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FOR COORDINATION WITH DIA

TEXT

SUBJ: AUSTRIA: WALDHEIM VISIT TO VATICAN. (U)
DOI: 22 JUN 87 (AS OF 1700 EDT)
TEXT: 1. (C) PRESIDENT WALDHEIM WILL BREAK HIS DIPLOMATIC ISOLATION ON 25 JUNE WITH AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE VATICAN.
2. (C) THE EVENT IS BEING TOUTED BY AUSTRIAN OFFICIALS AS A VINDICATION OF THEIR PRESIDENT AND AN END TO THE CRITICISM AGAINST WALDHEIM SINCE HE TOOK OFFICE. SOURCES AT THE VATICAN STATED THAT THE AUSTRIANS HAVE BEEN PRESSING FOR A VISIT SINCE WALDHEIM'S ELECTION, BUT THAT THEY HELD OFF AS LONG AS THEY COULD, HOPING SOME OF THE CONTROVERSY WOULD DIMINISH. THESE SOURCES ARE STRESSING THAT THE INVITATION IS TO THE ELECTED HEAD OF STATE, NOT THE MAN, KURT WALDHEIM. THE AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT IS PLANNING TO FOLLOW THIS VISIT WITH ONE TO JORDAN ON 1 JULY. HE HOPES THE TWO EVENTS WILL MUTE THE CONTINUING CONTROVERSY AND WILL GENERATE MORE OFFICIAL STATE VISIT INVITATIONS, PARTICULARLY FROM WEST EUROPEAN NATIONS.
3. (C/NF) COMMENT: THE VATICAN VISIT IS BEING BILLED AS A DIPLOMATIC VICTORY BY WALDHEIM SUPPORTERS. THE SUBSEQUENT VISIT TO JORDAN, A MODERATE ARAB NATION, FURTHER INDICATES THE END OF WALDHEIM'S ISOLATION. THE EMPHASIS BY VATICAN OFFICIALS ON INVITING THE PRESIDENT RATHER THAN WALDHEIM, HOWEVER, BELIES THIS CONFIDENCE AND HIGHLIGHTS THE CONTINUING CRITICISM. MOREOVER, THE LACK OF RESPONSE TO THE VISIT BY OTHER WESTERN CAPITALS INDICATES THEIR

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CONTINUED CONCERN OVER HIS CREDIBILITY. ALTHOUGH THE TWO TRIPS
ABROAD REDUCE THE LIKELIHOOD OF WALDHEIM'S RESIGNATION, THE AUSTRIAN
PRESIDENT REMAINS UNDER SCRUTINY AND COULD STILL BE ENCOURAGED TO
RESIGN IF WESTERN EUROPE DOES NOT WARM TO HIM.

ADMIN

PREP: MAJ M. SWEBERG, USA, JSI-4A, 695-1607; DIST 960-3204; KY
2571

DECL: OADR

END OF MESSAGE

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