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To: jeremy_gunn @ jfk-aio.gov @ internetcc. (cc: jeremy_gunn/ARRB)From: Davidwell @ aol.com @ Internet @ WORLDCOM Date: 01/18/97 09:48:13 PM CSTSubject: Fwd: Criticism Affects Swiss Pride-----
-----Forwarded message:From: AOLNewsProfiles@aol.netDate: 97-01-18 11:39:10 EST<HTML><PRE><I>.c The Associated Press</I></PRE></HTML> By CAROLYN HENSON Associated Press Writer GENEVA (AP) -- A relentless assault by a U.S. senator and Jewishgroups on Switzerland's dealings with Nazi Germany has shaken thiscountry's self-image as a haven of peace and humanity. The land of mountains, rolling Alpine meadows and chalets -- thehome of the Red Cross -- is perplexed by the turn of events andgripped by frantic self-analysis and guilt on one side and anger onthe other. "How did it come to this?" the newspaper SonntagsZeitunglamented about the criticism raining on Switzerland. The string of charges is seemingly endless: that Switzerlandprofited in numerous ways from World War II, that Swiss banksfailed to hand over the assets of Holocaust victims to their heirs,that the Nazis sold Jewish jewels in Switzerland, that the Swissturned away Jewish refugees. Newspapers have devoted pages to interviews with key politiciansand historians and to analytical musings. Television and radiostation have broadcast more debates and analysis. "Most of the Swiss public had no knowledge of what happenedduring the Second World War," said Thomas Lyssy, spokesman for theSwiss Federation of Hebrew Congregations. "Many don't want toknow." "Switzerland is split," he added. "Half say we are guilty andthe government must do something to compensate the Jews. The otherpart says all these people who say we are guilty don't want thetruth. They just want money and they are trying to destabilizeSwitzerland and the Swiss banks." For decades the Swiss prided themselves on their country'sstatus as a haven of peace. They believed their traditionalneutrality and isolation from the world -- they have shunnedmembership in the United Nations, NATO and the European Union -- made them different. When outgoing President Jean-Pascal Delamuraz recently dismissedas "blackmail and extortion" Jewish demands for a \$180 millioncompensation fund to be set up for Holocaust victims, he was sayingwhat many Swiss think. In opinion polls, roughly half the Swiss questioned said theybacked Delamuraz. But after the ensuing international outcry, heapologized and the country appears to be moving toward setting up afund. Still, Jewish groups have reported a rising tide ofanti-Semitism, with ugly letters being sent to Jewish organizationsand newspapers and graffiti sprayed on a Jewish restaurant and acommunity center in Zurich. As a neutral nation, Switzerland did not take sides in World WarII, continuing to have dealings with both Germany and the Nazis'enemies, as did other neutrals like Sweden. Anyway, Switzerland had little choice when war broke out in1939, said Philippe Burrin, a World War II historian. "It was a small country surrounded by two
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