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STATE FOR EUR/CE, INR/WEA AND INR/P
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E.O. 12356: N/A

TEXT

TAGS: PREL, PINR, PGOV, AU, LY, IR, UN, IS, PARM, YO, UR, ENRG
SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN PRESS SUMMARY NO.83/86, FOR 05/05/86

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PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION STATISTICS

1. IN THE AUSTRIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION MAY 4 NONE OF THE 4 CANDIDATES WON AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY OF THE VOTES. OVP-BACKED **KURT WALDHEIM** SCORED 49.64 PERCENT. THE CANDIDATE OF THE SPO, **KURT STEYRER**, RECEIVED 43.66 PERCENT. THE GREEN-ALTERNATIVE CANDIDATE, **FREDA MEISSNER-BLAU**, DREW 5.5 PERCENT, WHILE THE RIGHT-WING CONTENDER, **OTTO SCRINZI**, GATHERED 1.2 PERCENT. VOTER PARTICIPATION WAS 89.48 PERCENT OF TOTAL ELIGIBLE VOTERS, WHICH IS AN ALL TIME LOW. BLANK VOTES CONSTITUTED 3 PERCENT, ALSO A HISTORIC HIGH. A RUN-OFF ELECTION BETWEEN STEYRER AND WALDHEIM WILL NOW BE HELD JUNE 8 TO DECIDE THE ULTIMATE WINNER. (ALL PAPERS, MAY 5)

STATEMENTS BY CANDIDATES

2. ACCORDING TO WALDHEIM, THE ELECTION RESULT REFLECTED THE VOTERS' APPROVAL OF HIS INTERPRETATION OF THE PRESIDENCY AND HONORED HIS CALL FOR MORE FAIRNESS, DECENCY AND MORAL VALUES. WALDHEIM DECLARED THAT OUTSIDE ATTACKS BY "STRICTLY PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS" HAD PRODUCED A CONTRARY EFFECT WITH THE VOTERS. STEYRER DESCRIBED HIS PERFORMANCE AS "SATISFACTORY", CONSIDERING HIS WEAKER STARTING POSITION. STEYRER SUGGESTED HE WOULD BE PURSUING THE GREEN VOTE IN THE RUN-OFF. GREEN ALTERNATIVE **FREDA MEISSNER-BLAU** ASSERTED THAT HER 5.5 PERCENT SHOWING REPRESENTED AN OVERWHELMING SUCCESS, INDICATING A "NEW START AND A GREAT CHANCE". RIGHT-WING CANDIDATE **SCRINZI** EXPRESSED HIS DISAPPOINTMENT OVER THE 1.2 PERCENT HE RECEIVED. (ALL PAPERS, MAY 5)

REACTION OF AUSTRIAN PARTY LEADERS

3. IN A FIRST REACTION, OVP LEADER **ALOIS MOCK** CALLED THE OUTCOME AN "OVERWHELMING SUCCESS FOR THE INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE **WALDHEIM**". **MOCK** WAS CONFIDENT THAT **WALDHEIM** WILL BE THE NEXT PRESIDENT. ACCORDING TO CHANCELLOR **FRED SINOWATZ**, THE OVP STRATEGY OF BLAMING THE SPO FOR THE SMEAR CAMPAIGN AGAINST **WALDHEIM** APPARENTLY SUCCEEDED, ALTHOUGH THE CHARGES AGAINST THE SOCIALISTS WERE UNTRUE. SINCE A RUN-OFF ELECTION WOULD REPRESENT A COMPLETELY NEW SITUATION, STEYRER STILL WOULD STAND A GOOD CHANCE, THE CHANCELLOR SAID. FREEDOM PARTY (FPO) LEADER **NORBERT STEGER** STATED THAT THE OVP APPARENTLY WAS MORE SUCCESSFUL IN MOBILIZING ITS SUPPORTERS THAN THE SPO. IN HIS VIEW, THE 1.2 PERCENT FOR FORMER FPO MEMBER **SCRINZI** PROVES THAT "THERE IS NO FUTURE FOR THE POLICY OF THE RIGHT IN AUSTRIA". (ALL PAPERS, MAY 5)

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ANALYSES AND COMMENTARIES

4. OVP-BACKED **KURT WALDHEIM** GATHERED 6.4 PERCENT MORE VOTES NATIONWIDE THAN THE OVP DID IN THE NATIONAL UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 03 VIENNA 06733

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PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF 1983. SPO CANDIDATE KURT STEYRER FELL 3.9 PERCENT SHORT OF HIS PARTY'S PERFORMANCE IN 1983. IT IS WIDELY NOTED THAT THE SPO LOST A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF VOTES IN ITS TRADITIONAL STRONGHOLDS. THE 5.5 PERCENT OF THE ALTERNATIVE GREEN CANDIDATE WAS SURPRISING SINCE THE FPO, THE THIRD MAJOR PARTY IN AUSTRIA, MIGHT DRAW FEWER THAN 3 PERCENT OF THE VOTES IN AN ELECTION HELD TODAY, ACCORDING TO POLITICAL OBSERVERS. MOST COMMENTATORS INTERPRET THE ELECTION RESULTS AS AN EXPRESSION OF THE DESIRE FOR A POLITICAL CHANGE. THE OUTCOME IS MUCH MORE A VOTE OF PROTEST AGAINST SINOWATZ AND HIS GOVERNMENT, INDEPENDENT "KURIER" SUGGESTS. ACCORDING TO INDEPENDENT "DIE PRESSE", THE EXPRESSION OF SOLIDARITY WITH WALDHEIM AS A REACTION TO OUTSIDE ACCUSATIONS WAS AS MUCH RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS VICTORY AS WAS THE DEEP FEELING OF DISSATISFACTION WITH SPO GOVERNMENT POLICY. THE INSIGNIFICANT TURNOUT FOR RIGHT-WINGER SCRINZI HAS PROVED THAT ALL SPECULATION ABOUT NAZI NOSTALGIA IN AUSTRIA IS NONSENSE. INDEPENDENT "KRONENZEITUNG" SEES THE VOTER DECISION AS A "CLEAR, FEARLESS ANSWER TO THE SLANDER CAMPAIGN AGAINST WALDHEIM AND AUSTRIA." (ALL PAPERS, E.G. INDEPENDENT DIE PRESSE, INDEPENDENT KURIER, INDEPENDENT KRONENZEITUNG, MAY 5)

WALDHEIM CONTROVERSY CONTINUES

5. CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING **KURT WALDHEIM** CONTINUED BEFORE AND AFTER THE MAY 4 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. THE U.S. SENATE HAS ADOPTED A RESOLUTION WHICH CALLS ON THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO DECIDE ON POSSIBLY BARRING WALDHEIM FROM ENTRY INTO THE US. MEANWHILE, IT IS SPECULATED THAT THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRIA WILL BE RECALLED FROM VIENNA BEFORE THE END OF HIS TERM WITHOUT BEING REPLACED. ISRAEL'S UN AMBASSADOR, BENJAMIN NETANYAHU, APPARENTLY DEMANDED PUBLIC ACCESS TO UN WAR CRIMES COMMISSION FILES, A MOVE WHICH WAS CRITICIZED BY UN LAW EXPERTS. IN AN INTERVIEW, LEADING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS HAVE

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UNDERLINED THE GOOD RELATIONSHIP OF THEIR ORGANIZATION WITH AUSTRIA. THE WJC WAS ONLY QUESTIONING WHETHER WALDHEIM SHOULD EVER HAVE BECOME UN SECRETARY-GENERAL, A SPOKESMAN SAID. (MOST PAPERS, E.G. IND. KURIER, IND. DIE PRESSE, SEMI-INDEPENDENT WIENER ZEITUNG, MAY 3,4,5)

CHERNOBYL FALL-OUT IN AUSTRIA

6. WHILE THE LEVEL OF AIR-BORNE RADIOACTIVITY IS CONTINUOUSLY DECLINING, INCREASED EVIDENCE OF SLIGHT CONTAMINATION OF MILK, FRUIT AND VEGETABLES HAS BEEN DETECTED IN AUSTRIA. THE PROVINCES OF VIENNA AND BURGENLAND HAVE ISSUED AN IMPORT BAN ON ALL SUCH PRODUCTS FROM EAST BLOC COUNTRIES EFFECTIVE MAY 4-15. IT IS SPECULATED THAT THERE MIGHT BE PROBLEMS WITH THE MILK SUPPLY IN AUSTRIA. LEADING AUSTRIAN POLITICIANS DOUBT THAT AUSTRIA'S ONLY NUCLEAR PLANT WILL EVER BE PUT INTO OPERATION. IN SOME AREAS IN AUSTRIA OXYGEN MASKS AND PRESERVED FOODS WERE SOLD OUT. ACCORDING TO A "SOVIET SOURCE", MOSCOW TEACHERS WARNED THEIR PUPILS THAT SOME OF THEIR FOOD MIGHT CONTAIN RAT POISON. IN A TELEGRAM, UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 03 VIENNA 06733

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VIENNA MAYOR HELMUT ZILK APPEALED TO BAVARIAN GOVERNOR FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS TO ABANDON THE PROJECT OF A NUCLEAR REPROCESSING PLANT NEAR WACKERSDORF. (MOST PAPERS, E.G. IND. KURIER, IND. DIE PRESSE, SEMI-OFFICIAL WIENER ZEITUNG, MAY 3,4,5)

CONFERENCE OF "GENERALS FOR PEACE" OPENS IN VIENNA

7. THE 3RD CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL "GENERALS FOR PEACE AND DETENTE" ASSOCIATION WAS OPENED IN VIENNA BY DEPUTY UN SECRETARY-GENERAL MOWAFFAK ALLAF MAY 5. FOR FOUR DAYS, RETIRED MILITARY EXPERTS OF 14 NATO AND WARSAW-PACT NATIONS WILL DISCUSS THE "VISION OF EUROPE IN THE YEAR 2000 AS A COMMON HOMELAND FOR ALL EUROPEAN NATIONS". (SEMI-OFFICIAL WIENER ZEITUNG, MAY 5)

CASE AGAINST ARMS DEAL DISMISSED

8. THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE OF LINZ (PROVINCE OF

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UPPER AUSTRIA) HAS DISMISSED THE CASE AGAINST AUSTRIAN ARMS PRODUCER NORICUM. THE FIRM, AN AFFILIATE OF THE NATIONALIZED VOEST HOLDING COMPANY, HAD BEEN ACCUSED OF ILLEGALLY TRANSFERRING LIBYA-BOUND CANONS TO WARRING IRAN, WHICH WOULD BE A VIOLATION OF AN AUSTRIAN LAW REGULATING ARMS SALES. ACCORDING TO THE FINDINGS OF THE PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE, THE COMPANY MIGHT HAVE FALLEN VICTIM TO MANIPULATIONS BY COMPETING FIRMS.
(SEMI-OFFICIAL WIENER ZEITUNG, MAY 3)

RIFT IN AUSTRIAN FREEDOM PARTY DEEPENS

9. PROVINCIAL FPO REBEL, JOERG HAIDER, WHO HAD PUBLICLY ACCUSED THE FPO LEADERSHIP OF "BREAKING ITS PROMISES" TOWARDS HIS FRACTION, SAID HE WOULD RUN AGAINST HIS PARTY'S CHAIRMAN, VICE CHANCELLOR NORBERT STEGER, SHOULD AN EXTRAORDINARY PARTY CONVENTION BE HELD. MEANWHILE, HAIDER WILL FACE AN FPO ARBITRATION COURT ON CHARGES OF UNDERMINING HIS PARTY. (MOST PAPERS, E.G. IND. DIE PRESSE, IND. KURIER, MAY 3,4,5). LAUDER

END OF MESSAGE

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