

UNCLASSIFIED

DOCUMENT ID: 22054430
INQNO: DOC8D 00088368
DOCNO: TEL 001558 88
PRODUCER: VIENNA
SOURCE: STATE
DOCTYPE: IN
DOR: 19880210
TOR: 123203
DOCPREC: 0
ORIGDATE: 198802101551
MHFNO: 88 7800994
DOCCLASS: U

HEADER
OO RUEAIIB
ZNR UUUUU ZOC STATE ZZH
STU5964
OO RUEHC
DE RUFHVI #1558/01 0411552
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 101551Z FEB 88
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO RUEHIA/USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4936
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9782
INFO RUEHDC/USDOC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUFHMB/USMISSION USVIENNA IMMEDIATE 0899
BT

CONTROLS
UNCLAS VIENNA 01558

USIS

USIA FOR EU

STATE FOR EUR/CE, INR/WEA AND INR/P

USDOC FOR IEP/EUR OWE FOR P. COMBE

USVIENNA FOR MBFR AND UNVIE

E.O. 12356: N/A

TEXT

SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN PRESS SUMMARY NO. 26/88, FOR FEB. 10,
1988

1. WALDHEIM COMMISSION REPORT: FEDERAL PRESIDENT **KURT WALDHEIM** REACTED TO THE COMMISSION REPORT BY SAYING HE IS "GLAD" THAT THE COMMISSION CLEARED HIM OF WAR CRIME CHARGES. HE HAS NO INTENTION TO RESIGN FROM OFFICE. (PRINT AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA)

2. GOVERNMENT REACTION: THE "WALDHEIM CASE" NEARLY BECAME A STUMBLING BLOCK FOR THE COALITION GOVERNMENT YESTERDAY. THE QUESTION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REACTION TO

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2001 2007

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
2000

CIA HAS NO OBJECTION TO
DECLASSIFICATION AND/OR
RELEASE OF CIA INFORMATION
IN THIS DOCUMENT

UNCLASSIFIED

Page 1

UNCLASSIFIED

THE HISTORIANS' COMMISSION REPORT LED TO HEATED DISCUSSIONS BEFORE AND DURING THE CABINET MEETING. WALDHEIM HAD ASKED CHANCELLOR VRANITZKY TO REFUSE TO ACCEPT THE HISTORIANS' REPORT. THE PEOPLE'S PARTY HAD AGREED ON MONDAY NIGHT NOT TO ACCEPT PARTS OF THE REPORT, BUT THE SOCIALIST PARTY REFUSED TO DO THE SAME ON TUESDAY. THIS RESULTED IN A MEAGER JOINT GOVERNMENT STATEMENT. (DIE PRESSE, P.1)

3. VRANITZKY AND MOCK STATEMENTS: CHANCELLOR VRANITZKY SAID THAT THE REPORT "INCLUDES CRITICAL RESERVATIONS ABOUT CERTAIN ACTIONS OF THE PRESIDENT, INCLUDING SOME REMARKABLE POINTS... THE COMMISSION HAS FULFILLED ITS TASK WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF SCIENTIFIC FREEDOM. ITS CONCLUSIONS ARE THERE, AND CRITICISM BASED ON FORMALITIES WON'T MAKE THEM GO AWAY." ON THE QUESTION OF A POSSIBLE RESIGNATION OF WALDHEIM, VRANITZKY SAID THAT "HE HAS TO DECIDE ON IT HIMSELF." - VICE CHANCELLOR MOCK REPEATED HIS VIEWPOINT THAT THE COMMISSION HAD EXCEEDED ITS MANDATE. HE SAID HE WAS "VERY SURPRISED" AND ADDED THAT THE REPORT IS "NOT THE TEN COMMANDMENTS." (NEUE ARBEITERZEITUNG, P. 2)

4. HISTORIANS' STATEMENTS: THE HISTORIANS FEEL THEY HAVE BEEN MISINTERPRETED BY CHANCELLOR MOCK, BUT ALSO BY PART OF THE PRESS. THEY SAID THEY HAVE NOT EXONERATED PRESIDENT WALDHEIM. COMMISSION CHAIRMAN KURZ SAID AT A PRESS CONFERENCE THAT THE REPORT DOES NOT SAY THERE IS "NO PERSONAL GUILT," BUT THAT NO FACTS HAVE BEEN FOUND WHICH WOULD CONSTITUTE GROUNDS FOR A SENTENCE OF GUILT UNDER PENAL LAW. ASKED HOW THE PRESIDENT COULD ARRIVE AT HIS INTERPRETATION OF THE COMMISSION'S FINDINGS, COMMISSION MEMBER MESSERSCHMIDT SUGGESTED THAT WALDHEIM READ THE REPORT ONCE MORE. ISRAELI MEMBER WALLACH ATTACKED WALDHEIM MOST STRONGLY: "WE HAVE EVIDENCE THAT EVERY OFFICER IN SALONIKA KNEW OF THE DEPORTATION OF JEWS FROM THE CITY, WHO THEN CONSTITUTED ONE QUARTER OF THE INHABITANTS. EVERYONE BUT FIRST LIEUTENANT WALDHEIM NOTICED THEY WERE DEPORTED." (NEUE ARBEITERZEITUNG, P. 5)

5. SIMON WIESENTHAL: (THE HEAD OF THE JEWISH DOCUMENTATION CENTER IN VIENNA) SIMON WIESENTHAL, THE UNTIRING DEFENDER OF AN OBJECTIVE VIEW OF WALDHEIM AND AUSTRIA, THINKS THE COMMISSION'S REPORT "CALLS UPON THE INTELLECTUAL AND CULTURAL ELLTE OF AUSTRIA TO WORK TOGETHER AND ADVISE THE PRESIDENT TO RETHINK THE DECISION HE MADE YESTERDAY... I DON'T ACCUSE WALDHEIM BECAUSE OF WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE WAR. BUT THE REPORTS HE SAW WERE BLOOD AND TEARS." WIESENTHAL SAID THAT DEMOCRACY IS BASED ON TRUTHFULNESS, AND A PRESIDENT MUST BE "SPOTLESS." (KURIER, P. 2) - IN A TV INTERVIEW, WIESENTHAL SAID THAT "WALDHEIM'S INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION CANNOT BE REPAIRED," AND ADDED THAT HE COULD THINK OF NO OTHER CONSEQUENCE THAN RESIGNING FOR THE PRESIDENT. (TV, NEUE ARBEITERZEITUNG, P.3)

UNCLASSIFIED

6. REACTIONS ABROAD - UNITED STATES: THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE ANNOUNCED THAT THE WATCH LIST DECISION ON WALDHEIM WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED. NEIL SHER OF THE AMERICAN JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SAID WALDHEIM MIGHT HAVE BEEN PUT ON TRIAL BY THE NUREMBURG WAR CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL, WHERE THE HISTORIANS' COMMISSION'S FINDINGS WOULD HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT FOR A VERDICT OF "GUILTY." UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 VIENNA 01558

USIS

USIA FOR EU

STATE FOR EUR/CE, INR/WEA AND INR/P

USDOC FOR IEP/EUR OWE FOR P. COMBE

USVIENNA FOR MBFR AND UNVIE

E.O. 12356: N/A

SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN PRESS SUMMARY NO. 26/88, FOR FEB. 10,

(ORF RADIO NEWS)

7. YUGOSLAVIA: THE BELGRADE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN, AMBASSADOR STANIC, DECLARED OFFICIALLY THAT THERE IS "THE NECESSITY OF AND THE MUTUAL INTEREST IN MAINTAINING GOOD AND STABLE RELATIONS BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND YUGOSLAVIA IN THE FUTURE IN THE SPIRIT OF GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS AND FRIENDLY COOPERATION." IN AN INTERVIEW WITH "DIE PRESSE", A HIGH-RANKING YUGOSLAV DIPLOMAT SAID THERE IS SOME FEAR THAT YUGOSLAVIA MAY BECOME "A DOUBLE VICTIM OF THE CONFUSION ABOUT TRACES FROM THE WAR," AND WENT ON TO SAY: "OUR POPULATION SUFFERED ENORMOUSLY DURING THE WAR, AND NOW A NASTY GAME IS PLAYED AT YUGOSLAVIA'S EXPENSE, WHICH COULD DO GREAT POLITICAL DAMAGE TO THE COUNTRY, AND IN WHICH THE SUFFERING OF THE WAR VICTIMS IS NOTHING BUT A PRETEXT FOR OTHER POLITICAL INTERESTS." (DIE PRESSE, P.2)

8. ISRAEL: ISRAEL'S FOREIGN MINISTER PERES THINKS THAT "THE HISTORIANS' REPORT IS MAKING THE SITUATION WORSE. AT THIS STAGE, WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF RETURNING OUR AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRIA." (DIE PRESSE, P.2) O'CONNOR

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

UNCLASSIFIED