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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
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TEXT
E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: PTER, ASEC, FR, TU, SY
SUBJECT: ARMENIAN TERRORIST TRIAL OPENS FEBRUARY 19 IN
- PARIS
REFS: (A) 84 PARIS 1656, (B) PARIS 48767, (C) 84
- PARIS 57308
1. SUMMARY: THE TRIAL OF THREE ARMENIANS ACCUSED OF BEING
THE MAIN PERPETRATORS OF THE JULY 1983 BOMBING OF ORLY
AIRPORT WHICH KILLED EIGHT AND INJURED NEARLY FIFTY BEGAN
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19. THE TRIAL IS EXPECTED TO LAST ABOUT
TEN DAYS AND TO HAVE DISTINCT POLITICAL OVERTONES. THE
DEFENSE WILL SEEK TO INCRIMINATE THE GOF'S POLICY TOWARD
ARMENIANS AND TOWARD TERRORISTS IN GENERAL. WHILE PROVI-
DING A FORUM FOR AIRING ONCE AGAIN ARMENIAN GRIEVANCES
AGAINST TURKEY, THE TRIAL IS EXPECTED TO POINT UP SPLITS
WITHIN THE ARMENIAN TERRORIST COMMUNITY. END SUMMARY.

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2. THE TRIAL WHICH OPENS FEBRUARY 19 IS THE CULMINATION OF EFFORTS TO BRING TO JUSTICE THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEADLIEST TERRORIST ACT IN FRANCE IN THE LAST TWENTY YEARS. WITHIN TWO DAYS OF THE BOMBING SOME 50 SUSPECTS HAD BEEN BROUGHT IN FOR QUESTIONING. THE POLICE INVESTIGATION RESULTED IN CHARGES BEING FILED AGAINST NINE ARMENIANS, SIX OF WHOM HAVE ALREADY BEEN TRIED AS RELATIVELY MINOR-ACCOMPLICES. ONE OF THE ACCUSED WAS ACQUITTED AND THE REMAINING FIVE GIVEN PRISON SENTENCES RANGING FROM TWO TO FOUR YEARS (SEE REFTELS B AND C). THE THREE ASALA (SECRET ARMENIAN ARMY FOR THE LIBERATION OF ARMENIA) MEMBERS ABOUT TO BE TRIED ARE BELIEVED TO BE DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR MANUFACTURING AND SETTING OFF THE ORLY BOMB. THEY ARE:

- -- VAROUJIAN GARBIDIAN, 31, SYRIAN CITIZEN. GARBI-
DIAN, WHO IS A REPUTED FOLLOWER OF THE LATE ASALA LEADER
HAGOP HAGOPIAN AND SUSPECTED OF BEING THE MILITARY LEADER
OF ASALA IN FRANCE, FACES CHARGES OF ASSASSINATION AND
ATTACK WITH EXPLOSIVES.

- -- SONER NAYIR, 23, TURKISH NATIONAL. NAYIR IS
CHARGED WITH COMPLICITY, SPECIFICALLY WITH PURCHASING
SIX BOTTLES OF BUTANE GAS ON GARBIDIAN'S ORDERS. SIX
BOTTLES OF BUTANE WERE USED IN CONSTRUCTING THE ORLY
BOMB.

- -- HOVANES (OHANNES) SEMERCI, 23, TURKISH NATIONAL.
HE IS ALSO CHARGED WITH COMPLICITY, SPECIFICALLY WITH
HAVING STOCKED AN ARSENAL BELONGING TO ASALA IN HIS HOME.

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3. THE TRIAL IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLEX AND HIGHLY POLI-
TICAL. THE DEFENSE ATTORNEY, JACQUES VERGES, IS **KLAUS
BARBIE'S** ATTORNEY AND HAS DEFENDED ASSOCIATES OF "CARLOS"
AND OTHER MIDDLE EASTERN TERRORISTS IN THE PAST. VERGES
HAS ALREADY ANNOUNCED HE INTENDS TO POLITICIZE THE TRIAL
AND TO TRY TO CALL AS WITNESSES NUMEROUS GOF OFFICIALS
INCLUDING FORMER MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR GASTON DEFFERRE,
MINISTER OF JUSTICE ROBERT BADINTER, AND EVEN THE PRESI-
DENT OF FRANCE. ALTHOUGH NONE OF THESE FIGURES IS LIKELY
TO TESTIFY, THE GROUNDWORK HAS BEEN LAID FOR ATTEMPTING
TO PUT PART OF THE BLAME FOR TERRORIST INCIDENTS ON THE
GOF'S "HESITANT" POLICIES TOWARD THE ARMENIANS AND TERROR-
ISM IN GENERAL.

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4. THE ESSENCE OF VERGES' ARGUMENT WILL BE THAT BY PUBLIC-
LY RECOGNIZING AS A FACT THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE (SEE REFTEL
A) AND BY NEGOTIATING WITH ARMENIAN TERRORISTS (AMONG
OTHERS), THE MITTERRAND GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGED THEIR ACTIONS.
(COMMENT: IT IS WIDELY BELIEVED THAT THE GOF HAS CONCLU-
DED AGREEMENTS IN THE PAST WITH TERRORIST GROUPS TO PROVIDE
SANCTUARY FOR TERRORISTS IN FRANCE SO LONG AS THEY REFRAIN
FROM ATTACKING FRENCH TARGETS.) THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF
SUSPECTED TERRORIST MONTE MELKONIAN ON TWO OCCASIONS WHEN
HE WAS APPREHENDED BY FRENCH POLICE WILL BE USED TO BOLSTER

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THE ARGUMENT THAT THE GOF MADE ITSELF A SORT OF ACCOMPLICE TO TERRORISM.

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E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: PTER, ASEC, FR, TU, SY

SUBJECT: ARMENIAN TERRORIST TRIAL OPENS FEBRUARY 19 IN 5. IN ADDITION TO THE FIREWORKS EXPECTED FROM VERGES' INTENDED LINE OF DEFENSE, THE TRIAL WILL BE FURTHER COMPLICATED BY PUBLIC AIRING OF ASALA'S SPLIT INTO TWO RIVAL FACTIONS. ASALA ITSELF REMAINS FAITHFUL TO THE "TRADITION" OF ITS LATE LEADER HAGOP HAGOPIAN, BUT SPLINTER GROUP, ASALA-MR (REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT), WAS FORMED IN 1983 BY MONTE MELKONIAN (ALIAS DIMITRIU GEORGHIEU) REPORTEDLY BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCES OVER STRATEGY AND CONFLICTING PERSONALITIES. IN A LETTER FROM PRISON, GARBEDIAN AND NAYIR RECENTLY DENOUNCED A PRISONER SUPPORT COMMITTEE FORMED BY ARA TORANIAN, A PRESUMED MELKONIAN (ASALA-MR) FOLLOWER. THE TWO PRISONERS EXPRESSED THEIR CONFIDENCE INSTEAD IN A SIMILAR COMMITTEE RECENTLY FOUNDED BY PASTOR HELVADJIAN, A MARSEILLE RESIDENT BELIEVED CLOSE TO THE MAINLINE ASALA.

7. BLENDED INTO ANY EVALUATION OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FEUDING WITHIN THE ARMENIAN TERRORIST COMMUNITY ARE QUESTIONS OF DOMESTIC FRENCH POLITICS, AND THE NEED TO CURRY POLITICAL FAVOR WITH THE LARGE AND WELL-INTEGRATED ARMENIAN COMMUNITY. IN WHAT CAN BE CHARACTERIZED AS AN UNACKNOWLEDGED ATTEMPT TO JUSTIFY THE GOF'S POLICIES, THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY TRYING THIS CASE WILL ATTEMPT TO DRAW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE FOLLOWERS OF HAGOPIAN, BENT ON BLIND TERRORISM, AND THE FOLLOWERS OF MELKONIAN, WHO TARGET ONLY TURKISH OFFICIALS OUTSIDE OF FRANCE. THUS A GOF POLICY OF SEEKING TO CONVICT THE ORLY BOMBERS IS CONSISTENT WITH LEAVING MELKONIAN AND HIS FOLLOWERS UNDISTURBED. THOSE ON THE RIGHT OF THE FRENCH POLITICAL SPECTRUM REJECT THIS "GOOD" TERRORIST/"BAD" TERRORIST SCENARIO AS UNPROVABLE AND TOO CONVENIENT FOR THE GOF.

8. COMMENT: IN CONCLUSION, THE TRIAL JUST BEGINNING WILL INVOLVE HIGHLY CHARGED ARGUMENT ON SEVERAL LEVELS. IT WILL PROVIDE A FORUM FOR DEBATING ANEW THE QUESTION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE BUT WILL ALSO BE USED TO JUSTIFY OR ATTACK THE GOF'S HANDLING OF THE TERRORIST PROBLEM. THE FACT THAT THE ACCUSED ORLY BOMBERS ARE FINALLY COMING TO TRIAL AFTER SOME 18 MONTHS, HOWEVER IS A WELCOME SIGN OF THE GOF'S INTENTION TO CRACK DOWN AT LEAST ON THOSE WHO COMMIT THEIR VIOLENT ACTS IN FRANCE. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE TRIAL. RSO HAS LEARNED THAT POLICE HAVE BEEN PLACED ON SPECIAL ALERT PARTICULARLY AT FRENCH AIRPORTS, IN ANTICIPATION OF THE POSSIBILITY THERE WILL BE TERRORIST RETALIATION DURING THIS TRIAL. GALBRAITH

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