

Mr Randol Schoenberg

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Ihr Zeichen:

Antwortschreiben bitte unter Anführung der Geschäftszahl.

Vienna, 24th March, 2011

Dear Randy,

thank you for the messages, which we have discussed in depth during the past days. As to the case itself, there is nothing to add from our side at this point in time. The recommendation of the Kunstrückgabebeirat contains all reasons why it had to arrive at the conclusion that the selling of the painting was not done under duress. In the meantime, Federal Minister Claudia Schmied has decided to follow that recommendation.

We believe that the recommendation of the Beirat is clear and is based on more than exhaustive investigations of the provenance researchers. As in all the other cases of the Kunstrückgabegesetz, which now number about 250, the effort focused on finding the truth with an open mind, evaluating all information available at the time in a diligent and expedient manner.

We understand that the Nazi-crimes which affected and still affect so many people are leaving no-one untouched. There is a great deal of respect for people like you, who commit themselves to fight against these injustices. However, please understand that we expect that the same respect is also paid in the direction of the processes established under the Kunstrückgabegesetz and of the people executing them on behalf of the Republic of Austria to the best of their abilities. Therefore, we have to take exception to the language used in some of your communication which, while understandable as an expression of frustration and disappointment, is neither acceptable nor justified no matter how well-founded you believe your arguments to be.

Sincerely,

