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TEXT

SUBJECT: AUSTRIA MEDIA REACTION

1. WALDHEIM DEVELOPMENTS AND VRANITZKY'S U.S. VISIT: TOP HEADLINES IN THE VIENNA PRESS OF MAY 19, SHORTLY BEFORE CHANCELLOR FRANZ VRANITZKY'S DEPARTURE FOR THE U.S.: "U.S. PRESIDENT PLANS RECONCILIATION MESSAGE TO AUSTRIA" ("KRONEN-ZEITUNG"); "VRANITZKY CAUTIONS AGAINST ISOLATIONISM - 'I WILL SPEAK IN THE U.S. AS AN EQUAL'" ("DIE PRESSE"); "VRANITZKY: 'I WANT TO PRESENT AUSTRIA OF THE FUTURE TO THE U.S.'" ("KURIER"); "WHAT VRANITZKY WANTS TO DISCUSS WITH REAGAN" ("NEUE AZ"); "FURTHER CULTIVATION OF RELATIONS" ("WIENER ZEITUNG").

THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA AND SEVERAL PAPERS STRESSED VRANITZKY'S REMARK THAT THE U.S. DECISION AGAINST WALDHEIM CONSTITUTES "THE MOST SERIOUS STRAIN ON BILATERAL RELATIONS SINCE 1945," BUT THE FRIENDSHIP MUST NOT BE TOTALLY DESTROYED BECAUSE OF THE WALDHEIM CASE. ACCORDING TO THE "NEUE AZ," VRANITZKY WILL TELL PRESIDENT REAGAN THAT, IN THE OPINION OF THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT, THE WATCHLIST DECISION WAS MADE PRIMARILY FOR REASONS OF U.S. DOMESTIC POLITICS. VRANITZKY YESTERDAY EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT "THERE COULD HAVE BEEN SMOOTHER SOLUTIONS. THE U.S. DID NOT USE ITS DISCRETIONARY LATITUDE. ONE COULD HAVE BORNE IN MIND WHAT VALUE ONE ATTACHES TO A NEUTRAL, SMALL STATE AT THE CROSSROADS BETWEEN THE BLOCS." ACCORDING TO THE "KURIER," THE CHANCES FOR PERSUADING THE U.S. TO DELETE WALDHEIM'S NAME FROM THE WATCHLIST ARE NOT GOOD, BUT THIS REMAINS AUSTRIA'S AIM.

COMMENTING ON THE RECENT VIENNA VISIT OF A TEAM OF JUSTICE AND STATE EXPERTS, VRANITZKY DID NOT APPRAISE IT NEGATIVELY, ALTHOUGH NO DOCUMENTS WERE PRESENTED. "DIE PRESSE" AND THE "NEUE AZ" QUOTED HIM AS HAVING SAID: "THEIR ORAL PRESENTATION DID NOT LAG BEHIND THE INFORMATIONAL VALUE OF DOCUMENTS IN WRITING." HE ADDED, ACCORDING TO "DIE PRESSE," THAT AUSTRIA NOW REALIZES HOW THE U.S. IS INTERPRETING ITS LEGAL INSTRUMENTS - "THIS IS A MATTER ONLY OF PHYSICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PROXIMITY" TO WAR CRIMES.

REPORTING FOR THE "KRONEN-ZEITUNG" FROM WASHINGTON, FOREIGN EDITOR KURT SEINITZ CALLED ATTENTION TO INFORMATION FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT PRESIDENT REAGAN WILL USE THE VRANITZKY VISIT TO MAKE A STATEMENT OF RECONCILIATION WITH THE AUSTRIANS. SEINITZ QUOTED AN UNIDENTIFIED DIPLOMAT AS HAVING SAID THAT THE HIGH REGARD FOR AUSTRIA WILL BE EXPRESSED MORE EMPHATICALLY THAN IT WAS IN THE LAST FEW YEARS.

ACCORDING TO THE "KURIER," THERE IS DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO COALITION PARTIES REGARDING A POSSIBLE PROTEST NOTE TO THE U.S. IN CONNECTION WITH WALDHEIM. WHILE THE OFFICE OF FOREIGN MINISTER ALOIS MOCK HAS ALREADY DRAFTED THE TEXT, VRANITZKY SAID YESTERDAY THAT THE NOTE

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IS "NOT YET WORKED OUT TO THE LAST DETAIL" AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT YET MADE A DECISION IN THIS MATTER.

MOCK MAINTAINED YESTERDAY THAT WALDHEIM'S ELECTION FOR PRESIDENT WAS AN AUSTRIAN DECISION, "REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THIS SUITS SOME PEOPLE ABROAD OR NOT." IN MOCK'S OPINION, WALDHEIM'S OWN "WHITE BOOK" OUGHT TO BE UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 03 VIENNA 07731

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PUBLISHED INTERNATIONALLY.

SEVERAL PAPERS ANNOUNCED A RADIO AND TV ADDRESS BY WALDHEIM TO THE NATION TONIGHT. THE "KURIER" ASSUMED THAT HE WILL USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE HIS RECENT CONDEMNATION OF NAZI CRIMES.

ACCORDING TO THE "KRONEN-ZEITUNG," THE AUSTRIAN INVESTIGATING JUDGE CHARGED WITH WALDHEIM'S LEGAL ACTION AGAINST WJC PRESIDENT BRONFMAN WILL REQUEST THE PERTINENT NEW YORK COURT TO SUMMON MR. BRONFMAN AND ASK HIM WHETHER HE REALLY MADE THE REMARKS REGARDED BY WALDHEIM AS ACTIONABLE AND WHETHER HE PLEADS GUILTY OR WANTS TO PROVE THE TRUTH OF WHAT HE SAID. THE REQUEST THAT MR. BRONFMAN BE INTERROGATED WILL BE MADE THROUGH THE AUSTRIAN FOREIGN AND JUSTICE MINISTRIES AND THROUGH THE EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON.

2. EDITORIAL COMMENT: PETER GNAM WROTE IN THE INDEPENDENT, MASS-CIRCULATION TABLOID "KRONEN-ZEITUNG" TODAY: "ONE AFTER THE OTHER, THE ALLEGED PIECES OF EVIDENCE FOR WALDHEIM'S OFFENSES IN WWII ARE COLLAPSING LIKE HOUSES OF CARDS. YESTERDAY, FOR INSTANCE, WE LEARNED THAT THE (AUSTRIAN) EXPERTS WHO EXAMINED BELGRADE WAR ARCHIVES LAST WEEK DID NOT FIND ANYTHING WHICH WOULD INCRIMINATE HIM. EVEN THE AMERICANS THEMSELVES HAD ONLY VAGUE SUSPICIONS WHEN THEY PUT WALDHEIM ON THE WATCHLIST. ... THE FACT THAT THE U.S. THEREFORE HAS A BAD CONSCIENCE TOWARD AUSTRIA IS INDICATED BY THE RED CARPET FOR CHANCELLOR VRANITZKY'S VISIT TO AMERICA GETTING LONGER AND LONGER WITH EVERY DAY THAT PASSES."

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EDITORIALLY POINTING OUT THAT RUTHLESS INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE PRIVATE LIVES OF TOP POLITICIANS ARE TYPICAL OF THE U.S., ERWIN J. FRASL REMARKED IN THE INDEPENDENT, MASS-CIRCULATION "KURIER" TODAY: "THOSE (LIKE GARY HART) WHO CONVEY A PUBLIC IMAGE NOT TALLYING WITH THE TRUTH ARE BRANDED AS LIARS AND HAVE TO LEAVE THE POLITICAL SCENE SOONER OR LATER. IT IS NOT PRIMARILY THE OFFENDING ACT WHICH IS THE OBJECT OF CRITICISM, BUT THE ATTEMPTS TO COVER IT UP. THIS CLAIM BY THE U.S. MEDIA HAS FULLY HIT AUSTRIA'S PRESIDENT **KURT WALDHEIM**. THIS IS NO LONGER MAINLY A MATTER OF WHETHER OR NOT WALDHEIM IS A WAR CRIMINAL. THE ATTACKS BY THE U.S. MEDIA ON WALDHEIM FOCUS ON THE CHARGE THAT HE LIED."

PREVIEWING VRANITZKY'S TRIP TO THE U.S. AND WALDHEIM'S RADIO AND TV ADDRESS, CHIEF EDITOR THOMAS CHORHERR POINTED OUT IN THE INDEPENDENT "DIE PRESSE" THAT "CHANCELLOR VRANITZKY WILL DEPART FOR THE U.S. TODAY, AS SCHEDULED. THIS IS GOOD AND PROPER. AGAIN POSTPONING OR EVEN CANCELLING THE VISIT WOULD HAVE ADDED NEW MISUNDERSTANDINGS TO THOSE THAT HAVE ALREADY ACCUMULATED. ... CLEAR LANGUAGE WILL HAVE TO BE SPOKEN, HOWEVER, ALSO BY THE FEDERAL PRESIDENT IN HIS TV AND RADIO ADDRESS TO THE NATION TONIGHT. **KURT WALDHEIM** HAS EVIDENTLY DECIDED TO DO NOW WHAT WAS LONG EXPECTED OF HIM: HE WILL SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY TO COME TO GRIPS WITH HIS OWN, THE AUSTRIAN AND THE EUROPEAN PAST. ... THE TIMING OF THIS 'WEIZSAECKER SPEECH' - WHICH CANNOT UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 03 VIENNA 07731

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REALLY BE A 'WEIZSAECKER' SPEECH BECAUSE DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES ARE INVOLVED - IS GOOD. IN BELGRADE, NOTHING WAS FOUND (BY THE THREE AUSTRIAN EXPERTS) EXCEPT THAT THE WALDHEIM FILES WERE PERHAPS MANIPULATED (BY THE YUGOSLAV AUTHORITIES IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD). AND THE 'HIGH-RANKING' DELEGATION FROM WASHINGTON CAME WITH FULL MOUTHS AND EMPTY HANDS." KOHL

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ADMIN  
END OF MESSAGE

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