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FALKLANDS: LATEST BRAZILIAN REACTIONS

1. NEWS OF THE SINKING OF THE GENERAL BELGRANO OUTSIDE DE THE TEZ, AND THE GREAT LOSS OF LIFE WHICH WAS AT FIRST FEARED, WAS RECEIVED WITH ANXIETY AND PERPLEXITY IN BRAZIL. FEARS OF A FURTHER ESCALATION OF THE CONFLICT WERE REFLECTED WIDELY IN PRESS COMMENT. PRESIDENT FIGUEIREDO SENT A PERSONAL MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT GALTIERI EXPRESSING HIS DEEP CONCERN AT THE LOSS OF LIFE AND THE MOST SINCERE SYMPATHY OF THE BRAZILIAN PEOPLE FOR THE ARGENTINE FAMILIES THUS BEREAVED. HIS MESSAGE ENDED WITH FERVENT EXPRESSIONS OF HOPE THAT PEACE AND CONCORD SHOULD SOON BE RE-ESTABLISHED.
2. THE SUBSEQUENT NEWS YESTERDAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF HMS SHEFFIELD CAME AS NO LESS OF A SURPRISE AND APPEARS TO HAVE INCREASED CONCERN THAT THE CONFLICT IS GETTING OUT OF HAND. THIS VIEW IS REFLECTED IN SEVERAL RESPONSIBLE EDITORIALS, INCLUDING THAT OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LATIN AMERICAN DAILY POST, WHO HITHERTO HAVE BEEN AMONG THE STAUCHEST SUPPORTERS OF THE BRITISH POINT OF VIEW (FULL TEXT IN MIFT).
3. PRESSURE ON THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT TO ADOPT A MORE PRINCIPLED POSITION AND PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS IS BEGINNING TO INTENSIFY, BOTH IN THE MEDIA AND IN CONGRESS. THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS BEEN SUMMONED TO APPEAR TODAY BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, WHO ARE KNOWN TO BE UNHAPPY WITH THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT'S OPPORTUNIST LINE SO FAR AND THE FACT THAT IT HAS BEEN DECIDED WITHOUT REFERENCE TO PUBLIC OPINION OR ITS REPRESENTATIVES.
4. ATTENTION IS BEGINNING TO BE FOCUSED ON PRESIDENT FIGUEIREDO'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES, WHICH IS DUE TO START ON 11 MAY AND WHICH IS NOW SEEN INTER ALIA AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR BRAZIL TO MAKE ITS PRESENCE FELT IN INTERNATIONAL DELIBERATIONS ON THE FALKLANDS QUESTION.

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