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SUMMARY:

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1. IN THIS REPORT: AUSTRIAN ECONOMICS MINISTER DITZ RESIGNED FROM HIS POST. THE MOVE IS A SIGNIFICANT LOSS FOR THE PEOPLE'S PARTY. ALSO: FORMER AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT **KURT WALDHEIM** PRESENTED HIS NEW BOOK WITH THE TITLE "DIE ANTWORT" ("MY REPLY") IN THE AUSTRIAN PARLIAMENT YESTERDAY. THE BOOK GIVES **KURT WALDHEIM'S** PERSPECTIVE ON THE INCIDENTS THAT LED TO THE FAMOUS "WATCH-LIST" DECISION, WHICH WALDHEIM CONTINUES TO FIGHT. WALDHEIM SAID HE HOPED THE DAY WOULD COME WHEN THIS DECISION WOULD BE REVISED. THE POPULIST MASS-CIRCULATION TABLOID "NEUE KRONEN ZEITUNG," WHICH CARRIED A HIGHLY EMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN IN DEFENSE OF WALDHEIM BEFORE AND DURING HIS YEARS AS AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT, IS PUBLISHING A SERIES OF EXCERPTS FROM WALDHEIM'S BOOK ON A DAILY BASIS.

ECONOMICS MINISTER RESIGNS: TOO LIBERAL TO SUCCEED?

2. AUSTRIAN ECONOMICS MINISTER DITZ (OVP) PUT AN END TO SPECULATIONS AND ANNOUNCED HIS RESIGNATION BY JULY 1. MINISTER DITZ HAS BEEN POLITICALLY ACTIVE FOR 18 YEARS AND SHAPED THE COUNTRY'S FINANCIAL POLICY AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FINANCES FOR FIVE YEARS, BEFORE HE WAS APPOINTED FINANCE MINISTER IN MAY, 1995, FOLLOWING THE ELECTION OF WOLFGANG SCHUESSEL AS OVP PARTY CHIEF.

JOHANNES DITZ WAS ONE OF THE MAJOR ARCHITECTS OF THE COALITION'S AUSTERITY BUDGET. HE WAS VERY POPULAR AS A COMPETENT NEGOTIATOR BOTH WITH HIS OWN PARTY AND WITH THE SPO. OVP PARTY CHIEF SCHUESSEL ACCEPTED THE RESIGNATION BUT CALLED IT "PAINFUL." DITZ'S DECISION DOES NOT COME TOTALLY OUT OF THE BLUE. BEFORE THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN 1995, DITZ MADE IT KNOWN THAT HE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED THE FINANCE MINISTRY. THE REASONS HE GAVE FOR HIS RESIGNATION WERE EXHAUSTION AS WELL AS DISAPPOINTMENT OVER OPPOSITION FROM HIS OWN RANKS TO HIS EFFORTS OF INTRODUCING A MORE LIBERAL ECONOMIC POLICY.

"DITZ FOUGHT ENCRUSTED ECONOMIC STRUCTURES"

3. THE DAILY "DIE PRESSE" COMMENTS THAT IT WILL BE VERY HARD TO FILL THE ECONOMIC-POLICY VACUUM DITZ IS LEAVING BEHIND. "HE REPRESENTS AN ATTITUDE THAT IS NOT YET ALL TOO COMMON IN AUSTRIA'S ENCRUSTED STRUCTURES: OPENNESS, LIBERALISM, AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES."

DITZ HAD TRIED LATELY TO LIBERALIZE THE AUSTRIAN TRADE LAWS AS WELL AS THE RIGID SHOP OPENING AND CLOSING HOURS AND FACED STRONG OPPOSITION BY THE CONSERVATIVE FEDERATION OF ECONOMISTS AND THE PROVINCIAL ECONOMIC CHAMBERS, AS WELL AS THE LABOR UNIONS.

KURT WALDHEIM PRESENTS NEW BOOK TITLED "MY REPLY"

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4. KURT WALDHEIM, AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT BETWEEN 1986 AND 1992, PRESENTED HIS NEW BOOK "DIE ANTWORT" ("MY REPLY") AT THE AUSTRIAN PARLIAMENT YESTERDAY. THE BOOK IS AN EMOTIONAL ACCOUNT OF WALDHEIM'S PERSPECTIVES OF THE INCIDENTS THAT LED TO THE U.S. DECISION TO BAN WALDHEIM FROM ENTRY TO THE UNITED STATES.

THE MASS-CIRCULATION TABLOID "NEUE KRONEN ZEITUNG" IS PRINTING EXCERPTS FROM THE BOOK. KRONEN ZEITUNG'S HEADLINES REFLECT STRONG SUPPORT FOR WALDHEIM'S ARGUMENT OF A PERSONAL INFLAMMATORY CAMPAIGN AGAINST HIM.

AT THE PRESENTATION, WALDHEIM EXPRESSED HIS HOPES THAT "THE DAY WILL COME WHEN THE 'WATCHLIST' DECISION WILL BE REPEALED." HE WISHED THAT THOSE WHO ATTACKED HIM TEN YEARS AGO WOULD READ THE BOOK WITHOUT PREJUDICES.

WALDHEIM EMPHASIZED THAT SINCE 1987, WHEN HE WAS PUT ON THE LIST OF UNWANTED ALIENS IN THE UNITED STATES, THREE COMMISSIONS HAD CONFIRMED THAT HE WAS NOT A WAR CRIMINAL. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S DECISION WAS A VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

THE BOOK, WHICH THE AUTHOR CALLS THE "PRODUCT OF A THINKING PROCESS, NOT A RETRIBUTION OR SELF-JUSTIFICATION," WILL SOON BE PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH. (DER STANDARD; "ZEIT IM BILD" TV EVENING NEWS PROGRAM)

FINN

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END OF MESSAGE

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