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TEXT

SUBJECT: AUSTRIA MEDIA REACTION

1. HUGO PORTISCH, CHIEF COMMENTATOR AND NEWS ANALYST OF AUSTRIAN TV (ORF) COMMENTED FAVORABLY ABOUT THE PRESS REPORTS THAT HENRY A. GRUNWALD WILL BECOME THE NEXT AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRIA. DURING THE FIRST CHANNEL NEWS PROGRAM "ZEIT IM BILD" (AUDIENCE ESTIMATED AT 2.5 MILLION), ORF RAN A STRAIGHT NEWS PIECE ON GRUNWALD, RETRACING HIS LIFE IN VIENNA: HIS PLACE OF BIRTH, HIS FORMER HOME, FORMER SCHOOL AND HIS FAMILY'S INVOLUNTARY DEPARTURE IN 1938 AS A RESULT OF NAZISM AND PERSECUTION OF JEWS. ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, THE GRUNWALD FAMILY FLED TO CASABLANCA AND PARIS, AND ULTIMATELY TO NEW YORK, WHERE HENRY GRUNWALD STARTED HIS "DREAM CAREER." FOLLOWING ARE SOME VERBATIM QUOTES FROM THE PORTISCH

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COMMENTARY:

"HE IS A GREAT PERSONALITY AND HIGHLY RESPECTED IN ALL CIRCLES. HE COMES FROM THE GOOD OLD SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM WHERE ALL THE FACTS ARE CAREFULLY CHECKED." REFERRING TO THE WATCH LIST DECISION ON **KURT WALDHEIM**, WHICH CONTINUES TO DISRUPT AUSTRO-AMERICAN RELATIONS, PORTISCH SAID: "A MAN LIKE GRUNWALD WILL LOOK AT ALL INFORMATION AND CHECK IT CAREFULLY. FOR HIM A PERSON IS NOT GUILTY UNTIL PROVEN OTHERWISE. MR. GRUNWALD OFTEN CAME TO AUSTRIA AFTER THE WAR AND EVEN THOUGH HE WAS TREATED BADLY HERE (BEFORE 1938), HE RETURNED TO THIS COUNTRY WITH AN OPEN MIND AND SAW HOW THIS REPUBLIC DEVELOPED AND WAS BUILT UP. THEREFORE HIS JUDGMENT WILL BE RESPECTED HERE. WE HAD DIFFICULTIES (WITH THE UNITED STATES) BUT MR. GRUNWALD IS A MAN WHO CAN MAKE US BELIEVABLE AGAIN."

2. WRITING IN THE SOCIALIST PARTY'S DAILY, THE NEUE ARBEITERSZEITUNG, COLUMNIST GEORG HOFFMANN-OSTENHOF CRITICIZES THE POPULIST TABLOID, KRONEN ZEITUNG, FOR ITS COVERAGE OF TWO RECENT JOURNALISTIC "BOMBS" -- THE SUICIDE OF RUDOLF HESS AND THE REPORTED APPOINTMENT OF HENRY GRUNWALD AS U.S. AMBASSADOR TO VIENNA. OSTENHOF WRITES THAT THE TABLOID GAVE TOO LITTLE ATTENTION TO THE TWO STORIES.

"THE USA WANTS TO SEND THE VIENNA-BORN HENRY GRUNWALD, THE PUBLISHER (SIC) OF THE FAMOUS TIME MAGAZINE, AS AMBASSADOR TO VIENNA. SENSATIONAL ABOVE ALL (IS) HOW QUICKLY WASHINGTON FOUND A SUCCESSOR TO LAUDER. (BEFORE HELENE VON DAMM, THE EMBASSY WAS FOR A YEAR WITHOUT AN AMBASSADOR.) HENRY GRUNWALD'S COMING ARRIVAL WAS ONLY SLIGHTLY NOTED."

"WHY WAS THERE AT THE TIME SO MUCH REPORTING ON VON DAMM, AND OVER HENRY HARDLY ANYTHING? HIS VIENNA-CONNECTION IS AT LEAST AS INTERESTING AS THAT OF HIS PREDECESSOR'S PREDECESSOR: ISN'T THE STORY OF THE VIENNA-EXPELLED JEW AND SON OF THE 'COUNTESS MARIZA' LIBRETTIST, WHO MOVED FROM THE BOTTOM TO THE TOP OF THE NEW YORK JOURNALISTIC COMMUNITY AND WHO NOW RETURNS AS THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE, AT LEAST AS GLAMOROUS AS THE MARCH OF THE YOUNG GIRL FROM LOWER AUSTRIA BACK TO HER HOME AS 'EXCELLENCY', FOLLOWING A CAREER IN CALIFORNIA?"

"DOES ONE NOT LIKE EMIGRANTS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO COME FROM THE EAST COAST JOURNALISTIC COMMUNITY? AND IS THE HESS SUICIDE SO UNDERPLAYED OUT OF FEAR FOR THE SYMPATHY THAT MIGHT BE ENGENDERED? WHEN IT COMES TO HISTORY, THE TABLOID PRESS HAS APPARENTLY LOST ITS TOUCH."

WRITING IN THE INDEPENDENT DAILY, DIE PRESSE, WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT MONICA RIEDLER BORROWS HEAVILY FROM A NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON THE REPORTED APPOINTMENT, AND THE REACTION OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY. WRITES RIEDLER:

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"RELATIONS BETWEEN THE USA AND AUSTRIA WERE THROWN BACK INTO THE LIMELIGHT AGAIN WITH THE REPORTED APPOINTMENT OF HENRY GRUNWALD AS THE NEW AMBASSADOR. THE FACT THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO PRESENT HIS CREDENTIALS TO PRESIDENT WALDHEIM CAUSED HIM TO SEEK ADVICE, NOT ONLY FROM FRIENDS BUT ALSO FROM VARIOUS JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS IN UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 VIENNA 11912

THE UNITED STATES..." DIE PRESSE QUOTES ABRAHAM FOXMANN, THE DIRECTOR OF THE B'NAI B'RITH. SAID FOXMANN, "I'M PROUD OF THIS NOMINATION, PROUD OF THE FACT THE UNITED STATES HAS DECIDED TO SEND A JEWISH AMBASSADOR, A JEWISH REFUGEE, WHEN WALDHEIM IS PRESIDENT. I HOPE THEY WILL SEE HIM AS AN AMERICAN, NOT AS A JEW AND NOT AS A REFUGEE.'" O'CONNOR

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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