HOLOCAUST VICTIMS, AND SWISS
REFUGEE CAMPS DURING WWII:

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
2000

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BEGIN EXCERPTS:

1. MEDIATOR IN THE HOLOCAUST DEBATE

AS A SWISS AND HONORARY VICE PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS, GERHART M. RIEGNER WOULD BE A PERFECT MEDIATOR IN THE CURRENT CONTROVERSY. HOWEVER, NO FEDERAL COUNCILOR HAS EVER ASKED HIS OPINION.

ACCORDING TO RIEGNER, THE SWISS LABOR CAMPS WERE NO VACATION CAMPS, BUT THE LIVES OF THESE REFUGEES WERE RESCUED. EVEN JEWISH PEOPLE HERE IN SWITZERLAND DO NOT APPROVE OF THE COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS EDGAR BRONFMAN. HOWEVER, RIEGNER BELIEVES THAT THE CURRENT SITUATION IS MORE A CONFLICT BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND THE U.S. BECAUSE TWO DIFFERENT POLITICAL CULTURES HAVE CONFRONTED EACH OTHER. THE U.S. POLITICAL CULTURE IS MORE AGGRESSIVE WHILE THE SWISS ONE IS MORE AIMED AT CONSENSUS, WHICH CAUSES MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

RIEGER STATED THAT THE SWISS BANKS HAVE PUBLISHED A LIST OF DORMANT ACCOUNT OWNERS, BUT IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT HAPPENED WITH THE BAGS OF VALUABLE OBJECTS JEWS DEPOSITED IN SWISS BANK SAFES DURING THE THIRD REICH. IN ADDITION, THERE IS THE GOLD THE NAZIS BROUGHT TO SWITZERLAND. PART OF IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN TAKEN FROM VICTIMS. EVEN THOUGH IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS FROM THE GERMAN REICHSBANK ARE MISSING, FIRST INVESTIGATIONS MADE BY EIZENSTAT AND THE BERGIER COMMISSION LEAD IN THIS DIRECTION. SHOULD THERE BE EVIDENCE FOR THESE ASSUMPTIONS, THE QUESTION WHETHER THE WASHINGTON AGREEMENT OF 1946 IS BASED ON THE RIGHT FIGURES IS JUSTIFIED. THEREFORE, ONE CANNOT SAY THAT THIS AGREEMENT IS NOT RENEGOTIABLE.

ACCORDING TO RIEGNER, BOTH SIDES SHOULD BE SILENT FOR THE NEXT THREE MONTHS AND THOROUGHLY REVIEW THE RELEVANT INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS. IT MIGHT BE THAT A GLOBAL SETTLEMENT WILL SERVE THE PURPOSE OF ALL PARTIES INVOLVED.
(TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/20)

2. SPECIAL FUND FOR HOLOCAUST VICTIMS

THE SPECIAL FUND FOR HOLOCAUST VICTIMS IS MEETING IN KLOTEN RIGHT NOW. MORE THAN SFR. 200 MILLION REMAIN TO BE DISTRIBUTED. THE LARGE SWISS BANKS, COMPANIES, AND THE NATIONAL BANK HAVE CONTRIBUTED SFR. 273 MILLION TO THE FUND. SO FAR, SFR. 15 MILLION FOR JEWISH HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AND SFR. 2 MILLION FOR NON-JEWISH VICTIMS - MAINLY IN EASTERN EUROPE - HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED. THE "COMPENSATION MONEY" IS DISTRIBUTED IN SMALL AMOUNTS, ABOUT \$400 PER INDIVIDUAL. GYPSIES IN SWITZERLAND, GERMANY, AND AUSTRIA WILL SOON RECEIVE MONEY FROM THE FUND. THE FUND MUST NOW DECIDE HOW THE REMAINING SFR. 200 MILLION SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED. THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS HAS REQUESTED THAT THE MONEY BE RELEASED IMMEDIATELY.
(BERNER ZEITUNG, 1/21)

3. SWISS REFUGEE CAMPS

A FORMER INTERNEE OF SEVERAL SWISS REFUGEE CAMPS DURING WORLD WAR

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II HAS REJECTED CRITICISM FROM THE SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTERS WHICH CLAIMED THAT THE CAMPS DENIGRATED HUMAN DIGNITY. IN THE "NEW YORK TIMES," THE NEWSPAPER WHICH HAS HARSHLY CRITICIZED SWITZERLAND IN THE LAST COUPLE OF MONTHS, THE INTERNEE EXPRESSED GRATITUDE TOWARD THE SWISS PEOPLE. A REPORT BY THE WIESENTHAL CENTER HAS RECENTLY PROVOKED HEADLINES WHEN IT STATED THAT JEWISH REFUGEES WERE HELD LIKE SLAVES BEHIND BARBED WIRES AND HAD TO PERFORM FORCED LABOR. BUSINESS CONSULTANT HANS EPHRAIMSON-ABT WROTE THAT THE LABOR IN THE CAMPS WAS NOT EXTREMELY HARD AND THEY WERE TREATED CORRECTLY.
(BASLER ZEITUNG, 1/21)

4. COMPARISON TO CONCENTRATION CAMPS CANNOT BE MADE

ACCORDING TO PROFESSOR ANDRE LASSERRE, ONE OF THE MOST RENOWNED EXPERTS ON REFUGEE CAMPS IN SWITZERLAND, THERE WAS NO ALTERNATIVE TO HAVING HEALTHY REFUGEES DO COMMUNITY SERVICE BECAUSE OF THE DOMESTIC SITUATION. HOWEVER, ONLY A MINORITY OF THE REFUGEES WERE SHELTERED IN LABOR CAMPS. LASSERE DESCRIBED THE PROBLEMS OF THE REFUGEES, THE SWISS AUTHORITIES, AND THE CAMPS DIRECTORS. UNTIL 1939, REFUGEES IMMIGRATING TO SWITZERLAND WERE ABLE TO MOVE FREELY AND EITHER LIVE OFF THEIR SAVINGS OR BE SUPPORTED BY PRIVATE CITIZENS. THE BORDERS CLOSED WHEN THE WAR BROKE OUT AND EMIGRATION WAS MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT. THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF MOST REFUGEES DRIED UP AND THE JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS COLLAPSED UNDER THE FINANCIAL BURDEN. THESE ORGANIZATIONS ASKED THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES TO ESTABLISH THE FIRST REFUGEE CAMPS IN THE SPRING OF 1940. HOWEVER, THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES CONTINUED TO INCREASE. IN JUNE OF 1942, 9,600 REFUGEES WERE REGISTERED; BY DECEMBER, 26,000 HAD BEEN REGISTERED. THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES REACHED A PEAK IN MAY, 1945, AT 57,000. NOT TO MENTION THE 40,000 MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO LIVED IN SWISS MILITARY CAMPS. THESE FIGURES TELL EVERYTHING ABOUT THE SITUATION. ACCORDING TO A STATISTIC FROM APRIL 1944, 25,174 REFUGEES FOUND SHELTER IN SWITZERLAND, OF WHICH 2,990 PEOPLE WERE IN QUARANTINE OR RECEPTION CAMPS, 4,041 (16.1%) IN LABOR CAMPS, 5,206 IN HOMES, AND 5,329 IN HOTELS OR WITH RELATIVES.

FOR FINANCIAL REASONS AND OTHERWISE, IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO SIMPLY LET THE REFUGEES RESIDE WHERE THEY WANTED. MOST LIKELY, THERE WERE NOT EVEN ENOUGH APARTMENTS. IT IS TRUE THAT COMFORT IN MILITARY BARRACKS FOR THE MEN AND HOMES, WHICH WERE FORMER HOTELS, WAS INSUFFICIENT.

IN ORDER NOT TO DEMORALIZE THE REFUGEES COMPLETELY, HEALTHY ADULTS HAD TO BE EMPLOYED. THE SWISS POPULATION WAS ALSO FORCED TO MAKE WARTIME EFFORTS AND THEY WOULD NOT HAVE ACCEPTED THAT HEALTHY REFUGEES DID NOT CONTRIBUTE THEIR SHARE TO COMMUNITY SERVICES. ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY WOULD NOT HAVE ACCEPTED THE REFUGEES WORKING ON THE ECONOMY BECAUSE THE REMINDERS ABOUT THE YEARS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS WERE STILL FRESH IN THEIR MINDS.

HOWEVER, THE REFUGEES DID WORK WHICH DID NOT CORRESPOND WITH THEIR EDUCATION, TALENTS, OR EVEN PHYSICAL CAPACITIES. THE

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FEMALE REFUGEES WERE ENCOURAGED TO WORK AS MAIDS IN PRIVATE HOUSEHOLDS.

THE SIMPLE LIFE, AS WELL AS THE TOUGH AND MONOTONOUS WORK DID NOT MEAN THAT THE SWISS CAMPS IMITATED CONCENTRATION CAMPS. WHOEVER ASSERTS THIS KNOWS NEITHER THE SWISS CAMPS NOR THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS. IT WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE TO COMPARE THE LIFE IN THESE CAMPS WITH THE LIFE OF THE SWISS POPULATION WHOSE STANDARD WAS FAR LOWER THAN TODAY.

THE MAIN DIFFERENCE WITH THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS WAS THAT THE SWISS CAMPS WERE NOT CLOSED. PASTORS, PARLIAMENTARIANS, THEATER GROUPS, OR OTHER CULTURAL GROUPS ORGANIZED BY THE REFUGEES VISITED THESE CAMPS. THE REFUGEES COULD GO OUT IN THE EVENING AND COULD VISIT THEIR FAMILIES DURING THEIR VACATIONS. AN ADDITIONAL DIFFERENCE WAS THAT THE REFUGEES RECEIVED SOME MONEY FOR SERVICES RENDERED.

EVEN THOUGH THE DIRECTORS WANTED TO LIMIT CONTACTS TO PEOPLE OUTSIDE OF THE CAMPS, THE ARMY DID NOT CONTROL THE CAMPS. LATER ON, YOUNG REFUGEES WERE GRANTED ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITIES. THE WOMEN COULD CHOOSE PROFESSIONS OTHER THAN HOUSE WORK.

MANY JEWS DREAMED ABOUT THE U.S., SOME WANTED TO GO TO PALESTINE AND OTHERS WANTED TO RETURN TO THEIR HOME COUNTRIES. THE REFUGEES HAD THE RIGHT TO DETERMINE THEIR FUTURE. THIS WAS THE LAST GIFT FROM A COUNTRY PROUD OF ITS DEMOCRACY.
(DER BUND, 1/22)

5. DANGEROUS LISTLESSNESS

ONCE AGAIN, THE SWISS DIPLOMATS MUST REPAIR DAMAGES TO THE SWISS IMAGE. THE RENOWNED SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER IN LOS ANGELES REPORTED LAST WEEK THAT INTERNEES WERE HELD LIKE SLAVES IN SWISS REFUGEE CAMPS. IT IS MOST LIKELY THAT NEW YORK LAWYER ED FAGAN HAD ENCOURAGED TWO FORMER REFUGEES NOW LIVING IN THE U.S. TO TALK ABOUT THE SITUATION IN SWISS CAMPS ON BRITISH TV. BESIDES ED FAGAN, ELAN STEINBERG FROM THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS ALSO HAD HIS MANDATORY APPEARANCE IN THE NINE-MINUTE FILM. IT WAS SURPRISINGLY EASY FOR THE SWISS TO CONTROL THE DAMAGE IN THE U.S. MEDIA BECAUSE MOST RECOGNIZE THAT IT IS WRONG TO PLACE SWISS REFUGEE CAMPS NEXT TO GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS. WHOEVER JUXTAPOSES THE RELATIONSHIP PLAYS DOWN THE CONCENTRATION CAMP HORROR.

WITH THE SLAVE CAMP ALLEGATIONS, THE ATTACKS AGAINST COTTI, AND MEILI-UBS LAW SUIT, THE KEY PLAYERS IN THE U.S. WANT TO MAINTAIN PRESSURE ON SWITZERLAND. IF THE INTEREST OF THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA STARTS TO WAN, THE AMOUNT OF A POSSIBLE FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT WOULD ALSO DECREASE. FAGAN HOPES FOR A LARGE FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT FROM THE SWISS BANKS WHILE THE WJC DESIRES FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HOLOCAUST FUND. U.S. UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE STUART EIZENSTAT IS ALSO PLEADING FOR ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS. IF NOW THE WIESENTHAL CENTER

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ENTERS THE GAME, IT IS EVIDENCE OF COMPETITION AMONG THE JEWS. ON THE OTHER SIDE, THE NUMBER OF SWISS WILLING TO DISCUSS THE MOST RECENT ATTACKS HAS DECREASED. THE "BUND" HAS REGISTERED AN INCREASE IN ANTI-SEMITIC CALLS. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE FEDERAL COUNCIL FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO CALMLY FOLLOW THE PATH OF "TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND SOLIDARITY." AFTER THE UBS MERGER AND THE ANTICIPATED LOSS OF JOBS, THEY WOULD HAVE NO SCRUPLES IN AGREEING TO A FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT OF SEVERAL BILLIONS. IT IS MORE LIKELY THAT SETTLEMENTS WITH INDIVIDUAL OPPONENTS WILL BE REACHED. (EDITORIAL BY PATRICK FEUZ, DER BUND, 1/22)

6. EVERYDAY LIFE IN CAMPS

MILITARY OFFICIALS WERE IN CHARGE IN MOST SWISS REFUGEE CAMPS. SOME MADE CRUDE ANTI-SEMITIC STATEMENTS AGAINST INTERNEES. FORMER REFUGEE AND AUTHOR ALBERT HOCHHEIMER REPORTED IN AN ARTICLE IN 1971 HOW ONE CAMP COMMANDER PUT ASIDE FOOD TO FEED HIS PIGS WHILE INTERNEES WENT HUNGRY. HOCHHEIMER ALSO SAID THAT EVEN THOUGH THESE ACTIONS CANNOT BE EXCUSED, THERE WERE FAR WORSE THINGS AT THAT TIME. (DER BUND, 1/22)

7. SASSOLI LEAVES HOLOCAUST FUND

AFTER ALMOST FIVE MONTHS ON THE JOB, MARCO SASSOLI HAS RESIGNED AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SPECIAL FUND FOR HOLOCAUST VICTIMS. THE MANAGEMENT DID NOT COMMENT ON THE REASONS FOR SASSOLI'S RESIGNATION.

ONE POSSIBLE REASON FOR THE RESIGNATION - ITS PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT MAKES AN ANALYSIS DIFFICULT - MIGHT BE THAT THE CONCEPT AT THE BEGINNING AND THE REALITY OF THE FUND'S WORK HAVE DRIFTED APART. WHAT STARTED AS A HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITY HAS BECOME "TECHNICAL" DETAIL FINDING. IN ADDITION, IT IS DIFFICULT TO REMAIN FLEXIBLE AND AMBITIOUS UNDER STRONG INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE. THE PRESIDENT OF THE HOLOCAUST FUND ESTIMATES THAT THERE ARE ABOUT ONE MILLION HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS WORLDWIDE. ABOUT 88% OF THEM ARE JEWISH VICTIMS AND 12% NON-JEWS. SASSOLI WANTED TO DISCUSS WHO SHOULD BE CONSIDERED "IN NEED." IN ADDITION, SASSOLI, A FORMER DELEGATE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS, WANTED TO DEBATE A FAIR DISTRIBUTION FOR THE SFR. 275 MILLION.

IT IS SPECULATED THAT SASSOLI MET RESISTANCE FROM THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS AND THE WORLD JEWISH RESTITUTION ORGANIZATION, WHO REPRESENT THE JEWISH VICTIMS. THIS OPPOSITION COULD BE VIEWED AS A DIFFERENCE IN BACKGROUND, AS WELL AS SIMPLY PERSONAL ANTI-PATHY. FOR EXAMPLE, MARAM STERN, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE WJC AND DIRECTOR OF THE EUROPEAN BUREAU IN BRUSSELS, SAID THAT HE DOES NOT TALK WITH SASSOLI ANYMORE. (NEUE ZUERCHER ZEITUNG/TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/23)

8. SAFETY IN THE QUARRY

THE INTERNEES AT THE SWISS CAMP GORDOLA CALLED THE CAMP "NUOVO

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LOCARNO." MANY ACTIVISTS FROM THE GERMAN AND AUSTRIAN RESISTANCE AGAINST THE NAZIS MET IN GORDOLA. THEY BROKE UP STONES IN A QUARRY, MADE GRAVESTONES, AND CULTIVATED TOMATOES AND CORN. MANY OF THE ANTI-FASCIST INTELLECTUALS IN GORDOLA PLANNED A DEMOCRATIC GERMANY BETWEEN THE QUARRY AND THE WORK IN THE FIELDS. ONE OF THE INTERNEES STATED THAT THE DIRECTOR OF THE CAMP NEVER CRITICIZED THE MANY POLITICAL EVENTS THEY HELD.
(BERNER ZEITUNG, 1/23)

9. CALL TO JEWISH "VICTIMS" OF SWISS CAMPS
AS A REACTION TO THE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST SWITZERLAND FROM THE SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER, NATIONAL COUNCILOR FRANCOIS LOEB HAS ADDRESSED A CALL TO HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AND/OR THEIR RELATIVES TO WRITE TO HIM TELLING ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES DURING THAT TIME. THE CALL WAS ISSUED IN AN OPEN LETTER ADDRESSED TO ALL JEWISH REFUGEES WHO FOUND SHELTER IN SWITZERLAND. LOEB INTENDS TO SEND THEIR REPLIES TO THE WIESENTHAL CENTER IN LOS ANGELES.
JOURNAL DE GENEVE - 1/17-18/98

10. WJC VICE-PRESIDENT CALMS THINGS DOWN

GREVILLE JANNER, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS, CHARACTERIZED THE LATEST DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN FLAVIO COTTI AND THE WJC AS A "MISUNDERSTANDING." AT A MEETING IN BERN WITH SWISS PARLIAMENTARIANS, JANNER SAID THAT THE ISSUE SHOULD BE FILED AWAY NOW. ANOTHER WJC LEADER, ISRAEL SINGER, SAID AT A LECTURE LAST NIGHT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. GALLEN, THAT MORALS AND POLITICS ARE ONE. WHILE UNDERSTANDING SWISS NEUTRALITY DURING THE WAR, HE ALSO SAID THAT "IT WAS AS BAD AS COLLABORATIONISM." HOWEVER, HE BELIEVES THAT HIS RELATIONS WITH SWITZERLAND ARE GOOD AND HOPES FOR MORE UNDERSTANDING FOR THE SITUATION OF JEWISH PEOPLE IN NEED AROUND THE WORLD.
NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN - 1/22/98

11. AID TO HUNGARIAN JEWS

AFTER A MEETING YESTERDAY, THE BOARD OF THE SPECIAL FUND FOR HOLOCAUST VICTIMS DECIDED TO DISTRIBUTE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SFR. 12 MILLION TO JEWISH SURVIVORS IN HUNGARY. CONTRIBUTIONS OF ABOUT SFR. 600 EACH WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO ABOUT 20,000 NEEDY JEWISH PEOPLE. THE CONTINUATION OF THIS AID PROGRAM HAS BEEN APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE BY THE FUND'S BOARD. THE WORLD RESTITUTION ORGANIZATION WILL MAKE A REQUEST FOR AN ADDITIONAL SFR. 15 MILLION TO THAT EFFECT. REGARDING NON-JEWISH VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST, THE FUND'S BOARD APPROVED TWO OTHER REQUESTS. ONE FROM 44 JEWISH SURVIVORS AND ANOTHER FROM TWO MEN PERSECUTED FOR HOMOSEXUALITY. PAYMENTS FOR THESE TWO LATER CASES WILL BE MADE IN THE UPCOMING WEEKS.
JOURNAL DE GENEVE - 1/22/98

12. HITLER ASSASSIN MAURICE BAVAUD

SOCIALIST NATIONAL COUNCILORS, JOURNALISTS AND RELATIVES REQUEST THE POLITICAL AND MORAL REHABILITATION OF THE SWISS WOULD-BE HITLER ASSASSIN MAURICE BAVAUD. THE CITY OF NEUENBURG DOES NOT

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FEAR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE FAILED HITLER MURDERER AND WANTS TO HANG A MEMORIAL PLATE AT THE BIRTH PLACE OF THE THEOLOGY STUDENT WHO WAS EXECUTED IN BERLIN.

THE FEDERAL COUNCIL WILL DISCUSS THE ISSUE AT ONE OF THE NEXT WEEKLY MEETINGS. HOWEVER, BAVAUD'S CASE IS MORE DIFFICULT TO JUDGE FOR THE FEDERAL COUNCIL THAN THE ONE OF THE OFFICIALLY REHABILITATED ST. GALLEN POLICE COMMANDER PAUL GRUENINGER. BAVAUD'S MOTIVES ARE STILL CONTROVERSIAL. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES MIGHT HAVE AN INTEREST IN THE CURRENT SITUATION IF THE SWISS HITLER ASSASSIN IS BEING ACKNOWLEDGED IN SWITZERLAND AND ABROAD.
(DER BUND, 1/28)

13. U.S. FIRST LADY FILLS SWITZERLAND WITH ENTHUSIAM

HILLARY CLINTON GAVE A SPEECH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY STUDENTS AND RENOWNED GUESTS FROM THE BUSINESS WORLD, POLITICS, AND ART. SHE STRESSED THE COMMON GROUND BETWEEN THE U.S. AND SWITZERLAND. SHE PRAISED SWITZERLAND'S WILLINGNESS TO REAPPRAISE ITS ROLE DURING WORLD WAR II AND ITS SOLIDARITY WITH NAZI VICTIMS. HILLARY CLINTON STATED THE SAME DURING HER 45-MINUTE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT FLAVIO COTTI. COTTI DESCRIBED THE MEETING AS AN "INTERESTING POLITICAL DISCUSSION IN A PLEASANT ATMOSPHERE."
(FRONT PAGE SONNTAGSZEITUNG, 2/1)

14. SWITZERLAND SHOWED COURAGE

HILLARY CLINTON SAID DURING HER SPEECH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH THAT "SWITZERLAND EARNS PRAISE FOR ITS EFFORTS TO SEARCH FOR TRUTH AND TO DO JUSTICE." THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HUMANITARIAN FUND FOR NAZI VICTIMS WAS "A RIGHT STEP," SHE SAID. THE EFFORTS OF STUDENTS FROM THE BERN NEUFELD GYMNASIUM TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN FUND FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS WAS EXEMPLARY. THE FIRST LADY SAID THAT "AS TWO OF THE WORLD'S OLDEST DEMOCRACIES, SWITZERLAND AND THE U.S. HAVE PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS."
AT THE END OF THE IMPRESSIVE SPEECH, THE MOST POWERFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD THANKED SWITZERLAND FOR BEING A ROLE MODEL AND FOR EVERYTHING IT WILL DO IN THE FUTURE.
(SONNTAGSBlick, 2/1)

15. PRIVATE RECEPTION FOR BERN STUDENTS

THE YOUNG GUESTS OF U.S. AMBASSADOR MADELEINE KUNIN SAT ON THE BALCONY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH AND LISTENED TO THE 45-MINUTE SPEECH OF THE FIRST LADY. IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS, THEY WERE BROUGHT TO A LIMOUSINE WHICH DROVE THEM TO THE NOBLE HOTEL DOLDER, WHERE HILLARY OVERNIGHTED IN A 3-ROOM SUITE. THE SIX STUDENTS HAD A PRIVATE MEETING WITH THE FIRST LADY. HILLARY CLINTON WANTED TO KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT THE SOLIDARITY FUND FOR HOLOCAUST VICTIMS. THE ISRAELI ORGANIZATION "AMCHA" RECEIVED ABOUT SFR. 50,000 OF THE TOTAL SFR. 170,000. IN ADDITION, 14 ROMA VICTIMS IN LATVIA RECEIVE A MONTHLY PAYMENT OF

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SFR. 150.
(BERNER ZEITUNG, 2/2)

16. SLALOM OF THE GOOD INTENTION

OVER THE WEEKEND, AFTER THE NOTICEABLE HARDENING OF THE MOOD HERE (AND APPARENTLY ALSO AT THE BIG BANKS) FOLLOWING ACCUSATIONS CONCERNING THE LABOR CAMPS, THE AMERICAN SIDE HAS HANDED SWITZERLAND SOME FLOWERS ONCE AGAIN. BOTH THE WIFE OF THE PRESIDENT, HILLARY CLINTON, AND UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE, STUART EIZENSTAT, USED THE JOURNEY TO THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM TO CLARIFY THE RELATIONS WITH SWITZERLAND. ESPECIALLY INTERESTING IS THE EFFORT BY EIZENSTAT, WHO MANAGED TO "SLALOM" OVER THE SUBJECT "SANCTIONS TOWARDS SWISS BANKS." ON THE ONE HAND, HE SPOKE AGAINST SANCTIONS AS HE HAD BEFORE; ON THE OTHER HAND, HE DID NOT GO SO FAR AS TO ASK FOR THE CLEAR CESSATION OF THE THREATS.

ONE COULD ARGUE THAT EIZENSTAT SUPPORTS THE SANCTIONS THEMSELVES BY CALLING ONLY FOR A "PERMANENT MORATORIUM IN THE NEXT MONTHS" (A REMARKABLE DIPLOMATIC BALANCING ACT). HOWEVER, ONE HAS TO THINK ABOVE ALL, THAT THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE IS ON THE ONE HAND A REALIST, WHO KNOWS WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED BY THE FINANCE COMPTROLLERS OF THE AMERICAN STATES AND WHAT CANNOT BE ACHIEVED. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE IS ACTIVE (IN A PROBLEMATIC WAY FOR A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE) IN THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS WITH THE BANKS AND THEIR AMERICAN COUNTERPARTS AND IS THEREFORE UNDER PRESSURE TO PROTECT HIS OWN PRESTIGE. THE SWISS GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, DOES WELL NOT TO FOLLOW EIZENSTAT'S CALL TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROCESS.

ONE CAN POSITIVELY JUDGE EIZENSTAT'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE UNITED STATES ITSELF WILL START EXAMINATIONS ON THE WHEREABOUTS OF HOLOCAUST ERA ASSETS IN THE U.S. ALSO THE BANKING COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WANTS TO GO IN THAT DIRECTION. A RELATIVELY SIMPLE MEASURE IN THAT AREA WOULD BE - ANALOGOUS TO THE PROCEDURE OF THE SWISS BANKS - A PUBLICATION IN THE INTERNET OF THE NAMES OF PERSONS, WHOSE BANKING ASSETS, UNDER AMERICAN LAW, WERE TAKEN BY THE STATES. STRANGELY, THIS IDEA DID NOT OCCUR TO ANYBODY. HERE NEW YORK, WHICH LIKES PLAYING THOUGH WITH SWISS BANKS, COULD PROVE THE SINCERITY OF ITS MOTIVES AND COULD TAKE THE LEAD. AND HERE THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT MUST ASSUME A LEADING ROLE, IF IT EXPECTS TO JOIN THE DISCUSSION ON THE WHEREABOUTS OF SIMILAR ASSETS IN SWITZERLAND.
(EDITORIAL NEUE ZUERCHER ZEITUNG, 2/3)

17. EIZENSTAT TOWARDS THREATS OF SANCTIONS

"I URGENTLY SUGGEST AN END OF THREATS OF SANCTIONS AGAINST SWISS BANKS - MORE THAN MERELY POSTPONING THESE THREATS. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS MORATORIUM SHOULD BE PERMANENT IN THE NEXT MONTHS. SANCTIONS DO NOT ONLY DELAY THE PROGRESS ON A WAY TO FINAL CLOSURE, THEY ARE UNJUSTIFIED IN VIEW OF THE CONCRETE AND BRAVE STEPS WHICH SWITZERLAND AND THE SWISS BANKS HAVE TAKEN. WHAT WE NEED ABOVE ALL IS A TIME OUT FOR THREATS AND ACCUSATIONS, ON

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BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC, SO THAT THE SWISS PEOPLE AND THEIR INSTITUTIONS - PUBLIC AND PRIVATE - CAN CONTINUE TO DO THE RIGHT THING".

(NEUE ZUERCHER ZEITUNG, 2/3)

18. HILLARY IS BALM FOR SWITZERLAND

HILLARY CLINTON IS BALM FOR SWITZERLAND. BALM ON THE WOUNDS OF A NATION THAT HAD TO HEAR FOR MONTHS WHAT IT DID WRONG DURING WORLD WAR II. BALM ON A INSECURE COUNTRY THAT HAS BEEN THREATENED WITH BOYCOTTS AND DIRTY LOOKS FROM THE DREAM NATION AMERICA - ALMOST LIKE THE NAZIS DECADES AGO. OVER THE WEEKEND AND YESTERDAY IN DAVOS, THIS COUNTRY COULD LISTEN TO COMPLIMENTS AND ENCOURAGEMENT AND EVEN APPRECIATION FROM THE FIRST LADY. THIS PURELY POLITICALLY APPEARANCE OF THE U.S. PRESIDENT'S WIFE HAS, NOT ONLY DIPLOMATIC, BUT ALSO SYMBOLIC VALUE. THIS PROMINENT AND PLEASANT LADY FROM WASHINGTON EMBODIES THE U.S. SUPERPOWER AND THIS SUPERPOWER HAS REHABILITATED THE DWARF SWITZERLAND. A NICE FEELING NOT ONLY FOR THOSE WHO CONDEMN THE ATTACKS ON SWITZERLAND. BUT ALSO FOR THOSE WHO ARE READY TO THINK ABOUT SWITZERLAND'S ROLE IN THE PAST.

HOWEVER, IT IS NOT ONLY ABOUT FEELINGS. WHAT HILLARY CLINTON SAID IN SWITZERLAND IS POLICY AND, OTHER THAN AT THE TIME OF THE RELEASE OF THE EIZENSTAT REPORT, THE POLICY MOVED TOWARD THE SWISS SIDE. THE DANGER THAT SWITZERLAND, WHICH WAS CLUMSY AND NARROWMINDED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE DISCUSSION ABOUT ITS PAST, WILL BE PUT ON THE U.S. RED LIST (WITH UNFORESEEABLE CONSEQUENCES) SEEMS BANNED.

THE FIRST LADY'S WORDS WERE CHARMING, WELL BALANCED, AND DIPLOMATIC. ACCORDING TO THE U.S., IT WAS OBVIOUSLY TIME TO GIVE AN ALL-CLEAR TO SWITZERLAND. THIS SITUATION CORRESPONDS WITH THE FACT THAT SWITZERLAND'S ROLE DURING WORLD WAR II WAS NOT AN ISSUE AT THE DAVOS WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM. THIS GIVES SWITZERLAND THE OPPORTUNITY TO OBJECTIVELY DISCUSS THIS ISSUE. LET US RETURN TO THE FACTS AND PUT THEM ON THE TABLE. NOT ONLY DOES THE U.S. EXPECT THIS FROM US, BUT WE SHOULD EXPECT IT FROM OURSELVES. (EDITORIAL DIE SUEDOSTSCHWEIZ, 2/3)

19. FIRST PAYMENTS TO SHOAH SURVIVORS IN HUNGARY

ABOUT 2,000 SHOAH SURVIVORS IN HUNGARY HAVE RECEIVED \$400 EACH FROM THE SWISS SPECIAL FUND. IT IS EXPECTED THAT A TOTAL OF 20,000 JEWS IN HUNGARY WILL RECEIVE PAYMENTS FROM THE FUND. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH HUNGARIAN COMMUNITIES, GUSZTAV ZOLTAI, SAID ON TUESDAY THAT THE PAYMENTS STARTED LAST WEEK. CLAIMS HAVE TO BE REGISTERED BY THE END OF MAY.

(NEUE ZUERCHER ZEITUNG, 2/4)

20. HOLOCAUST VICTIMS

ACCORDING TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SPECIAL FUND FOR HOLOCAUST VICTIMS, ONLY PEOPLE IN NEED SHOULD BENEFIT FROM THE FUND; WELL-OFF PEOPLE SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH

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"HANDELSZEITUNG," ROLF BLOCH REJECTED REQUESTS FROM THE U.S. THAT WEALTHY HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS SHOULD RECEIVE PAYMENTS FROM THE FUND.

THE FUND CONSISTS CURRENTLY OF ABOUT SFR. 275 MILLION WHILE THE NUMBER OF VICTIMS WHO SURVIVED AMOUNTS TO MORE THAN ONE MILLION. SHOULD THE FUNDS BE DISTRIBUTED TO ALL VICTIS, EACH WOULD RECEIVE SFR. 275.

THEREFORE, ONLY THOSE WHO NEED SUPPORT WILL RECEIVE MONEY "I ASSUME THAT BETWEEN 200,000 AND 250,000PEOPLE WILL BE SUPPORTED," BLOCH SAID. A PESON WHO CLAIMS MONEY TO LIGHT HIS CIGAR IS TWICEIMMORAL BECAUSE HE DOES NOT ONLY THROWS AWAY THE MONEY, BUT HE TAKES IT AWAY FROM SOMEBODY WHO RELLY NEEDS IT, SAID BLOCH.

THE FAIR DISTRIUTION OF FUNDS TO HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS IN NEED IS CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE OF DISCUSSION AMONG THE MEMBES OF THE FUND, ACCORDING TO BLOCH. THE REGITRATION OF SURVIVORS IN NEED IS LESS OF A PROBLE THAN THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE MONEY. ACCORDINGTO BLOCH, THE NATIONAL BANK, BANKS, AND INSURNCE COMPANIES HAVE CONTRIBUTED A TOTAL OF SFR. 220 MILLION; ABOUT SFR. 55 MILLION HAS COME FROM OTHER COMPANIES.

BLOCH CONSIDERS THE PROPOSALS FROM JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS IN THE U.S. THAT SWITZERLAND SHOULD PAY A FLAT RATE TO HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AS "ALTERNATIVES WHICH COMPETE WITH THE FUND." FOR LEGAL REASONS, HE HAS DOUBTS ABOUT THE FEASIBILITY OF SUCH A PLAN.

BLOCH REJECTED NATIONAL COUNCILOR CHRISTOPH BLOCHER'S POSITION THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY LIES COMPLETELY WITH PRIVATE INDUSTRY. BLOCH SAID THAT BLOCHER FORGETS THAT THE GOVERNMENT MAKES POLICY AND REFERRED TO POLITICAL DECISIONS SUCH AS THE RESTRICTIVE POLICY TOWARD REFUGEES DURING WORLD WAR II OR THE "J" STAMP. ACCORDING TO BLOCH, "THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES HAVE TO ASSUME PART OF THE RESPONSIBILITY."
(BERNER ZEITUNG, 2/5)

21. HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS THANK SWITZERLAND

DOZENS OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD HAVE THANKED SWITZERLAND FOR SHELTER GRANTED DURING WORLD WAR II. ABOUT 100 PEOPLE ANSWERED NATIONAL COUNCILOR FRANCOIS LOEB'S CALL FOR EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS BY WEDNESDAY. LOEB ISSUED HIS CALL IN MID-JANUARY AS A REACTION TO REPEATED CRITICISM FROM JEWISH CIRCLES IN THE U.S. WHICH CLAIMED THAT SWITZERLAND TREATED THE REFUGEES AS "SLAVES." ACCORDING TO LOEB, MOST OF THE RESPONSES HAVE BEEN POSITIVE.
(TAGES-ANZEIGER, 2/5)

22. D'AMATO AGAINST UBS BUSINESS IN THE U.S.

ACCORDING TO U.S. SENATOR ALFONSE D'AMATO, CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE BANKING COMMITTEE, THE U.S. FEDERAL RESERVE SHOULD NOT ALLOW THE

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NEW SWISS BANK MERGER, UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND, TO DO BUSINESS IN THE U.S. AS LONG AS IT DOES NOT GIVE "REAL ANSWERS" TO HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AND DOES NOT "FULLY COOPERATE." SENATOR D'AMATO MADE THIS REQUEST IN A LETTER TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD ALAN GREENSPAN.

BASED ON A LAW OF 1978, THE FEDERAL RESERVE IS ABLE TO REFUSE A BUSINESS LICENSE IF A FOREIGN FINANCIAL INSTITUTE IS NOT IN THE POSITION TO ANSWER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT ITS BUSINESS. ACCORDING TO D'AMATO, UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND'S AND SWISS BANK CORPORATION'S HANDLING OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS, THE "MEILI AFFAIR," AND THE "LACK OF COOPERATION" POSE SUCH OPEN QUESTIONS.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO LARGE BANKS STATED ON THURSDAY EVENING THAT THEY ARE BEWILDERED BY D'AMATO'S MOST RECENT MOVE. CIRCLES CLOSE TO THE FEDERAL RESERVE, AS WELL AS AN ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING FOREIGN BANKS IN THE U.S. CONSIDER D'AMATO'S MOVE AS A POLITICAL MANEUVER.

D'AMATO'S PROPOSAL IS IN COMPLETE CONTRAST TO THE POSITION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE WHICH HAS RECENTLY PRAISED THE COOPERATION WITH SWITZERLAND AND HAS REJECTED SANCTIONS.
(FRONT PAGE BASLER ZEITUNG, NEUE ZUERCHER ZEITUNG, 2/6)

23. "SWITZERLAND HAS DONE VERY GOOD WORK"

U.S. AMBASSADOR MADELEINE KUNIN IS INTERESTED IN A GOOD RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. AND SWITZERLAND. ACCORDING TO AMBASSADOR KUNIN, HILLARY CLINTON'S VISIT TO SWITZERLAND IS A CLEAR SIGN OF HOW IMPORTANT THE U.S. CONSIDERS A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH SWITZERLAND.

WHEN AMBASSADOR KUNIN WAS ASKED HOW MUCH THE HOLOCAUST DEBATE HAS INFLUENCED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND THE U.S., SHE SAID THAT WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE BOYCOTT THREATS AGAINST SWISS BANKS, THE HOLOCAUST DEBATE HAS NOT HAD ANY ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES. EVEN THOUGH SWITZERLAND'S ROLE DURING WORLD WAR II HAS BEEN DISCUSSED INTENSIVELY IN THE U.S., IT DID NOT LEAD TO A GENERAL ANTISWISS ATMOSPHERE. IF THE BANKS ARE CRITICIZED, PEOPLE DO NOT MEAN THE WHOLE COUNTRY. AMBASSADOR KUNIN SAID THAT SHE WAS ABLE TO GIVE SOME SPEECHES IN THE U.S. AND WAS GLAD ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLAIN SWITZERLAND'S SITUATION.

SWITZERLAND HAS DONE VERY GOOD WORK IN THE LAST ONE AND A HALF YEARS BUT MOST AMERICANS DO NOT KNOW ABOUT IT.

THE VISIT OF HILLARY CLINTON AND SECRETARY OF STATE MADELEINE ALBRIGHT CLEARLY EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE FACT THAT HILLARY CLINTON DID NOT TRAVEL DIRECTLY TO DAVOS BUT VISITED SWITZERLAND FIRST IS EVIDENCE THAT SHE DID NOT COME ONLY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE IN DAVOS. HILLARY CLINTON WANTED TO SHOW HER RESPECT FOR SWITZERLAND AND THE MESSAGE WAS OBVIOUSLY WELL RECEIVED. ONE SWISS SAID THAT HE KNOWS NOW THAT SWITZERLAND IS STILL IMPORTANT FOR THE U.S.

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WHEN ASKED WHAT SHE WOULD PROPOSE TO THE BANKS WITH REGARD TO THE CLASS ACTION LAW SUITS, AMBASSADOR KUNIN SAID THAT SHE CANNOT GIVE ANY ADVICE BUT THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT DISCUSSIONS ARE TAKING PLACE. SOLUTIONS HAVE TO BE FOUND SOON AND THE PEOPLE SHOULD RECEIVE THE MONEY AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE. WITH REGARD TO THE LABOR CAMPS, SWITZERLAND HAS BEEN TREATED UNFAIRLY. ONE CANNOT COMPARE THEM TO CONCENTRATION CAMPS.
(INTERVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR KUNIN, CASH, 2/6)

24. SWISS JEWS TORN

FIRST, QUIET, THEN RATHER EMBARRASSED, THE 18,000 SWISS JEWISH IN SWITZERLAND HAVE LOST THEIR RESERVE. THEY ARE NOW ENRAGED. SIGI FEIGEL'S LATEST JOKE IS ILLUMINATING: "DO YOU KNOW WHY WE THANK MARTIN EBNER (A SWISS FINANCIER WHO MOVED HIS BANK FROM ONE CANTON TO ANOTHER TO AVOID PAYING TAXES)? BECAUSE HE IS NOT A JEW!" ALTHOUGH LAUGHING ABOUT IT, FEIGEL IS SOMEWHAT BITTER BECAUSE HE HAS ALWAYS FELT AS A "CONDITIONAL SWISS CITIZEN." HE IS TIRED OF ATTACKS SUCH AS "YOU, THE JEWS...!" LATELY, THINGS HAVE BEEN HAPPENING QUICKLY. FIRST, THERE WERE THE MINI-POLEMICS ON THE ISSUE OF THE ALLEGED BLUNDER MADE BY FLAVIO COTTI AND THE APOLOGY DEMANDED BY CERTAIN WJC MEMBERS. NOW COMES THE COMPARISON MADE BY THE SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER OF THE SWISS REFUGEE CAMPS WITH WWII CONCENTRATION CAMPS. AND THERE WAS ALSO THE EXORBITANT DEMAND MADE BY CHRISTOPH MEILI AND HIS LAWYER TO THE UBS.

"DURING ALL THIS, SWISS JEWS HAVE KEPT A LOW PROFILE DUE TO THEIR HISTORY - SWITZERLAND WAS THE LAST COUNTRY IN EUROPE TO GRANT THEM NATIONALITY IN LAST CENTURY - AND BECAUSE THEY ARE SWISS AND THEREFORE NOT WILLING TO BE IN THE HEADLINES. BUT THAT IS ALL CHANGING," SAID BRIGITTE SION, FROM THE INTER-COMMUNITY COORDINATION AGAINST ANTI SEMITISM AND DEFAMATION.

VOICES ARE RISING: FROM FRANCOIS LOEB, CALLING ON JEWS WHO FOUND REFUGE IN SWITZERLAND; TO THE MORE EMOTIONAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR STRONGLY ASKING SWISS JEWS NOT TO REMAIN SILENT; OR LIKE SIGI FEIGEL, WHO DID NOT HESITATE TO SAY THAT THE FEDERAL COUNCIL SHOULD STOP DEALING WITH THE WJC EVEN IF IT MEANS A BOYCOTT TO SWISS BANKS IN THE U.S. "SIX MONTHS AGO, THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES WOULD HAVE NOT BUDGED TO DEFEND THE SWISS POSITION BECAUSE IT WAS KNOWN THAT IN THIS COUNTRY THAT SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED WHICH DESERVED AN EXPLANATION," EXPLAINED MICHAEL WYLER, IN CHARGE OF COMMUNICATIONS AT THE FOUNDATION "FINANCIAL PLACE GENEVA." AND BECAUSE WITHOUT THE WJC AND ITS LOUD MOUTH ON THE WHOLE ISSUE OF MISSING JEWISH FUNDS, THE ISSUE WOULD HAVE BEEN FORGOTTEN. BUT THINGS HAVE CHANGED AND COMMISSIONS ARE AT WORK. HE EXPLAINED THAT "THE JEWS, JUST LIKE THE SWISS, HAVE A PORCUPINE MENTALITY: THEY ACCEPT INTERNAL DEBATE BY WITHDRAWING INTO THEMSELVES WHEN THEY FEEL ATTACKED FROM OUTSIDE. NOW, ONE IS TRYING TO DO THE LAUNDRY IN PUBLIC, AND THAT IS DIFFICULT."

THE APPEASING ROLE PLAYED BY THE SWISS FEDERATION OF JEWISH COMMUNITIES IS A DELICATE ONE. "KEEPING QUIET RISKS THAT PEOPLE

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WILL CHOOSE NOT TO TALK ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST WHICH WOULD JEOPARDIZE THE RESEARCH FOR THE TRUTH," SAID MICHAEL KOHN, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN JC.
L'HEBDO - 1/22/98

25. JEWISH FUNDS AT DAVOS

ON THE FRINGES OF THE OFFICIAL DAVOS SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM, WHICH WILL FOCUS ON THE ASIAN CRISIS, THE SWISS DELEGATION WILL ALSO HAVE BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS AND DISCUSS THE ISSUE OF JEWISH FUNDS. FEDERAL COUNCILORS FLAVIO COTTI AND KASPAR VILLIGER WILL MEET WITH HANS VAN DEN BROEK, JACQUES SANTER, AND STUART EIZENSTAT. ALTHOUGH HAVING CRITICIZED SWITZERLAND FOR ITS ROLE AS BANKER OF THE NAZIS, EIZENSTAT IS NOW IN FAVOR OF THE DIALOGUE AND HAS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS PRAISED SWISS EFFORTS TO SHED MORE LIGHT ON THE ISSUES AROUND WWII.
NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN/JOURNAL DE GENEVE - 1/26/98

26. FUNDS AGAINST "SOLIDARITY FUND"

DURING A SWISS GERMAN TV PROGRAM ON SATURDAY, NATIONAL COUNCILOR CHRISTOPH BLOCHER SAID THAT HE HAS RECEIVED PLEDGES FOR ABOUT SFR. 450 MILLION IN DONATIONS TO THE "GIFT FOR THE '98 SWISS JUBILEE" THAT HE LAUNCHED IN RESPONSE TO THE FEDERAL COUNCIL'S "SOLIDARITY FUND." BY THE END OF JANUARY, THE ZURICH PARLIAMENTARIAN WILL PRESENT A DEFINITE BALANCE OF THE DONATIONS.
NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN - 1/26/98

27. NOTHING TO DO WITH NAZI CAMPS

LOUIS SIDLER AND RENQ LEVI SPENT TIME IN INTERNMENT CAMPS IN SWITZERLAND DURING WWII. SIDLER WAS A COOK'S ASSISTANT AT THE CAMP IN PRLES (BERNER JURA). HE SAID HE WAS HAPPY TO BRING FORTH WITNESS AGAINST ACCUSATIONS THAT THE REFUGEES WERE MISTREATED IN SWISS CAMPS. "REFUGEES RECEIVED THE SAME AMOUNT OF FOOD THAT SWISS PEOPLE, WHO WERE ALSO UNDER RATIONING, DID," SAID SIDLER. EVERY NOW AND THEN, HE WAS ABLE TO MAKE A SMALL CAKE TO CELEBRATE SOMEONE'S BIRTHDAY AS INSTRUCTED. LEVI SPENT FOUR DAYS IN AN ENTRY PRISON BEFORE BEING SENT TO THE CAMP FOR POLISH SOLDIERS IN BQREN AN DER AARE. "COMPARING SWISS CAMPS WITH NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMPS IS ABSOLUTELY DISGUSTING," HE SAID.
LE MATIN - 1/26/98

28. LOOKING FOR EVIDENCE AT THE FEDERAL ARCHIVES

U.S. SENATOR ALFONSE D'AMATO HAS ONCE AGAIN ATTACKED SWITZERLAND, THIS TIME SHOWING AS EVIDENCE A LETTER DATED FEBRUARY 16, 1945. ACCORDING TO SWISS INTELLIGENCE, THE THEN DIRECTOR OF THE SWISS REAL ESTATE CREDIT, DR. WILHELM SCHULTHESS TRANSFERRED DUBIOUS ASSETS FROM GERMANY TO SWITZERLAND, ALLEGEDLY BELONGING TO PERSONS CLOSE TO THE NAZI REGIME. TWO EXPERTS FROM THE FEDERAL ARCHIVES ARE TRYING TO INVESTIGATE WHAT LIES BEHIND THE DOCUMENT WHICH WAS PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED.
NZZ - 1/26/98

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29. LOEB'S CALL WIDELY HEARD

ABOUT SIXTY PEOPLE RESPONDED TO THE CALL ISSUED BY NATIONAL COUNCILOR FRANOIS LOEB (FDP/BE) TO COME FORWARD WITH THEIR IMPRESSIONS OF SWISS INTERNMENT CAMPS DURING WWII. THE RESPONSES CLEARLY REJECT THE ACCUSATIONS MADE AGAINST SWITZERLAND COMPARING THE CAMPS WITH NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMPS. A FRENCH MAN SAID: "IN GERMANY, THERE WERE DEATH CAMPS. IN SWITZERLAND, THERE WERE HOPE CAMPS."

JOURNAL DE GENEVE - 1/27/98

30. EIZENSTAT DEFENDS SWITZERLAND

AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN DAVOS, UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE STUART EIZENSTAT CHARACTERIZED AS COUNTERPRODUCTIVE THE BOYCOTT THREATS AGAINST SWISS BANKS IN THE U.S. SWITZERLAND HAS TAKEN THE LEAD IN THE REVISION OF ITS PAST, HE SAID. HE ALSO SAID THAT DURING THE WEEKEND HE WILL MEET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF SWISS BANKS TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE OF DORMANT ACCOUNTS IN VIEW OF THE MARCH 31 DEADLINE FOR THE MORATORIUM ON SANCTIONS TO SWISS BANKS IN THE U.S. EIZENSTAT SAID HE WAS HOPEFUL THAT THE COLLECTIVE LEGAL ACTIONS IN THE U.S. AGAINST SWITZERLAND FIND A QUICK AND FAIR CONCLUSION. ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC, IT IS NECESSARY TO STOP THE THREATS AND THE SCOLDING, HE ADDED. HE DID NOT WANT TO COMMENT, HOWEVER, ON THE DISCUSSIONS SOME SWISS BANKS ARE HOLDING WITH CLAIMANTS FOR A GLOBAL SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM. THE UNDER SECRETARY SAID THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS SATISFIED WITH THE DIALOGUE ESTABLISHED WITH THE SWISS GOVERNMENT BUT HE FEARS THAT MANY SWISS HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THEIR COUNTRY IS BEING ARBITRARILY ATTACKED. HE ALSO DEFENDED FEDERAL COUNCILOR FLAVIO COTTI TRYING TO CLOSE THE INCIDENT CONCERNING THE STATEMENT MADE BY THE FEDERAL COUNCILOR WHICH BROUGHT ABOUT HARSH CRITICISM FROM THE WJC. CONCERNING SWISS POLICIES ON REFUGEES DURING THE WAR, EIZENSTAT SAID THAT IT WAS MUCH MORE COMPLEX THAN WHAT WAS PRESENTED BY THE SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER IN LOS ANGELES. IT ALSO INCLUDES THE "J" STAMPED ON PASSPORTS CARRIED BY GERMAN JEWS, THE REFUSAL TO ACCEPT THOUSANDS OF REFUGEES BUT ALSO THE FACT THAT THOUSANDS OF OTHERS FOUND SHELTER IN SWITZERLAND.

CORRIERE DEL TICINO - 1/31/98

31. WIESENTHAL DISAVOWS STUDY ON REFUGEES

"ANY COMPARISON BETWEEN LABOR CAMPS IN SWITZERLAND DURING WWII AND THE NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMPS RUNS LAMELY," SAID SIMON WIESENTHAL, DIRECTOR OF THE VIENNA BASED CENTER FOR JEWISH DOCUMENTATION, CONCERNING THE STUDY RECENTLY PUBLISHED BY THE SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER IN LOS ANGELES ABOUT CAMPS IN SWITZERLAND. THE STUDY WAS USED AS BASIS FOR A DOCUMENTARY FILM BROADCAST BY THE BRITISH PRIVATE TV "CHANNEL 4." ACCORDING TO WIESENTHAL, THE ISSUE SHOULD HAVE BEEN CONFRONTED IN ANOTHER MANNER BECAUSE, IN FACT, THE MAJORITY OF THOSE INTERNED IN SWITZERLAND DID NOT HAVE BAD EXPERIENCES. THE DOCUMENTARY SHOULD HAVE ALSO PRESENTED THOSE CASES IN WHICH THE CAMP LEADERS SHOWED UNDERSTANDING AND COMPASSION, SAID WIESENTHAL. FOR THE WORLD FAMOUS NAZI HUNTER, THE DIFFERENT EVALUATIONS DEPEND ON A PROBLEM

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OF APPROACH. HE SAID THAT, IN FACT, SWISS POLICIES ON REFUGEES DO HAVE THEIR DARK SIDES, BUT HE ALSO NOTED THAT DURING THE WAR SWITZERLAND WAS IN REAL DANGER.
CORRIERE DEL TICINO - LE MATIN - 1/31/98

32. IN DAVOS POSITIVE MESSAGES FOR SWITZERLAND

AT THE DAVOS WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM, SWITZERLAND RECEIVED TWO ENCOURAGING MESSAGES. HANS VAN DEN BROEK, EUROPEAN COMMISSIONER EXPRESSED OPTIMISM CONCERNING BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH SWITZERLAND. HE BELIEVES THAT THE WHOLE ISSUE WILL BE CONCLUDED BY THE END OF THE YEAR, ONCE THE TRANSPORTATION ISSUE IS APPROVED BY THE EU MEMBERS. UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE STUART EIZENSTAT ALSO GAVE SWITZERLAND GOOD GRADES FOR ITS EFFORTS TO CLARIFY ITS PAST. HE EVEN SAID THAT SWITZERLAND IS A MODEL STUDENT THAT OTHER COUNTRIES SHOULD IMITATE. EIZENSTAT ALSO HOPES THAT THE MORATORIUM AGAINST SANCTIONS IS MADE PERMANENT, ARGUING THAT SANCTIONS AGAINST SWISS BANKS IN THE U.S. WOULD ONLY JEOPARDIZE THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN BERN AND WASHINGTON. THOMAS BORER, HEAD OF THE SWISS TASK FORCE WAS SAID TO BE "VERY PLEASED WITH THE CONSTRUCTIVE REMARKS" MADE BY EIZENSTAT.
JOURNAL DE GENEVE - LE MATIN - 1/31-2/1/98

33. SINGER POSTPONES MEETING WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS

THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE WJC, ISRAEL SINGER, HAS POSTPONED HIS MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARIAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 10 IN BERN. IT WAS SAID YESTERDAY AT THE WJC HEADQUARTERS THAT THE CANCELLATION DID NOT HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH SWITZERLAND AND NEITHER WAS THERE ANY POLITICAL MOTIVATION. THE CANCELLATION WAS DUE TO A DATE CONFLICT AND SINGER WILL COME TO SWITZERLAND AT A LATER DATE, IT WAS SAID. ACCORDING TO THE "ISRAELITISCHES WOCHENBLATT," WJC OFFICIALS MUST TRAVEL TO SOUTH AMERICA WHERE JEWISH COMMUNITIES FEEL NEGLECTED. NATIONAL COUNCILOR JACQUES-SIMON EGGLY, WHOSE IDEA IT WAS TO EXTEND THE INVITATION IN ORDER TO CREATE DIALOGUES ON SWITZERLAND'S PAST, REGRETS THAT THE MEETING WAS POSTPONED. "IF A SOLUTION IS TO BE FOUND, THEN THE SWISS PEOPLE MUST ALSO BE LISTENED TO," HE SAID.
NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN - 2/2/98

34. REPORT ON SWISS CAMPS CONTAINS MISTAKES

IT TOOK AMERICAN HISTORIAN ALAN MORRIS SCHOM THREE DAYS TO WRITE THE REPORT ON SWISS INTERNMENT CAMPS BETWEEN 1940-1944. THE VERY CRITICAL REPORT IS 12 PAGES LONG AND DOES NOT MENTION SOURCES OR REFERENCES. IT JUST GIVES A NOT VERY SURPRISING BIBLIOGRAPHY. HE DEFENDS HIMSELF BY SAYING THAT HE DID NOT HAVE HIS CARTONS WITH NOTES WHEN MARVIN HIER, A SENIOR OFFICIAL AT THE LA SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER ASKED HIM URGENTLY FOR THIS REPORT TO PRESENT IT AT A CONFERENCE IN LA. SCHOM, AN UNKNOWN HISTORIAN, AGREED, WRONGLY. THE RESULT IS A DOCUMENT CONSIDERED BY ALL SPECIALISTS AS SUPERFICIAL, MEDIOCRE AND, WORST YET, UNWORTHY OF A HISTORIAN. HOWEVER, DESPITE ITS WEAKNESS AND THE OBVIOUS MISTAKES, HIS ACCUSATIONS WERE TAKEN BY THE MEDIA AS REVELATIONS. THE EFFECT

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WAS JUST STARTLING. MARVIN HIER DOES NOT STOP FROM STATING THAT "THIS IS PERHAPS MUCH MORE SERIOUS THAN THE ISSUE OF NAZI GOLD." WHAT IS THE SWISS POINT OF VIEW? THREE HISTORIANS WERE BRIEFLY CITED TO CONFIRM THE EXISTENCE OF THE CAMPS AND THE HARSH LIVING CONDITIONS. AS STATED BY ALFRED HQSLER, AUTHOR OF THE FAMOUS BOOK "THE BOAT IS FULL," THE REALITY IN REFUGEE CAMPS WAS FAR FROM BEING NICE. THERE WERE ABUSES AND INHUMANE MEASURES, SUCH AS SEPARATING FAMILIES. HOWEVER, THERE WAS NO DISCRIMINATION AS SO WIDELY MENTIONED BY THOSE NOW ACCUSING SWITZERLAND. FOLLOWING THE BROADCAST OF THE DOCUMENTARY ON THE BRITISH CHANNEL 4, THE SWISS TASK FORCE REACTED STRONGLY, POINTING OUT WHAT WAS NOT EXACT IN THE REPORT. BUT IT DID NOT PREVENT THE REPORT FROM BEING PUBLISHED. AGAIN, THOMAS BORER, HEAD OF THE TASK FORCE, REACTED IN A STRONGER TONE IN A LETTER PUBLISHED IN LA TIMES. "SCHOM'S ACCUSATIONS ARE INSULTING, DISHONEST AND CAN ONLY BE TREATED WITH UTMOST CONTEMPT."

SCHOM'S REPORT CONTAINS MISTAKES CONCERNING THE DETAILS AND STATEMENTS THAT ARE CONTRARY TO THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY SWISS HISTORIANS. WHEN WE CONTACTED SCHOM TO DISCUSS HIS SOURCES IN MORE DETAIL, HE SAID HE WAS NOT TALKING TO THE MEDIA ANY LONGER, FEELING HE WAS A VICTIM OF "PROVOCATION AGENTS."

35. JEWISH FUNDS SLIP OUT OF DAVOS

AT THE DAVOS WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM, PROFESSOR JEAN-FRANCOIS BERGIER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE STUART EIZENSTAT ON THE ISSUE OF JEWISH FUNDS. HOWEVER, THIS ISSUE WAS NOT OF IMPORTANCE FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING. THE TWO MEN CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THEY FACE THE SAME PROBLEMS REGARDING THE PUBLICATION OF THEIR RESPECTIVE REPORTS. RESEARCHERS CONTINUE FINDING NEW ELEMENTS AND IT IS DIFFICULT TO MAKE A COHERENT DOCUMENT WITH THE INFORMATION FOUND. BERGIER SAID THAT THE COMMISSION'S REPORT ON NAZI GOLD WILL MOST PROBABLY BE PUBLISHED BEFORE EASTER. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN DAVOS, EIZENSTAT SAID THAT HIS COMMISSION'S REPORT ON THE ROLE OF OTHER NEUTRAL COUNTRIES DURING THE WAR SHOULD BE PUBLISHED THIS SPRING. THE ISSUE OF STOLEN ARTWORK IS ALSO PART OF THE RESEARCH FOR THE BERGIER COMMISSION, BUT BERGIER BELIEVES THAT THE TOPIC DESERVES BEING HANDLED ON A WIDER SCALE. THE ISSUE OF REFUGEES IN SWITZERLAND DURING WWII WILL BE HANDLED IN AN INTERMEDIARY REPORT IN THE FALL.

NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN - 2/98

36. SEARCHING FOR THE TRUTH ON CAMPS

ACCORDING TO AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT FROM THE WAR YEARS, REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS SPENT 10,500,000 DAYS IN CIVIL LABOR CAMPS IN SWITZERLAND BETWEEN 1940-1947. VEHEMENTLY REJECTING THE COMPARISON DRAWN BY THE LA-BASED SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER AND THE BRITISH TV CHANNEL 4, NATIONAL COUNCILOR FRANCOIS LOEB HAS CALLED ON WITNESSES TO RELATE THEIR EXPERIENCES. THE LETTERS RECEIVED SHOW THAT EACH LABOR CAMP IN ITSELF IS A PARTICULAR CASE. ALTHOUGH SOME OF THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE COME FORWARD AS WITNESSES CLAIM THAT LIFE IN SOME OF THE CAMPS WAS HARSH, DUE PRIMARILY TO THE INHUMANE ATTITUDE OF SOME OF THE CAMP LEADERS, MOST OF THEM

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ARE GRATEFUL FOR HAVING BEEN GIVEN "A SECOND LIFE." "WITHOUT THE HELP FROM SWITZERLAND, MY ASHES WOULD NOW BE TOGETHER WITH THOSE OF GRANDMOTHER IN AUSCHWITZ," SAID ONE WITNESS. ONE OF THE INHUMANE CAMP LEADERS WAS DEMOTED AT THE END OF THE WAR AND SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR HAVING MADE MONEY RESELLING FOOD INTENDED FOR THE REFUGEES. IN SOME OTHER CASES, LABOR WAS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT FOR INTELLECTUALS WHO WERE NOT USED TO IT. DESPITE THAT, RELATED ANOTHER FORMER REFUGEE, THEY HAD THEIR LEISURE TIME AND EVEN TRIED TO MAKE THEIR MEAGER PAY (SFR. 7.50 A WEEK) STRETCH BY PLAYING AT THE CASINO IN LUGANO. "WE FOUND IT NORMAL AND USEFUL TO WORK," SAID ANOTHER. "WHAT ELSE COULD WE HAVE DONE? JUST WATCH THE SWISS BENDING THEIR BACKS IN THE FIELDS?" ANOTHER WITNESS, WHO WAS GIVEN THE POSSIBILITY OF STUDYING DURING THAT TIME, SAID THAT HIS FATHER "WAS VERY PROUD ABOUT BEING ABLE TO HELP SWITZERLAND WHICH HAD SAVED THEIR LIVES."
JOURNAL DE GENEVE - 2/4/98

37. HOLOCAUST FUNDS: PRIORITIES FOR INVESTIGATIONS

THE SWISS BANKERS ASSOCIATION (SBA) CONFIRMED YESTERDAY THAT THERE HAVE BEEN DELAYS IN HANDLING ABOUT 3,000 SWISS REQUESTS CONCERNING DORMANT ACCOUNTS. THIS IS DUE TO THE FLOOD OF REQUESTS FROM ABROAD. THE FOREIGN REQUESTS REQUIRE AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF WORK AND PRIORITIES NEED TO BE SET. THE FIDUCIARY COMPANY, ATAG, WHICH IS IN CHARGE OF PREPARING THE FILES FOR SBA, HAS BEEN STYMIED BY THE NEED FOR TRANSLATION OF THE DIFFERENT LANGUAGES USED IN THE REQUESTS. REQUESTS FROM HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS ARE BEING GIVEN PRIORITY. REQUESTS FROM SWISS NATIONALS WILL BE HANDLED DURING THE MONTH OF MARCH. RULES FOR UNIFIED HANDLING OF THE REQUESTS WILL HAVE TO BE SET.
NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN - 2/6/98

38. "MEA CULPA" FROM ALUSUISSE-LONZA

THE GROUP ADMITS THAT ITS BRANCHES IN GERMANY RESORTED TO EMPLOYING DEPORTED WORKERS AND WAR PRISONERS DURING WWII. AS A GESTURE OF SOLIDARITY, THE COMPANY'S GERMAN BRANCH WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE FINANCING OF HOSPITALS IN THE UKRAINE. THE PRESIDENT OF ALUSUISSE'S BOARD, THEODOR TSCHOPP, SAID THAT A TEAM OF RESEARCHERS, INCLUDING TWO HISTORIANS FROM OUTSIDE THE COMPANY, HAS BEEN IN CHARGE OF CLARIFYING ALUSUISSE'S ACTIONS DURING THE WAR. A TOTAL OF 7.6 MILLION FOREIGN WORKERS AND WAR PRISONERS WERE USED IN THE GERMAN ECONOMY DURING THE WAR. AT THE ALUSUISSE BRANCH, THE NUMBER WAS "PROBABLY SEVERAL THOUSAND FROM MORE THAN 10 COUNTRIES," SAID TSCHOPP. AT PRESENT, RESEARCH HAS NOT SHOWN THAT PRISONERS FROM CONCENTRATION CAMPS WERE USED.
JOURNAL DE GENEVE - 2/6/98

39. COTTI IS NOT WALDHEIM

ISRAEL SINGER, THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE WJC "ABSOLVED" THE HEAD OF SWISS DIPLOMACY, FLAVIO COTTI. HE REJECTED THE COMPARISONS BETWEEN COTTI AND WALDHEIM AND BETWEEN SWISS LABOR CAMPS AND NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMPS. HOWEVER, HE IS DISAPPOINTED THAT SWITZERLAND DOES NOT ADMIT ITS MISTAKES. CONCERNING THE

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COMPARISON MADE BY WJC VICE-PRESIDENT KALMAN SULTANIK OF FLAVIO COTTI WITH **KURT WALDHEIM**, SINGER SAID THAT HE DID NOT APPROVE, ADDING THAT COTTI IS NOT ANTI-SEMITIC. "HE ALWAYS TALKS ABOUT JEWS IN A VERY DIPLOMATIC WAY AND IS PARTICULARLY FRIENDLY TOWARDS THEM" SAID SINGER TO THE "JQDISCHE RUNDSCHAU." SINGER ALSO TALKED ABOUT NEUTRALITY. "COMPARING THE SITUATION OF DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, I REALIZE THAT OTHER COUNTRIES TOOK MANY RISKS TO SAVE HUMAN LIVES," HE SAID, REFERRING TO THE EFFORTS MADE BY DANISH PEOPLE TO SAVE JEWS DESPITE THE GERMAN OCCUPATION. REGARDING THE SWISS JEWISH COMMUNITY, SINGER SAID THAT THOSE WHO HAVE CRITICIZED THE WJC ARE BEHAVING COWARDLY. HE BELIEVES THAT THEIR ATTITUDE IS DESIGNED TO PRESERVE THEIR ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES, TO STIR SYMPATHY OR TO ENABLE THEIR GOVERNMENT TO SEE THEM DIFFERENTLY.

LE MATIN - 2/6/98

END EXCERPTS. KOENIG

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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