IBM Apprises Staff Of Book Reporting Nazi Use of Machines

Abstract (summary)

An IBM spokeswoman said many of its records from that period have been lost and others were donated to university libraries in the past two years. She said Germany froze assets of IBM and other foreign companies during the 1930s and IBM gradually lost control of the business.

ARMONK, N.Y. -- International Business Machines Corp. informed workers that a forthcoming book will say its former German unit licensed equipment used by the Nazis during World War II.

In a posting on its internal Web site, IBM said the use of the machines has been long known and that it hadn't seen the book.

According to an article in Sunday's Washington Post the book is called "IBM and the Holocaust," by Edwin Black, who has written extensively on Israel and World War II. The Post said it examined the book under an embargo restricting when it could publicize the book or disclose its contents. The Post says the book charges that Germans used IBM equipment in detailed censuses in 1933 and 1939 that helped identify and target Jews and other minorities who were later victimized in the Holocaust.

An IBM spokeswoman said many of its records from that period have been lost and others were donated to university libraries in the past two years. She said Germany froze assets of IBM and other foreign companies during the 1930s and IBM gradually lost control of the business. She said she didn't know when IBM stopped receiving equipment-leasing payments from Germany, although it didn't receive any during World War II, she said.

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