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ACTION OCS-06

INFO    OCT-00    ADS-00    SSO-00    AMAD-01    CA-02  
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Chile Project (#S199900030)

U.S. Department of State

Release X    Excise \_\_\_\_\_    Deny \_\_\_\_\_

Declassify: In Part \_\_\_\_\_    In Full \_\_\_\_\_

Exemption(s) \_\_\_\_\_

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O R 290946Z JAN 85

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 957

INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

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E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: CASC, CI (WEISFEILER, BORIS)

SUBJ: WELFARE/WHEREABOUTS: CASE OF BORIS WEISFEILER

REF: A) STATE 018587 (NOTAL), B) SANTIAGO 635, C) STATE 025331  
(NOTAL)

1. CONOFF TRAVELED TO LOCALITY OF DISAPPERANCE OF BORIS WEISFEILER ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, SPOKE WITH ALL PERSONS WHO HAD ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING WEISFEILER, VIEWED THE VALLEY OF THE NUBLE RIVER FROM EL ROBLE TO SAN FABIAN DE ALICO, AND RETURNED TO SANTIAGO LATE FRIDAY NIGHT, JANUARY 25.

2. CONOFF PROCEEDED FIRST TO THE TOWN OF SAN FABIAN DE ALICO AND SPOKE WITH CAPTAIN GUILLERMO LUIS FERNANDEZ CATALN AND SARGEANT LEONIDAS O. SEPULVEDA NUNEZ OF THE CARABINEROS STATION IN SAN FABIAN DE ALICO. THEY ALLOWED THE CONOFF TO EXAMINE THE ITEMS RECOVERED BY THEM ON JANUARY 15 FROM THE BANK OF THE NUBLE RIVER, AMONG WHICH WAS THE PENNSYLVANIA DRIVERS LICENSE NO. 19144459 OF BORIS WEISFEILER, AND ALSO HIS VISA CREDIT CARD NO. 4443-030-033-276 WITH QUOTE CASH MANAGEMENT ACCOUNT UNQUOTE. CONOFF THEN PROCEEDED BY EMBASSY VEHICLE ALONG THE MOUNTAIN ROAD TO EL ROBLE,

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IN THE COMPANY OF SERGEANT SEPULVEDA.  
THE CARABINEROS STATIONED AT EL ROBLE TOOK CONOFF BY HORSE TO THE SIGHT OF WEISFEILER'S PRESUMED DEATH BY DROWNING, THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER LOS SAUCES WHERE IT RUNS INTO THE LARGER NUBLE RIVER. UPON RETURN TO THE CARABINEROS STATION AT EL ROBLE, THEY

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LOCATED AND BROUGHT TO THEIR POST AT EL ROBLE, JOSE ANIBAL LOPEZ BENAVIDES, A FARMER RESIDING AT LOS MAYOS, A SMALL VILLAGE NEAR THE NORTH BANK OF THE NUBLE RIVER, MIDWAY BETWEEN EL ROBLE AND THE MOUTH OF THE LOS SAUCES RIVER, DISTANCE ABOUT TWO AND ONE-HALF MILES FROM THE SITE WHERE THE TRIBUTARY LOS SAUCES EMPTIES INTO THE NUBLE RIVER. LOPEZ INFORMED THE CONOFF THAT ON JANUARY 3 HE SPOKE TO A BEARDED FOREIGNER AT VALLE HERMOSO, A SITE LOCATED ON THE NORTH BANK OF THE NUBLE RIVER FIFTY MILES UPSTREAM FROM SAN FABIAN DE ALICO, CLOSE TO THE CHILE-ARGENTINA BORDER. THE FOREIGNER HAD EVIDENTLY JUST COROSSED THE NUBLE RIVER AND WAS PROCEEDING DOWN THE RIVER ON THE NORTH BANK TOWARD SAN FABIAN DE ALICO. LOPEZ STATED THAT THE FOREIGNER SPOKE VERY LITTLE SPANISH, AND THE ONLY FACTS LOPEZ GARNERED FROM HIM WERE THAT HE WAS A PROFESSOR AT A UNIVERSITY IN PENNSYLVANIA AND HE WAS RETURNING FROM A LONG HIKE IN THE MOUNTAINS AND WAS INTERESTED IN GETTING BACK TO PENNSYLVANIA IN TIME TO RESUME HIS WORK. AT THE CONCLUSION OF HIS INVESTIGATION CONOFF TRANSPORTED LOPEZ TO THE POLICE STATION AT SAN FABIAN DE ALICO, WHERE HE IDENTIFIED THE PERSONAL EFFECTS OF WEISFEILER AS BEING THE SAME EFFECTS AS HAD BEEN CARRIED BY THE FOREIGNER TO WHOM HE HAD SPOKEN ON JANUARY 3.

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3. LOPEZ ALSO STATED THAT HIS BROTHER, WHO HAD STAYED IN THEIR HOUSE AT LOS MAYOS INSTEAD OF TRAVELING WITH HIM TO THE MOUNTAINS, HAD SEEN WEISFEILER TWO DAYS LATER, ON JANUARY 5, WALKING PAST THEIR HOUSE IN LOS MAYOS IN THE DIRECTION OF THE MOUTH OF THE LOS SAUCES RIVER. UPON THE DISCOVERY OF WEISFEILER'S EFFECTS ON JANUARY 15 THE LOCAL CARABINEROS HAD INSTITUTED A SEARCH ALONG THE RIVERBANK, AND HAD LOCATED THE TWO BROTHERS DURING THE COURSE OF THIS SEARCH. LOPEZ'S BOTHER TOOK THE CARABINEROS TO THE SPOT WHERE HE HAD LAST SEEN WEISFEILER, AND THEY LOCATED WEISFEILER'S TRACKS. HIS TRAIL LED DIRECTLY TO THE MOUTH OF THE LOS SAUCES RIVER, BUT THE CARABINEROS WERE UNABLE TO LOCATE A TRAIL CONTUINING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LOS SAUCES RIVER. THE CARABINEROS AT THE EL ROBLE STATION TOOK THE CONOFF BY HORSE THE MOUTH OF THE LOS SAUCES AND SHOWED HIM THE PLACE WHERE WEISFEILER ENTERED THE WATER. THEY STATED THAT JUST PRIOR TO JANUARY 5 THERE HAD BEEN A HEAVY

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STORM, AND THE LOS SAUCES AND NUBLE RIVERS, ALREADY SWOLLEN WITH WATER FROM THE SNOW MELTING IN THE CHILEAN SUMMER, WERE EVEN HIGHER AS A RESULT OF THE STORM. THE CARABINEROS STATED THAT BOTH RIVERS HAD SUBSIDED CONSIDERABLY SINCE JANUARY 5 AND WOULD CONTINUE SUBSIDING. THEY POINTED OUT TO CONOFF THAT THE WATER OF THE LOS SAUCES RIVERS WAS CRYSTAL-CLEAR AND THE ROCKS AND STONES ON THE RIVER BOTTOM WERE CLEARLY VISIBLE. ROCKS JUST ABOVE THE WATER ONLY AT THE VERY ENTRANCE OF THE LOS SAUCES INTO THE NUBLE; AT THE SITE WHERE WEISFEILER EVIDENTLY ATTEMPTED TO CROSS THERE WERE NO ROCKS OR STONES JUTTING ABOVE WATER. THE CARABINEROS STATED THAT THE LOS SAUCES RIVERS IS THEREFORE A DECEPTIVELY DANGEROUS RIVER, AS IT IS QUITE SWIFT, ESPECIALLY WHEN SWOLLEN, AND ITS SWIFTNESS AND DEEPNESS ARE NOT READILY APPARENT BECAUSE OF THE CLEARNESS OF THE WATER AND THE ABSENCE

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OF RAPIDS-PRODUCING ROCKS JUTTING ABOVE WATER. THE CARABINEROS ARE CONVINCED THAT WEISFEILER ATTEMPTED TO CROSS THE LOS SUACES RIVER AT THE POINT WHERE HIS TRACKS MET THE RIVER, AND WAS SWEEPED OFF HIS FEET BY THE RIVER CURRENT AND DROWNED. DURING ONE OF THE TRIPS BY CONOFF BETWEEN SAN FABIAN DE ALICO AND EL ROBLE ONE OF THE EL ROBLE STATION CARABINEROS POINTED OUT SEVERAL SITES WHERE BODIES TEND TO COLLECT IN THE NUBLE RIVER. T HEY TOLD CONOFF THAT THE NUBLE WOULD CONTINUE TO SUBSIDE, AND THEY EXPECTED TO FIND WEISFEILER'S BODY AT SOME POINT IN THE NUBLE RIVER BY THE END OF FEBRUARY AT THE LEAST.

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4. CONOFF ALSO SPOKE WITH ALARINO CONTRERAS GARRIDO, WHO LIVES IN A HOUSE ON THE NORTHERN BANK OF THE NUBLE RIVER, BETWEEN THE MOUTH OF THE LOS SAUCES RIVER AND SAN FABIAN DE ALICO ON JANUARY 15. CONTRERAS DISCOVERED THE BACKPACK, SLEEPING BAG, AND OTHER PERSONAL EFFECTS OF WEISFEILER ON THE SOUTH BANK OF THE NUBLE RIVER ABOUT ONE MILE DOWNSTREAM FROM THE MOUTH OF THE LOS SAUCES RIVER. CONTRERAS IS EVIDENDLY A TRAPPER, AS CONOFF OBSERVED A NUMBER OF ANIMAL PELTS HANGING TO DRY OUTSIDE HIS HOUSE. THIS TRADE MAY ACCOUNT FOR THE FACT THAT HE WAS ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE NUBLE RIVER, WHICH IS EXTREMELY ROUGH AND ISOLATED AND WITHOUT A ROAD; THE ROAD BETWEEN SAN FABIAN DE ALICO AND EL ROBLE PASSES ALONG THE NORTH BANK OF THE NUBLE RIVER. CONTERAS STATED THAT THE BACKPACK AND OTHER ITEMS WERE FOUND BY HIM SOME DISTANCE FROM THE WATERS EDGE, AND THAT THE BACKPACK HAD BEEN OPENED AND THE CONTENTS THEREOF STREWN AROUND IT, AS THOUGH SOMEONE HAD SEARCHED THE BAKCPACK FOR VALUABLES. THE TRACKS OF TWO DIFFERENT PEOPLE WERE LEADING UP TO THE SITE OF THE PERSONAL EFFECTS, AND ALSO GOING AWAY FROM IT. CONTRERAS HAD TAKEN THE EFFECTS INTO THE CARABINEROS AND REPORTED THE SITUATION TO THEM, THUS CAUSING THEM TO BEGIN THE SEARCH FOR WEISFEILER.

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5. DURING HIS INTERVIEWS WITH THE POLICE OFFICIALS OF THE SAN FABIAN DE ALICO POLICE STATION, CONOFF OBTAINED A COMPLETE LIST OF THE PERSONAL EFFECT OF WEISFEILER; THESE EFFECTS ARE BEING RETAINED BY THEM PENDING DISCOVERY OF WESFEILER OR HIS BODY, OR THE PASSAGE OF THE LEGALLY REQUIRED PERIOD OF TIME FOLLOWING HIS PRESUMED DEATH. CONOFF ALSO OBTAINED A WRITTEN STATEMENT FROM JOSE ANIBAL LOPEZ BENAVIDES VERIFYING THAT THE EFFECTS VIEWED AT THE POLICE STATION WERE THOSE OF THE FOREIGNER HE SPOKE TO ON JANUARY 3 AT VALLE HERMOSO.

6. CONOFF SPOKE WITH GILBERTO CORNEJOS RIVAS, JUDGE OF THE SECOND CRIMINAL COURT OF SAN CARLOS, THE COMMUNITY AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE CHILLAN-SANTIAGO HIGHWAY AND THE ROAD TO SAN FABIAN DE ALICO, CONCERNING EISFEILER. CONOFF SIGNED A REQUEST THAT A SPECIAL

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SEARCH BE MADE FOR WEISFEILER, ON THE GROUNDS THAT NEITHER HE NOR HIS BODY HAD YET BEEN RECOVERED, AND THE JUDGE AUTHORIZED THE INSTITUTION OF A SPECIAL SEARCH. IN THE SAME DOCUMENT THE JUDGE ALSO GRANTED PERMISSION FOR THE CONSULAR SECTION TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE AUTOPSY REPORT, SHOULD WEISFEILER'S BODY BE DISCOVERED. JUDGE CORNEJO FURTHER INSTRUCTED THE POLICE TO TURN OVER TO THE CONSULAR SECTION WEISFEILER'S PERSONAL EFFECTS AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME, AND ORDERED THEM TO MAKE A SPECIAL SEARCH FOR WEISFEILER'S PASSPORT AND THE RETURN PORTION OF THIS ROUND-TRIP TICKET, NEITHER OF WHICH HAVE BEEN RECOVERED. CONOFF WAS ASSURED BY THE JUDGE AND BY MAJOR OF CARABINEROS JUAN FERNANDO IBACACHE GONZALEZ OF THE NO. 1 POLICE STATION, SAN CARLOS, THAT THEY WOULD

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COOPERATE FULLY WITH THE EMBASSY AND NOTIFY THE EMBASSY PROMPTLY OF ANY NEW INFORMATION RECEIVED CONCERNING WEISFEILER.

7. UPON RETURN TO SANTIAGO CONOFF REQUESTED INFORMATION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL POLICE AT THE SANTIAGO AIRPORTS CONCERNING WEISFEILER. THEIR RECORDS INDICATE THAT WEISFEILER ENTERED CHILE AT THE SANTIAGO AIRPORT. DECEMBER 25, 1984, ON LAN CHILE FLIGHT NO. 141. HE GAVE NO ADDRESS IN CHILE TO THE AUTHORITIES. HE ENTERED CHILE, ACCORDING TO THEIR RECORDS, USING AMERICAN PASSPORT NO. Z4003331, WHICH APPARENTLY WAS ISSUED AT A POST IN SPAIN. INTERPOL HAS NO RECORD OF HIS HAVING LEFT CHILE USING THE SAME PASSPORT.

8. POST HAS SEEN CONSIDERABLE PUBLICITY CONCERNING WEISFEILER IN THE LOCAL PRESS, INCLUDING SOME SPECULATION THAT HE MAY HAVE BEEN CARRYING A LARGE SUM OF MONEY WITH HIM AND MAY HAVE BEEN KILLED IN A ROBBERY. POST HAS NO REASON AT THIS TIME TO BELIEVE THAT WEISFEILER WAS IN FACT THE VICTIM OF A CRIME AS NO CONCRETE EVIDENCE HAS COME TO LIGHT TO SUPPORT THIS SPECULATION; ACCIDENTAL DEATH IS IN FACT THE MOST LIKELY EXPLANATION FOR HIS DISAPPEARANCE.

9. PER REFTTEL C, PLEASE RELAY THE INFORMATION IN THIS TABLE TO CONGRESSMAN KLINGER'S OFFICE.  
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