

~~SECRET~~

AUSTRIA

Minister of Foreign Affairs

A career diplomat with considerable experience in international affairs, Dr. Kurt Waldheim (49) was named Minister of Foreign Affairs in January 1968. At the time of his appointment he was Austrian Permanent Representative to the United Nations, prior to which he had held posts in the Foreign Ministry as Director General for Political Affairs and head of the Political Department West, and was Ambassador to Canada.

Since becoming Foreign Minister, Waldheim has commented cautiously and soberly on foreign policy problems, the tenor of his statements suggesting a preference for quiet re-examination and tackling of problems and avoidance of diplomacy by headlines (which his rather flamboyant predecessor, Lujo Toncic-Sorinj, dearly loved). Described as a professional who is thoroughly familiar with the full range of Austria's foreign policy, Waldheim often emphasizes the role which his country, as a neutral nation, can play in the settlement of international problems. Asserting that Austria is firmly rooted in Western democracy, he regards criticism against his country's "bridge building efforts" with Eastern Europe as unjustified. With reference to Austria's negotiations for association with the Common Market (EEC), he has been quoted as saying that increased diplomatic activities in the capitals of the "Six" will be indispensable. Waldheim attended the session of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) at New Delhi in February 1968, accepted an invitation (originally extended to his predecessor) to visit Moscow in March 1968 and accompanied Chancellor Klaus on an official visit to the United States in March 1968.

The son of a civil servant, Waldheim was graduated from the Consular Academy of Vienna in 1939 and studied law at the University of Vienna. Concurrent with his law studies, he worked as a court official, and by 1944 attained the rank of assistant judge.

US officials in Vienna have described Waldheim as a thoughtful, dignified and informal individual, usually frank and open in manner, and a pleasure to work with. His service in Canada and the United States has given him an understanding of American thinking and foreign policy objectives, and he has been very cooperative and helpful in promoting US interests. Although he possesses an unusual degree of objectivity, Waldheim can at times become quite excited and emotional. He is said to be suffering from a heart ailment. Married to the former Elisabeth Ritschel, who is also well regarded, Waldheim has one son and two daughters. Both he and his wife speak excellent English.

CENTRAL REFERENCE SERVICE



GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

September 1968

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2001 2007

NRE:klb

~~SECRET~~



AUSTRIA

WALDHEIM, DR. KURT. DELEGATE, U.N.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

1967

1 CIA-P-250200