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E.O. 12356: N/A

TEXT

SUBJECT: SPECIAL REPORT: "PROFIL" INTERVIEW WITH NEAL
SHER

THE FOLLOWING IS A FULL TRANSLATION OF AN INTERVIEW WITH
NEAL SHER OF THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS
PUBLISHED BY THE NEWSWEEKLY "PROFIL" (CIRC. 93,800) ON
JUNE 27:

"NO UNDERSTANDING FOR LIES"

PROFIL: ONE YEAR AGO, YOU PUT KURT WALDHEIM ON THE
WATCH LIST, THEN YOU SENT US THE FORMER CONCENTRATION
CAMP GUARD MARTIN BARTESCH, AND NOW YOU TAKE AIM AT THE
CONNECTION BETWEEN THE NATURALIZED AUSTRIAN AND FORMER
SS MAN ROBERT VERBELEN AND THE AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE

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SERVICE. WHAT CAUSED YOU TO BE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN AUSTRIA?

SHER: I DON'T HAVE ANY SPECIAL INTEREST IN AUSTRIA. FOUR YEARS AGO, THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL ASKED US TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION ON VERBELEN. AND THIS IS WHAT WE DID, BUT NOT BECAUSE HE IS AN AUSTRIAN. IF ANYBODY BELIEVES THAT THERE IS A SPECIFIC INTEREST IN AUSTRIA, THEN THEY ARE MISTAKEN. WHEN WE DEAL WITH PERSONS, WE DO SO BECAUSE OF THEIR WARTIME ACTIVITIES. AND NOT ON OUR OWN, BUT ON THE BASIS OF INSTRUCTIONS FROM OUR SUPERIORS. WE DO NOTHING BUT EXECUTE AMERICAN POLICY. PROFIL: WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN VERBELEN?

SHER: FOR THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS FOR THE AMERICAN PUBLIC, THE EVENTS OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR ARE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. YOU SHOULD NOT FORGET THAT THE UNITED STATES LOST HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF MEN WHO FOUGHT AGAINST THE NAZIS IN EUROPE IN THIS WAR. THE CONFRONTATION WITH NATIONAL SOCIALISM, ITS ROOTS AND CONSEQUENCES, CONTINUES TO BE A CENTRAL ISSUE IN THIS COUNTRY. THERE IS NO UNDERSTANDING FOR COVERING UP THE PAST AND LIES. THUS, MANY QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN RAISED SINCE IT BECAME KNOWN THAT THE U.S. MAY HAVE USED NAZI CRIMINALS.

PROFIL: THAT VERBELEN WORKED FOR THE AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE AFTER THE WAR HAS BEEN KNOWN IN AUSTRIA FOR NEARLY 30 YEARS. WHAT IS THE -- POLITICAL -- SENSE OF YOUR WORK, NAMELY TO INVESTIGATE AND DESCRIBE IN DETAIL SOMETHING WHICH HAS A GENERALLY LOW NEWS VALUE?

SHER: WE WERE INSTRUCTED TO WORK OUT IN DETAIL VERBELEN'S CONNECTIONS TO THE CIC. BUT THE DECISIVE RELEVANCE OF OUR REPORT LIES IN THOSE DISCOVERIES DEALING WITH THE GENERAL HIRING PRACTICE OF THE CIC. ON THE VIENNA-BASED SECTION 430 OF THE CIC ALONE, WE COULD FIND OUT THAT, APART FROM VERBELEN, 13 PERSONS WITH A BAD NAZI PAST WERE HIRED. ONE OF THEM WORKED AFTER THE WAR FOR THE EAST AND THE WEST, FOR THREE OR FOUR DIFFERENT WESTERN SERVICES AND FOR THE SOVIETS. THIS SHOWS, REGARDLESS OF ANY MORAL CONSIDERATIONS, HOW DANGEROUS THIS KIND OF HIRING POLICY WAS, TO USE NAZIS.

PROFIL: BUT THIS HAS ALSO BEEN KNOWN FOR A LONG TIME, THAT EAST AND WEST USED FORMER NAZIS FOR THEIR INTELLIGENCE SERVICES DURING THE COLD WAR.

SHER: OUR TASK WAS TO DESCRIBE THIS PRACTICE CAREFULLY AND IN DETAIL, WITHOUT ANY SPECULATION. MANY OF THE FILES WE WENT THROUGH WERE PRACTICALLY LOCKED UP UNTIL NOW. AND YOU SHOULD NOT OVERLOOK THAT THE ARMY, THE CIA AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT LOOKED THROUGH THIS REPORT BEFORE IT WAS RELEASED.

PROFIL: THE CIA WAS PROBABLY NOT PARTICULARLY HAPPY

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ABOUT THIS REPORT.

SHER: IT APPROVED PUBLICATION.

PROFIL: ARE YOU ABLE TO MAKE AN ESTIMATE ON THE NUMBER OF NAZIS EMPLOYED BY THE AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE AFTER THE WAR ON THE BASIS OF YOUR INVESTIGATIONS?
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SHER: NO. AND I THINK IT IS IMPOSSIBLE.

PROFIL: YOUR REPORT PERMITS THE CONCLUSION THAT THE CIC FOR A LONG TIME DID NOT KNOW THAT THE AGENT RECRUITED IN VIENNA WAS VERBELEN, WHO HAD BEEN SENTENCED TO DEATH IN BELGIUM. DO YOU REALLY THINK IT PLAUSIBLE THAT AN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE EMPLOYS SOMEONE WITHOUT CHECKING THIS PERSON'S CURRICULUM VITAE BEFOREHAND?

SHER: THERE IS NO EVIDENCE, AND WE DID NOT FIND ANY WITNESSES THAT THE CIC KNEW ABOUT VERBELEN'S REAL IDENTITY BEFORE 1956. BUT THE CIC SHOULD HAVE ACTED ON THE DATA SUPPLIED BY VERBELEN UNDER HIS ALFRED SCHWAB ALIAS ALONE. EVEN IN THIS FAKE CV, THE MAN SAID THAT HE HAD WORKED FOR THE SS AND THE SD.

PROFIL: HOW IMPORTANT WAS VERBELEN'S WORK FOR THE CIC?

SHER: HIS IMPORTANCE WAS RATHER SMALL. HE SEEMS TO HAVE BROUGHT GOOD INFORMATION NOW AND THEN. BUT HE WAS NOWHERE NEAR AS IMPORTANT AS HE CLAIMS. HE ACTS AS IF HE SAVED AUSTRIA. AND THAT'S NONSENSE.

PROFIL: FOR A FULL TWO YEARS, THERE HAS BEEN SPECULATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ABOUT WHETHER **KURT WALDHEIM** MAY HAVE HAD CLOSE TIES TO THE U.S. INTELLIGENCE SERVICE. DID YOU FIND ANY EVIDENCE POINTING THAT WAY DURING YOUR INVESTIGATION?

SHER: THIS IS A QUESTION ON WHICH I CANNOT COMMENT.
O'CONNOR

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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