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U N C L A S S I F I E D
 FM DUBLIN 041145Z MAY 82
 TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 123 OF 4 MAY 1982
 AND REPEATED FOR INTO TO PRIORITY WASHINGTON AND UKMIS NEW YORK
 FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING TO EC POSTS AND UKREP BRUSSELS

FALKLANDS: IRISH MEDIA REACTIONS.

1. EDITORIAL COMMENT IN THE IRISH NEWSPAPERS HAS BECOME SHARPER SINCE THE BOMBING OF PORT STANLEY AIRPORT AND, ESPECIALLY, THE SINKING OF THE GENERAL BELGRANO.

2. THE IRISH TIMES OF 3 MAY COMMENTED THAT ARGENTINA'S INITIAL MISJUDGEMENT HAD BEEN COMPOUNDED BY HMG WHICH HAD ABANDONED "THAT MOST VALUABLE OF HUMAN AS WELL AS POLITICAL VIRTUES, A SENSE OF PROPORTION." TODAY'S IRISH TIMES SHOWS A FURTHER DECLINE IN SYMPATHY FOR OUR POSITION: "BRITAIN SEEKS A BOOST. MRS THATCHER IS RIDING HIGH. THIS MORNING THE SICKENING REALITY IS THAT THE COST IS IN BLOOD,....". A SEPARATE ARTICLE CONCLUDES: "THE ESCALATION OF FIGHTING IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC MEANS IT IS EXTREMELY UNLIKELY THAT THE EEC WILL RENEW ITS TOTAL IMPORTS BAN ON GOODS FROM ARGENTINA."

3. THE IRISH INDEPENDENT HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY MORE SYMPATHETIC TO US. AN EDITORIAL ON 3 MAY SPOKE OF HMG'S SUCCESS IN ISOLATING ARGENTINA AND THE SERIOUS MILITARY SITUATION FACED BY THE JUNTA BUT URGED: "IT IS AT THIS POINT THAT BRITAIN MUST GO ALL OUT FOR DIPLOMATIC SETTLEMENT." TODAY'S INDEPENDENT REPORTS THE "MUTTERINGS AMONG SOME EEC MEMBERS (INCLUDING IRELAND) THAT SUPPORT FOR AN EMBARGO DOES NOT MEAN SUPPORT FOR A SHOOTING WAR." HOWEVER, IT CALLS ON THE IRISH GOVERNMENT TO REMEMBER THE PRINCIPLE "THAT IN THIS DAY AND AGE CIVILISED COUNTRIES DO NOT SETTLE DISPUTES OVER PIECES OF TERRITORY BY ARBITRARILY SEIZING THOSE TERRITORIES. IGNORING THE QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY AND LOOKING ONLY AT ARGENTINA'S ACTION SHE MUST STILL STAND CONDEMNED BY WORLD OPINION - AS SHE WAS BY THE UNITED NATIONS."

/4. THE IRISH

4. THE IRISH PRESS HAS BEEN MUCH LESS SYMPATHETIC. TODAY'S EDITORIAL STATES: "BRITAIN ENTERED THE CRISIS WITH CONSIDERABLE SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. THE ARGENTINES HAD FLOUTED THE RULE OF LAW WITH THEIR INVASION AND WHITEHALL INITIALLY AT LEAST APPEARED INTERESTED IN A DIPLOMATIC SETTLEMENT. BUT NOW THAT GOODWILL AND BACKING IS BEING SQUANDERED THROUGH THE STEPPING UP OF MILITARY ACTION IN WHICH THE ARGENTINES ARE OBVIOUSLY SUFFERING GRIEVOUSLY IN MEN AND EQUIPMENT. HOW MUCH LONGER BEFORE BRITAIN WILL BE SEEN AS THE AGGRESSOR AND INTERNATIONAL SYMPATHY WILL SWITCH TO ARGENTINA....."

5. PUBLIC OPINION HERE IS DIVIDED BUT THERE IS GROWING PRESSURE ON THE IRISH GOVERNMENT TO WITHDRAW FROM SANCTIONS AGAINST ARGENTINA. THIS TENDENCY HAS ACCELERATED WITH THE SINKING OF THE ARGENTINE CRUISER.

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[REPEATED AS REQUESTED]

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