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WHITE HOUSE PASS NSC/WEUROPE

E.O. 12356 N/A

TEXT

TAGS: ECPS, PREL, CA, IS, GZ, PGOV, XK, EAID,
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - KURT WALDHEIM; AID TO THE
CONTRAS

1. THE FINDINGS OF THE COMMISSION INVESTIGATING THE
WARTIME PAST OF AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT KURT WALDHEIM WERE THE
SUBJECT OF TWO FEBRUARY 10 EDITORIALS. OTTAWA CITIZEN
EDIT ENTITLED "WALDEIM INDICTED FOR LIFE OF DECEIT" SAID

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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IN PART:

2. "THERE IS ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO ACCUSE AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT **KURT WALDHEIM** OF DISHONESTY, HYPOCRISY AND A TERRIBLE MORAL COWARDICE. THAT STILL LEAVES UNANSWERED THE DARK, CENTRAL QUESTION: WAS HE A NAZI WAR CRIMINAL?.... FAR FROM ACKNOWLEDGING RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS WARTIME ACTIONS, WALDHEIM HAS ALWAYS TRIED TO DENY THEM (AND TO DENY, IN EARLY AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNTS, THAT HE WAS EVEN THERE AT THE TIME). HE HAS 'SOUGHT TO LET HIS MILITARY PAST SLIP INTO OBLIVION,' THE COMMISSION SAID, 'AND AS SOON AS THAT WAS NO LONGER POSSIBLE, TO PORTRAY IT AS HARMLESS.'

3. "WALDHEIM, NATURALLY, PUT THE MOST SELF-SERVING CAST ON THESE CONCLUSIONS. 'TO DEDUCE THAT KNOWLEDGE IS SOME KIND OF CRIME IS SIMPLY NOT CORRECT,' HE SAID. 'EVERY PERSON WHO SERVED IN THE WAR KNEW ABOUT THESE EVENTS....' IN A SINISTER SENSE HE IS RIGHT. WALDHEIM PERSONIFIES THE STRESSES THAT MUST HAVE WORKED AGAINST THE COURAGE AND CONSCIENCE OF MILLIONS WHO SERVED, OR MERELY TRIED TO SURVIVE, THE THIRD REICH. ANYONE WHO DID SURVIVE WAS LEFT TO DWELL, AT SOME DISTANCE PERHAPS, WITH UUILT....

4. "YET WE CANNOT FORGET THE DIFFERENCES IN THE WALDHEIM CASE. NOT EVERYONE HAS METHODICALLY LIED ABOUT HIS PAST. NOT EVERYONE WITH THAT GUILT BECAME (A RATHER SANCTIMONIOUS) SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UN. NOT EVERYONE WHO ACQUIESCED IN ATROCITY NOW STANDS AS PRESIDENT OF AUSTRIA. THESE ARE IMPORTANT MORAL DISTINCTIONS, EVEN IF WALDHEIM REFUSES TO SEE THEM. BUT THIS IS NOT THE FIRST MORAL TEST, NOR THE MOST SERIOUS, THAT WALDHEIM HAS FAILED."

5. PARTIAL TEXT OF TORONTO SUN EDIT ENTITLED "AUF WIEDERSEHEN" FOLLOWS:

6. "THE BEST THING AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT **KURT WALDHEIM** COULD DO FOR HIS COUNTRY - AND HIMSELF - IS RESIGN. THE TIMING'S PERFECT. A PANEL OF SIX HISTORIANS, AFTER FIVE MONTHS OF INVESTIGATION, HAS JUST CLEARED HIM OF GUILT FOR WAR CRIMES. IT WOULD BE AN HONORABLE END TO YEARS OF DECEPTION. WELL, ALMOST.... THE COMMISSION ALSO CONCLUDED THAT WALDHEIM'S KNOWLEDGE OF WAR CRIMES HAS BEEN PROVED BEYOND DOUBT - DESPITE HIS FREQUENT DENIALS WHICH ARE REVEALED AS LIES....

7. "WALDHEIM'S REACTION SHOWS HE IS UNREPENTANT. 'BECAUSE I FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COUNTRY,' HE SAYS, 'AND BECAUSE I WAS ELECTED BY THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF AUSTRIANS, I SEE AN OBLIGATION TO PUT INTO USE MY WHOLE KNOWLEDGE AND ALL MY MANY YEARS EXPERIENCE, AND I WILL CONTINUE TO DO THAT.' THAT'S A MISTAKE.... HIS REACTION MAY BE PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE FROM A PRIVATE CITIZEN WHO WENT THROUGH THE WAR JUST OBEYING ORDERS. IT'S NOT WORTHY OF A PERSON WHO'S TRIED TO PLAY THE ROLE OF WORLD LEADER.... BY HANGING ON - INSISTING HE'S BEEN

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EXONERATED - HE'S SAYING HE BELIEVES IT WAS ACCEPTABLE TO LIE REPEATEDLY ABOUT HIS WAR RECORD...."

8. EXCERPTS FROM EDITORIAL IN THE AFTERNOON VANCOUVER SUN OF FEB. 8 ENTITLED "OUT OF REJECTION, A CHANCE FOR PEACE" INCLUDE:

9. "A BREATH OF HOPE FOR PEACE HAS BEEN PUFFED TOWARD UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 OTTAWA 01218

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - KURT WALDHEIM; AID TO THE

CENTRAL AMERICA BY THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS. THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES' REJECTION OF PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN'S DEMAND FOR MORE AID TO THE NICARAGUAN CONTRAS MAY EVEN BECOME A CRUCIAL TURNING POINT. IT WILL CERTAINLY ENHANCE THE CLIMATE FOR SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE SANDINISTAS AND CONTRAS AND, OFTEN FORGOTTEN IN THE BLINDING FOCUS ON NICARAGUA, IT WILL IMPROVE PROSPECTS FOR STABLE DEMOCRACY IN THE OTHER COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AMERICA. THEY HAVE JOINED IN A SINCERE ATTEMPT TO SOLVE THE REGION'S MAIN PROBLEMS UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF THE PLAN DEvised BY COSTA RICAN PRESIDENT OSCAR ARIAS SANCHEZ.

10. "CONTINUED U.S. AID TO THE CONTRAS WAS A STUMBLING BLOCK BECAUSE IT ENCOURAGED THEM IN THE BELIEF THAT THEY COULD STILL WIN A MILITARY VICTORY AND SHUN THE NEGOTIATING TABLE.... NOW MUCH DEPENDS ON WHETHER ALL PARTIES ABIDE BY THIS DECISION. IN THE U.S. THIS MEANS NO NEW OR COVERT ATTEMPT BY THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION TO PUSH THROUGH MORE FUNDS. IT MEANS THE CONTRAS WILL BE TESTED ON THEIR DESIRE TO NEGOTIATE. AND IT TESTS THE GOOD WILL OF THE SANDINISTAS IN MAINTAINING AND BUILDING ON THE DOMESTIC REFORMS IN NICARAGUA."
THURBER

ADMIN

END OF MESSAGE

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