

UNCLASSIFIED

EUR/BNL
INCOMING

UNCLASSIFIED
IMMEDIATE

FRP:6.

STATE

ACTION: NONE INFO: DOMDS, DONOVA, NESA/IA/1, ODPB-B, ODPD-D,
ODPS-S, OPCTR/EEWE, RF, STATDICT, FILE, AF/SB/R-3, EUR/BNL, EUR/RR,
EUR/SA, ALA/PO/AF, CI/PROD, CRES/IRC, FBIS/WE-2, ICS/HC/EU, NIO/AF,
PPS/CLBC (15/W)

88 9394040 SUO

PAGE 001
TOR: 271536Z JUN 88

NC 9394040
VIENNA 07505

OO RUEAIB
ZNR UUUUU ZOC STATE ZZH
STU4944
OO RUEHC
DE RUFHVI #7505/01 1791511
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 271505Z JUN 88
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO RUEHIA/USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5953
INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3070
RUEBWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
BT
UNCLAS VIENNA 07505

FOR COORDINATION WITH DOJ/OSI
State

USIS

FOR P/P, EU-SCHLOEDER

STATE FOR EUR/CE

JUSTICE FOR SHER

E.O. 12356: N/A
SUBJECT: SPECIAL REPORT: MEDIA COVERAGE OF VERBELEN
CASE

THE PUBLICATION OF THE OSI REPORT ON THE VERBELEN CASE
RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION IN THE AUSTRIAN MEDIA.
HEREWITH A TRANSLATION OF EXCERPTS:

1. IN ITS JUNE 24 ISSUE, THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE
"WOCHENPRESSE" (CIRC. 50,042) PUBLISHED A P. 14 ARTICLE
BASED ON AN INTERVIEW WITH FORMER SS MAN ROBERT JAN
VERBELEN BY EDITOR ELISABETH HORVATH. EXCERPTS FOLLOW:

... TODAY, THE 77-YEAR OLD AUSTRIAN CITIZEN IS USING HIS
REAL NAME AND IS LIVING IN VIENNA'S 19TH DISTRICT,
UNDISTURBED BY ANY FEELINGS OF GUILT... THE FORMER
CONFIDANT OF THE BELGIAN GESTAPO, WHO IS STILL A NAZI
("I HAVE ALWAYS SUPPORTED THE THIRD REICH
IDEOLOGICALLY"), PUBLISHES HIS VIEW OF THINGS IN THE
APPROPRIATE MAGAZINES, SUCH AS "AULA", OR THE MAGAZINE
"MUT", WHICH WAS CHARACTERIZED AS "RIGHTIST-EXTREMIST"
IN THE WEST GERMAN REPORT ON PROTECTION OF THE
CONSTITUTION OF 1983.

FOR YEARS, HE HAS GIVEN LECTURES TO THE LIKE-MINDED ALL
OVER AUSTRIA. FOR EXAMPLE, HE APPEARED AT AN EVENT
SPONSORED BY THE FREEDOM PARTY (FPOE) AND THE
(RIGHT-WING EXTREMIST) NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NDP)
AT GOLS, BURGENLAND, AND AT AN FPOE EVENT AT
SCHAERFLING/ATTERSEE IN 1986... AND ONLY SOME WEEKS
AGO, HE PROJOLY SHOOK HANDS WITH WAR CRIMINAL WALTER
REDER (THE "BUTCHER OF MARZABOTTO")

HE HAS "CONTACTS WITH ALL OFFICERS WHO DID THEIR DUTY,"
AND HIS RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA AND SOUTH AMERICA
ARE ACCORDINGLY GOOD. VERBELEN SAYS TODAY: "I HAVE
HELPED MANY PEOPLE TO GO TO SOUTH AFRICA, IRELAND,
SPAIN, AND SOUTH AMERICA WITH FAKE DOCUMENTS" I AM

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2009 2008

RESTRICTED
CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

88 9394040 SUO

PAGE 002
TOR: 271536Z JUN 88

NC 9394040
VIENNA 07505

PROUD OF IT."

THE MURDER OF 101 BELGIANS, FOR WHICH VERBELEN WAS SENTENCED TO DEATH, DOES NOT DISTURB HIS SLEEP... VERBELEN'S LIFE IS A CRIME STORY OF CONTEMPORARY HISTORY. BUT IT ALSO FITS INTO THE PICTURE OF POLITICS IN POST-WAR AUSTRIA, WHERE REAL REPARATION AND COMPENSATION FOR VICTIMS WAS CIRCUMVENTED, WHEREAS NAZIS AND SS MEN IN SOME CASES WERE TREATED IN A WAY THAT BORDERED ON PAMPERING.

THAT THE AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE WAS NOT TOO SOUEAMISH EITHER HAS LONG BE SUSPECTED. BUT AT LEAST THE AMERICANS ARE SELF-CRITICAL NOW, MORE THAN 40 YEARS LATER...

... THE EX-SPY BOASTS HAVING PREVENTED THE SOVIETS FROM "POCKETING EASTERN AUSTRIA" IN 1950. AFTERWARDS, VERBELEN SAYS, INTERIOR MINISTER HELMER AND CHANCELLOR LEOPOLD FIGL SHOOK HANDS WITH HIM. ACCORDING TO THE SHER REPORT, HOWEVER, THE AMERICANS ONLY LEARNED OF VERBELEN'S REAL IDENTITY IN 1956. ODDLY ENOUGH, THE CIC NEVER SCREENED THE WAR CRIMINAL BEFORE... AFTER THAT, THERE IS ONE CONTRADICTION AFTER THE OTHER: DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE AMERICANS KNEW ABOUT VERBELEN'S MURDERS AND HIS SENTENCE IN BELGIUM IN 1956, AND THAT HE LEFT THE CIC ALSO BECAUSE OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN TROOPS, THE AUSTRIAN STATE POLICE HEADED BY OSWALD PETERLUNGER CONTINUED TO ACCEPT THE WAR CRIMINAL AS INFORMANT. TODAY VERBELEN SAYS: "I NEVER WAS A MEMBER OF THE STATE POLICE. BUT WHEN THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION FORCE LEFT, THE EASTERN INTELLIGENCE SERVICES STAYED ON IN AUSTRIA. I ONLY HAD TO WALK THROUGH VIENNA, I KNEW THEM ALL. AND I REPORTED ABOUT IT TO THE STATE POLICE."

IN 1959, WHEN VERBELEN APPLIED FOR AUSTRIAN CITIZENSHIP, WHICH HE RECEIVED ON JUNE 2, 1959, HIS PAST WAS UNKNOWN IN VIENNA ACCORDING TO THE FILES. NO MENTION IS MADE OF IT IN THE CITIZENSHIP FILE. TO THE CONTRARY: THE APPLICATION WAS APPROVED BY THE FEDERAL POLICE AUTHORITY IN VIENNA ... ON MAY 20, 1959. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE FILE DOES NOT INDICATE ANY INTERVENTION FROM THE UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 04 VIENNA 07505

USIS

FOR P/P, EU-SCHLOEDER

STATE FOR EUR/CE

JUSTICE FOR SHER

E.O. 12356: N/A

SUBJECT: SPECIAL REPORT: MEDIA COVERAGE OF VERBELEN

AMERICANS, AS THE FOREIGN MINISTRY PRESENTS IT TODAY. TO WIT, A CIRCULAR TO THE EMBASSIES ON THE VERBELEN CASE SAYS: "ACCORDING TO INFORMATION DATING FROM 1975, AMERICAN AUTHORITIES ADVOCATED VERBELEN'S NATURALIZATION." PERHAPS THEY ONLY DID SO ORALLY?

OFFICIALLY, THE AUSTRIAN AUTHORITIES RECEIVED INFORMATION ABOUT VERBELEN'S MURDERS AS LATE AS 1962. VERBELEN WAS TAKEN INTO CUSTODY AND HELD IN PRE-TRIAL ARREST FROM APRIL 11, 1962 TO DECEMBER 21, 1965. DURING THE TRIAL THE SS MAN PRESENTED HIMSELF AS A RESISTANCE FIGHTER AND WAS ACQUITTED BY THE JURY ON THE GROUNDS THAT HE HAD BEEN ACTING UNDER ORDERS. THE JURY'S VERDICT WAS OVERTHROWN BY A PANEL OF JUDGES AS A

RESTRICTED COPY

UNCLASSIFIED

88 9394040

SUD

PAGE 003
TOR: 271536Z JUN 88

NC 9394040
VIENNA 07505

MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE, AND THERE SHOULD HAVE BEEN A RE-TRIAL.

MANFRED SCHAUSBERGER OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, WHO WAS PUBLIC PROSECUTOR BETWEEN 1969 AND 1972, EXPLAINS COOLLY WHY THERE NEVER WAS A RE-TRIAL: "THE INTERMEDIARY INVESTIGATION YIELDED NO FRESH EVIDENCE. AT THE TIME WE HAD INTENSE CONTACTS WITH BELGIUM, BUT THE WITNESSES WERE UNWILLING TO COME TO VIENNA TO TESTIFY." ... IN 1978, THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE SHELVED THE FILE BECAUSE "THERE WERE NO PROSPECTS OF SUCCESS" (SCHAUSBERGER)...

IN 1962, VIENNA'S MAYOR FRANZ JONAS ISSUED AN OFFICIAL NOTICE WHICH REVERSED THE NATURALIZATION OF VERBELEN. VERBELEN APPEALED TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE COURT WHICH NULLIFIED JONAS' NOTICE...

THUS, ONE ODD STROKE OF LUCK FOLLOWS THE OTHER IN VERBELEN'S LIFE AFTER THE WAR. HIS ONLY SORROW IS THAT WHILE HE COULD STILL CAST HIS VOTE FOR THE VERBAND DER UNABHAENGIGEN (VDU), THE PREDECESSOR OF THE FREEDOM PARTY, BEFORE HIS TRIAL, HIS NAME WAS DELETED FROM THE VOTING LISTS AFTERWARDS, AS IF HE HAD BEEN CONVICTED.

2. ON JUNE 23, ORF TELEVISION AIRED A REPORT ON AND AN INTERVIEW WITH VERBELEN IN ITS "INLANDSREPORT" (EST. AUDIENCE 1.5 MILLION), IN WHICH VERBELEN SAID: "I WAS INTRODUCED TO THE AMERICANS... THEY DID NOT WANT TO KNOW WHO THEY WERE DEALING WITH, THEY SAID 'WE WILL CALL HIM MAYER, AND THEN WE WILL CALL HIM HERBERT,' AND UNDER THIS NAME, I STARTED TO BUILD UP A BIG AND ACTIVE SERVICE FOR THE WEST..."

O: "WHY WERE THE AMERICANS INTERESTED IN WORKING WITH YOU?"

"BECAUSE HITLER AND THE REICH WERE NO LONGER THERE TO FIGHT AGAINST, AND JUST AS THE RUSSIANS TRIED TO GET THE BEST MEN FOR THEIR INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, THE ECONOMY, INVENTIONS, THE AMERICANS ALSO TRIED TO GET THE BEST... (WHEN THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION ENDED) THE (AUSTRIAN) STATE POLICE WANTED TO KNOW NOW THAT I NO LONGER WORKED FOR THE AMERICANS WHETHER I WORKED FOR THE RUSSIANS OR BELGIANS ... WHEN THEY COULD NOT FIND ANYTHING, THEY ASKED ME WHETHER I HAD THE COURAGE TO GO TO THE IMMIGRATION AUTHORITY. I COULD HAVE GONE ANYWHERE, TO AFRICA, SPAIN, THEY WERE WAITING FOR VERBELEN..."

O: "IN BELGIUM TOO..."

"NO! AND NOW I ANSWER THE FOLLOWING: I WENT TO THE IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES, GOT THE RIGHT PAPERS, AND THEN I APPLIED FOR CITIZENSHIP. AND THEN THE STATE POLICE CALLED BELGIUM, AND BELGIUM SAID THEY DID NOT KNOW ANYTHING; THEY AGREED; ONLY VERBELEN CANNOT COME TO BELGIUM... THEN THE STATE POLICE CALLED ISRAEL, AND ISRAEL SAID THEY HAD NOTHING AGAINST ME; AND THIRD, THEY ASKED THE AMERICANS; AND THE AMERICANS SAID, OF COURSE, WE HAVE NOTHING AGAINST HIM, WE OWE HIM THANKS..."

SIMON WIESENTHAL OF THE JEWISH DOCUMENTATION CENTER IN VIENNA, WHO BROUGHT ABOUT VERBELEN'S ARREST IN 1962, WAS UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 04 VIENNA 07505

US15

FOR P.P. BU-SO-LOEDER

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

UNCLASSIFIED

88 9394040 SUO

PAGE 004
TOR: 271536Z JUN 88

NC 9394040
VIENNA 07505

STATE FOR EUR/CE

JUSTICE FOR SHER

E.O. 12356: N/A

SUBJECT: SPECIAL REPORT: MEDIA COVERAGE OF VERBELEN

ALSO INTERVIEWED BY ORF. ASKED WHETHER HE WOULD ADVOCATE DEPRIVING VERBELEN OF HIS AUSTRIAN CITIZENSHIP. HE SAID: "I MAKE NO PROPOSALS. AT THE TIME OF THE TRIAL, MANY WERE IN FAVOR OF SUCH A PROCEDURE."

3. IN ITS JUNE 27 ISSUE, THE NEWSWEEKLY "PROFIL" (CIRC. 93,800) RAN THE VERBELEN CASE AS COVER STORY ENTITLED "THE NAZI SPIES OF THE U.S.A." THE ARTICLE BY EDITOR HUBERTUS CZERNIN DESCRIBED VERBELEN'S ACTIVITIES DURING AND AFTER THE WAR BASED ON THE OSI REPORT. IN ADDITION, "PROFIL" PUBLISHED AN INTERVIEW WITH NEAL SHER OF THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS (SEPTEL), AND A MEMO BY VERBELEN ON HIS CONNECTIONS TO THE AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE WHICH, ACCORDING TO "PROFIL", WAS WRITTEN AROUND 1957. EXCERPTS OF CZERNIN'S ARTICLE FOLLOW:

"AMERICA'S NAZI SPIES"

BEFORE THE COLLAPSE, THEY MURDERED FOR "FUEHRER" AND "REICH." AFTERWARDS, THEY ENTERED THE SERVICE OF THE U.S. - ALSO IN VIENNA... (CZERNIN STARTS WITH A DESCRIPTION OF CRIMES COMMITTED BY VERBELEN DURING THE WAR, GOES ON TO ILLUSTRATE HOW HE CAME TO WORK FOR THE CIC, AND CONTINUES:)

... UNTIL 1956, ROBERT JAN VERBELEN WAS ON THE PAYROLL OF THE CIC IN VIENNA. FOR NEARLY TEN YEARS, HE RECEIVED IRREGULAR PAYMENTS FROM THE AMERICANS... ANTON SCHULZ, HEAD OF THE AUSTRIAN STATE POLICE, IS HIGHLY SURPRISED BY THE BIG EXCITEMENT CAUSED BY THE REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS ON VERBELEN'S CIC ACTIVITIES: "THIS IS NOTHING BUT AN OLD, REHASHED STORY," HE WONDERS.

INDEED, THE U.S. AGENT ACTIVITIES OF THE WAR CRIMINAL, WHO WAS SENTENCED TO DEATH IN BELGIUM, HAVE LONG BEEN OLD HAT. ONE COULD BASHFULLY CALL IT SOMETHING ELSE, LIKE THE PROSECUTOR IN THE AUSTRIAN TRIAL AGAINST THE BELGIAN WAR CRIMINAL, WHO SAID VERBELEN HAD BEEN WORKING FOR MANY YEARS AS AN INTERPRETER FOR THE AMERICAN MILITARY AUTHORITIES. OR ONE COULD SPEAK OPENLY ABOUT IT. THIS WAS MAINLY DONE BY VERBELEN HIMSELF.

VERBELEN, A FREQUENT GUEST AT EVENTS SPONSORED BY THE FREEDOM PARTY OR BY RIGHTIST EXTREMISTS, NEVER MADE A SECRET OF HIS AMERICAN CONNECTIONS. TO THE CONTRARY: WHENEVER POSSIBLE, HE WORKED AT BUILDING UP A VERBELEN LEGEND. VERBELEN AS PETER MAYER, VERBELEN AS ALFRED HEINRICH GUSTAVE SCHWAB. ... HE ALWAYS POSED AS AMERICA'S SUPER-AGENT, AS FIRST FIGHTER AGAINST THE BOLSHEVIK DANGER, AND CLAIMED TO HAVE SAVED AUSTRIA FROM A COMMUNIST TAKE-OVER WITH THE HELP OF THE WIFE OF A SOVIET OFFICER IN 1960. ... WHENEVER THERE WAS AN OPPORTUNITY, HE ELABORATED THIS ARTIFICIAL GESTALT, UNTIL IT BECAME A PERSONALITY IN ITS OWN RIGHT. WHEN VERBELEN SPEAKS ABOUT HIMSELF, HE DOES SO IN THE THIRD PERSON, AND TALKS ABOUT VERBELEN, THE UNTHANKED POST-WAR HERO.

THE SHOCK AND DIGNITY OF VIENNA CITY COUNSELOR CHRISTINA SCHIRMER ABOUT VERBELEN'S NATURALIZATION COMES PRETTY LATE, TOO. IN 1969, HE WAS AWARDED CITIZENSHIP BY THE VIENNESE AUTHORITIES, APPARENTLY WITH THE AID AND APPROVAL OF MEMBERS OF THE INTERIOR MINISTRY AND THE

RESTRICTED

