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# SEBASTIAN KURZ: FROM POLITICAL WUNDERKIND TO ROGUE OPERATOR

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By Matthew Karnitschnig

Sebastian Kurz, a political wunderkind who became Austrias leader at just 31, rose to power by cultivating a youthful, do-gooder image that endeared him to young and old alike.

And then he went rogue.

A cache of private text messages between the center-right chancellor and his deputies and other correspondence uncovered by Austrian authorities as part of a sweeping investigation into political corruption portrays Kurz not as the well-mannered favorite son-in-law of the nation who captured the heart of his compatriots and much of the EU, but rather as a shrewd behind-the-scenes operator willing to do whatever it takes to push through his agenda, whether dealing with the Catholic Church, doling out political favors or taking on rivals.

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