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TEXT  
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E.O. 12356: NA  
TAGS: SHUM, PA  
SUBJECT: (U) BEATE KLARSFELD VISIT TO PARAGUAY TO REQUEST  
EXTRADITION OF JOSEF MENGELE

1. (U) MRS. BEATE KLARSFELD, THE WEST GERMAN NAZI HUNTER,  
ARRIVED AT ASUNCION FROM CHILE ON FEBRUARY 9 TO SEEK EXTRA-  
DITION OF DR. JOSEF MENGELE TO GERMANY. IN STATEMENTS TO  
THE PRESS, KLARSFELD INSISTED THAT MENGELE IS HIDING OUT  
IN PARAGUAY, WHERE, SHE BELIEVES, THE GERMAN COMMUNITY AND  
THE GOP PROTECT HIM. NEVERTHELESS, SHE ADMITTED THAT SHE  
HAS NO SPECIFIC EVIDENCE TO PROVE THIS.

2. (U) THE FOLLOWING DAY, FEBRUARY 10, A VISIT WITH  
CARMEN DE LARA CASTRO, PRESIDENT OF THE PARAGUAYAN HUMAN  
RIGHTS COMMISSION, BROUGHT A PROMISE OF SUPPORT AS DID A  
MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIONAL ACCORD,  
COMPRISED OF VARIOUS OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES. THE  
OPPOSITION LEADERS WARNED MRS. KLARSFELD NOT TO EXPECT MUCH  
HELP FROM THE GOP "SINCE OFFICIALS ARE THE ONES WHO TAKE  
THE MOST CARE IN COVERING UP THE PRESENCE OF MENGELE IN  
OUR COUNTRY." A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH THE ISRAELI  
AMBASSADOR THE SAME DAY REPORTEDLY BROUGHT LITTLE SATIS-

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FACTION.

3. (U) THESE ACTIONS PRODUCED A SARCASTIC ATTACK ON KLARSFELD BY THE OFFICIAL COLORADO PARTY NEWSPAPER PATRIA ON FEBRUARY 11, SUGGESTING THAT SHE MIGHT HAVE COME TO PARAGUAY WITH "BIASED AND FANATIC IDEAS." THE COLORADO DAILY'S POSITION WAS THAT IF KLARSFELD CAN FIND MENGELE, OR PROVE HIS WHEREABOUTS IN THE COUNTRY, SHE IS WELCOME TO HIM.

4. (U) THIS ATTITUDE, AT LEAST OSTENSIBLY, WOULD SEEM TO BE THAT OF THE GOP AS WELL, SINCE THE INTERIOR MINISTER, DR. SABINO AUGUSTO MONTANARO, TOLD KLARSFELD MUCH THE SAME THING IN AN INTERVIEW ON FEBRUARY 13 WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY THE PRESS. MONTANARO, WHO CHIDED HER FOR HAVING GONE FIRST TO THE PRESS AND THE OPPOSITION BEFORE APPROACHING THE GOP, CLAIMED THAT THERE HAD NEVER BEEN ANY PROTECTION FOR WAR CRIMINALS IN PARAGUAY AND THAT WHEN MENGELE WAS GRANTED PARAGUAYAN CITIZENSHIP IN 1959 (LATER REVOKED IN 1962) THERE WAS NO REQUEST FOR HIS EXTRADITION FROM ANY NATION IN THE WORLD. THE MINISTER ASSURED HER THAT IF SHE PRODUCED PROOF OF MENGELE'S PRESENCE IN THE COUNTRY, HE WOULD PERSONALLY ORDER HIS ARREST. AFTERWARDS, MONTANARO TOLD THE PRESS THAT ALL THIS SEEMED TO BE NOTHING MORE THAN A PLOT BY THE GOP'S POLITICAL ENEMIES TO EMBARRASS THE GOVERNMENT.

5. (U) WHILE MRS. KLARSFELD MAY NOT HAVE BEEN ENTIRELY HAPPY WITH THE RESULTS OF HER MEETING WITH THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR, AN EARLIER MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME COURT, DR. LUIS MARIA ARGANA, APPEARED A BIT MORE POSITIVE. DR. ARGANA REPORTEDLY ASSURED HER THAT HE WOULD DO EVERYTHING IN HIS POWER TO SEE THAT MENGELE IS FOUND AND ARRESTED, PROMISING THAT MENGELE WOULD BE EXTRADITED TO GERMANY IF HE IS FOUND HERE. KLARSFELD LATER INFORMED THE PRESS THAT THESE PROMISES WERE SATISFACTORY, BUT THAT SHE WOULD BE EVEN MORE PLEASED WITH A CLEAR ORDER FOR AN OFFICIAL SEARCH FOR MENGELE.

6. (U) ON FEBRUARY 14, MRS. KLARSFELD VISITED ASUNCION'S ARCHBISHOP, ISMAEL ROLON, WHO EXPRESSED HIS ADMIRATION AND MORAL SUPPORT FOR HER ENDEAVOR. THE ARCHBISHOP AFFIRMED THAT WHILE THE CHURCH COULD NOT UNDERTAKE A SEARCH FOR MENGELE, HE WOULD AUSPICIOUSLY REMIND THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF THEIR PROMISES TO HER. ACCORDING TO THE INDEPENDENT DAILY ABC COLOR, PRIOR TO HER MEETING WITH ARCHBISHOP ROLON, MRS. KLARSFELD SPOKE WITH A PERSON OF GERMAN ORIGIN WHO CLAIMS TO HAVE SEEN MENGELE FREQUENTLY IN ASUNCION DURING 1976 AND 1977, INCLUDING ONE OCCASION AT THE CITY'S GERMAN CLUB. CLUB REPRESENTATIVES, HOWEVER, DENIED THAT MENGELE WAS EVER SEEN THERE.

7. (LOU) EVENTS SURROUNDING THE KLARSFELD VISIT TOOK AN EXCITING TURN ON THE MORNING OF FEBRUARY 17, WHEN MRS. KLARSFELD AND A GROUP OF SOME 20 PLACARD-WAVING PROTESTERS GATHERED BEFORE THE PALACE OF JUSTICE TO DEMAND THE EXPULSION OF MENGELE AND OTHER NAZIS FROM PARAGUAY. IT IS WORTHY OF NOTE THAT THE ASUNCION POLICE TOOK NO ACTION AGAINST THE PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATORS, WHO DISPERSED WITHOUT INCIDENT JUST IN TIME FOR LUNCH. IN COMMENTS TO EMBASSY OFFICERS, ONE HIGH-RANKING GOP OFFICIAL EXPRESSED IRRITATION AT MRS. KLARSFELD'S APPARENT ATTEMPT TO PROVOKE THE GOVERNMENT OVER THE MENGELE PROBLEM, ESPECIALLY WITH HER PUBLIC

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DEMONSTRATION. AT THE SAME TIME, HE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION  
AT THE GOVERNMENT'S RESTRAINT THROUGHOUT HER VISIT, A POINT  
WHICH THE EMBASSY ALSO BELIEVES IS NOTEWORTHY.

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