

UNCLASSIFIED
FM WASHINGTON 052000Z MAY 82
TO IMMEDIATE F C O
TELEGRAM NUMBER 1607 OF 5 MAY
INFO PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK BIS NEW YORK



FALKLANDS; US PRESS FOR 5 MAY

1. NEWSPAPERS LEAD WITH THE ARGENTINE ATTACK ON THE SHEFFIELD. THERE ARE ALSO REPORTS OF CASUALTY FIGURES FROM THE BELGRANO. A REPORT IN THE WASHINGTON POST, DATED LINED PARIS, REPORTS THAT THE PROSPECT OF GROWING HOSTILITIES IS LEADING BRITAIN'S EUROPEAN ALLIES TO RECONSIDER THEIR SUPPORT.
2. AN EDITORIAL IN THE WASHINGTON POST SAYS THAT THE NOTION OF A NICE LITTLE LIMITED WAR IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC IS FAST DISSOLVING. BLOOD HAS BEEN DRAWN ON BOTH SIDES, BRITAIN'S EUROPEAN ALLIES ARE TURNING AWAY FROM THE SPECTACLE OF VIOLENCE AND THE ARGENTINE REGIME IS UNDER HARDENING MILITARY AND ECONOMIC PRESSURE. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES IT IS MORE ESSENTIAL THAN EVER TO KEEP IN MIND THAT THE ARGUMENT IS ABOUT AGGRESSION. THE BRITISH DO NOT WANT SOVEREIGNTY BUT FAIR TREATMENT FOR THE FALKLAND ISLANDERS. ARGENTINA'S CRAVING FOR SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE ISLANDS MAY NOW BE SATISFIED; QUOTE WHAT IS REQUIRED IS NOT THE FURTHER HUMILIATION OF ARGENTINA, OR A DEMONSTRATION OF MORE MARTIAL DETERMINATION BY THE BRITISH, AND CERTAINLY NOT THE LOSS OF FURTHER LIVES. WHAT IS REQUIRED IS THAT THE TWO OF THEM, HELPED BY THEIR FRIENDS STOP THE SHOOTING AND RESUME THE TALKING AND END THIS WAR. UNQUOTE
3. THE BALTIMORE SUN CARRIES AN EDITORIAL WHICH IS CRITICAL OF THE SINKING OF THE BELGRANO AS OUT OF PROPORTION TO THE SCALE OF THE STRUGGLE FOR THE FALKLANDS. THE PAPER ADDS THAT IT IS NOT, HOWEVER, EASY TO SYMPATHISE WITH THE STRUTTING ARGENTINE MILITARISTS WHO BROUGHT ON THIS CATASTROPHE.
4. IN AN EDITORIAL HEADED QUOTE WHY BRITAIN RAISED THE STAKES UNQUOTE, THE NEW YORK TIMES SAID THAT IT IS NOT BRITISH BLOODY MINDEDNESS BUT ARGENTINE RECKLESSNESS WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR THE WIDENING CONFLICT. IN RAISING THE QUESTION OF WHETHER BRITAIN WAS RIGHT TO SINK THE BELGRANO, THE PAPER SAYS THAT BRITAIN'S FIRST OBLIGATION WAS TO PROTECT ITS OWN TROOPS. IN ANY CASE, ARGENTINA HAD BEEN WARNED. MOREOVER, IT COULD BE ARGUED THAT SINCE ARGENTINA REMAINED CAPRICIOUSLY AND ADAMANTLY UNWILLING TO COME TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE, A SHOCK HAD TO BE DELIVERED. THE PAPER CONCLUDES THAT, SADLY, THE PROSPECTS FOR NEGOTIATION MAY NOW HAVE RECEDED.
5. JAMES RESTON IN THE NEW YORK TIMES WRITES THAT THE ARGENTINE JUNTA DID NOT CALCULATE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR USE OF FORCE AND MISJUDGED NOT ONLY THE BRITISH BUT ALSO THE US WHICH HAD ALWAYS MADE CLEAR THAT, IF THE ARGENTINIANS INSISTED ON THE RULE

OF FORCE, WASHINGTON WOULD DEFEND THE RULE OF LAW: QUOTE THERE IS GREAT SYMPATHY HERE FOR THE LOSS OF LIFE, BUT THE GENERALS IN BUENOS AIRES SHOULD NOT BE DECEIVED. THE ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS ARE AGREED THAT THE PRINCIPLES OF NON-USE OF MILITARY FORCE TO SETTLE TERRITORIAL DISPUTES WILL BE DEFENDED UNQUOTE.

6. EVANS AND NOVAK IN THE WASHINGTON POST ARGUE THAT THE DISPUTE RAISES THE SPECTRE OF MAJOR US REVERSES IN ITS FIGHT AGAINST COMMUNIST EXPANSION IN LATIN AMERICA. THE MOOD IN ARGENTINA IS NOW MORE, NOT LESS, INTRANSIGENT AND LATIN AMERICAN CONDEMNATION OF THE US (EXPLOITED BY THE SOVIET UNION) IS LIKELY TO GET NOISY.

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