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E.O. 12356: N/A

TEXT  
SUBJECT: MEDIA COVERAGE OF ECKERT CASE

1. ON OCT. 3, THE INDEPENDENT WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE "PROFIL" PUBLISHED A ONE-PAGE ARTICLE ON THE CASE OF JOSEF ECKERT, WHICH INCLUDED PASSAGES OF JOSEF ECKERT'S STATEMENT TO THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS:

"I CONFESS"

... WHEN REPORTERS OF THE "LOS ANGELES TIMES" ARRIVED AT JOSEF ECKERT'S "SIMPLE, BUT WELL-KEPT THREE-ROOM HOUSE" ON DECEMBER 23, 1987, TO INTERVIEW HIM ABOUT HIS WARTIME PAST, THERE WAS NOBODY TO ANSWER THEIR QUESTIONS OTHER THAN THE NEIGHBORS. ECKERT HIMSELF WAS NOT TO BE FOUND. EYE WITNESSES STATED THAT HE TALKED ABOUT HIS

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WARTIME PAST SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE LAST FEW YEARS, TEARS IN HIS EYES, AND CLAIMED THAT HE HAD BEEN PRESSED INTO SS SERVICE.

HOWEVER, THESE PROTESTATIONS WERE NOT BELIEVED BY THE SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER IN LOS ANGELES AND NEAL M. SHER, HEAD OF THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS.

ACCORDING TO SHER, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT ECKERT WAS A GUARD AT THE AUSCHWITZ COMPLEX OF CONCENTRATION CAMPS BETWEEN 1943 AND 1945, AND "PARTICIPATED IN THE PERSECUTION OF THE INMATES OF AUSCHWITZ." CONSEQUENTLY, PROCEDURES TO EXPATRIATE THE SS GUARD WERE STARTED. "WE DON'T BRING CHARGES AGAINST ANYONE WITHOUT HAVING EVIDENCE," SAYS SHER. MARVIN HIER, HEAD OF THE SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER IN LOS ANGELES, SAYS THAT THE GUARDS OF ALL GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS CAME FROM ECKERT'S UNIT, AND THAT IT WAS ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR "MURDERING HUNDREDS OF BRITISH SOLDIERS AFTER THEY HAD SURRENDERED DURING THE GERMAN INVASION OF FRANCE IN 1940."

ECKERT CONFIRMED THE OSI EVIDENCE WHEN HE WAS INTERVIEWED BY THE U.S. AUTHORITIES. IN AN OFFICIAL PROTOCOL OF THE UNITED STATES IMMIGRATION COURT (NO A 10 631 698), THE SS CRIMINAL SAID (AT A TIME WHEN HIS EXPATRIATION WAS ALREADY UNAVOIDABLE): "I, JOSEF ECKERT, SERVED BETWEEN FEBRUARY 1943 AND JANUARY 1945 IN THE AUSCHWITZ CONCENTRATION CAMP... "

... ECKERT HAD TO AGREE TO THE CONDITIONS IMPOSED BY THE U.S. AUTHORITIES, WHICH MEANT LEAVING THE COUNTRY WITHIN SIX MONTHS AND AGREEING TO BE PUT ON THE WATCH LIST...

ACCORDING TO THE SO-CALLED "READMISSION STATEMENT" OF 1954, AUSTRIA IS OBLIGATED TO ACCEPT THE 74-YEAR OLD SS GUARD (BECAUSE HE CAME TO THE U.S. VIA AUSTRIA). HELMUT TUERK, HEAD OF THE INTERNATIONAL LAW OFFICE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, HAS TRIED SINCE THE CASE OF MARTIN BARTESCH TO CONVINCING THE LEGAL SECTION OF THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT TO DECLARE THIS AGREEMENT NULL AND VOID, BUT THE AMERICANS INSIST ON THE VALIDITY OF THE AGREEMENT BECAUSE OF A FORMULATION THAT SAYS THAT AUSTRIA WILL TAKE BACK PERSONS WHO RECEIVED THEIR VISA BECAUSE OF FRAUDULENT STATEMENTS "AT ANY TIME."

JOSEF ECKERT IS NO STRANGER TO AUSTRIAN AUTHORITIES, EITHER. IN 1961, THE VIENNA OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR OPENED A FILE ON THE FORMER SS MAN. HERMANN LANGBEIN AND ELLA LINGENS OF THE INTERNATIONAL AUSCHWITZ COMMITTEE HANDED OVER A COMPLETE LIST OF THE AUSCHWITZ GUARDS. ONE OF THE NAMES WAS THAT OF ECKERT. HE WAS CHARGED WITH MURDER, BUT THE TRIAL COULD NOT PROCEED BECAUSE ECKERT WAS NOT TO BE FOUND.

AMONG THE PAPERS OF FORMER CONCENTRATION CAMP INMATE LANGBEIN, THERE IS FURTHER INFORMATION ON ECKERT,

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ACCORDING TO WHICH ECKERT WAS ACTIVE IN SWIENTOCHLOWITZ AND EINTRACHTHUETTE, TWO CAMPS ATTACHED TO AUSCHWITZ. IN CIVIL LIFE, HE WAS A BUTCHER, AND MARRIED TO THE DAUGHTER OF THE MAYOR OF KATTOWITZ. IN A BOOK OF FORMER INMATE Z. ROZANSKI, "MUETZEN AB", ECKERT WAS MENTIONED AS "COMMANDO LEADER OF THE SPECIAL COMMANDO BIRKENAU." UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 VIENNA 11492

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THERE IS SOME DOUBT, HOWEVER, AS TO THE REAL IDENTITY OF JOSEF ECKERT. IN APRIL 1986, THE "NEW YORK TIMES" WROTE IN CONNECTION WITH THE WALDHEIM AFFAIR ABOUT ONE "JOSEF ECKERT, WHO WAS A LOCAL GESTAPO BOSS IN KRALJEVO, YUGOSLAVIA, AND IN THIS CAPACITY ORDERED THE SHOOTING OF 100 MEN, 7 WOMEN, 3 CHILDREN, AND 30 BOYS BETWEEN JUNE 10 AND 20, 1943." THIS INFORMATION ORIGINATED FROM THE U.N. ARCHIVE ON WAR CRIMINALS AND WAS "ONLY ONE SHORT ITEM ON THE LIST OF CRIMES WHICH ARMY UNIT E COMMITTED IN THE BALKANS BETWEEN 1941 AND SUMMER 1943," ACCORDING TO THE "NEW YORK TIMES." THE VIENNA OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR IS NOW DIGGING UP THE OLD AUSCHWITZ FILES TO ASCERTAIN WHICH ECKERT WILL COME TO AUSTRIA. MANFRED SCHAUSBERGER OF THE JUSTICE MINISTRY, WHO DEALS WITH THE MATTER, IS CONFUSED: "THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT WE ARE DEALING WITH TWO ENTIRELY DIFFERENT PERSONS HERE."

2. ALSO ON OCTOBER 3, THE INDEPENDENT MASS-CIRCULATION DAILY "KURIER" CARRIED A P. 5 ARTICLE WHICH WAS, FOR THE MOST PART, A REVIEW OF CHRISTOPHER SIMPSON'S BOOK "BLOWBACK" ON THE RECRUITMENT OF NAZIS BY THE U.S. EXCERPTS:

"NAZI WAR CRIMINALS: AMERICA'S LATE REPENTANCE"

THE AMERICAN JUSTICE DEPARTMENT WANTS TO DEPORT ANOTHER SUSPECTED NAZI WAR CRIMINAL TO AUSTRIA. THIS IS THE LATE REPENTANCE OF A NEW, MORAL GENERATION... THE -- LEGALLY CONTROVERSIAL -- RE-EXPORT OF OLD NAZIS AND "ETHNIC GERMANS" FROM THE EAST (BARTESCH WAS BORN IN ROMANIA, ECKERT IN PRESENT YUGOSLAVIAN TERRITORY) HAS A GLOOMY BACKGROUND. THE AMERICANS NOW WANT TO CLEAN THEIR COUNTRY OF NAZIS AND WAR CRIMINALS WHO WERE BROUGHT TO THE COUNTRY AFTER THE WAR, PARTLY WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE U.S. INTELLIGENCE SERVICES...

AUSTRIA IS INDIRECTLY SUFFERING THE CONSEQUENCES. FOR

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IN THE EARLY 1980S, A SMALL GROUP OF MOTIVATED PEOPLE IN THE U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT, PARTICULARLY IN THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS, STARTED TO CORRECT THE ERRORS OF THE PAST AND THROW FORMER WAR CRIMINALS ON THE U.S. PAYROLL OUT OF THE COUNTRY.

THE SAME MOTIVATED PEOPLE WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR **KURT WALDHEIM'S** BEING PUT ON THE WATCH LIST. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT FORMAL REASONS FOR THIS DECISION EXIST, BUT IT WAS NOT NECESSARY TO BE THAT RELENTLESS. IT MAY WELL BE THAT THE PUBLIC SERVANTS OF THE OSI PUNISHED WALDHEIM, WHO WAS NEITHER A NAZI NOR A WAR CRIMINAL, FOR THE FACT THAT, FORTY YEARS AGO, OTHER PUBLIC SERVANTS OF THE U.S. PROTECTED AND USED NAZI CRIMINALS. O'CONNOR

ADMIN  
END OF MESSAGE

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