

PRIME MINISTER

YOUR INTERVIEW FOR SCANDINAVIAN TELEVISION - REACTIONS

You will be interested to see the attached largely positive reactions in Norway, Denmark and Sweden to your interview.

In particular I would draw to your attention the reaction from the Danish MFA:-

"From the MFA we have heard that the Prime Minister's warm remarks on the Danish Presidency and the opportunity it would give her to visit Copenhagen were noted with pleasure. The interview has given the Danish public a much greater feeling of contact with the Prime Minister and will have done much to ensure that her visit is eagerly anticipated here."

Clearly a most useful exercise.



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TO PRIORITY FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 133 OF 28 JUNE 1982
INFO SAVING STOCKHOLM, COPENHAGEN, HELSINKI.

YOUR TELNO 68 TO STOCKHOLM : INTERVIEW BY THE PRME MINISTER

FOR SCANDINAVIAN TELEVISION : NORWEGIAN REACTIONS

1. INTERVIEW WAS BROADCAST IN FULL AT 2250 LOCAL TIME ON 21 JUNE. NEWS EARLIER THAT EVENING SHOWED SUBSTANTIAL EXTRACT IN WHICH PRIME MINISTER, ASKED WHETHER SHE WOULD NEGOTIATE WITH ARGENTINA, EXPLAINED WHY SHE WOULD NOT.
2. I MENTIONED IN MY TELEGRAM NO 130 THAT THE INTERVIEW MADE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT IN NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT AND OFFICIAL CIRCLES, WHERE SEVERAL CONTACTS HAVE COMMENTED TO US IN WARMLY FAVOURABLE TERMS AS HAVE SOME OF OUR BUSINESS CONTACTS. A VISITING AMERICAN OFFICIAL HAS SPONTANEOUSLY REPORTED TO US THE ENTHUSIASTIC REACTION OF A KEY NORWEGIAN MINISTER, WHICH CONFIRMS THAT THOSE WHO SPOKE TO US DIRECTLY ON THESE LINES WERE NOT JUST BEING POLITE. SOME INFLUENTIAL FRIENDS COMMENTED, HOWEVER, THAT THEY WERE TAKEN ABACK BY THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT THAT SHE DID NOT CONTEMPLATE ANY NEGOTIATIONS WITH ARGENTINA.
3. THE TIMING OF THE BROADCAST WAS TOO LATE FOR MANY DEADLINES IN THE WRITTEN PRESS IMPACT, BUT IT HAS PROMPTED A FAIR AMOUNT OF COMMENT. DAGBLADET (INDEPENDENT LEFT) WROTE ON 23 JUNE THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD QUOTE TALKED HER WAY IN TO THE HEARTS OF EVERY NORWEGIAN UNQUOTE, ALMOST TO THE POINT OF BEING REGARDED AS A COMPATRIOT. THE PAPER SINGLED OUT MRS THATCHER'S PRAISE FOR THE GENERATION OF BRITONS WHO HAD SHOWN THAT THEY WERE PREPARED TO FIGHT FOR THEIR FORE-FATHERS' VALUES. THE RIGHT WING WEEKLY FARMAND DESCRIBED THE INTERVIEW AS A BRILLIANT PERFORMANCE IN WHICH THE COHERENCE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S POLICY AND THE FIRMNESS OF HER ACTIONS HAD EARNED THE ENTHUSIASM AND ADMIRATION OF HER NORWEGIAN AUDIENCE. THE PAPER ALSO EMPHASISED THE PRIME MINISTER'S TRIBUTE TO THE YOUNGER BRITISH GENERATION.
4. MORGENBLADET, THE RIGHT WING OSLO DAILY THAT HAS BEEN THE ONLY NORWEGIAN NEWSPAPER TO SUPPORT THE ARGENTINE CAUSE, RECOGNISED IN A LEADING ARTICLE ON 23 JUNE THAT WE HAD QUOTE VIEWED AN IMPRESSIVE PERSON WITH A RARE GIFT FOR EXPRESSING HERSELF ... HER COUNTRY HAD FOUGHT AND WON IN THE SERVICE OF RIGHT, DEMOCRACY, AND INTERNATIONAL LAW AND ORDER. OF THAT THERE IS NO DOUBT UNQUOTE. MORGANBLADET WENT ON TO COMPLAIN THAT THE INTERVIEWERS HAD GIVEN THE PRIME MINISTER A QUOTE TROUBLE-FREE RIDE UNQUOTE IN WHICH IMPORTANT POINTS (I.E. THE ARGENTINE CASE) HAD ONLY BEEN DEALT WITH SUPERFICIALLY.

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5. THE OFFICIAL LABOUR PARTY NEWSPAPER ARBEIDERBLADET, IN A MORE LIGHT-HEARTED PIECE ON 23 JUNE, ATTRIBUTED TO HARBORG, THE NORWEGIAN AMONG THE THREE JOURNALISTS, ADMIRATION FOR MRS THATCHER'S PROFESSIONALISM AND GUTS. ARBEIDERBLADET COMMENTED THAT SHE HAD MADE HARBORG AND HIS EXPERIENCED COLLEAGUES LOOK LIKE EMBARRASSED SCHOOL-BOYS. IT SUGGESTED WITH SOME RELISH THAT, IN TAKING LEAVE OF THEM AFTER THE RECORDING, SHE HAD SAID IT WAS TIME TO DO SOME WORK.

6. THE PRIME MINISTER'S UNEQUIVOCAL REJECTION OF THE SUGGESTION THAT SHE MIGHT CALL A SNAP ELECTION MADE AN OUTSTANDINGLY STRONG IMPRESSION AND IS HIGHLY PRAISED IN WRITTEN COMMENT AND IN CONVERSATIONS.

7. AFTENPOSTEN, WHICH MADE NO EDITORIAL COMMENT OF ITS OWN, STRIKES A CAUTIOUS NOTE IN CARRYING PROMINENTLY ON 28 JUNE A CONTRIBUTION BY A PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL COMPLAINING THAT WE HAD FOLLOWED IN AN UNFORTUNATE WAY THE ADVICE WHICH, HE CLAIMED, THE FOREIGN OFFICE GAVE A BRITISH AMBASSADOR AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, VIZ THAT WE HAD IN ARGENTINA QUOTE ALL THE ADVANTAGES OF A COLONY UNQUOTE WITHOUT THE COSTS. MRS THATCHER'S INTERVIEW, WHILE DEMONSTRATING BRITAIN'S GREATNESS AND RESOLUTION, HAD ALSO DEMONSTRATED BRITAIN'S TRAGEDY. SHE HAD TAKEN INSUFFICIENT ACCOUNT OF THE ARGENTINE LEADERS. THE LATTER WERE INDEED THE DICTATORS AND FASCISTS BUT THEY EXPRESSED IMPORTANT THINGS ABOUT THE ARGENTINE PEOPLE AND LATIN AMERICA. THE WRITER URGED MRS THATCHER TO SHOW MAGNANIMITY AND FORGIVENESS IN HELPING THE WOUNDS OF HISTORY TO HEAL.

8. OVERALL, RESERVATIONS ABOUT POLICY FOR THE FUTURE ARE OUTWEIGHED BY ADMIRATION OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S PERSONAL PERFORMANCE AND QUALITIES, AND RECOGNITION OF THE JUSTNESS OF THE CAUSE IN WHICH SHE LED THE BRITISH ACTION TO REPOSSESS THE FALKLANDS.

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TO PRIORITY FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 175 OF 24 JUNE
INFO SAVING TO STOCKHOLM, OSLO AND HELSINKI

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YOUR TELNO 68 TO STOCKHOLM: INTERVIEW BY THE PRIME MINISTER FOR SCANDINAVIAN TELEVISION

1. THE INTERVIEW, SHOWN ON DANISH TV AT 2110 ON 21 JUNE, ATTRACTED A LARGE AUDIENCE AND AN UNUSUAL AMOUNT OF SUBSEQUENT INTEREST AND COMMENT. REACTIONS IN SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS AND FROM OUR CONTACTS HAVE BEEN MIXED, DEPENDING ON THE PRIOR VIEWPOINT, AND CONCENTRATED MOSTLY ON THE FALKLANDS.

2. THE CONTENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS GENERALLY FOUND FAVOUR: HER PRESENTATION WAS MORE CONTROVERSIAL IN DENMARK, WHICH HAS FOUGHT NO WAR SINCE 1864 AND WHERE THE CONCEPT OF A GLORIOUS WAR IS UNFAMILIAR. THUS WIDE AGREEMENT WITH THE PRIME MINISTER'S JUSTIFICATION OF BRITAIN'S ACTION - AND ESPECIALLY HER STRICTURES OF THE JUNTA - DOES NOT PREVENT EVEN RIGHT-OF-CENTRE PAPERS FROM SPEAKING OF PATRIOTISM EXPRESSED IN QUOTE MORE PICTURES-QUE LANGUAGE THAN WE NORMALLY MEET UNQUOTE, WHILE MORE LEFT-WING COMMENTATORS REACTED AGAINST WHAT THEY SAW AS SELF-CONGRATULATORY STATEMENTS ABOUT BRITISH HEROISM. BOERSEN (BUSINESS DAILY) IN AN EDITORIAL REPRINTED TODAY IN THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AKTUELT, ADMIRES MRS THATCHER FOR HER CLEAR EXPRESSION OF WHAT SHE FEELS AND WHY - EVEN IF ONE DOES NOT HAVE TO AGREE WITH HER ALL THE WAY. IT JUDGES HER ARGUMENT FOR REPOSSESSION GOOD AND REASONABLE - BUT ENDS WITH CONCERN ABOUT GIBRALTAR. PRIVATE PERSONS HAVE EXPRESSED VIEWS RANGING FROM WHOLEHEARTED ENTHUSIASM TO REFERENCES TO QUOTE FANTASTIC CONCEIT UNQUOTE AND QUOTE JINCOISTIC RHETORIC UNQUOTE. EVEN ROTARIANS, WHILE APPLAUDING THE MESSAGE, REGARDED IT AS EXTREMELY TOUGH. INTERESTINGLY, WE HAVE COME ACROSS NO COMMENT ON THE CLEAR REFUSAL TO NEGOTIATE WITH ARGENTINA: THE GRATITUDE FOR SUPPORT OVER IMPORT BAN CAME OVER CLEARLY.

3. FROM THE MFA WE HAVE HEARD THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S WARM REMARKS ON THE DANISH PRESIDENCY AND THE OPPORTUNITY IT WOULD GIVE HER TO VISIT COPENHAGEN WERE NOTED WITH PLEASURE. THE INTERVIEW HAS GIVEN THE DANISH PUBLIC A MUCH GREATER FEELING OF CONTACT WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND WILL HAVE DONE MUCH TO ENSURE THAT HER VISIT IS EAGERLY ANTICIPATED HERE.

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GRS 460
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PM STOCKHOLM 240640Z JUNE 82
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 126 OF 24 JUNE 1982
INFO SAVING OSLO, COPENHAGEN AND HELSINKI

YOUR TEL NO 68: PRIME MINISTER'S INTERVIEW

1. MOST SWEDISH MEDIA COMMENT HAS BEEN BY TV CRITICS WHO CONCENTRATED MORE ON PRIME MINISTER'S PERSONALITY, PERFORMANCE AND STYLE THAN ON EXPOSITION OF HER POSITION ON THE FALKLANDS, WHICH IS ASSUMED TO BE WELL-KNOWN. HOWEVER BOTH CRITICS AND POLITICAL COMMENTATORS WELCOMED THE CHANCE TO FORM A DIRECT IMPRESSION WITHOUT INTERMEDIUM.
2. REGARDLESS OF POLITICS, TV CRITICS MARVELED AT PRIME MINISTER'S COMMAND AND ASSURANCE. GOTEBORGS POSTEN (LIB) SAID SHE SHOWED QUOTE THE SAME COOL DECISIVENESS UNQUOTE AS SHE DISPLAYED THROUGHOUT THE CRISIS. CRITICS ALSO NOTED THE UNUSUALLY RESPECTFUL DEMEANOUR OF INTERVIEWERS. VESTMANLANDS LANS TIDNING (LIB) OBSERVED THAT WHEN THEY TRIED TO GET THE BETTER OF HER SHE DELIVERED QUOTE AN EXCELLENT LESSON ON THE DUTIES OF DEMOCRACY UNQUOTE. OTHERS FOUND HER STYLE MORE ALIEN. GOTEBORGS TIDNINGEN (LIB) FOUND THE TOTAL ABSENCE OF DOUBTS UNSYMPATHETIC BUT ADDED THAT SHE WAS PLAYING THE ROLE DEMOCRACY HAD DEALT HER.
3. SVENSKA DAGBLADET (CONS) WAS THE ONLY NEWSPAPER YESTERDAY TO PRINT COMMENT ON ITS EDITORIAL PAGE. IN A SIGNED ARTICLE, HAKAN HAGWALL WROTE QUOTE IT CAN UNDOUBTEDLY BE SALUTARY FOR A SWEDE TO HEAR FOR ONCE A POLITICIAN (OR WHY NOT USE THE WORD STATESMEN, SO OFTEN MISUSED BUT IN THIS CASE JUSTIFIED) OF INTERNATIONAL STATURE. OF COURSE, IT FEELS STRANGE. MRS THATCHER HAS A PATHOS, ALMOST BOMBAST, IN HER TONE AND VOCABULARY THAT ONLY OLOF PALME CAN MATCH AMONG OUR OWN DOMESTIC POLITICIANS. BUT SHE HAS OTHER, MORE IMPORTANT SIDES: THE UNAVOIDABLE IMPRESSION OF SOMEONE WHO HAS THOUGHT THROUGH MOTIVES AND ACTIONS AND BECOME CONVINCED OF THEIR JUSTICE UNQUOTE. HAGWALL ALSO PRAISED THE PRIME MINISTER'S ABILITY TO STRESS THE IMPORTANT POINTS, AND WENT ON TO SUMMARISE THEM: THE UNPROVOKED AGRESSION BY A DICTATORSHIP, THE WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE AND ONLY AFTER THIS WAS PROVED TO LEAD NOWHERE, THE USE OF THE MILITARY WEAPON. HAGWALL WAS ONE OF A NUMBER OF COMMENTATORS TO BE STRUCK BY MRS THATCHER'S DIRECT CHALLENGE TO THE INTERVIEWERS AND TO QUOTE IT: QUOTE YOU ARE DEPENDENT ON FREEDOM. I HOPE YOU ARE PREPARED TO SEE IT DEFENDED UNQUOTE. HE ALSO APPRECIATED THE QUOTE STIFF DIGNITY UNQUOTE WITH WHICH MRS THATCHER REJECTED THE OPTION OF A QUICK ELECTION. ALL IN ALL, HAGWALL THOUGHT, A PROGRAMME UNLIKELY TO BE TO THE LIKING OF ALL THOSE WHO SEEK TO CULTIVATE THE MOST USUAL

(PREJUDICES

PREJUDICES ABOUT THE LADY DUBBED BY SWEDISH POLITICIANS QUOTE THAT
RIGHT-WING AUNTIE IN ENGLAND WITH HER VULGAR GROCER'S MENTALITY
UNQUOTE. SVENSKA DAGBLADET'S TV CRITIC COMPARED THE PROGRAMME TO
THE AUDIENCES OF DE GAULLE, AND THOUGHT THAT, CLOSER TO HOME, ONLY
MANNERHEIM COULD MATCH HER QUOTE IN MAGNIFICENCE UNQUOTE. THE
PRAISE FOR SWEDEN'S STANCE WAS NOTED: QUOTE NOTHING TOO INSIGNIFICANT
TO ESCAPE HER EAGLE EYE UNQUOTE. IN BRIEF, QUOTE A BRILLIANT SHOW
UNQUOTE WHICH DESERVED TO BE RE-RUN.

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