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TEXT

TAGS: PREL, AU, GE, SY
SUBJECT: NAZI WAR CRIMINAL ALOIS BRUNNER'S PRESENCE IN
DAMASCUS HITS THE PAPERS AGAIN

REF: 86 DAMASCUS 1692 AND PREVIOUS

1. NAZI WAR CRIMINAL ALOIS BRUNNER'S PRESENCE IN DAMASCUS HAS BECOME AN ISSUE AGAIN FOLLOWING THE PUBLICATION THIS PAST WEEKEND IN THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES AN THE WASHINGTON POST OF ARTICLES PURPORTING TO QUOTE BRUNNER IN DAMASCUS AS BEING UNREPENTANT ABOUT HIS BARBARIC WARTIME ACTIVITIES. DEPARTMENT IS AWARE CONGRESS MIGHT CONSIDER IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS A SENSE OF THE CONGRESS RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD ASK THE PRESIDENT TO REQUEST SYRIA EXTRADITE BRUNNER.

2. THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES ARTICLE DATED NOVEMBER 1, 1987, AND HEADLINED "NAZI

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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
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BUTCHER IN SYRIA HAVEN."

BEGIN TEXT:

THE WORLD'S MOST NOTORIOUS NAZI WAR CRIMINAL STILL AT LARGE ADMITS EVERYTHING, REGRETS NOTHING AND WOULD DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN, HE TOLD THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES LAST WEEK.

ALOIS BRUNNER, NOW 75, LIVES QUIETLY AT 7 RUE HADDAD IN DAMASCUS WHERE HE IS PROTECTED BY AROUND-THE-CLOCK BODYGUARDS PROVIDED BY THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS RECENT SERVICE TO SYRIA IN "SECURITY MATTERS."

IN A BRIEF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION IN FRONT OF A WITNESS, BRUNNER SAID "ALL OF THEM DESERVED TO DIE BECAUSE THEY WERE THE DEVIL'S AGENTS AND HUMAN GARBAGE. I HAVE NO REGRETS AND WOULD DO IT AGAIN."

AFTER CONFIRMING HE HAD BEEN LIVING UNDER THE NAME GEORG FISCHER, HE HUNG UP.

NAZI HUNTERS FROM ISRAEL, WEST GERMANY, AUSTRIA AND FRANCE HAD BEEN HUNTING FOR BRUNNER SINCE HE WAS CONDEMNED TO DEATH IN ABSENTIA BY A FRENCH HIGH COURT IN 1954. IT WAS FRENCH LAWYER MAITRE SERGE KLARFELD AND HIS WIFE, BEATE, WHO FIRST DISCOVERED THAT BRUNNER HAD FLED TO EGYPT AND THEN TO SYRIA AFTER WORLD WAR II. IN 1983, THEY PERSUADED A GERMAN COURT TO MOVE FORWARD WITH EXTRADITION PROCEEDINGS IN AN EFFORT TO GET BRUNNER RETURNED BY SYRIA TO COLOGNE TO FACE MASS MURDER CHARGES.

SYRIA FLATLY DENIED THAT BRUNNER, WHO WAS DESCRIBED BY VICTIMS DURING THE NUREMBERG TRIALS AS "THE MOST COLD-BLOODED KILLER IN ADOLF EICHMANN'S RETINUE," WAS LIVING IN DAMASCUS. THE MORE GERMANY INSISTED ON EXTRADITION, THE MORE SYRIA INSISTED THEY "DID NOT KNOW ANY SUCH PERSON."

IN 1985, THE SYRIAN COVER-UP WAS PIERCED BY AN AGGRESSIVE TEAM OF REPORTERS FOR THE GERMAN WEEKLY MAGAZINE BUNTE, WHO INTERVIEWED BRUNNER AND PHOTOGRAPHED HIM IN DAMASCUS. AT THAT TIME HE BRAGGED ABOUT HIS ROLE IN ROUNDING UP PRISONERS FOR AUSCHWITZ AND HOW HE PERSONALLY DIRECTED THE SLAUGHTERS AT THE DREADED DRANCY CONCENTRATION CAMP NORTH OF PARIS IN 1943.

EVEN AT THE EICHMANN TRIAL AND AT NUREMBERG IDENTIFIED BRUNNER AS AN SS CHIEF WHO SPECIALIZED IN BRUTALITY AGAINST CHILDREN AND "HUMILIATION BEFORE DEATH." RECORDS IN THE UNITED NATIONS ARCHIVES AND IN AMERICAN MILITARY FILES SHOW BRUNNER RESPONSIBLE FOR DEPORTING 56,000 PEOPLE FROM VIENNA, 43,000 FROM SALONICA, 23,500 FROM FRANCE AND 14,000 FROM SLOVAKIA. ALL 136,500 ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN EXECUTED.

GERMAN PROSECUTORS WORKING WITH ISRAELI AGENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE'S NAZI TASK

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FORCE HAVE PIECED TOGETHER BRUNNER'S TRAVELS AFTER WORLD WAR II.

HE FIRST FLED TO CAIRO AND TRIED TO HIDE HIS IDENTITY BY RELYING ON THE CONFUSION SURROUNDING THE EXECUTION OF ANOTHER MAN NAMED BRUNNER FROM THE SAME NAZI UNIT. THE TWO WERE UNRELATED, BUT IT ENABLED HIM TO MOVE FREELY WHILE THE ALLIES WERE ROUNDING UP NAZI WAR CRIMINALS.

BRUNNER THEN MOVED TO DAMASCUS, WHERE HE WAS EMBRACED BY SYRIAN OFFICIALS, ACCORDING TO ONE OF BRUNNER'S RELATIVES NOW LIVING IN AUSTRIA WHO DECLINED TO BE NAMED. THIS FAMILY MEMBER SAID BRUNNER HAS ALWAYS BEEN OBSESSED WITH HIS ROLE IN EICHMANN'S LIFE BUT HAS INSISTED HE MAINTAINS A "POISON PILL" THAT HE WILL SWALLOW IF THE ISRAELIS COME AFTER HIM.

DURING THE LAST TWO YEARS, THERE HAVE BEEN RUMORS OF BRUNNER'S DEATH IN SYRIA. BRUNNER LOST AN EYE AND THE FINGERS OF HIS LEFT HAND FROM TWO LETTER BOMBS BELIEVED TO BE SENT BY ISRAELI EXTREMISTS, BUT ACCORDING TO A CANADIAN OFFICIAL WHO VISITED HIM LAST MONTH, BRUNNER IS CLEAR HEADED AND "AS NASTY AND ARROGANT AS EVER."

NOW WHEN GERMAN AUTHORITIES RENEW EFFORTS AT EXTRADITION, SYRIA REPEATS ITS OFFICIAL POSITION THAT BRUNNER HAS COMMITTED NO CRIMES "THAT ARE PUNISHABLE."

ALFRED STREIM, SENIOR PROSECUTOR OF WAR CRIMINALS FOR WEST GERMANY, SAID, "SYRIA IS CONTINUING TO IGNORE OUR REQUESTS, BUT WE KNOW HE IS THERE AND WELL-GUARDED."

BRUNNER'S BODYGUARDS ARE COURTESY OF SYRIA'S FIRST FAMILY, THE AL ASSADS, AND WERE ARRANGED FOR BY THE BROTHER OF THAT COUNTRY'S PRESIDENT IN EXCHANGE FOR BRUNNER'S ADVICE TO SYRIAN SECURITY FORCES.

GERMANY CONTINUES TO PRESS FOR THE RELEASE OF BRUNNER FOR TRIAL IN THAT COUNTRY, BUT AUSTRIA NO LONGER ACTIVELY PURSUES HIM. ACCORDING TO FRENCH LAWYER KLARSFELD, "UNDER PRESIDENT WALDHEIM, AUSTRIA NO LONGER CHASES ALOIS BRUNNER."

MEANWHILE AT THE UNITED NATIONS, THE ORIGINAL 17 ALLIED NATIONS CONTINUE TO DEBATE WHETHER TO MAKE PUBLIC THE MASSIVE WAR FILES THAT CONTAIN ACCUSATIONS AND EVIDENCE AGAINST BRUNNER, KURT WALDHEIM AND THOUSANDS OF OTHER ACCUSED WAR CRIMINALS.

END TEXT.

3. DEPARTMENT HAS CONTACTED THE CANADIAN EMBASSY TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO A CANADIAN OFFICIAL WHO PURPORTEDLY VISITED BRUNNER LAST MONTH.

4. WE WILL KEEP YOU ADVISED OF DEVELOPMENTS ON THIS

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SUBJECT. SHULTZ

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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