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TEXT

SUBJECT: AUSTRIA MEDIA REACTION

1. WALDHEIM ON WATCH LIST: BIG HEADLINES IN THE VIENNA PRESS OF MAY 16: "U.S. EXPERTS ALSO UNABLE TO INCRIMINATE WALDHEIM" ("KURIER"); "U.S. DELEGATION CAME WITHOUT FILES" ("DIE PRESSE"); "NEW WALDHEIM BOMB: AMERICANS DID NOT PRESENT ANY FILES IN VIENNA" ("KRONEN-ZEITUNG"); "NO DOCUMENTS PRODUCED" ("WIENER ZEITUNG"); "U.S. TEAM GAVE INFORMATION ABOUT WALDHEIM" - 'THIS INFORMATION WILL NOT BE MADE PUBLIC BY US'" ("NEUE AZ").

"DIE PRESSE" CLAIMED IN BOLD PRINT IN ITS MAY 16 LEAD STORY THAT "THE ATMOSPHERE DETERIORATED DRAMATICALLY" WHEN THE U.S. TEAM DID NOT PRODUCE ANY DOCUMENTS AND THAT "AMBASSADOR KLESTIL EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT BREAKING THE TALKS OFF." THE "NEUE AZ" QUOTED AMBASSADOR LAUDER'S EXPLANATION THAT "IT IS, TO BE SURE, AN EXTRAORDINARY AND UNPRECEDENTED ACTION ON THE PART OF MY GOVERNMENT TO PRESENT TO ANY FOREIGN GOVERNMENT THE BASIS FOR AN INTERNAL DECISION." "DIE PRESSE" SAID "IT WAS IN VAIN THAT THE AUSTRIANS POINTED OUT THAT, ACCORDING TO THE U.S. LINE OF REASONING, HALF OF THE GERMAN WEHRMACHT WOULD HAVE TO BE PUT ON THE WATCH LIST." THE SAME PAPER CLAIMED THAT THE AMERICANS DID NOT SHOW ANY INTEREST IN THE ENVISAGED COMMISSION OF HISTORIANS AND ARE NOT PREPARED TO LET THIS COMMISSION LOOK AT THEIR FILES.

ACCORDING TO THE INDEPENDENT NEWS MAGAZINE "PROFIL" OF TODAY, IT IS TRUE THAT THE U.S. TEAM DID NOT PRESENT ANY DOCUMENTS, BUT THE VISITORS ENUMERATED SIX REASONS FOR PUTTING WALDHEIM ON THE WATCH LIST. THE CRUX: WALDHEIM NOT ONLY KNEW ABOUT WAR CRIMES IN THE BALKANS, BUT ALSO PARTICIPATED IN SOME CASES IN DEPORTATIONS OF JEWS, THE TURNING OVER OF CIVILIANS TO THE SS, AND RETALIATORY MEASURES AGAINST THE POPULATION. CALLING ATTENTION TO THIS "PROFIL" STORY, THE SOCIALIST DAILY "NEUE AZ" TODAY CARRIED A PAGE 2 HEADLINE "U.S. DELEGATION SAYS WALDHEIM KNEW MORE."

TODAY, "DIE PRESSE" REPORTED THAT THE OFFICE OF CHANCELLOR VRANITZKY HAS REACTED SHARPLY TO THE REMARK BY PEOPLE'S PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL MICHAEL GRAFF AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON SATURDAY THAT WHETHER OR NOT VRANITZKY WILL MAKE HIS TRIP TO THE U.S. IS A SUBJECT WHICH NEEDS TO BE DISCUSSED FIRST. THE CHANCELLERY EMPHASIZED THAT CANCELLING THIS VISIT IS OUT OF THE QUESTION.

THE SEMI-OFFICIAL "WIENER ZEITUNG" OF MAY 17 STRESSED GRAFF'S CHARGE AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE THAT THE VISIT OF THE U.S. TEAM PRODUCED "A ZERO RESULT" AND THAT THE AMERICANS RESORTED TO "CAMOUFLAGE TACTICS" IN ORDER TO CONCEAL THE FACT THEY HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO EVIDENCE AGAINST WALDHEIM. GRAFF SPOKE OF AN "AFFRONT" AND

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CALLED FOR A DIPLOMATIC DEMARCHE BY AUSTRIA.  
INTERVIEWED BY THREE AUSTRIAN JOURNALISTS ON TELEVISION  
SUNDAY MORNING, GRAFF REITERATED HIS THEORY THAT THE  
U.S. INVESTIGATING AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO PROVE  
ANY PERSONAL GUILT OF WALDHEIM. GRAFF MAINTAINED THAT A  
COMMISSION OF HISTORIANS WOULD MAKE SENSE ONLY IF IT  
WERE PERMITTED TO SEE THE U.S. FILES. HE DOES NOT WANT  
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WALDHEIM TO TAKE LEGAL ACTION ALSO IN THE U.S.  
TSELF  
BECAUSE, AS GRAFF ALLEGED, "NAZIS AND THE WEHRMACHT ARE  
REGARDED AS ONE AND THE SAME THING" IN AMERICA.

THE "KURIER" OF MAY 17 PLAYED UP A SPEECH BY WALDHEIM ON  
THE OCCASION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AUSTRIAN GUARDS BATTALION. HE WAS  
QUOTED AS HAVING SAID ABOUT THE NAZI REGIME THAT "IN  
THAT WAR, MILLIONS OF PEOPLE FELL VICTIMS TO AN  
UNCONSCIONABLE CRIME" AND THAT "THERE IS NOTHING WHICH  
COULD JUSTIFY THE ATROCITIES." HE EXPLAINED THAT HE WAS  
INDUCTED INTO THE WEHRMACHT IN 1939, AND DID NOT JOIN  
VOLUNTARILY.

TODAY'S "NEUE AZ" REPORTED ON A SPEECH MADE ON BEHALF OF  
THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT BY (SOCIALIST) FINANCE MINISTER  
FERDINAND LACINA AT A COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY AT THE  
FORMER CONCENTRATION CAMP IN MAUTHAUSEN. LACINA CALLED  
FOR A DETERMINED FIGHT AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM WHICH HE  
DEFINED AS AN "IMMUNE DEFICIENCY."

THE "KRONEN-ZEITUNG" OF MAY 16 DEVOTED ITS TOP STORY TO  
WHAT IT CALLED "A TRIPLE OFFENSIVE" BY FOREIGN MINISTER  
ALOIS MOCK IN SUPPORT OF WALDHEIM. HE WANTS (1) TO SEND  
A SPECIAL ENVOY TO THE MAJOR WESTERN CAPITALS TO EXPLAIN  
THAT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE INCRIMINATING WALDHEIM; (2)  
TO MAKE A DEMARCHE WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT WHICH "IF YOU  
WANT TO, CAN ALSO BE DESCRIBED AS A PROTEST NOTE"; (3)  
TO CONSIDER TAKING LEGAL ACTION ON THE GROUND THAT

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INTERNATIONAL LAW DOES NOT PERMIT THE PLACING OF ANY CHIEF OF STATE UNDER ANOTHER COUNTRY'S JURISDICTION.

THE "KURIER" OF MAY 17 POINTED OUT THAT FREEDOM PARTY CHAIRMAN JORG HAIDER HAS DISSOCIATED HIMSELF FROM WALDHEIM, AN ATTITUDE WHICH HAS MET WITH APPROVAL BY MANY SOCIALISTS. HAIDER BELIEVES THAT UNLESS WALDHEIM HIMSELF TAKES "LIBERATING ACTION," THE TWO BIG PARTIES WILL PERHAPS ASK HIM EVEN BEFORE THE SUMMER TO DRAW THE NECESSARY CONCLUSIONS IN THE INTEREST OF THE REPUBLIC.

"DIE PRESSE" REPORTED TODAY THAT THE WWII FILES WHICH A GROUP OF AUSTRIAN EXPERTS RECENTLY EXAMINED IN BELGRADE SEEM TO HAVE BEEN "MANIPULATED" BY THE YUGOSLAVS AFTER THE WAR. SERVING AS SECRETARY TO FOREIGN MINISTER K?RL GRUBER IN THE POSTWAR YEARS, WALDHEIM WAS APPARENTLY REGARDED AS SO INTERESTING BY THE YUGOSLAV AUTHORITIES THAT THEY TAMPERED WITH THE FILES, THE PAPER EXPLAINED.

2. EDITORIAL COMMENT: THE SOCIALIST PARTY DAILY "NEUE AZ" TODAY COMMENTED ON GRAFF'S REMARK ON TV THAT ALL PERSONS OF GOOD WILL REALIZE NOW THAT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE INCRIMINATING WALDHEIM, THE U.S. TEAM HAVING BEEN UNABLE TO PROVE ANYTHING. THE PAPER POINTED OUT THAT NO PERSONS OF GOOD WILL HAVE EVER ASSERTED THAT WALDHEIM WAS GUILTY OF ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN WAR CRIMES; WHAT ONE HAD OBJECTED TO WAS "HIS COVERING UP A DUBIOUS PASSAGE IN HIS BIOGRAPHY." "NEUE AZ" CHIEF EDITOR MANFRED SCHEUCH WOUND UP HIS COMMENT AS FOLLOWS: "IN VIEW OF A PEOPLE'S PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL WHO IMPUTES 'ACTS OF FRIENDSHIP' BY THE U.S. AUTHORITIES UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 03 VIENNA 07678

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TOWARD THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS AND WHO ALLEGES THAT U.S. COURTS KNOW THE NAZIS FROM COMICS ONLY, IT IS DEEPLY GRATIFYING THAT THE FEDERAL CHANCELLOR DOES NOT LET HIMSELF BE DISSUADED FROM PAYING A CLARIFYING VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES."

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DIETER KINDERMANN WROTE IN THE INDEPENDENT, MASS-CIRCULATION TABLOID "KRONEN-ZEITUNG" OF MAY 17: "U.S. AMBASSADOR LAUDER HAS DESCRIBED IT AS AN EXTRAORDINARY AND UNPRECEDENTED ACTION ON THE PART OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO PRESENT TO AUSTRIA THE BASIS FOR AN INTERNAL DECISION. IN REALITY, IT IS AN EXTRAORDINARY, UNPRECEDENTED MEASURE TO BLACKLIST THE CHIEF OF STATE OF A FRIENDLY COUNTRY. THIS NEGATIVE IMPRESSION HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED BY THE FACT THAT THE U.S. DELEGATION SENT TO VIENNA WAS UNABLE TO PRESENT ANY DOCUMENTS OR EVIDENCE AGAINST WALDHEIM."

UNDER THE PAGE 2 HEADLINE "AMERICA AND WE," DEPUTY CHIEF EDITOR HANS RAUSCHER REMARKED ON MAY 17 IN THE INDEPENDENT, MASS-CIRCULATION DAILY "KURIER": "THE AMERICAN DELEGATION WHICH CAME TO VIENNA HAS MERELY EXPLAINED THE REASONS FOR PLACING **KURT WALDHEIM** ON THE WATCH LIST, BUT HAS NOT PRESENTED ANY DOCUMENTS. WHAT IS SO ABSURD ABOUT THIS IS THE FACT THAT THE AMERICANS REALLY SEEM TO REGARD THIS AS A MAJOR CONCESSION MADE TO AUSTRIA. U.S. AMBASSADOR RONALD LAUDER CERTAINLY DID NOT INTEND ANY PROVOCATION WHEN HE SPOKE OF 'AN EXTRAORDINARY AND UNPRECEDENTED ACTION' ON THE PART OF HIS GOVERNMENT. ... AMERICAN HYPOCRISY? REASONS OF DOMESTIC POLITICS? UNDOUBTEDLY THEY, TOO, PLAY A ROLE. BUT A NATION WHICH JUST NOW IS SUBJECTING ITS PRESIDENT TO A RUTHLESS INVESTIGATION OF THE IRAN AFFAIR IS UNDOUBTEDLY REALLY INTERESTED IN SELF-PURIFICATION. WE AND WALDHEIM HAVE BEEN DRAGGED INTO THIS PROCESS. AN EXAMPLE IS BEING MADE OF US, MAINLY BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN STUBBORNLY REFUSING TO LISTEN TO REASON AND TO PRONOUNCE A FEW WORDS: 'IT WAS WRONG; WE ARE SORRY'." KOHL

ADMIN  
END OF MESSAGE

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