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TEXT

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, AU  
SUBJECT: "WATCH-LIST" DECISION - FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: THREE DAYS AFTER THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT DECISION TO INSCRIBE PRESIDENT WALDHEIM'S NAME ON THE "WATCH-LIST" THE AFFAIR STILL RANKS AS THE NUMBER ONE ISSUE HERE. MEDIA COVERAGE HAS FOCUSED ON A FOLLOW-UP SPEECH BY WALDHEIM DELIVERED TO A PROVINCIAL AUDIENCE, STATEMENTS BY RECALLED AUSTRIAN AMB. TO THE U.S. KLESTIL, AND ON FURTHER COMMENTS BY FM MOCK. SPO AND OVP VIEWS DIFFER AS TO WHETHER WALDHEIM SHOULD SUE IN THE U.S.. BY SHEER COINCIDENCE, A TRIAL AGAINST A "PROFIL" JOURNALIST (THE LATTER HAD ALLEGED THAT FORMER

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CHANCELLOR SINOWATZ (HAD STARTED THE ANTI-WALDHEIM CAMPAIGN IN THE FIRST PLACE) HAS SUDDENLY GAINED EXPLOSIVE POTENTIAL IN AUSTRIAN DOMESTIC POLITICS. END SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION.

2. AUSTRIAN PRIME TIME TELEVISION APRIL 29 SHOWED PRESIDENT KURT WALDHEIM ADDRESSING AN AUDIENCE OF AUSTRIAN WW II VICTIMS AND VETERANS IN THE BURGENLAND PROVINCIAL CAPITAL OF EISENSTADT. WALDHEIM SAID HE HAD BEEN VERY MUCH HURT BY THE "TERRIBLE AND TOTALLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE NEWS". HE CRITICIZED THE U.S. FOR HAVING IGNORED THE PRINCIPLE OF DUE PROCESS OF LAW WHICH HE SAID WAS OBSERVED "IN ALL DEMOCRATIC NATIONS". WALDHEIM FURTHER REMARKED THAT MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WHO HAD FOUGHT IN WW II AND WHO HAD SERVED UNDER A "CRIMINAL REGIME" HAD FALLEN VICTIM TO A "GIGANTIC CRIME". THE FACT THAT SOMEBODY HAD INVOLUNTARILY SERVED UNDER A HATED REGIME SHOULD NOT BE USED AGAINST HIM, WALDHEIM NOTED. DESPITE THE CONSIDERABLE TIME SPAN BETWEEN THE PRESENT AND THE HORRORS OF WW II, ONE MUST NEVER GIVE IN TO THE TEMPTATION OF FORGETTING THE VICTIMS OF THOSE TIMES, HE UNDERLINED. IT WAS FURTHER POINTED OUT THAT WALDHEIM USED HIS STAY IN EISENSTADT TO PAY A PRIVATE VISIT TO THE TOWN'S JEWISH MUSEUM, A FORMER SYNAGOGUE.

3. AUSTRIAN AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON, THOMAS KLESTIL, RECALLED BY FM MOCK FOR CONSULTATIONS, APPEARED ON A LATE TV NEWS SHOW APRIL 29 SAYING HE HAD HOPED UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE THAT THE U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT WOULD REFRAIN FROM SUCH A MOVE. THE U.S. HAD APPARENTLY IGNORED "THE POLITICAL DIMENSIONS" IN THE MATTER. U.S. DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS HAD OBVIOUSLY OUTWEIGHED EVERYTHING ELSE, KLESTIL REMARKED. KLESTIL AVOIDED COMMENTING ON CRITICISM IN AUSTRIA WHICH CHARGED THAT THE AUSTRIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON HAD NOT BEEN FULLY AWARE OF THE DEVELOPMENTS. IN AN APRIL 30 RADIO INTERVIEW KLESTIL STRESSED THAT AUSTRIA HAD REPEATEDLY POINTED OUT TO THE U.S. SIDE THAT IT DID NOT CONSIDER THE MATTER SIMPLY A VISA QUESTION BUT A CASE OF "ENORMOUS POLITICAL IMPORTANCE". KLESTIL DISCLOSED THAT HE WILL NOT MOVE TO THE POST OF SECRETARY-GENERAL IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY BUT REMAIN AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S. FOR THE PRESENT.

4. FM ALOIS MOCK TOLD A WEST GERMAN RADIO STATION THE U.S. DECISION WAS THE "RESULT OF A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN". HE REJECTED THE IDEA THAT WALDHEIM RESIGN. IT WAS THE AUSTRIAN PEOPLE WHO DETERMINED WHO THEIR PRESIDENT WAS, SAID MOCK. IN HIS VIEW THE "HUGE DAMAGE" COULD ONLY BE REPAIRED BY EXPLAINING HOW "INJUST, ILLEGITIMATE AND INCOMPREHENSIBLE" THE MOVE WAS. THE GOA HAD ASKED THE U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT FOR ACCESS TO THE ALLEGEDLY INCRIMINATING DOCUMENTS, SAID MOCK. IN AN APRIL 30 INTERVIEW MOCK TERMED THE AFFAIR "POSSIBLY THE MOST SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR AUSTRIA SINCE 1955". ASKED ABOUT THE WIDELY-SUGGESTED PROPOSAL THAT WALDHEIM SUE IN THE U.S. MOCK SAID THE PROS AND CONS OF SUCH A MOVE ARE CURRENTLY BEING CAREFULLY WEIGHED.

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5. SPO CENTRAL SECRETARY HEINRICH KELLER SAID THE AUSTRIAN SOCIALIST PARTY FULLY SUPPORTED THE GOA STATEMENT IN DEFENSE OF PRESIDENT WALDHEIM. HE STRESSED THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND PROCEDURES WHICH ALSO APPLIED TO THE ELECTED PRESIDENT. HOWEVER, SPO PARTY MEMBERS DID NOT UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 VIENNA 06912

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HAVE TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES WITH THE PERSON KURT WALDHEIM, KELLER SAID. IT WOULD BE WISE FOR WALDHEIM TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO SETTLE THE AFFAIR, THE SPO POLITICIAN REMARKED. KELLER JOINED THE VIEW THAT WALDHEIM SUE IN THE U.S. AND RECALLED THE TIME MAGAZINE VS. SHARON CASE.

6. OVP SECRETARY-GENERAL MICHAEL GRAFF ON THE OTHER HAND SAID A PROPOSED COURT ACTION BY WALDHEIM WOULD NOT BE "A VERY SENSIBLE MOVE". ATTORNEY GENERAL MEESE HAD ACTED IN AN OFFICIAL CAPACITY AND COULD THEREFORE HARDLY BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE. U.S. MEDIA COULD ONLY BE SUED IF "MALICE" OR "RECKLESS DISREGARD FOR THE TRUTH" COULD BE PROVED, WHICH HE THOUGHT WAS DIFFICULT AS PAPERS HAD ALWAYS CONFINED THEMSELVES TO QUOTING THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT. GRAFF SUGGESTED THAT THE ALLEGEDLY INCRIMINATING MATERIAL USED BY THE U.S. BE PRESENTED IN PUBLIC FOR EVALUATION, AND THAT WALDHEIM PUBLISH THE PROMISED WHITE BOOK DOCUMENTING IN DETAIL HIS ROLE DURING THE WAR. HE FURTHER ARGUED FOR THE CONVENING OF A TEAM OF HISTORIANS TO EXAMINE ALL MATERIAL. IN GRAFF'S VIEW THE U.S. DECISION HAD BEEN POLITICALLY MOTIVATED. THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS MIGHT HAVE PLAYED A ROLE, GRAFF REMARKED. PRESIDENT REAGAN WAS CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING A POLITICAL LOW AND AT THE SAME TIME HAD HIS EYE ON THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS, GRAFF ADDED.

7. THE "POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE" DEVELOPMENTS AT AN APRIL 29 TRIAL, DEALING WITH A LIBEL SUIT BY FORMER SPO CHANCELLOR FRED SINOWATZ AGAINST A JOURNALIST OF THE WEEKLY "PROFIL", VIENNA OVP POLITICIAN ALFRED WORM, HAVE ADDED YET ANOTHER HIGHLY SENSITIVE DIMENSION TO THE WALDHEIM AFFAIR: IN AN 1986 "PROFIL" ARTICLE, WORM HAD ALLEGED THAT THEN SPO CHANCELLOR SINOWATZ HAD INFORMALLY INDICATED THAT "WALDHEIM'S NAZI PAST" SHOULD BE BROUGHT INTO PLAY DURING THE COMING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. BURGENLAND SPO POLITICIAN OTTILIE MATYSEK, OUSTED FROM THE SPO ON ALLEGATIONS OF ILLEGAL FINANCIAL DEALINGS, YESTERDAY TESTIFIED THAT, AT A 1985 MEETING, SHE HAD OVERHEARD SINOWATZ SUGGESTING THAT WALDHEIM'S NAZI PAST BE BROUGHT UP DURING THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. SINOWATZ' LAWYER CALLED THIS A LIE. A COMMENTARY IN TODAY'S DAILY 'DIE PRESSE' REMARKED THAT MATYSEK HAD "COURAGEOUSLY"

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INDICATED THAT SINOWATZ HAD BEEN THE MASTERMIND OF THE  
ANTI-WALDHEIM CAMPAIGN IN AUSTRIA, THE CONSEQUENCES OF  
WHICH THE ENTIRE REPUBLIC IS SUFFERING NOW. END.  
LAUDER

ADMIN  
END OF MESSAGE

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