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TEXT

TAGS: ECPS, PREL, CA, AU, AF, UR
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - KURT WALDHEIM; SOVIET
PULLOUT FROM AFGHANISTAN

1. A FEBRUARY 11 MONTREAL GAZETTE EDITORIAL LOOKS AT THE
CONCLUSIONS OF THE COMMISSION INVESTIGATING THE WARTIME
PAST OF AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT KURT WALDHEIM. PARTIAL TEXT
OF "KURT WALDHEIM'S MORAL GUILT IS CLEAR" FOLLOWS:

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2. ".... ANOTHER MAN, ONE WITH A FINER MORAL SENSE, MIGHT HAVE PROFESSED SHAME OVER THE FINDINGS, OR DEEP REMORSE. SUCH A MAN MIGHT AT LAST HAVE FACED UP PUBLICLY TO THE TRUTH ABOUT HIMSELF. NOT MR. WALDHEIM. HE SAID THAT HE IS 'HAPPY' HE HAS BEEN PROVEN RIGHT, SMUGLY ADDING THAT 'KNOWLEDGE IS NOT A CRIME.'... MR. WALDHEIM DEMONSTRATES AN APPALLING MORAL VACUITY.

3. "THE COMMISSION FOUND NO CASES IN WHICH HE 'OPOSED AN ORDER TO DO SOMETHING HE RECOGNIZED AS UNJUST' BUT ON THE CONTRARY 'REPEATEDLY WENT ALONG WITH UNLAWFUL ACTS AND THEREBY MADE IT EASIER FOR THEM TO BE CARRIED OUT.' THEN HE SOUGHT 'TO HAVE HIS MILITARY PAST SLIP INTO OBLIVION AND AS SOON AS THAT WAS NO LONGER POSSIBLE, TO PORTRAY IT AS HARMLESS.'... AT THE LAST MOMENT, THE COMMISSION SHRANK FROM CHARGING MR. WALDHEIM SPECIFICALLY WITH 'MORAL GUILT.' BUT THE COMMISSIONERS HAVE BEEN OUTRAGED TO SEE THEIR REPORT TAKEN AS CLEARING MR. WALDHEIM. THE MORAL GUILT WAS AND IS CLEAR."

4. THE SOVIET ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THEY WILL START PULLING TROOPS FROM AFGHANISTAN ON MAY 15 WAS THE SUBJECT OF AN OTTAWA CITIZEN EDITORIAL ENTITLED "AFGHAN TRIALS BEGIN AFTER SOVIETS LEAVE." EXCERPTS INCLUDE:

5. "AS EXPECTED, THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT SOVIET TROOPS WILL START WITHDRAWING FROM AFGHANISTAN MAY 15 HAS WON ONLY SCATTERED APPLAUSE. AN AGREED SCHEDULE FOR A SOVIET PULLOUT SOLVES ONLY HALF THE AFGHAN PROBLEM. THE OTHER HALF - MORE COMPLICATED - IS DECIDING THE SORT OF GOVERNMENT THAT WILL REMAIN IN KABUL ONCE THE SOVIET OCCUPIERS LEAVE. ON THIS POINT, THE SOVIETS FOR ONCE SOUND AGREEABLE....

6. "THE QUESTION OF THE POST-SOVIET REGIME INSIDE AFGHANISTAN REMAINS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT. THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH INVADDED IN THE FIRST PLACE TO ENFORCE FRIENDLINESS TOWARD MOSCOW, HAS NOW GIVEN UP ALMOST ALL OUTWARD CLAIM TO DECIDE THE ISSUE FOR ITSELF. AFTER EARLIER MUTTERINGS ABOUT COALITIONS, GORBACHEV NOW SAYS THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN IS ALL UP TO THE AFGHANS THEMSELVES.

7. "IF THE SOLE SOVIET REQUIREMENT IS THAT NO AFGHAN GOVERNMENT BE HOSTILE TO THE SOVIET UNION, NOBODY ELSE SHOULD BALK. (SIC) THE TROUBLE IS, THE AFGHANS THEMSELVES GIVE NO SIGN OF AGREEING ON SUCH A GOVERNMENT.... THE DANGER (SENSED MOST ACUTELY IN PAKISTAN) IS THAT CIVIL WAR WILL PREVAIL IN AFGHANISTAN EVEN AFTER THE SOVIETS LEAVE. THAT MEANS MORE REFUGEES, MORE BORDER CLASHES, MORE RISK OF SUPERPOWER INTERVENTION. GETTING THE SOVIETS TO STOP FIGHTING AFGHANS IS ONE THING; GETTING AFGHANS TO STOP FIGHTING EACH OTHER IS QUITE ANOTHER."
THURBER

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ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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