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E.O. 12356: DECL/OADR

TEXT

TAGS: PREL, AU, TU  
SUBJECT: TURKISH PRESS REACTIONS TO WALDHEIM VISIT

1. SUMMARY: AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT WALDHEIM'S NOVEMBER 2-3  
"UNOFFICIAL" STOPOVER IN ISTANBUL DREW EXTERMELY  
LIMITED, LOW KEYED, PRESS COVERAGE. (THIS WAS  
UNDOUBTEDLY DONE AT FOREIGN MINISTRY INSTIGATION.)  
PAPERS GAVE MORE PROMINENT ATTENTION TO PROTESTS AGAINST  
THE VISIT BY AMERICAN RABBI ARI WEISS AND NAZI-HUNTER

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BEATE KLARSFELD. ALL NEWSPAPERS NOTED THAT ONLY FOREIGN MINISTER YILMAZ WELCOMED WALDHEIM AT ISTANBUL'S ATATURK AIRPORT. THE MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENTS KENAN EVREN AND **KURT WALDHEIM** WAS SAID TO BE SHORT, AND THE DINNER IN WALDHEIM'S HONOR HOSTED BY EVREN WAS REPORTEDLY SMALL. ONLY ONE NEWSPAPER CARRIED A PHOTOGRAPH OF WALDHEIM AND TURKISH FM MESUT YILMAZ. THERE WERE NONE OF WALDHEIM WITH EVREN. A FEW COLUMNISTS DEFENDED, UNENTHUSIASTICALLY, TURKEY'S RECEIVING WALDHEIM; ONE PROMINENT JOURNALIST CONCLUDED THE EPISODE DAMAGED TURKEY'S INTERNATIONAL STANDING. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF HIGHLIGHTING THE CONTROVERSIAL NATURE OF WALDHEIM'S NOVEMBER 2-3 STOP-OVER IN ISTANBUL, TURKISH PRESS REPORTED THE VISIT ITSELF STRAIGHTFORWARDLY BUT IN A VERY LOW KEY. PAPERS NOTED THE AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT, WHO ARRIVED IN ISTANBUL ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE EDITH AND AUSTRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER AND MRS. ALOIS MOCK, WAS MET BY ONLY TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER AND MRS. MESUT YILMAZ. IN SHARP DEPARTURE FROM USUAL PRACTICE, PAPERS FAILED TO CARRY ANY PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ARRIVAL CEREMONY.

3. IN A FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL, RESPECTED CENTRIST DAILY "MILLIYET" NOTED TURKEY LIMITED WALDHEIM'S ACTIVITIES TO ISTANBUL, HAD HIM WELCOMED AT THE AIRPORT BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND NOT THE PRESIDENT, WHILE PRIME MINISTER OZAL AVOIDED THE VISIT ENTIRELY. NEVERTHELESS, "MILLIYET" OPINED TURKEY NEED NOT FOLLOW THE LEAD OF THE U.S. AND OTHER NATO COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE DECLARED WALDHEIM PERSONNA NON GRATA. THE PAPER CONCLUDED THE CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST WALDHEIM WERE UNSUBSTANTIATED; AN INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION WAS UNABLE TO CONCLUDE DEFINITELY THAT WALDHEIM COMMITTED ANY CRIMES, ALTHOUGH IT DETERMINED HE PROBABLY KNEW OF THE EXISTENCE OF ATROCITIES AGAINST THE JEWS.

4. OTHER COMMENTARIES OFFERED THREE REASONS WHY TURKEY OFFERED HOSPITALITY TO THE AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT. FIRST, TURKEY RESPECTS THE FRIENDLY AUSTRIAN PEOPLE. SECOND, TURKEY, RARE AMONG COUNTRIES, HAD WHOLLY CLEAN HANDS ABOUT JEWS, HAVING WELCOMED THE VICTIMS OF THE SPANISH INQUISITION IN 1492 AND HAVING ROUNDLY AND REPEATEDLY CONDEMNED THE NAZI REGIME AND THE HOLOCAUST AGAINST THE JEWISH PEOPLE. THIRD, TURKEY CANNOT FORGET WALDHEIM'S EVENHANDED HANDLING OF CYPRUS QUESTIONS WHILE HE WAS UNSYG.

5. AFTER HIS DEPARTURE, HIGHLY RESPECTED JOURNALIST METIN TOKER OPENLY CONDEMNED THE VISIT. TOKER SPECULATED THAT A POLITICAL FAVOR WAS BEING REPAID BY ANAP TO AUSTRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MOCK'S PEOPLE'S PARTY FOR ITS SUPPORT FOR ANAP'S ADMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC UNION. TOKER CONCLUDED THE VISIT DAMAGED TURKEY'S INTERNATIONAL STANDING. PRESIDENT EVREN AND FOREIGN MINISTER YILMAZ, TOKER POINTED OUT, BOTH HAD BEEN IN THE U.S. RECENTLY, AND COULD NOT HAVE BEEN

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UNAWARE OF THE EFFECT THE VISIT WOULD HAVE ON THE "JEWISH LOBBY," WHICH TURKEY HAS BEEN COURTING IN AN EFFORT TO CONTAIN GREEK AND ARMENIAN CONGRESSIONAL MACHINATIONS.

6. THE PROTESTS AND SUBSEQUENT BRIEF DETENTIONS OF THREE ANTI-WALDHEIM PROTESTERS, BEATTE KLARSFELD, RABBI ABRAHAM WEISS, CHIEF RABBI OF THE RIVERDALE SYNAGOGUE, AND ONE OF HIS STUDENTS, SOLOMON ELJASHEV, DREW MORE PROMINENT PRESS COVERAGE THAN DID THE VISIT ITSELF.  
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ONLY TWO PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT WERE PRINTED; ONE SHOWING THE EXTENSIVE SECURITY NEEDED TO PROTECT WALDHEIM.

7. COMMENT: THE LACK OF COVERAGE CONTRASTS SHARPLY FROM THE INTENSE ATTENTION NORMALLY ACCORDED VISITING HEADS OF STATE. WE SUSPECT THIS WAS THE RESULT OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS' EFFORTS TO MOUNT A BELATED DAMAGE CONTROL EXERCISE. END COMMENT.

STRAUSZ-HUPE

ADMIN  
END OF MESSAGE

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