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TEXT
SUBJECT: "MEDIA REACTION" NAZI GOLD/HOLOCAUST
ASSETS

SUMMARY: THE FOLLOWING TEXT IS A SELECTION OF
NEWSPAPER ARTICLES THAT HAVE APPEARED THIS PAST
WEEK ON SWISS "NAZI GOLD" AND DORMANT SWISS BANK
ACCOUNTS OF HOLOCAUST VICTIMS.
BEGIN EXCERPTS:

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1. ARCHIVIST IS NOT A HISTORIAN

THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND, WHO ORDERED THE SHREDDING OF FILES FROM THE WAR ERA, HAS WORKED SINCE 1993 IN THE HISTORICAL BANK ARCHIVES. ERWIN HAGGENMUELLER IS NOT A HISTORIAN BUT AN ECONOMIST. THE BANK SUSPENDED HIM FROM HIS WORK ON TUESDAY. THE

ARCHIVIST WAS OF POOR HEALTH. IN ADDITION, IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER HE WAS COMPETENT ENOUGH TO JUDGE THE RELEVANCE OF HISTORICAL MATERIAL.

THE FEDERAL BANKING COMMITTEE HAS REQUESTED A WRITTEN REPORT ON THE PROCEDURES FOR THE UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND'S ARCHIVES. ZURICH DISTRICT ATTORNEY, PETER COSSANDEY, ESTIMATES THAT ONE TO TWO LARGE GARBAGE BAGS FULL OF MATERIAL FROM THE UBS ARCHIVES WERE ULTIMATELY LOST.

THE FEDERAL COUNCIL CALLED ON THE INDEPENDENT EXPERT COMMISSION TO START ITS INVESTIGATION OF THE NATIONAL BANK'S GOLD DEALS DURING WORLD WAR

II. THE SPOKESMAN FOR THE SWISS NATIONAL BANK, WERNER ABEGG, CONFIRMED THAT HIS BANK WOULD WELCOME THIS PROCEDURE.

(FRONT PAGE TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/17)

2. AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

THE FEDERAL COUNCIL'S EXPLANATION ON WEDNESDAY ALLOWED A RETURN TO DIALOG. JEWISH REPRESENTATIVES FROM SWITZERLAND AND ABROAD WERE RECEIVED IN THE BUNDESHAUS FOR DISCUSSIONS.

FEDERAL COUNCILOR FLAVIO COTTI PROMISED A DELEGATION OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY THAT THEIR PROPOSAL OF A "GESTURE OF GOOD WILL" IN CONNECTION WITH SWITZERLAND'S POLICY TOWARD REFUGEES AND THE GOLD DEALS DURING THE NAZI ERA WILL BE REVIEWED. SWITZERLAND'S FOREIGN MINISTER EXPLAINED TO SENIOR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE U.S. ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE OF B'NAI B'RITH (ADL) THAT HE IS PLEASED THAT THE DIALOG WITH JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS IS CONTINUING.

AFTER A MEETING BETWEEN PARLIAMENTARIANS AND A DELEGATION OF THE ADL, THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL, JUDITH STAMM, PROMISED "TO RAISE HER VOICE AGAINST RACISM AND ANTISEMITISM WHENEVER IT IS NECESSARY." THE PRESIDENT OF THE ADL, FOXMANN, WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT THE SWISS PEOPLE WERE NOT OUTRAGED BY DELAMURAZ'S "UGLY WORDS," THE SHREDDING OF FILES AT UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND, AND THE "NAZI GOLD TEETH" AD IN

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"TAGES-ANZEIGER." ON THE OTHER HAND, HE SHOWED UNDERSTANDING FOR SWITZERLAND'S DIFFICULTIES IN DEALING WITH ITS DARK PAST. "THE DARK PAST IS SWITZERLAND'S ENEMY, NOT WE JEWS," FOXMANN, A SURVIVOR OF THE HOLOCAUST, STATED. AFTER THE FEDERAL COUNCIL'S EXPLANATIONS AND THE

DISCUSSIONS, HE IS LEAVING SWITZERLAND WITH A FEELING OF HOPE.

(TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/17)

3. POSITIVE RESPONSE ON DELAMURAZ'S LETTER

IN A LETTER TO THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS, FEDERAL COUNCILOR JEAN-PASCAL DELAMURAZ EXPRESSED REGRET ABOUT HIS STATEMENTS REGARDING BLACKMAIL ALLEGATIONS. DELAMURAZ STATED IN HIS LETTER TO EDGAR BRONFMAN THAT HE REGRETS HAVING HURT THE FEELINGS OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY. HIS STATEMENTS WERE MADE BECAUSE THEY WERE BASED ON WRONG INFORMATION. BRONFMAN FAXED BACK THAT HE LOOKS FORWARD TO A RETURN TO CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOG. THE BANKS, THE JEWISH COMMUNITY, AS WELL AS THE FREE DEMOCRATS AND THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY WELCOMED THE EASING OF TENSION. THE SOCIALIST PARTY EXPLAINED THAT DELAMURAZ'S WORDS OF REGRET CAME TOO LATE. THE SOCIALISTS PLEAD FOR THE BANKS BEING BROUGHT IN TO CONTRIBUTE

TO A

POSSIBLE FUND. THE SWISS PEOPLE'S PARTY IS IN FAVOR OF WAITING FOR THE RESULTS OF BERGIER'S COMMISSION OF HISTORIANS BEFORE THINKING OF CREATING SUCH A FUND. THE FEDERAL COUNCIL SEND NEW SIGNALS. IT ASKED THE BERGIER COMMISSION TO SET THE PRIORITIES ON SWITZERLAND'S GOLD DEALS WITH NAZI GERMANY AND ON SWISS POLICY TOWARD REFUGEES.

A DELEGATION OF THE "ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE OF B'NAI B'RITH" IS CURRENTLY STAYING IN SWITZERLAND. THE JEWISH ORGANIZATION WILL DISCUSS THE ISSUE OF DORMANT JEWISH ACCOUNTS WITH FEDERAL COUNCILOR FLAVIO COTTI AND PARLIAMENTARIANS.

(FRONT PAGE TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/16)

4. UBS GUARD WILL FLY TO WASHINGTON

SINCE TUESDAY, CHRISTOPH MEILI, THE GUARD WHO PURLOINED THE OLD FILES AT UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND, IS A PERSON OF PUBLIC INTEREST. HE TOOK THE FILES IN THE UBS SHREDDER ROOM AND HANDED THEM OVER TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ZURICH BECAUSE HE THOUGHT THEY CONTAINED INFORMATION ON JEWISH ASSETS FROM THE NAZI ERA. IN THE MEANTIME, MEILI IS THE SUBJECT OF A LEGAL INVESTIGATION AND HE WAS SUSPENDED FROM HIS EMPLOYER, THE WACHE AG FOR WHOM HE HAD WORKED FOR

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THREE YEARS.

MEILI'S PHONE IS RINGING OFF THE HOOK. EVEN ALFONSE D'AMATO CONGRATULATED HIM PERSONALLY AND INVITED HIM TO WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK. MEILI ACCEPTED THE INVITATION AND WILL FLY TO WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK.

EIGHT YEARS AGO, MEILI LEFT THE REFORMED CHURCH AND WAS ACTIVE IN SEVERAL FREE CHURCHES. HE BELIEVES IN THE BIBLE AND KNOWS LITTLE ABOUT THE JEWISH RELIGION. HE AND HIS WIFE VISIT SOMETIMES THE INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP AT LIMMATPLATZ.

(TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/16)

5. A FUND AS PROP TO OVERCOME THE PAST

IT IS LITTLE DISPUTED THAT SWITZERLAND SHOULD CREATE A FUND. HOWEVER, IT IS CONTROVERSIAL WHO SHOULD FINANCE IT. NOBODY IS CLAIMING ANYMORE THAT THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS REQUESTED FROM SWITZERLAND A FUND OF SFR. 250 MILLION. HOWEVER, THE WJC REQUESTED A FUND FOR VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST ALREADY IN NOVEMBER. ACCORDING TO THOMAS LYSSY FROM THE JEWISH COMMUNITY, THE SUM IS NOT SO DECISIVE. IT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAT THE FUND BE CREATED BY THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND NOT BY THE BANKS. THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO SHOW THAT "SWITZERLAND LAYS ITSELF OPEN TO THE PAST."

THE FUND CUTS THE GORDIAN KNOT OF THE PAST FROM DIFFERENT SIDES: IF THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES FINANCE IT, IT LOOKS LIKE A NATIONAL GESTURE OF BELATED RESPECT TO THE JEWISH REFUGEES SWITZERLAND REJECTED AT THE BORDER DURING THE WAR. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE BANKS FINANCE THE FUND, IT LOOKS LIKE AN ATTEMPT TO REIMBURSE ILLEGALLY HOARDED ASSETS IN A SOMEWHAT FAIR MANNER.

ACCORDING TO FRANCOIS STEIERT, SECRETARY OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY, THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY AND HAVE TO SHOW THEIR GOOD WILL TO REMOVE HISTORICAL TABOOS. STEIERT IS OF THE OPINION THAT THE AUTHORITIES COULD DO THIS IN MANY WAYS - TO PUBLISH THE NAMES OF PEOPLE WHO WERE REJECTED AT THE SWISS BORDER DURING THE WAR, FOR EXAMPLE.

(BERNER ZEITUNG, 1/16)

6. NO DATA ON DORMANT ACCOUNTS

THE UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND EXPLAINED THAT THE FILES A GUARD RESCUED FROM BEING SHREDDED DID NOT CONTAIN DATA ON DORMANT ACCOUNTS. THE

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RESPONSIBLE DISTRICT ATTORNEY, PETER COSANDEY, CONFIRMED THIS STATEMENT ON WEDNESDAY. ERWIN HAGGENMULLER, THE HEAD OF THE HISTORICAL ARCHIVES, IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SHREDDING OF FILES AT UBS.

HOWEVER, UBS HAS BEEN CONFRONTED WITH ANOTHER ALLEGATION. ACCORDING TO A REPORT OF A ISRAELI TV STATION, UBS PUT 2,600 ACCOUNTS ON A DISKETTE AND DISPOSED OF IT. IT WAS REPORTED THAT AN ANONYMOUS MAN FROM ISRAEL EXPLAINED IN AN INTERVIEW THAT A HIGH-RANKING, IN THE MEANTIME . VANISHED UBS EMPLOYEE TOLD HIM PERSONALLY ABOUT THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE ACCOUNTS. THE SPOKESPERSON FOR THE UBS, GERTRUD ERISMANN, EXPLAINED THAT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE TO PUT ACCOUNTS ON DISKETTES AND DISPOSE OF THEM. (DER BUND, 1/16)

7. HISTORICAL BANK DOCUMENTS DESTROYED

DESPITE A DESTRUCT ION BAN, HISTORICAL BUSINESS DOCUMENTS WERE RELEASED FOR WASTE DISPOSAL AT THE UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND'S HEADQUARTERS IN ZURICH.

UBS SPOKE OF A "REGRETTABLE MISTAKE" ON TUESDAY. A SENIOR BANK OFFICIAL ALLOWED THE SHREDDING OF HISTORICAL BANK DOCUMENTS. A GUARD WHO HAD COLLECTED SOME OLD DOCUMENTS AT UBS'S SHREDDING ROOM AND BROUGHT THEM TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ZURICH ON FRIDAY FORCED THE BANK TO GO PUBLIC. THE GUARD WAS WORRIED THAT THE BANK WANTED TO DESTROY DOCUMENTS WHICH MIGHT BE IMPORTANT IN CONNECTION WITH JEWISH ASSETS FROM THE NAZI ERA. THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ZURICH HANDED THE DOCUMENTS OVER TO THE ZURICH CRIMINAL POLICE. THE ZURICH DISTRICT ATTORNEY OPENED TWO INVESTIGATIONS AGAINST THE BANK'S SENIOR OFFICIAL, AS WELL AS THE GUARD. THE MAJORITY OF THE DOCUMENTS "RESCUED" BY THE GUARD ORIGINATE FROM A WELL BEFORE THE NAZI REGIME.

SWITZERLAND WILL ALLOW POLAND TO SEARCH FOR THE OWNERS OF THE BANK ACCOUNTS REGISTERED DORMANT IN 1962. THEY SHOULD RECEIVE THE SFR. 464,000 WHICH SWITZERLAND TRANSFERRED TO POLAND UNDER THE COMPENSATION AGREEMENT IN 1975. THE HEAD OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL'S TASK FORCE, THOMAS BORER, PROMISED THE POLISH AMBASSADOR IN SWITZERLAND TO SUBMIT TO HIM A LIST OF NAMES IN THE NEAR FUTURE. ON WEDNESDAY, BORER WILL MEET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JEWISH ORGANIZATION BNAI BRITH FROM THE U.S.

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THE REQUEST FOR A "GESTURE OF GOOD WILL" TOWARD THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST RECEIVED PROMINENT SUPPORT ON TUESDAY. THE DIRECTOR OF THE FEDERAL ARCHIVES, CHRISTOPH GRAF, VIEWS "GOOD HISTORICAL REASONS" TO CREATE IMMEDIATELY A FUND, WHICH MIGHT BE CO-FINANCED BY PRIVATE INDUSTRY.

ACCORDING TO GRAF, NOT THE DORMANT ACCOUNTS OF NAZI VICTIMS BUT THE LOOTED GOLD AND THE ASSETS OF THE PERPETRATORS ARE THE MAIN FOCUS OF THE INVESTIGATION UNDERTAKEN BY THE INDEPENDENT EXPERT COMMISSION ON THE ROLE OF SWITZERLAND'S FINANCIAL CENTERS DURING WORLD WAR II. MORE THAN A HUNDRED MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES, PR EXPERTS, AND

SPOKESMEN FOR THE BANKS CAME TO LOOK AT THE 35,000 METERS OF FILES AND TO INFORM THEMSELVES ON THE SPOT ABOUT THE "SEARCH FOR TRUTH."
(FRONT PAGE TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/15)

8. MORE THAN A FAUX PAS

THE CHAIN OF MISTAKES IN THE "SWITZERLAND AND NATIONAL SOCIALISM" MATTER IS NOT BREAKING OFF. AN AD IN YESTERDAY'S EDITION OF "TAGES-ANZEIGER" IS ONE OF THEM. THE CUSTOMER - SINGER AG IN NIEDERURNEN (CANTON OF GLARUS) - AND THE TAGES-ANZEIGER MEDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE APOLOGIZED FOR THE INCIDENT.

THE AD "IF NAZI GOLD TEETH CAUSE A HEADACHE: SINIPHEN WORKS." CAUSED OUTRAGE.
(TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/15)

9- DELAMURAZ UNDER PRESSURE

THE PRESIDENT OF THE FREE DEMOCRATS, FRANZ STEINEGGER, EXPLAINED ON SWISS GERMAN RADIO THAT A "DE-ESCALATION OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND THE JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS HAS TO BE REACHED." THE JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS DENIED HAVING DEMANDED A FUND OF SFR. 250 MILLION. THIS DENIAL OFFERS DELAMURAZ A "GOLDEN BRIDGE" FOR SOLVING THE CONFLICT. OBSERVERS IN THE BUNDESHAUS EXPECT THAT HIS COLLEAGUES WILL PRESSURE DELAMURAZ TO MAKE A CONCILIATORY GESTURE.

THE MAIN TOPIC IN THE SEARCH FOR A SOLUTION WHICH WOULD ALLOW BOTH SIDES TO KEEP FACE IS THE QUESTION WHETHER THE HEAD OF THE SWISS TASK FORCE, THOMAS BORER, REPORTED CORRECTLY THE CONTENTS OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH SENIOR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS.

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BASED ON BORER'S REPORT, FOREIGN MINISTER FLAVIO COTTI DESCRIBED THE WJC'S POSITION IN AN INTERNAL PAPER AS "BLACKMAIL." LATER, BASED ON THESE THREATS, DELAMURAZ MADE THIS CONCLUSION PUBLIC. BORER EXPLAINED ON TUESDAY THAT HE WILL NOT COMMENT ON THE INTERNAL PAPER.
(DER BUND, 1/15)

10. FUND WOULD EASE THE SITUATION

ACCORDING TO ROBERT HEYMANN, PRESIDENT OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN BERN, THE CREATION OF A FUND WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM BANKS AND THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES WOULD BE A STEP TOWARD EASING THE SITUATION, AS WELL AS A CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURE.

ON THE OTHER HAND, HEYMAN
N DOES NOT BELIEVE IN AN
APOLOGY FROM FEDERAL COUNCILOR JEAN.PASCAL
DELAMURAZ FOR HIS "ALLEGATION OF BLACKMAIL"
STATEMENTS. HE IS OF THE OPINION THAT IT IS NOW
TOO LATE FOR AN APOLOGY, SINCE DELAMURAZ HAS
REJECTED SUCH A STEP TOO MANY TIMES ALREADY.
THERE IS ANOTHER POSSIBILITY, HOWEVER, TO ASSUME
A CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOG BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND THE
JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS. "THE CREATION OF A FUND
WOULD BE SUCH A STEP." THIS FUND DOES NOT HAVE
TO BE HUGE AND, AT THE BEGINNING, IT COULD BE FED
WITH ASSETS WHOSE ORIGIN HAS ALREADY BEEN
IDENTIFIED. AS A JEW AND A SWISS, HEYMANN TRIES
TO TAKE A MEDIATING POSITION IN THE DEBATE ON
HOLOCAUST ASSETS. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH "BERNER
ZEITUNG" HE REFERRED TO A WORRISOME TENDENCY:
"THIS DEBATE MOTIVATES CERTAIN CIRCLES NEGATIVELY
TOWARD JEWS. THE OLD PICTURE OF THE GREEDY JEWS
AND SIMILAR ALLEGATIONS ARE RISING."

IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE GERMAN WEEKLY MAGAZINE
"DER SPIEGEL" ABRAHAM BURG, THE PRESIDENT OF THE
JEWISH AGENCY, DESCRIBED HIS IDEA OF A HOLOCAUST
FUND. ACCORDING TO BURG, SUCH A FUND SHOULD BE
CREATED BY ISRAEL AND ALL JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS.
THE LEGAL OWNERS OF HOLOCAUST ASSETS AND
SURVIVORS OF THE HOLOCAUST SHOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF THAT FUND.
(FRONT PAGE BERNER ZEITUNG, 1/14)

11. HOLOCAUST ASSETS

ACCORDING TO A SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE ASSOCIATED
PRESS, DESPITE THE HOLOCAUST ASSETS DEBATE,
NEITHER BANKS NOR INSURANCE COMPANIES IN
SWITZERLAND OR ABROAD REGISTERED NEGATIVE
REACTIONS.

(TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/14)

12. GOLD TRANSPORT DURING THE WAR

ACCORDING TO THE VICE PRESIDENT OF SWITZERLAND'S NATIONAL BANK, JEAN-PIERRE ROTH, SWITZERLAND CARRIED OUT A TOTAL OF 70 GOLD TRANSPORTS TO PORTUGAL AND SPAIN DURING WORLD WAR II. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH SWISS GERMAN TV, ROTH SPECIFIED THAT THEY WERE NOT TRANSFERS FROM THE SWISS NATIONAL BANK. PORTUGAL AND SPAIN EXPORTED GOODS TO GERMANY AND WERE PAID THROUGH THE REICHSBANK BRANCH IN BERN. ROTH STATED THAT "GERMANY REQUESTED THAT SUCH TRANSPORTS BE CARRIED OUT FROM TIME TO TIME." HOWEVER, SWITZERLAND WAS NOT ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE TRANSPORTS.

ACCORDING TO ROTH, SWITZERLAND HAD AN INTERNATIONAL CURRENCY AND, THEREFORE, CLEARING OF FINANCIAL DEALS WAS DONE IN SWITZERLAND. THUS, SWITZERLAND WAS NOT THE NAZIS' FINANCIAL CENTER. ROTH EXPLAINED THAT SWITZERLAND DID BUSINESS WITH GERMANS, AS WELL AS WITH THE ALLIES.

ROTH REJECTED ALLEGATIONS INDICATING THAT SWITZERLAND REQUESTED FROM GERMANY TO POSTDATE THE GOLD TRANSFERS. ACCORDING TO ROTH, THERE ARE NO TRACES OF SUCH A PROCEDURE IN THE NATIONAL BANK'S ARCHIVES.

(TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/14)

13. DELAMURAZ'S STATEMENTS

THE SOCIALIST PARTY, AS WELL AS SWITZERLAND'S GREEN PARTY REQUEST THAT THE FEDERAL COUNCIL DISTANCE ITSELF FROM DELAMURAZ'S STATEMENTS. THE SOCIALISTS EXPECT FEDERAL COUNCIL TO STOP "BLINDLY COVERING UP FOR THE BANKS." THE BANKS HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO SOLVE THE QUESTION OF ASSETS OF HOLOCAUST VICTIMS IN 50 YEARS AND COMPROMISED SWITZERLAND WITH THEIR ATTITUDE. NOW IT SHOULD NOT BE THE TAXPAYERS' TASK TO BE ANSWERABLE TO THEIR "SHAMEFUL PRACTICE AND FAILURES." THE FREE DEMOCRATS AND THE SWISS PEOPLE'S PARTY ACCUSE THE SOCIALISTS OF CHEAP POPULISM. THE COUNCIL OF STATES COMMITTEE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUPPORTS THE EXECUTIVE. THE COMMISSION WELCOMES THE FEDERAL COUNCIL'S INTENTION TO PUT THE HISTORICAL TRUTH ON THE TABLE.

FEDERAL COUNCILOR ARNOLD KOLLER STATED IN THE SWISS-GERMAN TV PROGRAM "ARENA" THAT THE DECISION ABOUT CREATING A FUND IN FAVOR OF HOLOCAUST VICTIMS WILL BE MADE SOON. HE ADDED THAT THE

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FEDERAL AUTHORITIES ARE READY TO DISCUSS THIS ISSUE. A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SWISS BANKING ASSOCIATION EXPLAINED THAT HIS ORGANIZATION IS WILLING TO DISCUSS ITS CONTRIBUTION TO SUCH A FUND WITH THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES.
(FRONT PAGE TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/11, ALL MAJOR SWISS DAILIES, 1/13)

14. D'AMATO'S NEW ATTACKS

U.S. SENATOR ALFONSE D'AMATO DESCRIBED SWITZERLAND AS "HITLER'S MONEY LAUNDERER." D'AMATO PRESENTED DOCUMENTS THAT SHOWED SWITZERLAND WAS ACTIVELY AND DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN NAZI GOLD TRANSPORTS. THEREFORE, THE ASSERTION THAT SWITZERLAND WAS NEUTRAL IS COMPLETE NONSENSE.

SENIOR REPRESENTATIVES OF SWISS BANKS ENTERED THE DISCUSSION ON HOLOCAUST ASSETS OVER THE WEEKEND. THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND, ROBERT STUDER STATED IN AN INTERVIEW WITH "TAGES-ANZEIGER" THAT THEIR CONSCIENCE IS CLEAR AND THAT THEY DO NOT WANT MONEY THAT DOES NOT BELONG TO THEM. AS A SWISS CITIZEN, STUDER BELIEVES THAT FROM TODAY'S POINT-OF-VIEW SWITZERLAND'S BEHAVIOR DURING WORLD WAR II WAS QUESTIONABLE. THEREFORE, COMPENSATION HAS TO BE REVIEWED. HOWEVER, COMPENSATION THAT GOES BEYOND HISTORICALLY PROVEN FACTS WOULD BE WRONG. THE HEAD OF SWISS BANK CORPORATION, MARCEL OSPEL, STATED IN AN INTERVIEW WITH "FINANZ UND WIRTSCHAFT" THAT THE PROBLEM OF HANDLING ASSETS OF HOLOCAUST VICTIMS HAS BEEN UNDERESTIMATED.
(FRONT PAGE TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/13, ALL MAJOR SWISS DAILIES, 1/13)

15. SWISS ISOLATION IS FEARED

SWISS DIPLOMATS DO NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT SWITZERLAND LIKE AUSTRIA DURING THE **KURT WALDHEIM** TIMES MIGHT BECOME ISOLATED. IF SWITZERLAND WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CONVINCE FOREIGN COUNTRIES OF ITS GOOD WILL IN THE DORMANT ACCOUNT ISSUE, DIPLOMATS FEAR BOYCOTT. THE CONFLICT INTENSIFIED AFTER FEDERAL COUNCILOR JEAN-PASCAL DELAMURAZ'S ALLEGATIONS OF BLACKMAIL. HIS STATEMENTS WERE OBVIOUSLY AN INTERPRETATION OF A REPORT BY THE HEAD OF THE SWISS TASK FORCE, THOMAS BORER. BORER DRAFTED THE REPORT AFTER DISCUSSIONS IN THE U.S. IN THE MEANTIME, THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS EXPLAINED THAT IT NEVER MADE A REQUEST FOR AN IMMEDIATE PAYMENT OF

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DOLLARS 250 MILLION. FOLLOWING THIS DENIAL, A POSSIBLE EXPLANATION FROM FEDERAL COUNCILOR DELAMURAZ WAS DISCUSSED BUT NO AGREEMENT WAS FOUND. ACCORDING TO DELAMURAZ'S SPOKESMAN, YVES SEYDOUX, AN APOLOGY FROM THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC ECONOMY IS OUT OF THE QUESTION. FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND JEWISH CIRCLES HAVE TRIED TO COUNTERACT THIS TREND. FEDERAL COUNCILOR RUTH DREIFUSS PROMISED THAT SWITZERLAND WILL NOT PLAY FOR TIME WITH THE SURVIVORS OF THE HOLOCAUST. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS PEOPLE'S PARTY, UELI MAURER, SHOWED LITTLE TACT. WHEN HE CALLED ON THE JEWISH ORGANIZATION TO "TURN AWAY FROM THEIR HYSTERIA." MAURER FEARS THAT THIS DEBATE WILL PARALYZE SWITZERLAND'S POLITICS FOR MONTHS. MAURER STATED THAT SWITZERLAND HAS MORE IMPORTANT PROBLEMS TO SOLVE. ACCORDING TO MAURER, LEFTIST CIRCLES ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF CRACKS IN "SWITZERLAND'S BANKING INDUSTRY."

(TAGES-ANZEIGER, 1/13)

16. THE SWISS DISAPPROVED OF DELAMURAZ TWO POLLS SHOW THAT THE SWISS DID NOT LIKE THE TERMS "RANSOM" AND "BLACKMAIL" USED BY THE THEN PRESIDENT OF THE CONFEDERATION. YET THERE ARE RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE CREATION OF A RESTITUTION FUND. A POLL TAKEN BY THE SWISS FRENCH SPEAKING TV SHOWS THAT 45 PERCENT OF THOSE POLLED BELIEVE THE JEAN-PASCAL DELAMURAZ'S STATEMENTS ARE "EXAGGERATED," AND 15 PERCENT SAY THE STATEMENTS ARE "INADMISSIBLE." ANOTHER POLL TAKEN BY "SONNTAGSBlick" SHOWS A MORE FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARD DELAMURAZ: 37 PERCENT OF THOSE POLLED SHARE HIS SENTIMENTS, 43 PERCENT DISAPPROVE OF THEM AND 20 PERCENT DO NOT HAVE AN OPINION. IN BOTH CASES, CRITICISM DOMINATES, NOTABLY AMONG WOMEN AND IN THE GERMAN SPEAKING REGION. IN GENERAL THE POLLS SHOW THAT THE POPULATION APPROVED THE POLICY TAKEN BY THE FEDERAL COUNCIL ON THE ISSUE OF MISSING JEWISH FUNDS. CONCERNING THE CREATION OF A RESTITUTION FUND FOR HOLOCAUST VICTIMS, 58 PERCENT OF PEOPLE POLLED BY THE ROMANDE JV ARE NOT IN FAVOR OF THE CREATION OF SUCH A FUND BEFORE THE RESEARCH BY HISTORIANS IS FINISHED. THE "SONNTAGSBlick" POLL SHOWS THAT 60 PERCENT ACCEPT THE CREATION OF THE FUND AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE EXPERT RESEARCH. REGARDING THE ISSUE OF WHO SHOULD PAY, THE ROMANDE TV POLL SHOWS THAT ONE OUT OF EVERY TWO OF THOSE POLLED BELIEVE THAT BANKS SHOULD PAY; 37 PERCENT WOULD MAKE BANKS AND THE CONFEDERATION SHARE THE BILL; AND ONLY 4 PERCENT BELIEVE THE CONFEDERATION

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ALONE SHOULD PAY. THE "SONNTAGSBlick" SHOW THAT 60PERCENT OF THOSE POLLED BELIEVE BANKS ALONE SHOULD PAY AND 7 PERCENT BELIEVE THE BURDEN SHOULD BE SHARED. WHILE A MAJORITY OF THE SWISS DISTANCE THEMSELVES FROM JEAN-PASCAL DELAMURAZ'S STATEMENTS, THE FEDERAL COUNCIL CAREFULLY AVOIDED THE ISSUE. ARNOLD KOLLER PLEADED FOR "RENOUNCING A WAR OF 'QUICK WORDS'" AND FOR ESTABLISHING TOGETHER GOOD WILL TO THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF MISSING JEWISH FUNDS. RUTH DREIFUSS'S POSITION CALLED FOR UTMOST PRUDENCE. ACCORDING TO HER, DELAMURAZ'S STATEMENTS HAVE "UPSET THE CONFIDENCE" THE FEDERAL COUNCIL IS TRYING TO CREATE DOMESTICALLY AND ABROAD.
(LE NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN, 1/13)

17. JEWISH FUNDS: RUTH DREIFUSS SETS OFF ON THE DEBATE

SHE BELIEVES THAT BERN MUST GIVE PROOF OF ITS WILL TO ACT. SHE FINDS DELAMURAZ'S STATEMENTS REGRETTABLE. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE ROMANDE TV, THE FEDERAL COUNCILOR SAID THAT DELAMURAZ'S STATEMENTS DO NOT REFLECT WHAT THE FEDERAL COUNCIL WANTS, NAMELY CLARITY AND TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY, HOPING THAT ONE DAY SWITZERLAND CAN CLOSE THIS CHAPTER OF ITS PAST. ACCORDING TO RUTH DREIFUSS, IT IS NOT ENOUGH THAT WE TELL THE WORLD THAT WE HAVE ACTED IN GOOD FAITH FOR THE WORLD TO BELIEVE IN US. "WE HAVE TO GIVE SOME PROOF OF IT, NOT MATERIALLY BUT IN THE WILLINGNESS TO ACT." TALKING ABOUT THE ROLE SWITZERLAND PLAYED DURING THE WAR, SHE MENTIONED THAT OTHER COUNTRIES SUCH AS FRANCE, SWEDEN, NORWAY, AND HUNGARY ARE FACING SIMILAR PROBLEMS AND THAT SOME COUNTRIES HAVE ALREADY CREATED RESTITUTION FUNDS. THE FEDERAL COUNCILOR SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT DISTANCE ITSELF FROM DELAMURAZ'S STATEMENTS BECAUSE THAT IS AGAINST PAST POLITICAL PRACTICE. AS A GENERAL RULE, THE FEDERAL COUNCIL DOES NOT CORRECT THE STATEMENTS MADE BY ITS MEMBERS. THE STATEMENT MADE BY HER COLLEAGUE, SHE SAID, SHOULD NOT LET US LOSE SIGHT

OF THE WHOLE PROCESS TAKING PLACE. THOMAS LYSSY, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE JEWISH COMMUNITY, SUGGESTED A MEETING IN THE U.S. BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFEDERATION, ARNOLD KOLLER, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS. THE SUMMIT WOULD SHOW TO THE WORLD THAT SWITZERLAND TAKES SERIOUSLY THE ISSUE OF JEWISH FUNDS.
(24 HEURES -JOURNAL DE GENEVE, 1/13)

18. DELAMURAZ CANNOT RESIGN DUE TO PRESSURE

A MEDIA CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE FEDERAL COUNCILOR DOES NOT SEEM TO GAIN STEAM. NOBODY WOULD LIKE SOMETHING THAT WILL LOOK LIKE CAPITULATION. THE PERSISTENCE OF INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE, FELT AS UNJUST, CREATES A SENTIMENT OF SOLIDARITY AROUND

DELAMURAZ AND THE TIMID MENTION OF RESIGNATION IN YESTERDAY'S "TAGES ANZEIGER" DID NOT FIND ANY ECHO IN THE POLITICAL SECTOR. EXCEPT AMONG THE GREENS, WHO, EVEN WITH THE GREATEST PRUDENCE, LONG FOR DELAMURAZ'S SEAT. A DECISION WILL BE TAKEN BY THE PARTY NEXT SATURDAY. FOR THE "TAGES ANZEIGER," THE ONE WHO FIRED THE FIRST SHOTS, THE

PRESSURE WILL CONTINUE UNTIL SWITZERLAND PRESENTS APOLOGIES. ALL THE HESITATION CAN BE EXPLAINED BY HOW THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE FEDERAL COUNCILOR IRRITATES THE ZURICH ECONOMIC SECTOR. USEFUL AMMUNITION WAS FOUND IN THE ROMANDIE IN A RECENT ARTICLE PUBLISHED BY "FACTS," CITING UP A LIST OF THE FEDERAL COUNCILOR'S FAILURES. HOWEVER, WHATEVER THE RESERVATIONS MAY BE TO THE ECONOMICS MINISTER'S POLICIES, THE POLITICAL SECTOR DOES NOT WISH A RESIGNATION. THE COUNTRY'S CREDIBILITY IS AT STAKE, THEY CLAIM IN BERN. IT IS SUFFICIENT THAT RUTH DREIFUSS CALLED DELAMURAZ'S STATEMENTS "REGRETTABLE." FOR THE SOCIALISTS, A RESIGNATION WOULD NOT BRING ANYTHING. IT WOULD JUST MAKE JEAN-PASCAL DELAMURAZ A SCAPEGOAT. CVP RAYMOND LORETAN SAID IT WOULD DISPROPORTIONATE, AND SVP MARTIN BALTISSER SAID THAT DELAMURAZ ONLY SAID OUT LOUD WHAT MOST OF HIS COUNTRYMEN THINK. WHILE IT IS RATHER UNLIKELY THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL RESENT APOLOGIES AS DEMANDED BY THE SOCIALISTS AND THE GREENS, A GESTURE FROM THE GOVERNMENT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF A FUND IS CALLED FOR. IT IS DIFFICULT TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS FROM THE CONTROVERSIAL AMOUNT OF SFR. 250 MILLION MENTIONED RECENTLY. IT COULD WELL BE ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO PRESSURE SWITZERLAND OR THE BUILDING OF A BRIDGE THAT WOULD ALLOW THE TWO PARTIES TO GRACIOUSLY GET AWAY FROM A USELESS CONTROVERSY. (24HEURES, CHRISTIANE IMSAND, 1/14)

19. UBS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT BOYCOTT

ROBERT STUDER, PRESIDENT OF THE UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND, DOES NOT BELIEVE THE CALL OF CERTAIN JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS TO BOYCOTT SWISS BANKS WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. ACCORDING TO HIM, A LEGAL BASIS

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MUST BE FOUND TO MAKE RESTITUTIONS. BECAUSE,
"FROM TODAY'S POINT OF VIEW, ONE CAN ASK
QUESTIONS ABOUT SWITZERLAND'S BEHAVIOR DURING THE
WAR, THE ISSUE OF RESTITUTION MUST BE EXAMINED,"
STUDER SAID.

(JOURNAL DE GENEVE - 24 HEURES, 1/14)

20. JEWISH FUNDS: COTTI'S EXPLANATIONS IN ROME

FOLLOWING HIS ONE-DAY VISIT TO ROME YESTERDAY,
FEDERAL COUNCILOR FLAVIO COTTI CHARACTERIZED
SWISS-ITALIAN RELATIONS AS A "TRUE FRIENDSHIP",
WITH "EXCELLENT UNDERSTANDING." COTTI FOCUSED ON

THOSE ISSUES THAT ARE WORKING, EVEN IF SLOWLY,
SUCH AS SWISS RELATIONS WITH THE EU, THE PROPOSAL
FOR NATIONAL SERVICE FOR DUAL NATIONALS, AND THE
EQUIVALENCE OF UNIVERSITY DEGREES. HE DID NOT
BRING UP BILATERAL ISSUES THAT MAY BE SOMEHOW

IRKSOME. WITH HIS ITALIAN COUNTERPART, FLAVIO
COTTI MENTIONED THE ISSUE OF JEWISH MISSING FUNDS
IN SWITZERLAND AND TRIED TO EXPLAIN THE SWISS
POSITION. HE REITERATED "THE SWISS STRONG WILL
DEFINITELY TO CLARIFY THIS DIFFICULT PERIOD OF ITS
HISTORY WITHOUT WITHDRAWING INTO ITSELF AND WITH
THE COOPERATION OF EXPERTS." HIS WAS A STRONG
"GLASSNOST" CAMPAIGN TO REFURBISH THE PRESTIGE OF
THE COUNTRY AND TO DEFEND THE SWISS BANKING
OPERATIONS THREATENED BY THE ACCUSATIONS FROM THE
WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS AND THE JEWISH AGENCY. HE
EVEN STRESSED THAT, EACH TIME HE WILL HAVE THE
OPPORTUNITY, HE WILL TELL HIS FOREIGN
COUNTERPARTS ABOUT THE FEDERAL COUNCIL'S POLICY
REGARDING THIS ISSUE, EVEN IF THE QUESTION IS NOT
BROUGHT UP.

(LE NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN, 1/15)

21. INCREASE OF ANTISEMITISM

THE NUMBER OF LETTERS WITH A CLEAR ANTISEMITIC
SLANT RECEIVED BY JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS IN
SWITZERLAND IS INCREASING. SINCE THE BEGINNING OF
THE YEAR, THE FEDERATION OF SWISS JEWISH
COMMUNITIES (FSJC) HAS RECEIVED ABOUT 50 SUCH
INSULTING LETTERS. ACCORDING TO THE SECRETARY
MARTIN ROSENFELD, THE STATEMENTS MADE BY FEDERAL
COUNCILOR JEAN-PASCAL DELAMURAZ HAVE CONTRIBUTED
TO THE INCREASE OF ANTISEMITIC FEELINGS. HOWEVER,
THE FEDERAL COUNCILOR IS NOT THE ONLY ONE TO BE
RESPONSIBLE. THE HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE ZURICH

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JEWISH COMMUNITY, SIGI FEIGEL, SAID THAT THE JEWISH WORLD CONGRESS HAS PART OF THE RESPONSIBILITY ALSO. THE ZURICH JEWISH COMMUNITY HAS ALSO RECEIVED HOSTILE LETTERS AND TELEPHONE CALLS. BY CONTRAST, THE GENEVA JEWISH COMMUNITY, THE BIGGEST IN THE ROMANDIE, HAS NOT RECEIVED ANY SUCH MESSAGE. THE SAME IS TRUE FOR THE COMMUNITIES IN BERN AND LUCERNE. THE PRESIDENT OF THE BERN COMMUNITY EVEN MENTIONS A LETTER IN WHICH A CHECK FOR SFR 2,000 WAS ENCLOSED FOR "FUNDS TO THE HOLOCAUST VICTIMS."

(LE NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN - LE MATIN, 1/15)

22. OUR FRIENDS.... FROM AMERICA

THE ISSUE OF MISSING JEWISH FUNDS HAS BECOME A STREAM THAT SWEEPS ALONG A GREAT DEAL OF INFORMATION MORE OR LESS CREDIBLE, VERIFIABLE AND RESPECTABLE. THE FACTS ARE MIXED UP WITH THEIR INTERPRETATIONS. TO SORT IT ALL OUT BECOMES A DESPERATE EXERCISE... THE QUESTION TO BE ASKED IS: WHERE IS THE TRUTH? AT THE MOMENT, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND IT. WISDOM TELLS US TO WAIT FOR THE FACTS. AND TO THIS EFFECT THE FEDERAL COUNCIL AND THE PARLIAMENT HAVE ALREADY TAKEN THE NECESSARY MEASURES. DURING THIS WAITING PERIOD, IT WOULD NOT BE A BAD IDEA FOR EVERYBODY TO KEEP CALM AND TO BE PRUDENT. IN THIS REGARD, ONE HAS TO APPRECIATE THE STATEMENTS MADE BY THE U.S.

AMBASSADOR TO BERN, MADELEINE MAY KUNIN, LAST SATURDAY IN THE "NZ.," AND THAT OF U.S. UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE STUART EIZENSTAT. IN SUBSTANCE, BOTH OF THEM BELIEVE THAT BERN HAS TAKEN THE APPROPRIATE MEASURES. FOLLOWING RUTH DREIFUSS' STAB IN THE BACK TO HER COLLEAGUE JEAN-PASCAL DELAMURAZ IN THE "SONNTAGSZEITUNG," SUCH A LESSON OF PRUDENCE FROM OUR FRIENDS FROM AMERICA IS WELCOME.

(LE MATIN, JEAN-PIERRE GATTONI, 1/15)

23. LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

IF IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN FOR THE BLUNDER MADE BY THE UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND, ONE COULD HAVE SAID THAT THE CLOUDS BLOCKING THE SWISS SKIES WERE ABOUT TO GO AWAY. THE UNEXPECTED SUPPORT RECEIVED FROM UNDER-SECRETARY OF COMMERCE STUART EIZENSTAT, GAVE BERN A RESPITE. A SIGNAL OF

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APPEASEMENT ALSO, SHOWING THAT APOLOGIES FROM THE FEDERAL COUNCIL DUE TO THE STATEMENTS MADE BY JEAN-PASCAL DELAMURAZ WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN TAKEN AS HUMILIATING CAPITULATION. IN THE MEANTIME, THE FEDERAL ARCHIVES ARE WIDE OPEN TO RESEARCHERS IN CHARGE OF SHEDDING MORE LIGHT INTO THE ISSUE OF MISSING JEWISH FUNDS. THEY WILL HAVE TO GO THROUGH ABOUT 6,500 BOXES CONTAINING FILES. IT WILL TAKE A HISTORIAN ABOUT 50 YEARS, TO MAKE SURE NOTHING WAS MISSED. CONCERNING THE ISSUE OF RESTITUTION TO THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST, NATIONAL COUNCILOR LILI NABHOLZ (FDP/ZH), IS IN FAVOR OF THE CREATION OF A FUND. HOWEVER, GIVING MISSING JEWISH FUNDS TO HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS AS PROPOSED BY THE FDP, NEEDS APPROPRIATE LEGISLATION. IT COULD TAKE ONE YEAR. FOR CHRISIOPH GRAF, DIRECTOR OF THE FEDERAL ARCHIVES, THAT WOULD BE TOO LONG. THE CONFEDERATION SHOULD MAKE AN IMMEDIATE GESTURE, GRAF BELIEVES. ON THE PARLIAMENTARY SIDE, THE PRESIDENTS OF THE BOTH CHAMBERS OF PARLIAMENT JUDITH STAMM AND EDOUARD DELALAY INTEND TO

CONTINUE DEBATING THE ISSUE. ACCORDING TO THEM, IT IS NECESSARY THAT PARLIAMENT CONTINUE THE DEBATE ON ASSETS WITHOUT OWNERSHIP THROUGH BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN PARTNERS. THE TWO PRESIDENTS HAVE INVITED THE PRESIDENTS OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND LEGAL COMMISSIONS TO A MEETING ON JANUARY 21.

(24 HEURES, CHRISTIANE IMSAND, 1/15)

24. DELAMURAZ CALMS DOWN THE SITUATION

IN THIS PAINFUL ISSUE OF THE MISSING JEWISH FUNDS, WHO IS THE ONE TO CALM DOWN THINGS? JEAN-PASCAL DELAMURAZ! DURING SEVERAL DAYS, MANY WERE THOSE WHO PUT HIM UNDER ACCUSATION FOR TWO WORDS IN FACT MOST UNFORTUNATE: "RANSOM" AND "BLACKMAIL." HOW MANY ARE THOSE WHO TOOK THE TWO WORDS OUT OF CONTEXT TO MISUSE THEM AS A VERBAL DECLARATION OF WAR? NOW, THEY SHOULD BE ON THEIR GUARD SINCE THE FEDERAL COUNCILOR OFFICIALLY REGRETTED THE FACT THAT HE COULD HAVE HURT ANYBODY. THE MEDIA ARE JUST OVERWHELMED. HOW CAN THEY ACTUALLY INFORM AUDIENCES ABOUT WHAT IS THE TRUTH OR WHAT IS FALSE? JUST CONSIDER: THE DISASTROUS SILENCE FROM THE BANKS, THEIR MONUMENTAL BLUNDERS, SENATOR D'AMATO'S POLITICAL EGO, THE JEWISH WORLD CONGRESS' MILITANT

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INTRANSIGENCE AND RUTH DREIFUSS REGRETTABLY MAKING JEAN-PASCAL DELAMURAZ TRIP. IT'S HAVOC! TO CALM THINGS DOWN? EVEN THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION UNDERSTOOD THAT. THROUGH THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF COMMERCE STUART EIZENSTAT, OR U.S. AMBASSADOR MADELEINE MAY KUNIN, WHO BOTH HAD SENSIBLE AND APPEASING STATEMENTS TO MAKE.

BECAUSE THE FEDERAL COUNCIL, THE PARLIAMENT, THE BANKS MUST SHED LIGHT ON THIS ISSUE. BUT CALMLY. (LE MATIN, ANTOINE EXCHAQUET, 1/16)

25. UBS DOCUMENTS DESTROYED: A HISTORIAN IS RESPONSIBLE

THE UBS EMPLOYEE WHO DECIDED TO DESTROY CERTAIN BANK ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS IS A HISTORIAN. THE MAN EXAMINED ARCHIVES FROM THE CONFEDERATE BANK, TAKEN OVER BY THE UBS IN 1945, TAKING THOSE WHICH, ACCORDING TO HIM, DID NOT HAVE ANY INTEREST. IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS FROM A HISTORIC POINT OF VIEW WERE NOT DESTROYED. THE UBS SPOKESPERSON, GERTRUD ERISMANN-PEYER, SAID THAT NO DOCUMENT CONCERNING CLIENTS WAS DESTROYED. (24 HEURES, 1/16)

26. BERN KNEW THE ORIGIN OF THE GOLD

A FRENCH PUBLICATION, "L'EVENEMENT DU JEUDI," TO BE ISSUED TODAY, SHOWS DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN SENATOR D'AMATO'S ARCHIVES ACCORDING TO WHICH SWITZERLAND CLEARLY KNEW THE ORIGIN OF THE GOLD BOUGHT FROM THE NAZIS. THE FIRST TEXT SHOWS THAT ALL MONETARY STATISTICS GAVE PROOF THAT GERMAN GOLD ASSETS HAD BEEN USED UP BY 1943 IN THE WAR EFFORTS. CONSEQUENTLY, IF SWITZERLAND TOOK 100 TONS OF GERMAN GOLD IN 1943, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE THAT THEY DID NOT KNOW THAT GOLD HAD BEEN STOLEN FROM OCCUPIED COUNTRIES. THE SECOND DOCUMENT SUPPLIES FIGURES CLEARLY SUPPORTING THE FORMER CLAIM, THUS POINTING TO THE ILL FAITH OF THE SWISS. (24 HEURES, 1/16)

27. JEWISH FUNDS ALSO MADE U.S. STATES WEALTHY

FROM PORTUGAL TO SWEDEN, FROM THE U.S. TO GREAT BRITAIN, JEWISH FUNDS AND NAZI GOLD CREATE SERIOUS PROBLEMS. NEW YORK STATE HAD BANKS

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DEPOSIT DOLLARS 3.6 BILLION IN UNCLAIMED ASSETS. EVEN IF IT IS DIFFICULT TO ADVANCE CONCRETE FIGURES, IT IS CERTAIN THAT, WITH THE FIRST RUMORS OF WAR, ASSETS DEPOSITED IN SWITZERLAND AND IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WERE SUBSEQUENTLY PLACED IN THE U.S. HUNGARIANS, ENGLISH, GERMANS, JEWS AND CHRISTIANS, ALL TRIED TO FIND A SAFE PLACE FOR THEIR LAST PENNIES IN FOREIGN BANKS, ESPECIALLY THOSE HAVING HEADQUARTERS IN NEW YORK. ALTHOUGH POLITICIANS, HISTORIANS AND JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS ESSENTIALLY FOCUS ON WHAT HAPPENED IN SWITZERLAND, QUESTIONS ARE BEING POSED ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED IN THE U.S. WILLIAM SCHLINGER, A HUNGARIAN JEW, HAD AN ACCOUNT WITH DOLLARS 3,717 AT THE NEW YORK OFFICE OF THE SWISS BANK CORPORATION. HIS WIDOW, RUDOLFINE, IS NOW CLAIMING \$50,000. THE SWISS BANK, ADMITTING THAT THE ACCOUNT MAY HAVE EXISTED, SAYS THERE IS NO CURRENT INFORMATION ON IT, SINCE THE BANKS DESTROY ARCHIVES EVERY TWENTY YEARS. (AMERICAN LAW REQUIRES ONLY SEVEN YEARS). THE BANK SUGGESTS THAT AN ANSWER MAY BE FOUND WITH THE NEW YORK OR WASHINGTON AUTHORITIES! THE BANK IS INSISTENT THAT NO DORMANT ACCOUNT HAS BEEN WITHHELD. THE SAME IS TRUE FOR OTHER BANKS IN NEW YORK. ACCORDING TO AMERICAN LAW, AN ACCOUNT THAT SHOWS NO ACTIVITY FOR SOME TIME (FIVE YEARS IN NEW YORK) MUST BE TURNED OVER TO STATE AGENCIES. CYNTHIA MUNK, SPOKESPERSON FOR THE NEW YORK DORMANT ACCOUNTS SERVICE, SAID IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ESTIMATE HOW MUCH BELONGED TO HOLOCAUST VICTIMS. THE ONLY INDICATION AVAILABLE IS THAT THE STATE RECEIVED FROM BANKS DOLLARS 3.6 MILLION. WAS MR. SCHLINGER'S MONEY PART OF THAT AMOUNT? THERE IS ALSO THE QUESTION OF ASSETS BELONGING TO THOSE WHO DIED DURING THE WAR AND THAT WERE CONFISCATED BY WASHINGTON AS "ASSETS FROM THE ENEMY." IT WAS ONLY IN 1954 WHEN THE U.S. CONGRESS DEBATED THIS ISSUE. IT WAS THEN DECIDED THAT JEWISH CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS WOULD BE AUTHORIZED TO RECEIVE THE MONEY AND BE USED TO AID HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS. THE AMOUNT WAS ESTIMATED AT DOLLARS 3 MILLION - A MUCH SMALLER AMOUNT THAN THAT DEMANDED FROM SWITZERLAND. HERMAN A. GRAY, FROM THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE, EXPLAINED THAT THE AMOUNT REPRESENTS "MORE OR LESS THE SAVINGS OF THOSE WHO, FEELING PERSECUTED AND HOPING TO BE ABLE TO EMIGRATE TO THE U.S. PLACED THEIR REMAINING SAVINGS IN THE U.S." THE JEWISH RESTITUTION ORGANIZATION (JRO)

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WAS GIVEN ONE YEAR TO FIND AND DOCUMENT CLAIMS. THE JRO FINDS 7,000 CLAIMANTS, BUT FOR LACK OF EVIDENCE, ONLY 1,800 WERE HONORED. FINALLY ONLY 500 WERE CONSIDERED ADMISSIBLE BY AMERICAN AUTHORITIES. IN 1962, FOLLOWING YEARS OF SCUFFLE, CONGRESS AND THE JRO AGREED THAT THE JEWISH ORGANIZATION WOULD RECEIVE \$500,000. AS A FAVOR, THE JEWISH ORGANIZATION WOULD NOT HAVE TO SUPPLY EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE CLAIMS. EVEN IF THERE WERE NO EVIDENCE, SOME QUESTIONS DESERVED BEING ASKED. DID THE STATE OF NEW YORK AND/OR ANY OTHER U.S. STATE USE ASSETS THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY? DID AMERICAN AUTHORITIES MAKE AN APPROPRIATE RESTITUTION TO HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS, THEIR HEIRS AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY? HOWEVER, SUCH QUESTIONS ARE OBVIOUSLY NOT IMPORTANT FOR EITHER SIDE, JEWISH OR THE GOVERNMENT. WHEN ASKED ABOUT IT, HISTORIANS WORKING FOR UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE STUART EIZENSTAT, ON THE HISTORICAL REPORT TO BE PUBLISHED IN FEBRUARY, EXCUSED THEMSELVES BY SAYING THAT THEY WERE ONLY FOCUSING ON THE WASHINGTON AGREEMENT. THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS AND THE SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER ARE LITTLE INTERESTED IN WHAT HAPPENED IN THE U.S. A SPOKESMAN FOR THE LATTER ORGANIZATION CLAIMED, HOWEVER, TO BE "DETERMINED TO FIND THE TRUTH NO MATTER WHAT COUNTRY IS INVOLVED." IT IS OBVIOUS THAT SWISS BANKS AND AUTHORITIES ARE THE MOST INTERESTED IN RAISING THESE QUESTIONS. (LE NOUVEAU QUOTIDIEN, ANNE-FREDERIQUE WIDMANN, NEW YORK, 1/17)

28. D'AMATO EXAGGERATES

AMERICAN JEWS ARE EMBARRASSED BY THE VIRULENT CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED BY THE NEW YORK SENATOR. ALTHOUGH HE WAS RE-ELECTED DUE TO THE JEWISH VOTE, CERTAIN JEWS DO NOT AGREE WITH HIS CAMPAIGN AGAINST SWITZERLAND. ONE SUCH PERSON SAID THAT, "WANTING TO BE RE-ELECTED IN 1998 AND BEING SO LOW IN THE POLLS, HE OBVIOUSLY NEEDS THE JEWISH VOTE." ANOTHER PERSON SAID THAT "THE DECLASSIFICATION BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS HAS BEEN A MARVELOUS GIFT FOR D'AMATO." D'AMATO, WHOSE POLITICAL CAREER HAS BEEN MARKED BY SEVERAL PARLIAMENTARY INVESTIGATIONS, BADLY NEEDS THE JEWISH VOTE. IN 1992 HE WAS RE-ELECTED BY ONLY 80,000 ADDITIONAL VOTES AND 40PERCENT OF THE JEWISH VOTES. HE

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CANNOT JUST DO WITHOUT THAT VOTE...

LE MATIN

29. AN-ANTI SWISS CLIMATE IN AMERICA

NATIONAL COUNCILOR THEO MEJER (PS/BL) TRAVELED TO THE U.S. AT THE END OF NOVEMBER AND MET, AMONG OTHERS, WITH U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JAMES LEACH. IN AN INTERVIEW, MEJER SAID THAT HE TRAVELED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION. HE IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH THE WORRISOME IMAGE THE COUNTRY HAS IN THE U.S. NOWADAYS DUE TO THE MISSING JEWISH FUNDS. THOSE SWISS CITIZENS HE MET WITH TOLD HIM THEY DID NOT EXCLUDE LEGAL MEASURES TO FIGHT WHAT THEY FEEL AS DISCRIMINATION FROM THE U.S. AGAINST SWITZERLAND. HE SAID THAT THE CLIMATE IS SO SERIOUS, PARTICULARLY IN NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON, THAT THE SWISS ARE AFRAID OF LETTING IT BE KNOWN THAT THEY ARE SWISS. HE WAS TOLD THAT, FOR INSTANCE AT A RESTAURANT, SOMEBODY CHANGED PLACES, ARGUING THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO BE NEAR A SWISS. REGARDING HIS MEETING WITH JAMES LEACH, MEJER SAID IT WAS CORDIAL AND LED TO AN OPEN DISCUSSION. ACCORDING TO MEJER, LEACH SHOWED SOME UNDERSTANDING FOR SWITZERLAND'S PREDICAMENT. MEJER SAID THAT LEACH ADMITTED THE U.S., WHEN TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT ITS HISTORY, COULD WELL FIND ITSELF IN A SIMILAR POSITION: PRIOR TO THE PEARL HARBOR ATTACK, EVEN THE U.S. SENT BACK TO CERTAIN DEATH IN GERMANY SHIPS FULL OF IMMIGRANTS. LEACH COMMENTED THAT, REGARDING THE ISSUE OF SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE MISSING JEWISH FUNDS, SWITZERLAND IS ON THE RIGHT TRACK, EVEN IF IT WILL BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO REACH A DEFINITE CONCLUSION. MEJER SAID IN THE INTERVIEW THAT HE PREPARED HIS TRIP IN CONSULTATION WITH FEDERAL COUNCILOR COTTI AND AMBASSADOR THOMAS BORER. AND, ALTHOUGH HAVING HAD IN-DEPTH CONTACT WITH THE SWISS EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, HE THOUGHT IT BETTER TO ACT AS A PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL. UPON HIS RETURN, HE ALSO SENT A REPORT TO COTTI. REGARDING THE LESSONS THE TRIP TAUGHT HIM, HE SAID THAT THERE ARE FEW PEOPLE IN THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENT FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS WHO REALLY KNOW THE U.S. WELL. THAT IS ONE OF THE REASONS WHY A STORM BROKE OUT ABOUT THE MISSING JEWISH FUNDS WITHOUT THE SWISS REALIZING IT. HE SUGGESTS THAT A FULL-TIME DIPLOMAT BE POSTED IN WASHINGTON TO DEAL SOLELY WITH THIS ISSUE, JUST AS BORER IS DOING. MEJER

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ALSO BELIEVES THAT THE FEDERAL COUNCIL MUST COORDINATE ITS OWN STATEMENTS AND KEEP A MORE UNIFIED POSITION. ACCORDING TO HIM, GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, ESPECIALLY IN MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE, HAS BEEN RATHER WEAK. MEJER SAID HE WAS NOT IN AGREEMENT WITH THE SFR. 250 MILLION THAT SHOULD

BE RESTITUTED BEFORE THE EXPERTS END THEIR WORK. HOWEVER, HE AGREES THAT THOSE FUNDS STILL IN BANKS - ABOUT SFR. 38.7 MILLION . MUST BE

RESTITUTED. THE QUESTION, HE SAID, IS FINDING OUT WHO SHOULD RECEIVE THEM AND WHO SHOULD ADMINISTER THEM. PRECEDENCE SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ALL THOSE WITH SOCIAL/ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND NOT TO THE CREATION OF A FUND FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE WAR, WHICH IS TOO VAGUE A TERM.
(CORRIERE DEL TICINO, 1/16)

END EXCERPTS. WESTGATE

ADMIN

END OF MESSAGE

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