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DOCUMENT ID: 1148946  
INQNO: DOC39D 00236795  
DOCNO: TEL 014447 96  
PRODUCER: BONN  
AGENCY: STATE  
DOCTYPE: IN  
DOR: 19960923  
TOR: 081943  
DOCPREC: 0  
ORIGDATE: 199609230948  
MHFNO: 96 5475911  
DOCCLASS: C

CDS  
C 97301BONN 144472671226ZSCO 96-5475911 C  
MIDB

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FRP: ,2,3, , , , ,

ACTION: NONE INFO: ACIS/LGL, CIRAS, DCI/SRP, DONOVA, EUR/BCI,  
EUR/FRSR, EUR/GA, EUR/GAR, EUR/IBIR, EUR/NBLR, EUR/RIG, EUR/RR, FBIS/NFS,  
IRL, MDSX, NHTC/EUR, NHTC/RE, NPCEDC, ODPD, ODPS, OPCTR/EURA, STATDICT,  
FILE (O/W)

96 5475911 SCO PAGE 001 NC 5475911  
TOR: 231226Z SEP 96 BONN 14447

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
SOURCES METHODS EXEMPTION 3828  
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
DATE 2001 2007

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

HEADER  
OO RUEAIIB  
ZNY CCCCC ZOC STATE ZZH  
WSE5612  
OO RUEHC  
DE RUEHOL #4447/01 2670948  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 230948Z SEP 96  
FM AMEMBASSY BONN  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3663  
INFO RUEHRS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE 3168  
RUEHFT/AMCONSUL FRANKFURT PRIORITY 2899  
RUEHSL/AMEMBASSY BRATISLAVA 0623  
RUEHTI/AMEMBASSY TIRANA 0948  
RUEHPG/AMEMBASSY PRAGUE 0022  
RUEHLE/AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG 9498  
RUCNFRG/FRG COLLECTIVE  
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 8180

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RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA 1318  
RUEHSW/AMEMBASSY BERN 4687  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 7706  
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 6221  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 5886  
RUEATRS/TREASURY WASHDC  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 6960  
BT

CONTROLS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 014447

BRUSSELS FOR U.S. GOLD COMMISSIONER BREESE  
L FOR CONRAD HARPER, MICHAEL MATHESON, ELY MAUER  
EUR/AGS FOR HERNANDEZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 9/20/98

TEXT

TAGS: PREL, EFIN, GM  
COMBINE: COMPLETE

SUBJECT: GERMANS AGREE TO TRANSFER NAZI-LOOTED GOLD  
BARS THIS WEEK

REF: A) BONN 5582 B) BONN 4016 C) STATE 144123  
D) JOHNSON-BREESE TELCON 9/20/96 E) REDIFER-BREESE  
TELCON 9/20/96 F) STATE 74474 G) BONN LEGAL ADVISER  
PROPP LETTER TO BUNDESBANK OF JULY 8, 1985 H) BONN  
LEGAL ADVISER RAMISH LETTER TO L/ECP MAURER OF APRIL  
18, 1985

1. CLASSIFIED BY ROBERT D. JOHNSON, POLITICAL MINISTER  
COUNSELOR FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D).

2. (C) THE GERMAN FOREIGN OFFICE AND THE BUNDESBANK  
HAVE ACCEPTED HE SOLUTION FOR THE TRANSFER OF THE TWO  
NAZI-LOOED GOLD BARS PROPOSED BY THE EMBASSY (REFS A  
ANDB) AND APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT (REF C). THE  
BUNDESBANK HAS AUTHORIZED ITS REPRESENTATIVE TO  
TRANSFER CUSTODY OF THE BARS TO AN EMBASSY  
REPRESENTATIVE AS SOON AS ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE  
FOR THEIR SECURE TRANSPORTATION. THE U.S. COMMISSIONER  
FOR THE TRIPARTITE GOLD COMMISSION IN BRUSSELS HAS SET  
IN MOTION AN AUTHORIZATION FOR THE BANK OF ENGLAND TO  
ARRANGE FOR AN APPROVED COURIER SERVICE TO MOVE THE  
BARS FROM GERMANY TO THE CONSOLIDATED GOLD POOL  
HOLDINGS OF THE COMMISSION IN THE U.K. AS HAD BEEN  
PREVIOUSLY AGREED (REFS D AND E). THE TRANSFER IS  
TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 27 AT THE  
BUNDESBANK'S REPOSITORY AT NEU-ISENBURG NEAR FRANKFURT.

3. (C) THE EMBASSY REQUESTS THE DEPARTMENT'S  
CONFIRMATION OF THE AUTHORIZATION PROVIDED IN PARA 4 OF  
REF C FOR THE EMBASSY TO SIGN THE LETTER OF TRANSFER  
AND RECEIPT. POLITICAL MINISTER COUNSELOR ROBERT  
JOHNSON WILL SIGN FOR THE EMBASSY. EMBASSY FINANCIAL

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OFFICER LAURE REDIFER WILL ALSO BE PRESENT FOR THE TRANSFER. DR. STAUDT WILL SIGN FOR THE BUNDESBANK. THE AGREED TEXT IS PROVIDED IN PARA 5 BELOW.

4. (U) WITH THIS TRANSFER, THE SAGA OF THESE GOLD BARS -- ORIGINALLY OWNED BY THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT, GIVEN WITH OTHER GOLD TO FRANCE FOR SAFEKEEPING AFTER THE WAR REACHED BELGIUM, TAKEN BY THE NAZIS FROM THE FRENCH IN 1942, RESMELTED AND RELABELED BY THE REICHSBANK, MOVED TO BAVARIA LATE IN THE WAR AGAIN FOR SAFEKEEPING, HIDDEN BY INDIVIDUAL GERMAN SOLDIERS, FOUND IN THE GRATE OF A STOVE IN A MILITARY SCHOOL BY GERMANS AFTER THE END OF THE WAR AND TURNED OVER TO THE SAVINGS BANK OF BERCHTESGADEN, PICKED UP BY THE U.S. MILITARY AND DEPOSITED WITH THE BAVARIAN STATE BANK IN 1945, TRANSFERRED TO THE BUNDESBANK, AND FINALLY IDENTIFIED IN 1985 FOR DISPOSITION AS PART OF THE GOLD POOL ADMINISTERED BY THE U.S., UK, AND FRANCE UNDER THE 1946 PARIS REPARATIONS AGREEMENT -- WILL COME TO AN END. THEY WILL BECOME PART OF THE POOL OF GOLD BEING DISTRIBUTED AMONG THE COUNTRIES FROM WHOM THE NAZIS TOOK GOLD. THEY WILL NOT, WE UNDERSTAND, BE GIVEN TO THE BELGIANS BECAUSE THE FRENCH MADE GOOD THE BELGIAN LOSSES EARLY ON AND THEMSELVES TOOK OVER THE BELGIAN CLAIM AGAINST THE GOLD POOL.

5. (U) AGREED TEXT

BEGIN TEXT

LETTER OF TRANSFER AND RECEIPT

1. THE DEUTSCHE BUNDESBANK HERewith TRANSMITS TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CARE OF THE U.S. EMBASSY IN BONN, TWO GOLD BARS AS DESCRIBED BELOW FOR TRANSFER TO THE TRIPARTITE GOLD COMMISSION (UNITED STATES, UNITED KINGDOM, AND FRANCE) FOR INCLUSION IN THE GOLD POOL, ESTABLISHED ACCORDING TO SECTION III OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT ON REPARATION FROM GERMANY OF JANUARY 14, 1946.

THE MATTER CONCERNS TWO GOLD BARS WHICH WERE DEPOSITED AT THE CENTRAL BANK OFFICE IN MUNICH, NOW THE REGIONAL CENTRAL BANK IN BAVARIA, AS SPECIAL ASSETS OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT. THERE WERE NO DETAILS AS TO OWNERSHIP. THE TWO GOLD BARS ARE MARKED:

PREUSS. STAATSMUENZE BERLIN,  
1938  
905/7 AND 905/8

EACH CARRIES A LABEL OF THE DEUTSCHE BUNDESBANK (A 1562 AND A 1563).

WEIGHT AND STANDARD WERE TESTED IN 1956 BY THE DEGUSSA, DEUTSCHE GOLD- UND SILBERSCHNEIDANSTALT, FORMERLY ROESSLER, FRANKFURT, WITH THE FOLLOWING RESULTS:

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