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TEXT

TAGS: PREL, AU, US  
SUBJECT: AUSTRIA REACTS TO USG OFFICIAL'S WALDHEIM  
- WATCHLIST COMMENTS  
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1. THE AUSTRIAN MEDIA AND GOVERNMENT HAVE REACTED SHARPLY TO COMMENTS REPORTEDLY MADE BY OSI CHIEF NEAL SHER ON MAY 7. ACCORDING TO REPORTS PRINTED HERE, SHER TOLD A MEETING OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS IN BERLIN "WITH PRIDE" THAT KURT WALDHEIM'S NAME WILL NOT BE REMOVED FROM THE WATCHLIST OF PERSONS BARRED FROM THE U.S. BECAUSE OF THEIR NAZI PAST. MFA RELEASED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT ADDRESSED TO THE USG ON MAY 7:

"THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT IS DISTURBED AT THE POLEMICS OF MR. NEAL SHER, AN EMPLOYEE OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, AGAINST THE HEAD OF STATE OF A COUNTRY

STATE DEPT. DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW  
 Retain classification  
 Declassify after \_\_\_\_\_  
Change/classify to \_\_\_\_\_  
with concurrence of \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: 8/29/07  
EO 12958, 25X  
IPS/CR/IR by \_\_\_\_\_

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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
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WHICH IS ON FRIENDLY TERMS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES. THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT DEALT WITH THE WATCHLIST-DECISION IN 1987 AND OFFICIALLY REJECTED IT AS UNFOUNDED. NO NEW ASPECTS HAVE BEEN PRESENTED IN THIS RESPECT. THUS, THERE WAS NO REASON FOR A U.S. GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL TO TAKE UP THE SUBJECT AT THE MEETING OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS IN BERLIN AND REPEAT POLEMICS ALREADY KNOWN."

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MFA AMERICAS DIRECTOR PROHASKA TOLD US THAT AMBASSADOR HOESS HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO CONVEY THE CONTENTS OF THIS STATEMENT AT AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

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2. THE MASS CIRCULATION "NEUE KRONEN ZEITUNG" CARRIED THE FOLLOWING COMMENTARY ON THIS SUBJECT IN ITS MAY 8 EDITION:

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"THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WHICH KEEPS EMPHASIZING THAT IT ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO BEING ON FRIENDLY TERMS WITH AUSTRIA, OWES US AN EXPLANATION. HOW DOES ONE OF ITS TOP-RANKING OFFICIALS EXPLAIN HIS PUBLIC POLEMICS AGAINST THE HEAD OF STATE OF THIS COUNTRY? EITHER, HE CAN GET AWAY WITH THIS BECAUSE A POWERFUL LOBBY IS BACKING HIM, OR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS DELIBERATELY CLOSING ITS EYES TO A VIOLATION OF A CIVIL SERVANT'S PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINE." BILLO

ADMIN  
END OF MESSAGE

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