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DOCUMENT\_ID: 177032833  
INQNO: DOC43D 00116054  
DOCNO: TEL 008021 97  
PRODUCER: VIENNA  
SOURCE: STATE  
DOCTYPE: IN  
DOR: 19970903  
TOR: 080834  
DOCPREC: O  
ORIGDATE: 199709031157  
MHFNO: 97 8993178  
DOCCLASS: U

HEADER

OO RUEAIIB  
ZNR UUUUU ZOC STATE ZZH  
MSI6581  
OO RUEHZL RUEHC  
DE RUEHVI #8021/01 2461157  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 031157Z SEP 97  
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2973  
RUEAWJB/DOJ WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
INFO RUEHIA/USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0707  
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 0035  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0100  
BT

CONTROLS

UNCLAS VIENNA 008021

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT CA, PA AND EUR/AGS  
JUSTICE FOR OSI

E.O. 12958: N/A

TEXT

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, PINR, CVIS, AU  
COMBINE: COMPLETE

SUBJECT: BOOK BY FORMER CIA AGENT ON KURT WALDHEIM

1. SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE TREAT ACCORDINGLY.

SUMMARY:

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2. IN A BOOK TO BE RELEASED IN VIENNA NEXT WEEK, A SELF-DESCRIBED RETIRED CIA AGENT MAINTAINS THAT THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION HAD INSUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR THE 1986 DECISION TO PLACE THEN AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT KURT WALDHEIM ON THE WATCHLIST FOR INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN NAZI ERA CRIMES. WALDHEIM SAYS THE BOOK CONFIRMS THE INJUSTICE OF THE USG

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DECISION IN HIS CASE. AUSTRIAN TV, RADIO AND PRINT MEDIA CARRIED AN INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR. PRESS GUIDANCE EMBASSY PLANS TO DRAW ON IN RESPONDING TO MEDIA INQUIRES IS AT PARA 7, BELOW. END SUMMARY.

THE BOOK

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3. IN A SEPTEMBER 2 INTERVIEW WITH EUGEN FREUND, U.S. CORRESPONDENT FOR AUSTRIAN TV ORF, JOHN R. MAPOTHER, WHO DESCRIBES HIMSELF AS RETIRED CIA AGENT WHO WORKED IN THE US EMBASSY IN VIENNA FROM 1953 TO 1958, TALKED ABOUT HIS BOOK "HOW TO GET ON THE WATCHLIST - A TRUE STORY FROM AMERICA," WHICH IS TO BE RELEASED IN VIENNA NEXT MONDAY. MAPOTHER, WHO HAD -- AS "A PRIVATE CITIZEN" -- REQUESTED THE RELEASE OF THE DOJ/OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS (OSI) FILES ON WALDHEIM FOLLOWING THE WATCHLIST DECISION, MAINTAINS THAT "INFLUENTIAL PRESSURE-GROUPS AND IMPORTANT MEDIA" HAD PUSHED THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION TOWARD THE WATCHLIST DECISION. (COMMENT: THE FILES WERE RELEASED IN 1994 FOLLOWING A FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST BY THE CONSUMER ORGANIZATION "PUBLIC CITIZEN." END COMMENT) WALDHEIM HAD BEEN MADE A "WAR CRIMINAL AGAINST BETTER KNOWLEDGE," ACCORDING TO MAPOTHER, ADDING THERE HAD NOT BEEN SUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR PUTTING HIM ON THE WATCHLIST. AUSTRIAN RADIO ALSO CARRIED EXCEPTS OF THE INTERVIEW ON SEPTEMBER 3. ONE MAJOR DAILY CARRIED THE STORY ON PAGE 2. FBIS HAS PUBLISHED A TRANSLATION.

WALDHEIM MISTAKES

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4. IN THE INTERVIEW, MAPOTHER DID, HOWEVER, ALSO NOTE THAT WALDHEIM HAD MADE MISTAKES IN HANDLING HIS WARTIME PAST, AND THAT HIS "HYPOCRISY AND LIES" HAD PROBABLY BEEN WORSE THAN THAT OF THE "AVERAGE POLITICIAN." WALDHEIM HAD, IN PARTICULAR, LEFT A "BAD IMPRESSION" SINCE HE ONLY ACKNOWLEDGED HIS WAR ACTIVITIES IN THE BALKANS IN A "BIT BY BIT" FASHION.

WALDHEIM COMMENT

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5. COMMENTING ON THE BOOK TO THE MASS-CIRCULATION DAILY "KURIER" ON SEPTEMBER 3, WALDHEIM SAID IT "CONFIRMS THE INJUSTICE OF THE WATCHLIST DECISION." WALDHEIM STRESSED "THAT DECISION ASSUMES A COLLECTIVE GUILT, WHICH IS UNACCEPTABLE ACCORDING TO INTERNATIONAL LAW. MOREOVER, THE U.S. AUTHORITIES IN CHARGE WERE NEGATIVELY INFLUENCED BY FALSE INFORMATION AND FALSE INTERPRETATIONS."

COMMENT

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6. MAPOTHER'S BOOK WILL CONCEIVABLY STIR SOME COMMOTION IN THE AUSTRIAN MEDIA, IN PARTICULAR WITH WALDHEIM SUPPORTERS. FOR THE FIRST TIME, A FORMER USG OFFICIAL HAS SUPPORTED THEIR CONTENTION THAT THE WALDHEIM DECISION WAS POLITICALLY MOTIVATED. GIVEN MAPOTHER'S RETIRED STATUS, AND THE FACT THAT HE DOES NOT CLAIM TO HAVE BEEN PERSONALLY INVOLVED IN THE U.S. DECISION ON WALDHEIM, WE

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EXPECT THAT HIS VIEWS MOST LIKELY WILL ONLY PRODUCE LIMITED REVERBERATIONS HERE. OUR APPROACH WILL BE TO FOCUS ON PRESENT AND FUTURE RELATIONS WITH AUSTRIA, AND NOT TO REOPEN A TEN-YEAR-OLD DEBATE. END COMMENT.

PRESS GUIDANCE  
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7. PENDING FURTHER GUIDANCE, THE EMBASSY IS DRAWING ON THE FOLLOWING TO RESPOND TO PRESS INQUIRIES:

Q: HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE BOOK BY FORMER CIA OFFICER JOHN R. MAPOTHER?

A: WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE BOOK WILL BE PUBLISHED IN AUSTRIA SHORTLY. WE ARE NOT MAKING ANY COMMENTS ON THE BOOK AS WE HAVE NOT HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW IT.

IF ASKED: WILL YOU REVIEW THE WATCHLIST DECISION?

A: THE DECISION REACHED BY THE U.S. FOLLOWED AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS BY THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS (OSI) OF AVAILABLE DOCUMENTATION FROM A NUMBER OF SOURCES AND WAS REVIEWED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

IF PRESSED: THIS IS A DECISION WHICH WAS REACHED OVER 10 YEARS AGO BY PROPER U.S. GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES AND IT IS NOT FOR THIS EMBASSY TO DECIDE. ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS NEED TO BE DIRECTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

THE U.S. EMBASSY IS FOCUSING ON CURRENT AND FUTURE BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH AUSTRIA AND INTENDS TO CONTINUE THE POSITIVE COOPERATION, WHICH EXISTS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

DETHOMAS

ADMIN  
END OF MESSAGE

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