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TEXT

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION -- U.S. BAN ON WALDHEIM

FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF APRIL 29 "STRAITS TIMES"
EDITORIAL, HEADLINED "ONLY IN AMERICA":

(BEGIN TEXT)

IF MR. KURT WALDHEIM WERE JUST AN ORDINARY PERSON, THE U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S DECISION TO BAR HIM FROM ENTERING THE COUNTRY BECAUSE OF HIS ALLEGED NAZI PAST WOULD HARDLY HAVE RAISED AN EYEBROW. THE FACT THAT HE IS THE ELECTED PRESIDENT OF AUSTRIA RAISES SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT THE WISDOM OF THE AMERICAN MOVE, WHICH ONE SUSPECTS MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN AT THE BEHEST OF POWERFUL LOBBY GROUPS. ONE WONDERS TOO WHETHER THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT CAN POSSIBLY DISTINGUISH BETWEEN PRIVATE CITIZEN MR. WALDHEIM AND PRESIDENT WALDHEIM AND WHETHER THAT DISTINCTION SERVES ANY USEFUL PURPOSE.

TO THE AUSTRIANS, THE U.S. DECISION MUST BE SEEN AS A

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GRAVE AFFRONT TO THEIR SENSITIVITIES FOR THERE IS NO PRECEDENT OF A HEAD OF STATE BEING DENIED ENTRY INTO THE U.S. THE AUSTRIAN PEOPLE CHOSE MR. WALDHEIM TO BE THEIR PRESIDENT DESPITE ALLEGATIONS OF AN UNSAVORY WAR RECND. THIS IS THEIR RIGHT AND OBVIOUSLY NOT A CHOICE WHICH THE AMERICANS CAN OBJECT TO. FURTHERMORE, IT HAS NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED BEYOND DOUBT THAT MR. WALDHEIM DID WHAT HE WAS ALLEGED TO HAVE DONE DURING THE WAR. BY BARRING MR. WALDHEIM, THE U.S. IS IGNORING ESTABLISHED PRACTICE AND VENTURING INTO UNCHARTED, AND POSSIBLY DANGEROUS, TERRITORY. IT MIGHT SET A PRECEDENT FOR OTHER STATES. IT IS ONE DECISION THAT CANNOT BE TAKEN TOO LIGHTLY. (END TEXT)

GONG

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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