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TEXT

TAGS: KPIN, PGOV, PREL, AU, NL
SUBJECT: DUTCH LIBERALS SEEK TO EXPEL AUSTRIAN
- FREEDOM PARTY FROM LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL
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REF: VIENNA 14161
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1. (U) DUTCH PRESS REPORTS CONFIRM THE ARTICLE IN AN AUSTRIAN DAILY (REFTEL) STATING THAT THE DUTCH LIBERAL PARTY (VVD) WILL SEEK THE EXPULSION OF THE AUSTRIAN FREEDOM PARTY (FPO) FROM THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL (LI) BECAUSE OF THE FPO'S ASSOCIATION WITH PEOPLE ACCUSED OF NAZI SYMPATHIES. LIBERAL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY LEADER JORIS VOORHOEVE WROTE AN ARTICLE OVER THE WEEKEND THAT HE AGREED WITH VVD INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY TOM VAN BEMMELEN'S INITIATIVE TO EXPEL THE FPO AT THE NEXT LI MEETING SCHEDULED FOR OCT. 1

2. (U) AN ARTICLE IN THE DAILY DUTCH PAPER "TROUW" OFFERED FURTHER BACKGROUND ON THE LIBERAL INITIATIVE.

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IT STATED THAT, SINCE THE FPO WAS FOUNDED IN 1955, IT HAD PROVIDED SHELTER TO MANY FORMER NAZIS. THIS, ACCORDING, TO "TROUW", IS THE REASON THE FPO WAS NOT ALLOWED TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL UNTIL 1979. IT SEEMED TO TURN OVER A NEW LEAF AFTER THE MILITANT FORMER SS MEMBER FRIEDRICH PETER, ACCUSED OF MASS MURDER OF JEWS, RESIGNED AS FPO'S CHAIRMAN. THE FPO WAS THEN ALLOWED TO JOIN THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL. BUT A SERIES OF INCIDENTS ULTIMATELY PERSUADED THE VVD TO CALL FOR THIS PARTY'S EXPULSION. THESE INCIDENTS INCLUDED THE RETURN OF PETER AS CHAIRMAN AFTER ONE YEAR, THE WELCOME EXTENDED BY FPO DEFENSE MINISTER FRISCHENSLAGER TO WAR CRIMINAL WALTER REDER UPON HIS RETURN TO AUSTRIA AND RECENTLY THE ELECTION OF JORG HAIDER AS THE NEW PARTY CHAIRMAN, A MAN WITH STRONG NATIONAL-SOCIALIST SYMPATHIES. "TROUW" REPORTS THE VVD'S CONCERN THAT ASSOCIATION WITH THE FPO IN AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION COULD HURT THE PARTY'S IMAGE. VVD INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY VAN BEMMELEN IS ALLEGED TO HAVE SAID THE GERMAN LIBERALS HAVE ALREADY ASSURED HIM THAT THEY WILL SUPPORT HIS CALL FOR FPO'S EXPULSION.

3. (LOU) THE VVD MOVE AGAINST THE FPO SERVES TO UNDERSCORE HOW WIDESPREAD THE NEGATIVE DUTCH REACTION IS TO THE ELECTION OF **KURT WALDHEIM**. EVEN A RELATIVELY CONSERVATIVE PARTY LIKE THE VVD FEELS THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL NEED TO DISTANCE ITSELF FROM ITS AUSTRIAN COUNTERPART. HEIMANN
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