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FALKLANDS: FRENCH PRESS REACTION

1. THE FALKLANDS CRISIS OCCUPIES MOST OF THE FRONT PAGES OF THE FRENCH PRESS TODAY, WITH WIDE COVERAGE IN INSIDE PAGES. THE WORD "WAR" FIGURES IN MOST HEADLINES, BUT WITH STRESS ON THE LIMITED AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS. MUCH SPACE IS GIVEN TO ACCOUNTS OF THE MILITARY ACTION, AND ALL PAPERS POINT TO THE CONTRADICTIONARY STATEMENTS FROM LONDON AND FROM BUENOS AIRES.
2. AN EDITORIAL IN LE QUOTIDIEN DE PARIS (RIGHT OF CENTRE) SAYS THAT "ONE CANNOT HELP FEELING AN UPSURGE OF ADMIRATION FOR THE BRITISH ATTITUDE ... THE (BRITISH) SEAMEN, AIRMEN AND TROOPS ARE ADMIRABLE BECAUSE THEY ARE FIGHTING FOR NOTHING; THAT IS TO SAY FOR HONOUR ... FOR PERHAPS THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR A COUNTRY IS FIGHTING NOT FOR SELF-INTEREST BUT FOR THE IDEA IT HAS OF ITSELF; FOR HONOUR". IT REMINDS READERS THAT THE DEFEAT OF NAZI GERMANY WAS ACHIEVED "BECAUSE THE BRITISH - AGAIN - KNEW HOW TO MAKE THE SACRIFICE OF BLOOD", AND CONCLUDES "THAT A PEOPLE STILL DARES TODAY TO DIE FOR ITS HONOUR IS A LESSON WHICH ALL THE WORLD'S DICTATORS SHOULD PONDER, WHETHER IN BUENOS AIRES OR HAVANA ... OR ELSEWHERE."
3. LE MATIN (SOCIALIST) STRESSES ON SIMILAR LINES THAT BRITAIN IS FIGHTING FOR A PRINCIPLE. IT DESCRIBES THE ARGENTINIAN ANTI-COLONIALIST ARGUMENT AS HOLDING NO WATER AND SAYS THAT THE BATTLE SHOULD BE SEEN AS THE FIRST CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE INDUSTRIALISED NORTH AND THE DEVELOPING SOUTH. IT WARNS THAT THE CRISIS MIGHT EXACERBATE TENSION BETWEEN THE US AND THE USSR AND LEAD TO A SITUATION REMINISCENT OF SUEZ IN 1956. SEVERAL OTHER PAPERS POINT TO THE LATENT GRAVITY OF THE CRISIS SHOULD THE SUPERPOWERS BECOME ACTIVELY INVOLVED.

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4. AN ARTICLE IN LE QUOTIDIEN BY ITS BRUSSELS CORRESPONDENT DESCRIBES THE BRITISH RECOURSE TO FORCE AS UNWELCOME TO BRITAIN'S NINE EUROPEAN PARTNERS. THE COMMUNITY COUNTRIES HAD MADE HEAVY SACRIFICES IN IMPOSING ECONOMIC SANCTIONS ON ARGENTINA AND NOW FELT "TRAPPED" BY BRITISH USE OF FORCE.

5. AN EDITORIAL IN LE MONDE CRITICISES THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND MR HAIG FOR THEIR INCAPACITY TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM, THE COMMUNITY FOR COMING TOO QUICKLY TO BRITISH AID AND MRS THATCHER FOR USING FORCE IN RELATION TO A COLONIAL PROBLEM, THEREBY EXASPERATING LATIN AMERICAN OPINION WITHOUT SOLVING THE PROBLEM. AN EDITORIAL IN L'HUMANITE (COMMUNIST) INEVITABLY CONDEMNS BRITISH MILITARY ACTION.

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