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JUSTICE FOR GALEBACH/DUNLOP AND SHER

E.O. 12356: N/A

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SUBJECT: AUSTRIA MEDIA REACTION

1. WALDHEIM ON WATCH LIST: UNDER THE HEADLINE "ONLY COMMISSION OF HISTORIANS CAN EXCULPATE WALDHEIM!," THE "KURIER" TODAY CARRIED A LEAD ARTICLE BASED ON AN INTERVIEW WITH SIMON WIESENTHAL. HE REAFFIRMED HIS CONVICTION THAT THE APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF HISTORIANS IS THE ONLY WAY HOW WALDHEIM COULD EXTRICATE HIMSELF FROM HIS PREDICAMENT. WIESENTHAL MAINTAINED THAT "HE WHO IS OUTLAWED INTERNATIONALLY MUST TRY TO BRING ABOUT AN INTERNATIONAL INVESTIGATION." IN WIESENTHAL'S OPINION, IT IS TOO LATE TO TAKE LEGAL ACTION AND, MOREOVER, IT WOULD NOT MAKE SENSE BECAUSE THIS IS A VISA MATTER. HE REMARKED THAT "IF WALDHEIM NOW SUED MEESE OR THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION, THIS WOULD BE LIKE AN IRANIAN SUEING (AUSTRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ALOIS) MOCK OR (INTERIOR MINISTER KARL) BLECHA BECAUSE OF A VISA." UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD WALDHEIM HIMSELF DECIDE ABOUT THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION, WIESENTHAL SAID, SUGGESTING THAT THE INSTITUTE OF MILITARY SCIENCE IN FREIBURG IM BREISGAU, GERMANY, SHOULD ORGANIZE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMISSION WHICH OUGHT TO BE HEADED BY A BRITISH OR AMERICAN HISTORIAN AND INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF ISRAEL, YUGOSLAVIA AND GREECE. WIESENTHAL ADDED: "THESE PEOPLE SHOULD GET ALL THE DOCUMENTS, BUT COMMIT THEMSELVES NOT TO PUBLISH ANYTHING BECAUSE THERE MIGHT EASILY BE WRONG INTERPRETATIONS. THEN THEY SHOULD DRAW A CONCLUSION WHICH WALDHEIM WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT A PRIORI. IF HE MERELY KNEW (ABOUT THE NAZI ACTIVITIES), THE MATTER WITH THE WATCH LIST WILL BE OVER. IF HE WAS INVOLVED, HE WILL HAVE TO RESIGN."

"DIE PRESSE" AND SEVERAL OTHER PAPERS REPORTED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER MOCK HAS OBTAINED YUGOSLAV PERMISSION OF AUSTRIAN EXPERTS EXAMINING THE ARCHIVES OF THE INSTITUTE OF MILITARY HISTORY IN BELGRADE. THIS AUSTRIAN GROUP WILL INCLUDE PEOPLE'S PARTY MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FELIX ERMACORA, MILITARY HISTORIAN JOHANN CHRISTOPH ALLMAYER-BECK, AND POSSIBLY ALSO THE CHIEF OF THE STATE ARCHIVES, KURT PEBALL. THESE FILES IN BELGRADE ARE THE SAME ONES WHICH WERE EXAMINED BY THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATION BEFORE THE DECISION AGAINST WALDHEIM. THE "KRONEN-ZEITUNG" QUOTED PROF. ERMACORA AS HAVING SAID IT IS HIS PATRIOTIC DUTY TO PARTICIPATE, BUT HE HAS A TIGHT SCHEDULE BECAUSE, IN HIS CAPACITY AS THE U.N. RAPPORTEUR ON AFGHANISTAN, HE IS IN CONTACT WITH THE SOVIETS REGARDING A TRIP TO THAT COUNTRY.

THE "KRONEN-ZEITUNG" PLAYED UP MILOVAN DJILAS' REMARK DURING A VISIT TO VIENNA THAT WALDHEIM WAS JUST A COG IN THE GERMAN MILITARY MACHINE AND, AS A FIRST LIEUTENANT, WAS NOT AUTHORIZED TO MAKE ANY MAJOR DECISIONS. ASKED WHETHER THE YUGOSLAV FILES MIGHT CONTAIN A "TICKING TIME BOMB" INCRIMINATING WALDHEIM, MARSHAL TITO'S FORMER DEPUTY SAID THAT HE HAS NOT SEEN THE DOCUMENTS, BUT HE

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ASSUMES THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT ONES HAVE ALREADY BEEN PUBLISHED.

"DIE PRESSE" AND THE "NEUE AZ" STRESSED CHANCELLOR VRANITZKY'S OPINION THAT THE PUBLICATION OF WALDHEIM'S "WHITE BOOK" WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE BECAUSE CRITICS MIGHT THEN AGAIN COME TO THE FORE. ADDING THAT HE HAS EXPLAINED THIS TO WALDHEIM, VRANITZKY SAID "THE FEDERAL UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 03 VIENNA 07118

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PRESIDENT THINKS, HOWEVER, THAT HE MUST PUBLISH THIS WHITE BOOK."

THE "KRONEN-ZEITUNG" ALLEGED THAT "ONE HAS NOT HEARD ANYMORE FROM THE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO VIENNA, RONALD LAUDER, ALTHOUGH HE HAD PROMISED LAST THURSDAY THAT THE NEW U.S. 'EVIDENCE' (AGAINST WALDHEIM) WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE GOVERNMENT IN VIENNA."

ACCORDING TO THE "KRONEN-ZEITUNG," MANY AUSTRIAN SOCIALISTS ARE DISGRUNTLED, RESENTING WHAT THEY REGARD AS AN ABOUT-FACE BY THEIR LEADERS WHO NOW SUPPORT WALDHEIM. ON TUESDAY, THE SOCIALIST PARTY DAILY "NEUE AZ" CARRIED SEVERAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, EXPRESSING THIS DISSATISFACTION. VRANITZKY STATED AFTER TUESDAY'S CABINET MEETING THAT THE UTMOST MUST BE DONE TO AVOID DISCORD IN AUSTRIA BECAUSE OF THE WALDHEIM CASE.

"DIE PRESSE" REPORTED THAT AMBASSADOR THOMAS KLESTIL WILL RETURN TO WASHINGTON BY MAY 18 WHEN CHANCELLOR VRANITZKY'S OFFICIAL VISIT IS TO BEGIN. IN THE MEANTIME, KLESTIL WILL CHAIR A COMMISSION FORMED AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND ASSIGNED THE TASK OF DAILY EXAMINING THE LATEST PROPOSALS FOR SETTLING THE CRISIS.

2. EDITORIAL COMMENT: IN A PAGE 2 EDITORIAL IN THE INDEPENDENT, MASS-CIRCULATION "KURIER," ENTITLED "WHAT THE WORLD WANTS TO HEAR FROM US," DEPUTY CHIEF EDITOR HANS RAUSCHER QUOTED FROM "TIME" MAGAZINE COMMENT ON THE IRANGATE INVESTIGATION. RAUSCHER ADDED: "THIS IS HOW THE AMERICANS COPE WITH THEIR CRISES. AUSTRIAN CRISIS MANAGEMENT - BE IT BY THE GOVERNMENT, THE MEDIA OR THE POPULATION - LOOKS RATHER DIFFERENT. AT FIRST, ONE DENIES WHAT CANNOT BE DENIED. NEXT, ONE BELITTLES IT.

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THEN IT IS CALLED A 'CAMPAIGN.' THEN ONE SAYS THAT 'THE OTHERS' ARE NO BETTER THAN WE. AND IF THE PROBLEM STILL DOES NOT DISAPPEAR, WE ARE SEIZED BY A MIXTURE OF SELF-PITY AND EXTERNAL AGGRESSION. IN ANY CASE, THE CONFLICTS ARE NEVER REALLY FOUGHT, THE RIGHT QUESTIONS ARE NEVER ASKED, AND REDEEMING CATHARSIS IS NEVER ATTEMPTED. ... WHAT DOES THE WORLD ACTUALLY EXPECT FROM US? IN REALITY, THIS IS NO LONGER A MATTER OF WALDHEIM AS A PERSON. WHAT THE WORLD WANTS TO KNOW IS WHICH ATTITUDE AUSTRIA IS TAKING TO THE NAZI PAST. THE WORLD WANTS TO KNOW WHETHER WE ARE CAPABLE OF SAYING ONE THING: 'WHAT HAPPENED AT THAT TIME WAS WRONG'."

IN AN EDITORIAL ON THE IRANGATE HEARINGS, THE SOCIALIST PARTY DAILY "NEUE AZ" WROTE: "BEFORE THE EYES OF THE WORLD, THE U.S. IS GIVING A REMARKABLE EXAMPLE OF LIVING DEMOCRACY AND RELENTLESS SEARCH FOR THE TRUTH. IN AUSTRIA, ONE NOW HEARS MORE AND MORE THAT AMERICAN INVESTIGATION PRACTICES ARE INCOMPREHENSIBLE. PRECISELY THIS IS A PITY."

IN ANOTHER EDITORIAL, THE "NEUE AZ" POINTED OUT THAT WALDHEIM WANTS HIS "WHITE BOOK" TO BE PUBLISHED ON BEHALF OF THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT WHICH SHOULD ALSO DEFRAY THE EXPENSES. THE SOCIALIST PAPER ADDED: "REGARDLESS OF ALL THE LOYALTY WHICH CHANCELLOR VRANITZKY DEMONSTRATES FOR WALDHEIM AND WHICH SOME OF US CAN ACCEPT ONLY BY SLIGHTLY GNASHING OUR TEETH, THE UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 03 VIENNA 07118

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GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ILL-ADVISED IF IT STUCK OUT ITS NECK BY SUPPORTING WALDHEIM'S (WHITE BOOK) SELF-DEFENSE."

UNDER THE PAGE 3 HEADLINE "SWITCHING OVER TO THE OFFENSIVE," THE MASS-CIRCULATION TABLOID "KRONEN-ZEITUNG" MAINTAINED: "EITHER BY MEANS OF LEGAL ACTION OR BY AN INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF HISTORIANS - WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING AGAINST THE U.S. NO-ENTRY DECISION. OFFERING THE EVIDENCE SHOULD NOT PROVE TOO DIFFICULT BECAUSE ALL EXPERTS AGREE THAT KURT WALDHEIM WAS NO WAR CRIMINAL, BUT - IF AT ALL - JUST A COG IN THAT WAR." KOHL

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ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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