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SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN NEWS ROUND-UP FOR JUNE 17, 1996

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SUMMARY:  
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1. IN THIS REPORT:

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2000  
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DOMESTIC/INTERNATIONAL: WITH HIS BOOK "DIE ANTWORT," **KURT WALDHEIM** RESUSCITATED HIS CASE SUPPOSED DEAD FOR YEARS: ORF TV AND "KURIER" REPORTED ABOUT DEMANDS BY A JUDICIAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR A LAW TO FORCE THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE CIA TO REVEAL DOCUMENTS ABOUT THEIR COOPERATION WITH FORMER 'WEHRMACHT' OFFICIALS.

THE AUSTRIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE INTERNATIONAL BOSNIAN CONFERENCE IN FLORENCE SAID HOLDING ELECTIONS IN BOSNIA ON SEPTEMBER 14, EVEN IF THEY ARE FLAWED, WOULD BE BETTER THAN NOT HOLDING THEM AT ALL.

AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT KLESTIL IS TRAVELLING TO PARIS TODAY TO VISIT JACQUES CHIRAC.

DOMESTIC: JOHANN FARNLEITNER WILL BE AUSTRIA'S NEW ECONOMICS MINISTER. AND: "DIE PRESSE" COMMENTS CRITICALLY ON POLITICIANS' HESITANCE TO SPEND MONEY ON THE MODERNIZATION OF THE AUSTRIAN ARMY.

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DID WALDHEIM COLLABORATE WITH U.S. SECRET SERVICE?  
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2. AS REPORTED ON THE ORF TV NEWS PROGRAM "ZEIT IM BILD" ON JUNE 15 AS WELL AS IN THE DAILY "KURIER," A JUDICIAL SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IS LOOKING INTO WHETHER **KURT WALDHEIM** COLLABORATED WITH THE U.S. SECRET SERVICE AFTER WORLD WAR II.

AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON, CONGRESS MEMBER CAROLYN MALONEY DEMANDED A NEW LAW TO FORCE THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE CIA TO REVEAL ANY DOCUMENTATION ABOUT COOPERATION WITH FORMER 'WEHRMACHT' OFFICIALS. ORF CORRESPONDENT EUGEN FREUND ADDED IN THE SATURDAY EVENING TV REPORT ABOUT MALONEY'S PRESS STATEMENTS THAT WALDHEIM, WHO HAD ASKED YEARS AGO THAT THE RESPECTIVE FILES BE LAID OPEN, HAD REJECTED SUCH ALLEGATIONS.

"KURIER" ADDS THAT THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED RESISTANCE AGAINST THIS INITIATIVE.

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FLORENCE CONFERENCE ON ARMS CONTROL IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA:  
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3. AS ALL MEDIA REPORT OVER THE WEEKEND, AN AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED AT THE CONFERENCE ON ARMS CONTROL IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA IN FLORENCE. THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO INITIAL THIS AGREEMENT IN VIENNA FAILED DUE TO BOSNIA'S REFUSAL TO ACCEPT THE REPUBLIC OF SRPSKA'S SIGNING AS A SOVEREIGN STATE, WHILE SRPSKA OBJECTED TO BEING CALLED AN "ENTITY" WITHIN BOSNIA AND HERCEGOVINA. A RE-ALLOCATION OF THE SIGNATURES ON THE DOCUMENT SOLVED THE PROBLEM.

THE CONFERENCE ALSO CONFIRMED SEPTEMBER 14 AS THE DATE

FOR ELECTIONS IN BOSNIA. AUSTRIAN ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS BENITA FERRERO-WALDNER, WHO REPRESENTED AUSTRIA IN FLORENCE, SAID SHE FAVORED THIS DECISION, "EVEN IF WE KNOW THAT THE SITUATION IS FLAWED IN MANY WAYS," OVER NOT HOLDING THE ELECTION AT ALL. (DER STANDARD)

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PRESIDENT KLESTIL MEETS HIS FRENCH COUNTERPART  
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4. AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT KLESTIL IS MEETING WITH FRENCH PRESIDENT JACQUES CHIRAC IN PARIS TODAY "TO MELT AWAY THE ICE OF THE NUCLEAR WINTER." AUSTRIA HAD HARSHLY CRITICIZED FRANCE'S NUCLEAR TESTING IN THE PACIFIC. "DIE PRESSE" QUOTES FRENCH PRIME MINISTER ALAIN JUPPE AS SAYING, "THIS VISIT WILL MARK A NEW BEGINNING OF POLITICAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND FRANCE."

PARIS LOOKS UPON AUSTRIA AS AN ALLY REGARDING EFFORTS OF GIVING THE EUROPEAN UNION A STRONGER SOCIAL DIMENSION.

FRANCE, WHO ONLY JUST RENEWED ITS PRESENCE IN THE MILITARY STRUCTURE OF NATO, DEMANDED A FEW DAYS AGO THAT THE NEUTRAL EU COUNTRIES REVISE THEIR NEUTRALITY. AS "KURIER" REPORTS, PRESIDENT KLESTIL TOLD THE FRENCH PAPER "LE MONDE" THAT NEUTRALITY HAD ITS JUSTIFICATION DURING THE COLD WAR, BUT THAT ITS MEANING HAD TO BE DEFINED ANEW. "I WOULD LIKE TO REPLACE THE WORD NEUTRALITY WITH SOLIDARITY."

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AUSTRIA HAS NEW ECONOMICS MINISTER:  
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5. OVP PARTY CHIEF WOLFGANG SCHUESSEL INTRODUCED JOHANN FARNLEITNER AS THE NEW MINISTER FOR ECONOMICS. FARNLEITNER IS REPLACING JOHANNES DITZ, WHO RESIGNED LAST WEEK. THE 57-YEAR-OLD DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CHAMBER OF ECONOMICS IS KNOWN AS A HIGHLY QUALIFIED LAW AND ECONOMICS EXPERT AND DESCRIBES HIMSELF AS A "TOLERANT CATHOLIC AND COURAGEOUS MODERNIZER" -- AN INTERESTING CHOICE, CONSIDERING THAT HIS PREDECESSOR RESIGNED MAINLY BECAUSE HE LACKED SUPPORT AMONG HIS OWN PARTIES FOR HIS REFORM PROPOSALS.

FARNLEITNER SAID HIS MAIN TASKS WOULD BE TO CONTINUE TO OPEN INTERNATIONAL MARKETS FOR AUSTRIAN PRODUCTS, STRENGTHEN COMPETITIVENESS AND PREPARE THE ECONOMY FOR EUROPE'S EXPANSION TOWARD THE EAST. "DIE PRESSE" HOPES IN A COMMENTARY BY CHIEF EDITOR UNTERBERGER THAT FARNLEITNER WILL CONTINUE WHAT DITZ BEGAN -- TO REFORM THE RIGID AUSTRIAN TRADE LAWS.

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WHERE IS OUR "SECURITY KIT"?  
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6. FOLLOWING DEFENSE MINISTER FASSLABEND'S RECENT DEMAND FOR 40 BILLION SCHILLINGS TO MODERNIZE THE AUSTRIAN ARMY, CONSERVATIVE "DIE PRESSE" CRITICIZES THE RELUCTANCE OF AUSTRIAN POLITICIANS AND THE NATIONAL DEFENSE COUNCIL TO AGREE TO SUCH SPENDING, AND IN PARTICULAR STATEMENTS BY SOCIAL DEMOCRAT REPRESENTATIVES WHO DEMANDED A DEFINITION OF NEW THREATS BEFORE THEY WERE WILLING TO AGREE ON INCREASED DEFENSE SPENDING. ON THE DISCUSSION OF WHETHER THE AUSTRIAN "DRAKEN" INTERCEPTORS OUGHT TO BE REPLACED, "DIE PRESSE" WRITES:

"IT OUGHT TO BE SELF-EVIDENT TO INFORM THE POPULATION THAT SUCCESSORS TO THE "DRAKEN" WILL BE BOUGHT. THE FACT THAT THIS IS A MATTER OF PROTRACTED DEBATE IS FRIGHTENING. IF AUSTRIA GIVES UP THE DEFENSE OF ITS AIR SPACE, WHICH IS HARDLY MORE THAN SYMBOLICAL ANYWAY, WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO GIVING UP SOVEREIGNTY. AUSTRIA SHOULD LOOK BEYOND ITS BORDERS: SWITZERLAND, WHOSE EXAMPLE AUSTRIAN NEUTRALITY OUGHT TO FOLLOW, HAS TEN TIMES AS MANY FIGHTER PLANES. BUT IF AUSTRIA DECIDES TO GIVE UP ON THIS SUBJECT, IT MIGHT JUST AS WELL ABOLISH ITS ARMY ALTOGETHER OR SEEK REFUGE UNDER NATO'S UMBRELLA.  
END REPORT. FINN

ADMIN  
END OF MESSAGE

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