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Subject: Fwd: Swiss Try To Restore Reputation
TO: jeremy_gunn @ jfk-airb.gov @ internetcc. (cc: Jeremy Gunn/ARRB)FROM: David Weil @ aol.com @ INTERNET @ WORLDCOM Date: 02/03/97 09:58:17 AM CSTSubject: Fwd: Swiss Try To Restore Reputation-----
-----Forwarded message:From: AOLNewsProfiles@aol.netDate: 97-02-01 13:38:22
EST<HTML><PRE><I>.c The Associated Press</I></PRE></HTML> By CLARE NULLIS Associated Press Writer
GENEVA (AP) -- Accusations that Switzerland cooperated with theNazis in World War II and a recent upsurge in
anti-Semitism have stunned the Swiss and spurred them into action to repair theirnation's battered image.
Officially neutral in the war, Switzerland long has prided itself for its humanitarian traditions and tolerance. But
charges that the Swiss only managed to stay out of the war by laundering gold looted by the Nazis and by
forcing back tens of thousands of Jewish refugees have stung the Alpine country. Director Markus Imhoof,
whose 1981 film "The Boat is Full" criticized Swiss refugee policy during the war, said the backlash may be a
needed correction. "It hurts me when Switzerland is criticized, but maybe its image was too good," Imhoof
said. "The image of a model pupil and a paradise was cultivated by Switzerland and abroad. And it's simply not
true." Imhoof is among more than 100 academics and artists who signed a petition demanding that
Switzerland and its people admit their mistakes of the past and face up to their moral obligations toward Jewish
groups. Phone lines have been jammed with support for the manifesto since it appeared in newspapers Friday.
School children are collecting donations for a compensation fund for needy Jews whose families lost
everything in World War II. Church groups hope thousands will show up at a silent demonstration this week in
solidarity with victims of the Holocaust and against anti-Semitism. And Switzerland's new president has tried to
make amends for perceived anti-Jewish remarks of his predecessor by condemning the Holocaust as a
"monstrous, unspeakable wrong." "We strictly reject every form of anti-Semitism in this country," Arnold
Koller said Friday after meeting Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu in the Alpine resort of Davos. Foreign
Minister Flavio Cotti repeated the message to Netanyahu on Saturday, stressing that Switzerland is serious
about full disclosure of its treatment of Jewish assets and other issues related to the Nazi era in neighboring
Germany. Swiss banks and Jewish groups have set up an international panel to search for Jewish assets: Jewish
groups say there may be as much as \$7 billion. The banks argue the total is only a fraction of that amount. The
government hopes its recent steps will mend relations with Jewish groups. The vice president of the Swiss
Federation of Hebrew Congregations agreed. "We hope we are turning a corner," Thomas Lyssy said.
"There are more and more positive initiatives now." Swiss officials have had to make up for displays of bad
grace and incredible public gaffes. In December, outgoing President Jean-Pascal Delamuraz caused a storm by
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