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TEXT

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, AU
SUBJECT: WALDHEIM STATEMENT ON WATCH-LIST DECISION

1. SUMMARY: IN A STATEMENT TELEVISED DURING THE NATIONAL EVENING NEWS APRIL 28, PRESIDENT **KURT WALDHEIM** CALLED THE U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT DECISION TO PUT HIM ON THE WATCH-LIST "INCOMPREHENSIBLE" AND "DISMAYING" AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT'S STAND IN HIS DEFENSE. RECALLING FORMER PRESIDENT'S KIRSCHSCHLAEGER'S FINDING THAT THE EVIDENCE AGAINST HIM WAS INSUFFICIENT, WALDHEIM SAID HIS CONSCIENCE WAS CLEAR WHILE, AT THE SAME TIME, IT WAS THE FATE OF HIS GENERATION TO CARRY THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ATROCITY OF WAR.

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WALDHEIM THANKED HIS COUNTRYMEN FOR THE WAVE OF SYMPATHY AND CONFIDENCE EXTENDED TO HIM AND CONCLUDED THAT THE AUSTRIANS COULD CONTINUE TO HAVE FAITH IN HIM -- TRUTH AND JUSTICE WOULD PREVAIL. END SUMMARY.

2. WALDHEIM SAID THE U.S. WATCH-LIST DECISION WAS "DISCONCERTING AND INCOMPREHENSIBLE". THE IMPRESSION WAS CREATED THAT, 40 YEARS AGO, HE HAD COMMITTED CRIMES. HIS CONSCIENCE, HOWEVER, WAS CLEAR. OTHERWISE HE AND HIS FAMILY WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN ABLE TO LIVE THROUGH THE WEEKS AND MONTHS OF ALLEGATIONS AND SUSPICIONS.

3. WALDHEIM ALSO REMINDED TELEVISION VIEWERS OF THE FACT THAT HE HAD AGREED TO THE SUBMISSION OF 100 PAGES OF DOCUMENTS CONTAINING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST HIM TO FORMER PRESIDENT RUDOLF KIRCHSCHLAEGER. KIRCHSCHLAEGER HAD EXAMINED THE MATERIAL AND HAD FOUND NO EVIDENCE OF GUILT, WALDHEIM SAID.

4. AS AT SEVERAL POINTS IN RECENT MONTHS, THERE HAD NOW AGAIN BEEN TALK OF NEW DOCUMENTS, NOTED WALDHEIM. BUT HE KNEW THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE THAT PROOF OF HIS GUILT EXISTED. A "WHITE BOOK" (I.E. A "WHITE PAPER") ON HIS WAR-TIME PAST WAS IN PREPARATION AND WOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC SHORTLY.

5. IT WAS THE FATE OF HIS GENERATION, THOSE WHO HAD BEEN THROWN INTO THE EVENTS OF WORLD WAR TWO, TO CARRY THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ATROCITY OF WAR THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES. OUT OF THIS EXPERIENCE HAD GROWN THE WILL TO WORK FOR PEACE. IN PURSUIT OF THIS GOAL, HE HAD BEEN ACTIVE AS A DIPLOMAT FOR HIS NATIVE COUNTRY, AND FOR TEN YEARS AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS. IF HE WERE BEING ACCUSED OF THE SHOOTING OF HOSTAGES (IN YUGOSLAVIA), HE WOULD WANT TO REFER TO THE FACT HE HAD, ON THE CONTRARY, CONTRIBUTED TO THE FREEING OF HOSTAGES, NAMELY THOSE AMERICANS WHO HAD BEEN HELD IN TEHERAN. IN LIGHT OF HIS PAST ACTIVITIES, HE CLAIMED THE RIGHT TO DEMAND THAT NO ONE BE ACCUSED WITHOUT EVIDENCE. WHOEVER ACTED IN SUCH A WAY VIOLATED THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF LAW AND JUSTICE.

6. WALDHEIM ALSO EXPRESSED HIS THANKS FOR THE WAVE OF SYMPATHY AND SOLIDARITY WHICH HAD COME FROM ALL PARTS OF AUSTRIA AND ABROAD. HE SENSED THE CONFIDENCE AUSTRIANS HAD IN HIM; ADDING THAT HE FELT A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY BECAUSE OF THIS. CONCLUDING HIS STATEMENT, HE REITERATED THAT HIS FELLOW CITIZENS COULD HAVE CONFIDENCE IN HIM. HE WAS CONVINCED THAT TRUTH AND JUSTICE WOULD PREVAIL. "I SAY THIS TAKING FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE HIGHEST OFFICE IN THE STATE AND FOR OUR NATIVE COUNTRY", WAS WALDHEIM'S CLOSING REMARK. LAUDER

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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