

Waldheim Denies New Charges Of Involvement In Atrocities

VIENNA (JTA) — Austrian President Kurt Waldheim has denied new allegations about his personal involvement in atrocities committed against Yugoslav partisans during World War II, though he has admitted knowing of them.

He has also moved to sue an Austrian periodical for publishing a story about his reputed acceptance of bribes in exchange for sparing the lives of hostages in Yugoslavia in 1943 and 1944.

The new allegations surfaced as an international commission meeting in Vienna, which Waldheim himself convened, broadened the scope of its investigation against him after receiving testimony from his wartime colleagues.

Articles alleging Waldheim's Nazi activities in Yugoslavia were published in two German-language magazines, the West German Stern and the Austrian Wiener magazine.

The Stern article contended that the German army unit in which Waldheim was serving as a lieutenant was directly involved in massacres and depor-

tations in the area of Kozara, Yugoslavia, during the summer of 1942.

A spokesman for Waldheim denied reports in Stern linking the Austrian president personally to the Kozara atrocities, in which some 4,000 Yugoslavs were killed and 10,000 others were

sent to forced labor camps, where thousands died.

Waldheim recently initiated legal proceedings against Wiener for an article, written by American journalist Chuck Ashman, which charged that Waldheim, as an intelligence officer in the Wehrmacht

during World War II, accepted gifts of coins and gold jewelry in exchange for sparing the lives of hostages in Yugoslavia in 1943 and 1944.

The Austrian Press Agency was quoted as saying that the Wiener article was intended to incite "feelings against

the Austrian head of state by unqualified and untrue allegations. In view of the publication and the recognizable intention of defamation, the president has decided to empower the Vienna public prosecutor to begin criminal

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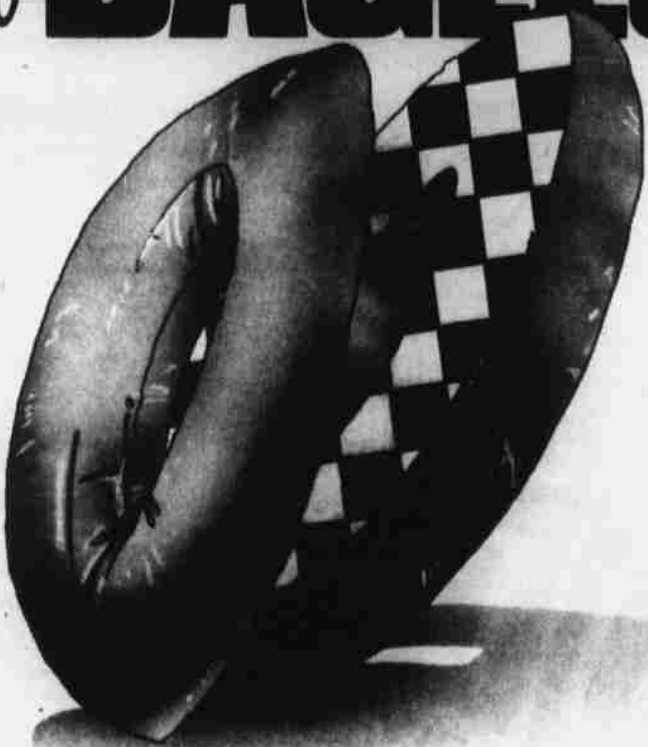
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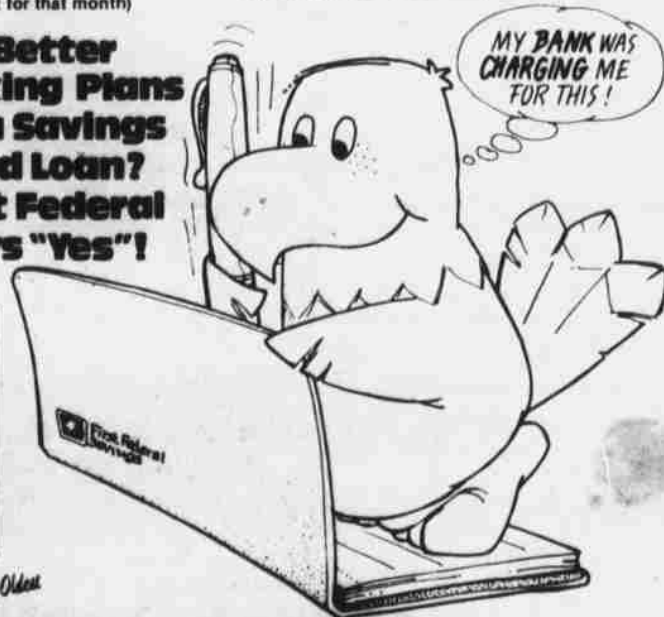
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