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GRS 250

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FROM ROME 271600Z APR 82

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TELNO 207 OF 27 APR 82

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FALKLAND ISLANDS: ITALIAN PRESS REACTION

1. THE FACTUAL REPORTING OF THE RECAPTURE OF SOUTH GEORGIA HAS BEEN REASONABLY ACCURATE ALTHOUGH THERE IS A TENDENCY TO DESCRIBE THE ACTION OF 25 APRIL AS "THE BEGINNING OF HOSTILITIES". TODAY'S PRESS REPORTS THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE ON 26 APRIL AND DRAWS ATTENTION TO HER READINESS TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS.

2. EDITORIAL COMMENT IS MUCH LESS SATISFACTORY. THE LEFT OF CENTRE PRESS IS CRITICAL OF THE USE OF FORCE AND TENDS TO IGNORE THE FACT THAT ARGENTINA WAS THE FIRST TO RESORT TO FORCE. A COMMENT IN IL MESSAGGERO (PRO SOCIALIST) INTERPRETS THE REASONS FOR THE CONFLICT BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND BRITAIN AS A DESIRE ON BOTH SIDES NOT TO LOSE FACE. IL GLOBO (ALSO PRO SOCIALIST) DESCRIBES THE "WAR" IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC AS GROTESQUE. AV ANTI (THE OFFICIAL SOCIALIST PAPER) SAYS THAT KILLING FOR A SMALL AND REMOTE ISSUE LIKE THE FALKLANDS IS A CRIME THAT DARKENS THE IMAGE OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED. THE PAPER CALLED ON ITALY TO PRESS FOR CONTINUED NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND ARGENTINA. UNITA (PCI) SAYS THAT THE POLICY OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS IS DICTATED BY INTERNAL POLITICS.

3. CENTRE AND RIGHT-OF-CENTRE PAPERS ARE LESS CRITICAL BUT THEY, TOO, UNDERLINE THE NEED FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. IL GIORNALE (RIGHT-WING) SAYS THAT NOW THAT BOTH BRITAIN AND ARGENTINA HAVE HAD A MILITARY SUCCESS, THEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO

/ REACH

REACH A GENUINE COMPROMISE. ARRIGO LEVI IN LA STAMPA (CENTRE), WHO HAS BEEN SYMPATHETIC TO THE BRITISH CASE, SAYS THAT HMG MUST NOW ALLOW TIME FOR ITS MILITARY ACTION IN S. GEORGIA TO OPERATE AS A NEW MEANS OF PRESSURE ON THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT. THE ACTION SHOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE THE FIRST STEP IN A WIDER MILITARY CAMPAIGN. IL POPOLO (CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT) ALSO EMPHASIZES THAT NEGOTIATIONS MUST NOW RESUME.

FCO PLEASE PASS TO ALL SAVING ADDRESSEES

ARCULUS

[REPEATED AS REQUESTED]  
[THIS TELEGRAM WAS NOT ADVANCED]

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