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TEXT
TAGS: PGOV, PREL, AU
SUBJECT: WATCH-LIST DECISION - MEDIA REACTION III

1. SUMMARY:
TODAY'S (APRIL 30) EDITORIAL COMMENT ON THE U.S.
WATCH-LIST DECISION AGAINST KURT WALDHEIM CONTINUES, AT
TIMES IN AN ANGRIER TONE THAN IN THE PREVIOUS TWO DAYS,
ITS CRITICISM OF THE U.S. FOR ITS "DISRESPECT" TOWARD
AUSTRIA AND A GENERAL "LACK OF DECENCY". BUT THERE HAVE
ALSO BEEN WARNINGS AGAINST AN EMOTIONAL OVERREACTION ON
AUSTRIA'S PART, AND SOME WRITERS HAVE ALSO NOTED THAT THE
U.S. MOVE SEEMED TO HAVE THE APPROVAL OF A MAJORITY OF
THE INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC. MOST COMMENTARIES AGAIN CALLED

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ON WALDHEIM TO TAKE STEPS TO CONTEST THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S ACTION. END SUMMARY.

2. "KRONENZEITUNG":

IN A COMMENTARY, DIETER KINDERMANN MAINTAINED THAT AMERICAN POLITICIANS ACT LIKE "ELEPHANTS IN THE CHINA SHOP OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS" WHEN THEY ARE FACING UPCOMING ELECTIONS. "THE BEST FRIENDSHIPS ARE FORGOTTEN, THE MOST SOLID PRINCIPLES ARE ABANDONED, JUST TO EARN 'POLITICAL CASH'", SAID THE "KRONENZEITUNG" JOURNALIST. WHAT HAD MADE THINGS WORSE WAS THE FACT THAT AMERICANS HAD ALWAYS LACKED SUFFICIENT KNOWLEDGE OF EUROPEAN HISTORY. KINDERMANN REFERRED IN HIS EDITORIAL TO AUSTRIA'S ROLE AS COUNTRY OF REFUGE AND TO ITS POST-1945 ACHIEVEMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE WESTERN WORLD IN GENERAL. IT WAS NOT THE AUSTRIAN WAY TO ADVERTISE THESE CONTRIBUTIONS, ADDED THE COMMENTATOR, BUT, IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, ONE HAD TO DEMONSTRATE SUFFICIENT SELF-CONFIDENCE BY SPEAKING UP MORE LOUDLY THAN USUAL WHEN ONE FELT "SOLD AND BETRAYED" BY ONE'S BEST FRIENDS.

3. "KRONENZEITUNG" COLUMNIST RUDOLF NIMMERRICHTER (ALIAS "STABERL") NOTED IT IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE THAT WALDHEIM WAS PUT ON THE WATCH-LIST BY THE U.S., WHILE THAT COUNTRY, AT THE SAME TIME, EXTENDED SYMPATHY AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO POLITICIANS LIKE PAPA AND BABY DOC DUVALIER OR PHILLIPINE DICTATOR MARCOS. "THIS DEMONSTRATES ONCE AGAIN HOW LITTLE DECENCY COUNTS IN THIS WORLD, WHEREAS POWER DOMINATES EVERYTHING", ADDED "STABERL". AT THE SAME TIME, HE ARGUED THAT THE WATCH-LIST DECISION ALSO HAD A POSITIVE EFFECT, SINCE AUSTRIA WAS CURRENTLY DEMONSTRATING PATRIOTIC SELF-CONFIDENCE AND SIGNS OF NATIONAL UNITY, SIMILAR TO THE NEW PATRIOTISM IN THE U.S. AFTER REAGAN'S ELECTION - ALTHOUGH REAGAN WAS STEADILY LOSING POPULARITY NOW, SNEERED "STABERL". "IN AUSTRIA, EVERYBODY SENSES THAT A MIGHTY POWER HAS, IN EXORBITANT DISRESPECT FOR DECENCY AND JUSTICE, COMMITTED AN INFAMOUS ACT AGAINST A WEAK AND UNINFLUENTIAL COUNTRY"; ATTORNEY GENERAL MEESE'S CLAIM THAT THE DECISION WAS NOT A GUILTY VERDICT AGAINST WALDHEIM AMOUNTED TO SHEER DISDAIN.

4. "KURIER":

"KURIER" FOREIGN POLICY EXPERT HANS RAUSCHER URGED THAT WALDHEIM APPEAL AGAINST THE WATCH-LIST DECISION. ACCORDING TO RAUSCHER, THE FACT THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT (NOT JUST THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT) HAD PUSHED FOR A DECISION AGAINST WALDHEIM MEANT THAT THERE WAS MORE INVOLVED THAN A JUDICIAL DETERMINATION. CONSEQUENTLY, AUSTRIA AS A WHOLE HAD ADDITIONAL GROUNDS FOR CONCERN, CONCLUDED RAUSCHER.

5. "KURIER" POLITICAL COMMENTATOR RUTH PAULI WARNED AGAINST OVERREACTING TO THE WATCH-LIST DECISION EITHER BY EXAGGERATING AUSTRIAN PATRIOTISM OR BY "WHINING SELF-COMPASSION". SIMILARLY, ACCUSING THE U.S. OF APPLYING A DOUBLE STANDARD SHOULD BE BELOW AUSTRIA'S DIGNITY, SAID PAULI.

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6. SOCIALIST "AZ":

"AZ" EDITOR MANFRED SCHEUCH NOTED THAT, INTERNATIONALLY, THE U.S. WATCH-LIST DECISION SEEMED TO BE MEETING WITH APPROVAL. IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE SIMPLY TO MAINTAIN THAT INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION WAS BEING INFLUENCED BY AMERICA, SAID SCHEUCH, SINCE THE CORE OF THAT OPINION WAS UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 VIENNA 06914

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RATHER AN UNCOMPROMISING CONDEMNATION OF NAZI FASCISM. IN WHAT SEEMED LIKE A REFERENCE TO A WALDHEIM RESIGNATION, SCHEUCH CONSIDERED AN "ACT WHICH IS AS SPECTACULAR AS THE WATCH-LIST DECISION" TO BE THE ONLY EFFECTIVE MEASURE THAT COULD BE TAKEN TO PREVENT FURTHER DAMAGE TO AUSTRIA'S REPUTATION.

7. "AZ" POLITICAL COMMENTATOR HERBERT LACKNER MAINTAINED IN AN EDITORIAL THAT MEASURES LIKE DOWNGRADING THE AUSTRIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON OR CANCELLING THE VRANITZKY VISIT TO THE U.S. WOULD ONLY WORSEN AUSTRIA'S SITUATION, SINCE ANY OPPORTUNITY TO CORRECT DISTORTIONS IN THE COUNTRY'S IMAGE WOULD BE LOST.

8. PEOPLE'S PARTY "NEUES VOLKSBLATT":

WHILE CONCEDING THAT MISTAKES HAD BEEN MADE ON ALL SIDES IN THE "AFFAIR WALDHEIM", WALTER SALZMANN STRESSED IN THE PEOPLE'S PARTY'S (OVP) OFFICIAL ORGAN THAT THE ACTION OF THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT HAD TO BE CONSIDERED SCANDALOUS. THE PROCEDURE IN THE WATCH-LIST DECISION HAD LACKED PUBLIC SCRUTINY, CONCRETE ACCUSATIONS, A HEARING, AN ORDERLY PROCEDURE TO WEIGH EVIDENCE, OR A FINAL CONCRETE DETERMINATION OF THE FACTS. SUCH AN ACTION HAD BEEN IN CONTRADICTION TO THE LEGAL TRADITION OF A COUNTRY WHICH HAD ALWAYS BEEN PRESENTED AS A MODEL, SAID SALZMANN. QUITE A FEW AUSTRIANS WERE NOW, HOWEVER, EXPECTING WALDHEIM AS AN "ACTIVE PRESIDENT" TO TAKE THE OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE ACCUSATIONS, EITHER BY BRINGING LEGAL SUIT IN THE U.S. OR ESTABLISHING AN INTERNATIONAL INVESTIGATIVE COMMISSION. LAUDER

ADMIN

END OF MESSAGE

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