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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

CONTROLS  
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SERIAL: DIADIN 48-13A

FOR COORDINATION WITH <sup>ed</sup> DIA

TEXT

SUBJ: AUSTRIA: RISING STRAINS OVER WALDHEIM. (U)  
DOI: 17 FEB 88 (AS OF 1840 EST)  
TEXT: 1. (S/NF) THE AVOWED INTENTION OF KURT WALDHEIM TO REMAIN  
PRESIDENT OF AUSTRIA, FOLLOWING THE HISTORIAN COMMISSION'S REPORT ON  
HIS WARTIME ACTIVITIES, HAS EVIDENTLY DEEPENED THE GULF BETWEEN HIS  
SUPPORTERS AND DETRACTORS.  
2. (S/NF) AS THE LEADER OF THE COALITION'S MINORITY PARTNER  
PEOPLE'S PARTY (OVP), WHICH SUPPORTED WALDHEIM'S PRESIDENTIAL BID,  
VICE CHANCELLOR MOCK HAS CALLED THE REPORT A VINDICATION OF THE  
NATION'S LEADER, WHILE SOCIALIST (SPO) CHANCELLOR VRANITZKY  
DISMISSED IT AS AN INADEQUATE RESPONSE. THE CHANCELLOR HAS NOT  
CALLED DIRECTLY FOR WALDHEIM'S RESIGNATION, BUT HE HAS ASKED THE  
PRESIDENT TO CONSIDER THE NATION'S INTERESTS IN LIGHT OF CONTINUING  
INTERNATIONAL OSTRACISM. COMPOUNDING THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION,  
VRANITZKY MADE AN IMPLICIT THREAT ON 14 FEBRUARY TO RESIGN IF THE  
CONTROVERSY CONTINUES TO ABSORB MOST OF HIS TIME TO THE DETRIMENT OF  
HIS MORE PRESSING DUTIES.  
3. (S/NF) COMMENT: THE HISTORIAN COMMISSION'S REPORT APPEARS TO  
HAVE DEEPENED THE RIFT BETWEEN THE CHANCELLOR AND VICE CHANCELLOR.  
VRANITZKY, HOWEVER, IS UNLIKELY TO RESIGN SOON, IF AT ALL. IN FACT,

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THE SPO MIGHT TOLERATE THE REPERCUSSIONS OF THE AFFAIR IN ORDER TO WEAKEN THE RIVAL OVP. ITS RATIONALE IS THAT THE STORM OVER WALDHEIM IS PARTICULARLY DETRIMENTAL TO THE OVP, WHICH CHAMPIONED HIM AND CONTINUES TO DO SO. EVENTUALLY, THE CONTROVERSY WILL EITHER SUBSIDE AND AUSTRIA WILL NO LONGER BE SHUNNED BY WESTERN EUROPE, OR DOMESTIC PRESSURE AND CONTINUING INTERNATIONAL ISOLATION WILL COMPEL VRANITZKY TO ENCOURAGE OR TO FORCE THE PRESIDENT TO RESIGN. IN EITHER CASE, THE OVP COULD PAY A POLITICAL PRICE FOR ITS SUPPORT OF WALDHEIM. MOCK, IN PARTICULAR, STANDS TO LOSE SOME OF HIS POLITICAL STATURE. ALTHOUGH THE COALITION IS UNLIKELY TO COLLAPSE, THE OVP COULD BE SUFFICIENTLY WEAKENED, SO LONG AS IT EXPENDS INORDINATE ENERGY ON WALDHEIM, TO ALLOW THE SPO TO PUSH THROUGH ITS AGENDA.

ADMIN

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DECL: OADR

END OF MESSAGE

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