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TEXT
TAGS: PREL, PINR, PGOV, PARM, AU, SP, SW, LY, IR, IZ, PTER
SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN PRESS SUMMARY NO.40/86, FOR 03/03/86

PALME ASSASSINATION

1. PRESIDENT RUDOLF KIRCHSCHLAEGER AND OTHER AUSTRIAN
GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION LEADERS SENT MESSAGES OF
CONDOLENCE AFTER SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER OLOF PALME WAS
ASSASSINATED IN STOCKHOLM ON FEBRUARY 28. (SEMI-OFFICIAL
WIENER ZEITUNG, ET AL., MARCH 2)

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FINANCE MINISTER DISCUSSES US VISIT

2. FINANCE MINISTER FRANZ VRANITZKY RETURNED WITH POSITIVE IMPRESSIONS FROM HIS VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES LAST WEEK. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, HE FOUND AUSTRIA'S IMAGE IN THE US LARGELY UNIMPAIRED AND NOTED THAT AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN EXPRESSED GREAT INTEREST IN AUSTRIA AS A "WINDOW TO THE EAST." AFTER MEETING WITH U.S. DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN WHITEHEAD, VRANITZKY SAID THAT BOTH WASHINGTON AND VIENNA WANT TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION TO DETERMINE THE VALIDITY OF CHARGES THAT AUSTRIAN ARMS WERE DELIVERED TO IRAN VIA LIBYA. VRANITZKY DISCLOSED THAT HE HELD A "CANDID DISCUSSION" WITH WHITEHEAD, DURING WHICH DIFFERENCES OF OPINION ABOUT THE ROLE OF LIBYA AND SYRIA IN THE ROME AND VIENNA AIRPORT ATTACKS OF LAST DECEMBER WERE DISCUSSED. (INDEPENDENT DIE PRESSE, MARCH 1 AND 3)

FOREIGN POLICY COUNCIL MEETING

3. IN A FEBRUARY 28 MEETING OF THE FOREIGN POLICY COUNCIL CHAIRED BY CHANCELLOR FRED SINOWATZ, BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OPPOSITION AGREED TO TREAT THE ARMS EXPORT ISSUE WITH DISCRETION FOLLOWING INTERIOR MINISTER KARL BLECHA'S REPORT ON THE ISSUE. OVP CHAIRMAN ALOIS MOCK SAID THAT BLECHA'S REPORT WILL BE CAREFULLY STUDIED. THERE WILL BE ANOTHER MEETING ON BLECHA'S REPORT INCLUDING ALL PARTIES LATER THIS WEEK. DURING THE SAME COUNCIL SESSION THE OPPOSITION PEOPLE'S PARTY RAISED THE SUBJECT OF EX-CHANCELLOR BRUNO KREISKY'S CONTROVERSIAL ACTIVITIES. FOREIGN MINISTER GRATZ EXPLAINED IN A PUBLIC STATEMENT THAT DURING THE MEETING CHANCELLOR SINOWATZ HAD MADE CLEAR THAT AUSTRIAN FOREIGN POLICY IS MADE EXCLUSIVELY BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. GRATZ ADDED THAT KREISKY HIMSELF HAS REPEATEDLY INDICATED HE DOES NOT WISH TO INTERFERE WITH AUSTRIAN FOREIGN POLICY. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS BY JOURNALISTS, GRATZ STATED THAT HE DOES NOT THINK THAT KREISKY'S ACTIONS WOULD AFFECT THE POSSIBILITY OF A US VISIT BY CHANCELLOR SINOWATZ. (SEMI-OFFICIAL WIENER ZEITUNG, INDEPENDENT DIE PRESSE, SOCIALIST AZ, ET AL., MARCH 1)

AUSTRIAN OFFICIAL VISITS

4. FOREIGN MINISTER LEOPOLD GRATZ WILL BE IN MADRID FOR AN OFFICIAL VISIT MARCH 3-4. HIS SCHEDULE INCLUDES TALKS WITH SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTER FRANCISCO FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ AND A CALL ON PRIME MINISTER FELIPE GONZALEZ. (SEMI-OFFICIAL WIENER ZEITUNG, MARCH 2) --- AFTER CONCLUDING HIS TALKS IN LONDON, VICE CHANCELLOR AND TRADE MINISTER NORBERT STEGER VISITED BERLIN MARCH 1 TO ATTEND AN EVENT TO PROMOTE TOURISM. (SEMI-OFFICIAL

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WIENER ZEITUNG, MARCH 2; INDEPENDENT DIE PRESSE,
MARCH 3)

LOWER AUSTRIAN REFERENDUM ON PROVINCIAL CAPITAL

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 VIENNA 03242

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5. WITH AN OVERALL TURNOUT OF APPROXIMATELY 62 PERCENT, 56 PERCENT OF LOWER AUSTRIAN VOTERS SUPPORTED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROVINCIAL CAPITAL IN A NON-BINDING REFERENDUM MARCH 1-2. WITH 45 PERCENT, ST. POELTEN WAS THE MOST PREFERRED SITE AMONG THE FIVE CITIES LISTED ON THE BALLOT. GOVERNOR SIEGFRIED LUDWIG OF THE PEOPLE'S PARTY, WHO HAD INITIATED THE PLAN TO TRANSFER THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION FROM VIENNA, WAS PLEASED WITH THE RESULT. SPO PROVINCIAL CHAIRMAN ERNST HOEGER, WHOSE PARTY OPPOSED THE IDEA, INDICATED A WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN TALKS ON THE ISSUE. (ALL PAPERS, MARCH 3)

PRESIDENTIAL RACE

6. ACCORDING TO A REPORT IN "PROFIL" MAGAZINE, A GERMAN ARMY FILE ON PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE **KURT WALDHEIM** SHOWS THAT HE HAD BEEN A NAZI STORM TROOPER (SA) AND A MEMBER OF THE NAZI STUDENT ASSOCIATION. WALDHEIM REACTED IMMEDIATELY, STRONGLY DENYING THAT HE HAD EVER BEEN A MEMBER OF ANY NAZI ORGANIZATION. (INDEPENDENT KURIER, INDEPENDENT KRONEN-ZEITUNG, MARCH 2; ALSO ALL PAPERS, MARCH 3).

BLOCH

END OF MESSAGE

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