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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
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RUESAS/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION IMMEDIATE 905
RUFHOL/AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE 127
RUEHLD/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 240
RUFHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 420
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE 106
RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA IMMEDIATE 051
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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2001 2007

CONTROLS

S E C R E T SAO PAULO 1432
EXDIS EZ2:

TEXT

DEPT PLS PASS TO JUSTICE
E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PINR, PGOV, TBIO, BR, GE
SUBJ: JOSEF MENGELE: HAVE HIS REMAINS BEEN FOUND IN SAO PAULO
1. SUMMARY:
DURING A THREE HOUR MEETING ON THE EVENING OF JUNE 6, THE SAO
PAULO REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY'S
INTELLIGENCE SERVICE BKA (BUNDERSKRIMINALAMT) - STRICKLY PROTECT -
TOLD ME THAT BASED ON EVIDENCE SEIZED AND OBTAINED IN THE LAST
SEVERAL DAYS IN BOTH GERMANY AND BRAZIL, THE BKA IS CONVINCED
THAT; A) JOSEF MENGELE LIVED IN SAO PAULO BETWEEN 1967 AND 1979,
OR FROM THE TIME HE CAME HERE FROM PARAGUAY UNTIL HE DROWNED
AFTER SUFFERING A STROKE ON A SAO PAULO BEACH; B) MENGELE WAS
BURIED IN THE MUNICIPAL CEMETERY OF EMBU, A TOWN APPROX.
20 KM SOUTHWEST OF THE CITY OF SAO PAULO; C) HIS REMAINS--
OR RATHER WHAT IN ALL LIKELIHOOD ARE HIS REMAINS--WERE
EXHUMED ON THE AFTERNOON ELOF JUNE 6 BY THE BRAZILIAN

FOR COORDINATION WITH ^{ed} STATE

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FEDERAL POLICE AND TAKEN TO THE SAO PAULO MEDICOLEGAL INSTITUTE OF THE FEDERAL POLICE FOR STUDY AND IDENTIFICATION; D) THE REMAINS WERE BADLY MISHANDLED IN THE OPINION OF THE FOUR GERMAN SPECIALISTS PRESENT AT THE EXHUMATION, BY THE INEPTITUDE AND LACK OF PROFESSIONALISM OF BRAZILIAN OFFICIALS CARRYING OUT THE PROCEDURE, AND THUS MUCH POTENTIALLY IMPORTANT EVIDENCE WAS NEEDLESSLY LOST OR DESTROYED; D) NONE OF THE VOLUMINOUS EVIDENCE UNCOVERED BY THE GERMAN INVESTIGATORS CONTAINED EVEN THE SLIGHTEST INDICATION OF ANY AMERICAN KNOWLEDGE OF OR INVOLVEMENT WHATSOEVER IN MENGELE'S ACTIVITIES, EFFORTS TO HIDE OUT AND AVOID DISCOVERY DURING THIS PERIOD, OR AT THE TIME HIS REMAINS WERE BURIED; AND F) DURING THE NEXT FEW DAYS BRAZILIAN AUTHORITIES CONTROLLING THE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS WILL COME TO A CONCLUSION ON WHETHER THE REMAINS ARE THOSE OF JOSEF MENGELE, BUT THAT THEIR INEPTITUDE WAY WELL LEAVE GERMAN, AMERICAN, ISRAELI AND OTHER EXPERTS UNCONVINCED OF THE VALIDITY OF THEIR FINDING EITHER WAY. END SUMMARY.

2. ACCORDING TO THE BKA REPRESENTATIVE, OFFICERS OF HIS AGENCY TOGETHER WITH COUNTERPARTS FROM THE STATES OF HESSE AND BAVARIA OBTAINED A WARRANT AND ON 31 MAY SEARCHED THE PERSON AND HOUSE OF HANS SEDLMEIER AN OLD MAN WHO WAS THE FIRST DIRECTOR AFTER WORLD WAR II OF MENGELE'S AGRICULTURAL MACHINE FIRM OWNED BY SEVERAL OF HIS SONS IN THE BAVARIAN TOWN OF GUNZBURG. THE SEARCH PRODUCED A WEALTH OF EVIDENCE CONSISTING OF LETTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHS BEING CAREFULLY SAVED BY SEDLMEIER'S WIFE, BASED ON WHICH A WIDE TRAIL LEAD TO NAMES, ADDRESSES AND POST-OFFICE BOX NUMBERS IN SAO PAULO.

3. BECAUSE THE INFORMATION SEIZED INCLUDED NOTES AND REFERENCES MADE AS RECENTLY AS THIS YEAR, AND THUS LEAD THE INVESTIGATORS TO SUSPECT THAT MENGELE MAY POSSIBLY STILL BE ALIVE, THEY FELT THEY HAD TO ACT VERY QUICKLY WITH THEIR FOLLOW-UP IN BRAZIL TO AVOID NEWS REACHING THE SUSPECTS FOLLOWING THE SEARCH, AND LIKELY RESULTING IN THE DESTRUCTION OF EVIDENCE. ACCORDINGLY, GERMAN INVESTIGATORS HAD NO TIME - IN THEIR WORDS - TO NOTIFY AMERICAN OR ISRAELI COUNTERPART AGENCIES WHICH HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH THEM.

4. AFTER COMING TO SAO PAULO IN 1967, MENGELE LIVED ON A FARM IN CAIEIRAS VERY CLOSE TO SAO PAULO, TOGETHER WITH GEZA JANOS STAMMEL AND HIS WIFE GITTE, TWO NATURALIZED BRAZILIANS OF HUNGARIAN ORIGIN QUALIFIED AS HARD-CORE NAZIS BY THE BKA. THE STAMMERS HELPED MENGELE FINANCIALLY, AND ALLOWED USE OF THEIR POST-OFFICE BOX FOR CORRESPONDENCE WITH HIS FAMILY, DONE THROUGH CODED LETTERS MANY OF WHICH WERE FOUND IN THE LATEST SEARCH IN GUNZBURG. STAMMER, WHO HAS A SON SERVING IN THE BRAZILIAN NAVY IS CURRENTLY AWAY IN JAPAN, THUS ONLY HIS WIFE GITTE COULD BE QUESTIONED AT THIS TIME, AND WAS FOUND TO BE HIGHLY EVASIVE AND UNTRUTHFUL. THE STAMMER RESIDENCE IS NOW, AS IT WAS IN 1967, AT AVENDIA DAS PALMEIRAS, 2900 IN THE SAO PAULO SUBURB OF JARDIM PETROPOLIS.

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5. IN 1969 MENGELE MOVED TO A NEW HOUSE HE BOUGHT AT

ESTRADE ALVARENGA, 5555 (NOW 5575) IN THE SUBURB OF ELDORADO, AND LIVED THERE UNTIL HE DIED IN 1979. THIS ADDRESS WAS ALSO FOUND AMONG NOTED DATED 1985 AMONG SEDLMEIER'S BELONGINGS.

6. MENGELE WAS ORIGINALLY GIVEN THE NAME OF DOCTOR PEDRO BY THE STAMMERS. IN 1969, A QUOTE FAMOUS, MUCH-DECORATED OLD NAZI AIR PILOT UNQUOTE BY THE NAME OF RUDEL INTRODUCED DOCTOR PEDRO TO ANOTHER NAZI COUPLE WOLFRAM AND LISELOTTE BOSSERT LIVING NEARBY, TO WHOM MENGELE EVENTUALLY REVEALED HIS IDENTITY AND WITH THEM HE DEVELOPED A CLOSE FRIENDSHIP.

7. DURING THE PERIOD 1967-69 ANOTHER KEY ACTOR CAME INTO THE PICTURE, AN AUSTRIAN BY THE NAME OF WOLFGANG GEARHART FROM THE CITY OF GRAZ, WHO LIVED IN THE SAO PAULO AREA UNTIL 1974, AND BECAME FRIENDS WITH THE BOSSERTS AND WITH MENGELE. IN 1974, GEARHART RETURNED TO GRAZ ALTHOUGH HIS MOTHER REMAINED BEHIND AND UPON HER DEATH WAS BURIED IN THE MUNICIPAL CEMETERY IN EMBU. WHEN GEARHART RETURNED TO GRAZ, HE LEFT ALL OF HIS BRAZILIAN IDENTITY PAPERS TO MENGELE, WHO CHANGED ONLY THE PHOTOGRAPHS, AND LIVED THE REST OF HIS LIFE WITH THE ALIAS OF WOLFGANG GEARHART. THE REAL GEARHART MEANWHILE DIED IN GRAZ ON DECEMBER 16, 1978 AND WAS BURIED THERE ACCORDING TO EVIDENCE CONSIDERED UNMISTAKEABLE BY THE BKA.

8. ON FEBRUARY 7, 1979, MENGELE, TOGETHER WITH THE BOSSERTS WENT TO THE BEACH IN BETIOGA, A SMALL TOWN CLOSE TO THE BRAZILIAN PORT OF SANTOS. WHILE SWIMMING, HE SUFFERED A STROKE, WAS PULLED UNCONSCIOUS FROM THE WATER BY THE BOSSERTS AND DIED SHORTLY THEREAFTER. NO AUTOPSY WAS PERFORMED, AND THE DEATH CERTIFICATE FOUND ON JUNE 5, 1985, IN THE BOSSERTS POSSESSION AND SIGNED BY A SANTOS DOCTOR ON FEBRUARY 7, 1979, LISTED WOLFGANG GEARHART AS HAVING DIED OF A STROKE SINCE AT THE TIME OF DEATH THE SUBJECT WAS THOUGHT TO HAVE ONE SIDE OF HIS BODY AND FACE PARALYZED.

9. THE BOSSERTS BURIED JOSEF MENGELE, ALIAS WOLFGANG GEARHART IN THE MUNICIPAL CEMETERY OF EMBU ABOVE THE CASKET OF THE REAL GEARHART'S MOTHER. WHEN THIS GRAVE-SITE WAS DUG UP YESTERDAY - JUNE 6 - EXPERT GERMAN SPECIALISTS WITNESSING THE EXHUMATION WERE CONVINCED THE DIRT AND OTHER MATERIAL COVERING THE GRAVE HAD NOT BEEN DISTURBED OR TAMPERED WITH IN THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS.

10. IN COMMENTING THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF WHAT MY BKA INTERLOCUTOR CONSIDERS CERTAINLY TO HAVE BEEN THE DEATH OF JOSEF MENGELE IN 1979, HE MADE THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS. BRAZILIAN LAW REQUIRES THAT FINGERPRINTS BE TAKEN ON ANY UNIDENTIFIED DEAD, HOWEVER, SINCE THE BODY HAD AN IDENTITY AS WOLFGANG GEARHART, NO FINGERPRINTS WERE TAKEN IN THIS CASE. MENGELE WHILE STILL ALIVE, INSISTED TO THE BOSSERTS THAT UPON HIS DEATH HE MUST BE CREMATED. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO BRAZILIAN LAW A BODY CAN BE CREMATED ONLY ON THE ORDER OF IMMEDIATE RELATIVES OR OF THE DECEDENT'S WILL. SINCE MENGELE HAD LEFT NO WILL, AND GEARHART HAD NO IMMEDIATE RELATIVES IN BRAZIL, THERE WAS NO ALTERNATIVE FOR THE BOSSERTS EXCEPT TO BURY HIM. THESE FACTS ARE ALSO SUBSTANTIATED ACCORDING TO THE BKA BY THE

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LETTERS AND OTHER EVIDENCE OBTAINED IN THE LAST SEVERAL DAYS, AND SPECIFICALLY BY A LETTER FROM BOSSERT TO SEDLMEIER DATED APRIL 29, 1979.

11. ACCORDING TO ADDITIONAL LETTER EVIDENCE OBTAINED BY THE BKA, MENGELE'S SON ROLF WAS INVITED BY BOSSERT TO COME TO SAO PAULO, AND HE DID SO LATE IN 1979 OR EARLY 1980. AT THAT TIME BOSSERT RECREATED FOR ROLF THE EVENTS OF JOSEF MENGELE'S DEATH, INCLUDING THE DROWNING AND THE BURIAL.

12. WHEN THE BOSSEJTS WERE QUESTIONED BY BRAZILIAN FEDERAL POLICE IN THE PRESENCE OF THE GERMANS ON JUNE 5 AND 6, THEY WERE IN THE WORDS OF THE BKA AGENT VERY COOPERATIVE AND SHOWED NO EVIDENCE OF EVER HAVING BEEN TRAINED TO RESIST INTERROGATION. THEY CONGRATULATED THE AGENTS FOR FINDING THEM SO QUICKLY - THAT IS IN SIX YEARS - SAYING THEY WOULD HAVE NEVER THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE. A GREAT DEAL OF LETTER EVIDENCE WAS SEIZED AT THE BOSSERTS' AND IS NOW IN THE POSSESSION OF BRAZILIAN FEDERAL POLICE. SEVERAL OF THE LETTERS WERE COPIES OF ORIGINALS SEIZED EARLIER AT THE SEDLMEIER RESIDENCE IN GUNZBURG. BOSSERT NOT ONLY TALKED A LOT TO THE POLICE AND SWORE THAT EVERYTHING BE SAID WAS TRUE AND ACCURATE, BUT ALSO DID A GREAT DEAL OF TALKING TO THE RAPIDLY GROWING MEDIA CORPS WHICH TRAILED THE BRAZILIAN POLICE TO HIS DOORSTEP.
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13. BOSSERT WAS NOT UTHE ONLY ONE WHO TOOK A LIKING TO THE MEDIA. ACCORDING TO THE BKA AGENT, SAO PAULO FEDERAL POLICE CHIEF ROMEU TUMA AND FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST JOSE ANTONIO MELO SPENT FAR MORE TIME AND EFFORT SHOWING OFF TO THE TELEVISION CAMERAS THAN THEY DID LOOKING AFTER THE EVIDENCE. AT THE BOSSERT RESIDENCE THEY FAILED TO WEAR GLOVES WHILE FINGERING THROUGH ALL THE PAPERS, EVEN THOUGH THE GERMAN EXPERTS PRACTICALLY THRUST THEM INTO THEIR HANDS. AT THE GRAVESITE, THEY FAILED TO RECORD OR PHOTOGRAPH THE REMAINS INCLUDING PIECES OR SHREDS OF HAIR AND CLOTHING IN THEIR ORIGINAL RELATIONSHIP, INSTEAD DUMPING EVERYTHING INDISCRIMINATELY INTO A LARGE CONTAINER, AFTER HOLDING UP VARIOUS BONES TO THE TELEVISION CAMERAS.

14. CONGEN WENT TO THE MEDICOLEGAL INSTITUTE ON THE EVENING OF JUNE 6, AND ASCERTAUNED THAT ACCORDING TO THE DUTY OFFICER AT LEAST, THE ALLEGED MENGELE REMAINS WERE INDEED THERE, AND THAT DR. MELO WOULD BEGIN TO WORK ON THEM ON FRIDAY, JUEEN 7, IN AN EXERCISE LIKELY TO LAST A FEW DAYS. ALTHOUGH THE GERMAN OFFICERS ON THE SCENE ARE CONVINCED OF THE STRENGTH OF THEIR RECENTLY SEIZED EVIDENCE THAT JOSEF MENGELE LIVED IN SAO PAULO FROM 1967 AND DIED HERE IN 1979, THEY CANNOT BE CERTAIN THAT THE REMAINS EXHUMED YESTERDAY WILL PROVE TO BE HIS. WHAT WORRIES THEM THE MOST IS THAT THE BRAZILIAN IDENTIFICATION PROCESS WILL BE A CURSORY OR UNSCIENTIFIC ONE, AND THAT WHATEVER CONCLUSION THEY REACH WILL NOT BE ACCEPTABLE OR CONVINCING TO EITHER THE GERMAN OR TO THE EXPERTS OF OTHER INTERESTED COUNTRIES.

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15. DENTAL IDENTIFICATION, ONE OF THE POTENTIALLY MORE RELIABLE MEANS OF IDENTIFICATION, WILL BE DIFFICULT ALTHOUGH NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO USE. THE EXHUMED SKULL DID HAVE SEVERAL NATURAL LOWER TEETH PRESENT, BUT THE UPPER JAW WAS COVERED WITH A COMPLETE DENTURE. DENTAL RECORDS BROUGHT BY THE GERMAN EXPERTS CONSIST ONLY OF DENTAL CHARTS MADE IN 1937, AND NO X-RAYS. THE BKS CLAIMS TO HAVE SPECIFIC EVIDENCE OF BONE CHANGES IN MENGELE, THE NATURE OF WHICH THEY REFUSED TO REVEAL, BUT WHICH MAY BECOME IMPORTANT WHEN ALL THE BONES ARE X-RAYED. ACCORDING TO THE SAO PAULO DAILY "FOLHA DE SAO PAULO" THIS CHANGE IS A CONGENITAL DEFECT OF THE RIGHT INDEX FINGER.

16. ANOTHER UNKNOWN FACTOR AT THIS TIME IS THE DEGREE OF ASSISTANCE HIGHLY SENSITIVE BRAZILIAN AUTHORITIES ARE LIKELY TO ACCEPT WITH THE EXAMINATION OF THE REMAINS. THE BKA REPRESENTATIVE FEARS THAT THE BRAZILIANS HAVE A STRONG, POLITICALLY MOTIVATED INTEREST IN A QUICK, POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION, AND MAY NOT STUDY OR WORK THROUGH THE EVIDENCE SERIOUSLY ENOUGH TO BE CONVINCING TO OUTSIDE EXPERTS. THE LATTER PROSPECT, GIVEN THE YEARS OF EFFORT WHICH HAVE GONE INTO THIS CASE, HAS LEFT THE GERMAN TEAM PRESENT IN SAO PAULO, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT, PROFOUNDLY DEPRESSED.

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