

CONFIDENTIAL

DOCUMENT ID: 28858667  
INQNO: DOC6D 00626639  
DOCNO: TEL 021011 87  
PRODUCER: ROME  
SOURCE: STATE  
DOCTYPE: IN  
DOR: 19870903  
TOR: 130025  
DOCPREC: P  
ORIGDATE: 198709031424  
MHFNO: 87 6023222  
DOCCLASS: C

HEADER  
PP RUEAIIB  
ZNY CCCCC ZOC STATE ZZH  
TOP5839  
PP RUEHC  
DE RUFHRO #1011/01 2461430  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 031424Z SEP 87  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8741  
RUEHIA/USIA WASHDC PRIORITY 6028  
INFO RUFHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 6074  
RUFHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA 8969  
BT

STATE DEPT. DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW  
 Retain class'n Change/classify to \_\_\_\_\_  
 Declassify with concurrence of \_\_\_\_\_  
after \_\_\_\_\_  
EO 12958, 25X \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 8/30/01  
IPS/CR/IR by [signature]

CONTROLS  
C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 21011  
USIA FOR P/FW, P/PFE, VOA/BRE  
FROM AMEMBASSY VATICAN/MESSAGE NO. 565/87  
E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
SOURCES METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B  
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
DATE 2001 2007

TEXT  
SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL JEWISH LEADERS MEET POPE,  
-- VATICAN OFFICIALS.

REF: A) ROME 20904, B) ROME 18879

1. (C) SUMMARY. INTERNATIONAL JEWISH LEADERS, IN TWO DAYS OF MEETINGS WITH SENIOR HOLY SEE OFFICIALS AND WITH THE POPE, CAME AWAY WITH A MAJOR PUBLIC RELATIONS VICTORY. THEY TURNED THE MEETINGS INTO POLITICAL, INDEED QUASI-DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS, RATHER THAN THE "RELIGIOUS ENCOUNTER" DESIRED BY THE VATICAN. THE JEWISH LEADERS SUCCESSFULLY PORTRAYED THEMSELVES AS PRIVILEGED INTERLOCUTORS WITH THE VATICAN ON MATTERS RELATING TO WORLD JEWRY -- INCLUDING ISRAEL. THE VATICAN WAS SUCCESSFUL IN DEMONSTRATING THAT IT IS SENSITIVE AND SYMPATHETIC TO INTERNATIONAL JEWISH CONCERNS. ON SUBSTANCE, THE JEWISH LEADERS DID MAKE SOME GAINS. THEY WON TWO

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
2000

CIA HAS NO OBJECTION TO  
DECLASSIFICATION AND/OR  
RELEASE OF CIA INFORMATION  
IN THIS DOCUMENT

CONFIDENTIAL

CONCESSIONS FROM THE VATICAN, WHICH PROMISED TO ISSUE A DOCUMENT ON ANTI-SEMITISM AND ALSO TO IMPROVE THE "MECHANISM" OF CATHOLIC-JEWISH DIALOGUE. ON THE KEY ISSUES OF VATICAN RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AND ON THE AFTERMATH OF THE WALDHEIM AUDIENCE, HOWEVER, THE VATICAN REFUSED TO BE PRESSURED INTO CHANGING ITS VIEWS. WE DOUBT, MOREOVER, WHETHER IN THE FUTURE THE VATICAN WILL ACCEPT THE JEWISH LEADERS AS PRIVILEGED INTERLOCUTORS ON THEIR POLITICAL AGENDA OF ISSUES RELATING TO INTERNATIONAL JEWISH CONCERNS, INCLUDING ISRAEL. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) WALDHEIM EFFECT  
-----

THE VISIT OF AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT **KURT WALDHEIM** TO THE VATICAN IN JUNE, AND HIS FORMAL RECEPTION BY POPE JOHN PAUL II, AROUSED AN INTERNATIONAL FIRESTORM OF CONTROVERSY, WITH INTERNATIONAL JEWISH GROUPS AND SOME ISRAELI OFFICIALS HARSHLY CRITICAL OF THE VATICAN. THE CONTROVERSY QUICKLY TOOK ON POLITICAL OVERTONES THAT INCLUDED SUCH ISSUES AS ANTISEMITISM AND THE LACK OF VATICAN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL.

3. (U) VATICAN RESPONSE  
-----

IMPRESSED BY THE EXTENT OF THE CONTROVERSY AND CERTAINLY NOT WANTING TO APPEAR INSENSITIVE TO JEWISH CONCERNS, THE VATICAN RESPONDED WITH CONCILIATORY MOVES. CARDINAL SECRETARY OF STATE AGOSTINO CASAROLI MET IN NEW YORK JULY 4 WITH AMERICAN JEWISH LEADERS AND SUGGESTED A FURTHER MEETING IN ROME WITH MEMBERS OF THE VATICAN COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH JUDAISM. THE POPE THEN WROTE TO ARCHBISHOP JOHN MAY, PRESIDENT OF THE U.S. NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS, ON THE SUBJECT, EXPRESSING HIS DESIRE "TO DEEPEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR ELDER BROTHERS IN THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM" AND REPEATING THAT THE HOLOCAUST IS A "WARNING, A WITNESS, AND A SILENT CRY."

4. (U) VATICAN VISIT  
-----

ON AUGUST 7, THE VATICAN ANNOUNCED THE UPCOMING MEETING IN ROME BETWEEN VATICAN OFFICIALS AND THE INTERNATIONAL JEWISH LEADERS, AND SPOKE OF A CONTINUING "RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE." THREE OF THE JEWISH LEADERS WHO HAD MET CASAROLI IN NEW YORK IN JULY PLUS SIX OTHER LEADERS OF JEWISH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS JOURNEYED TO ROME AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 1 FOR EXTENDED SESSIONS CAPPED BY AN HOUR-LONG MEETING WITH THE POPE. THE JEWISH LEADERS APPEARED DETERMINED NOT TO BE CONFRONTATIONAL, AND ISSUED PRESS STATEMENTS BEFORE THE MEETING EMPHASIZED THAT "WE ARE NOT HERE TO MAKE THE POPE APOLOGIZE".

5. (U) WILLEBRANDS, CASAROLI MEETINGS

CONFIDENTIAL

-----  
THE MAIN SUBSTANTIVE EVENT WAS A DAY-LONG MEETING  
(AUGUST 31) WITH CARDINAL WILLEBRANDS AND HIS STAFF OF  
THE PONTIFICAL COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH  
THE JEWS. REPORTS FROM SOME OF THE AMERICAN ATTENDEES  
INDICATE THAT AT LEAST FOUR HOURS WERE SPENT ON  
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 ROME 21011

USIA FOR P/FW, P/PFE, VOA/BRE

FROM AMEMBASSY VATICAN/MESSAGE NO. 565/87

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR  
SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL JEWISH LEADERS MEET POPE,

DISCUSSION OF THE WALDHEIM VISIT. THE OFFICIAL  
COMMUNIQUE (SEE REFTEL) INDICATES THAT THE VATICAN MADE  
TWO CONCESSIONS: IT AGREED TO ISSUE A DOCUMENT ON THE  
HOLOCAUST, AND TO IMPROVE THE "MECHANISM" OF  
CATHOLIC-JEWISH DIALOGUE. ON TWO KEY ISSUES, HOWEVER,  
THE VATICAN WAS ADAMANT: IT DID NOT CHANGE ITS  
OFFICIAL RATIONAL NOR APOLOGIZE FOR THE WALDHEIM  
AUDIENCE; AND NO MENTION WAS MADE OF VATICAN RELATIONS  
WITH ISRAEL. THE JEWISH LEADERS ALSO MET SEPARATELY  
WITH SECRETARY OF STATE CARDINAL CASAROLI, WHICH  
STRENGTHENED THE "POLITICAL" RATHER THAN "RELIGIOUS"  
ORIENTATION OF THE VISIT.

6. (U) PAPAL AUDIENCE  
-----

THE JEWISH GROUP WAS RECEIVED IN SPECIAL AUDIENCE BY  
THE POPE ON SEPTEMBER 1. SITTING AROUND A TABLE, EACH  
MEMBER OF THE GROUP WAS INVITED TO ADDRESS THEIR  
CONCERNS TO THE POPE, WHO LISTENED TO EACH INTERVENTION  
IN SILENCE. AFTER THE GROUP'S REMARKS WERE OVER, THE  
POPE MADE GENERAL REMARKS, THANKING THE GROUP FOR ITS  
VISIT AND RECOUNTING PERSONAL INSTANCES OF HIS  
RELATIONS WITH JEWS IN POLAND. ALTHOUGH THE JEWISH  
LEADERS BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER THE AUDIENCE, TRIED TO  
PORTRAY IT AS A KIND OF NEGOTIATION OR DIALOGUE, IN  
FACT IT WAS MORE OF A TYPICAL AUDIENCE, THOUGH A LONG  
AND DETAILED ONE.

-  
7. (U) PRESS CONFERENCE  
-----

A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE WAS HELD AT THE VATICAN'S  
PRESS OFFICE AND WAS ATTENDED BY NEARLY TWO HUNDRED  
JOURNALISTS - THE LARGEST IN THE POST'S MEMORY.  
PARTICIPATING WERE BISHOP WILLIAM KEELER OF HARRISBURG;  
FATHER PIERRE DUPREY OF THE VATICAN'S COMMISSION FOR  
RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS; RABBI MORDECHAI  
WAXMAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE  
ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS (IJCIC); AND DR.  
GERHARDT RIEGNER, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD JEWISH

CONFIDENTIAL

CONGRESS. THE MAIN ANNOUNCEMENT WAS THAT THE COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS WILL PREPARE AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT ON "THE SHOAH, THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ANTI-SEMITISM, AND ITS CONTEMPORARY MANIFESTATIONS". THE CONFERENCE STARTED HARMONIOUSLY, BOTH SIDES LAUDING THE GOOD FAITH, THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF AN EXTENDED AUDIENCE WITH THE POPE, AND THE PROMISE OF A DOCUMENT. IT LOOKED SO HARMONIOUS FOR A WHILE THAT RABBI GILBERT KLAPERMAN, PRESIDENT OF THE SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA, FELT CONSTRAINED TO INTERVENE SAYING THAT WHILE THE MEETINGS WERE LARGELY SUCCESSFUL, "ON SOME ISSUES WE HAVE AGREED TO DISAGREE AGREEABLY".

8. (C) MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR SHAKESPEARE.

-----

RABBI GILBERT KLAPERMAN AND GROUP PRESS SPOKESMAN GUNTHER LAWRENCE VISITED EMBASSY AFTER THE PRESS CONFERENCE ON SEPTEMBER 1 TO GIVE A PRIVATE BRIEFING TO AMBASSADOR SHAKESPEARE. KLAPERMAN SAID THAT WHILE THE GROUP UNDERSTOOD THE VATICAN'S STATED REASONS FOR INVITING WALDHEIM, IT DID NOT AGREE WITH THEIR VALIDITY, NOR COULD IT ACCEPT VATICAN'S RELUCTANCE TO FORMALLY RECOGNIZE ISRAEL, ALTHOUGH THERE IS ALREADY CONTACT AND EVEN VISITS OF ISRAELI OFFICIALS TO THE VATICAN. KLAPERMAN REPORTED THAT THE POPE LISTENED ATTENTIVELY DURING THE AUDIENCE AND SPOKE OF HIS REMINISCENCES OF LIVING NEAR JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN POLAND BUT HE 'DID NOT DIRECTLY ANSWER OUR QUESTION'. KLAPERMAN SAID HE WISHED THE POPE HAD MADE STRONGER STATEMENTS INDICATING THAT HE REALIZED THE ANGUISH OF THE JEWS OVER THE WALDHEIM VISIT BUT THAT, OVERALL, THE VISIT WAS MORE BENEFICIAL THAN NOT. THE POPE TOLD KLAPERMAN THAT HE WOULD LIKE ONE DAY TO RETURN TO JERUSALEM AND THAT HE REALIZED THAT ISRAEL WAS AT THE CORE OF MODERN JEWRY, AN ELLIPSIS, KLAPERMAN BELIEVES, THAT MAY LEAD TO PROGRESS TOWARDS EVENTUAL DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION OF THE JEWISH STATE. THE COMMUNIQUE'S  
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 ROME 21011

USIA FOR P/FW, P/PFE, VOA/BRE

FROM AMEMBASSY VATICAN/MESSAGE NO. 565/87

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR  
SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL JEWISH LEADERS MEET POPE,

SPECIFIC MENTION THAT THERE EXISTS NO "RELIGIOUS" BARRIER TO RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL WAS ALSO A POSITIVE SIGN, KLAPERMAN SAID. HE ADDED THE PROMISE OF THE DOCUMENT TO BE ISSUED AND AN IMPLIED EASE OF ACCESS TO CARDINAL CASAROLI, WHEN NEEDED, WERE VERY HELPFUL. (COMMENT: DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE, FATHER DUPREY MINIMIZED THIS ACCESS TO CASAROLI, SAYING THE COMMISSION WAS THE APPROPRIATE CHANNEL FOR RELATIONS

**CONFIDENTIAL**

BUT THAT OBVIOUSLY THE CARDINAL WAS 'INTERESTED'.)

9. (C) COMMENT I. IT IS OBVIOUS TO EMBASSY OBSERVERS THAT BOTH THE VATICAN AND THE JEWISH LEADERS VIEWED THE RECENTLY-CONCLUDED MEETINGS AS NECESSARY TO PRESERVING THE CHRISTIAN-JEWISH DIALOGUE WHICH WAS BEGUN SHORTLY AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL (1969). THE MEETINGS WERE A PUBLIC RELATIONS VICTORY OF SORTS FOR THE JEWISH LEADERS. THEY GAINED, IN EFFECT, FAR LESS THAN THEY HAD HOPED FOR IN SUBSTANCE FROM THE VATICAN. THEY WERE ABLE TO TURN WHAT THE VATICAN WANTED - AND EXPECTED - TO BE A "RELIGIOUS" ENCOUNTER, INTO A POLITICAL, INDEED AN ALMOST DIPLOMATIC EVENT. THEY WERE ALSO SUCCESSFUL IN PORTRAYING THEMSELVES AS PRIVILEGED INTERLOCUTORS WITH THE HOLY SEE IN ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THEM -- THE WALDHEIM CASE, VATICAN-ISRAELI RELATIONS, ANTISEMITISM. THE VATICAN, ON THE DEFENSIVE FROM THE BEGINNING, HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN DEMONSTRATING TO THE WORLD JEWISH COMMUNITY THAT IT IS NOT INSENSITIVE NOR UNSYMPATHETIC TOWARD INTERNATIONAL JEWISH CONCERNS.

10. (C) COMMENT II. IRONICALLY, THE JEWISH LEADERS HAVE WALDHEIM TO THANK FOR STIMULATING AND RE-ACTIVATING THE VATICAN'S INTEREST IN AND DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF JEWISH CONCERNS. NEVER BEFORE IN HISTORY HAS A POPE SAT DOWN AND CLOSELY LISTENED TO THE OPINIONS AND VIEWPOINTS OF SUCH AN IMPRESSIVE ARRAY OF JEWISH LEADERS. THE MEETINGS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY, IN THE LONG-RUN, CONTRIBUTE TO BETTER AND MORE SERIOUS RELATIONS IN FUTURE YEARS. THE JEWISH LEADERS WON TWO IMPORTANT CONCESSIONS FROM THE VATICAN - ON THE ANTISEMITISM DOCUMENT AND ON A NEW "SPECIAL MECHANISM" FOR DIALOGUE WITH JEWS. ON THE KEY ISSUES OF THE WALDHEIM AUDIENCE AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL, HOWEVER, THERE WAS NO MOVEMENT. THE VATICAN'S RECENT GESTURES TOWARDS THE JEWISH COMMUNITY SHOW THAT THEY FULLY UNDERSTAND THE HURT CAUSED BY THE WALDHEIM AUDIENCE. RELATIONS WILL SURELY IMPROVE IN THE AREA OF INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE BUT WE DOUBT THAT THE VATICAN INTENDS TO TREAT THE INTERNATIONAL JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS AS PRIVILEGED INTERLOCUTORS ON THE POLITICAL ISSUES OF MORE INTEREST TO THEM - INCLUDING RELATIONS WITH THE STATE OF ISRAEL.

SHAKESPEARE

ADMIN  
END OF MESSAGE

CONFIDENTIAL