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INFO ROUTINE CABINET OFFICE, HOME OFFICE
INFO ROUTINE SANTIAGO, WASHINGTON, EU POSTS

SUBJECT: PINOCHET: SPANISH REACTIONS

SUMMARY

1. Predictable blanket coverage overwhelmingly in favour of Home Secretary's decision. Government say it wholly respects the British decision.

DETAIL

2. The decision by the Home Secretary to give "the green light to Pinochet's extradition to Spain" (as most of the headlines have it) dominates all sections of the media. All main radio and TV stations broke into their regular programmes to announce the news as it broke and today's written press has wall to wall coverage of the story. Almost without exception the decision is welcomed and the Home Secretary is singled out for praise. Reporting is factual, with many of the papers printing in full the Home Secretary Written PQ and several highlighting the political divisions over the case in the UK: Baroness Thatcher's comments are quoted widely. The coincidence of the 50th Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights is not lost on most of the leader writers.

3. The Government, in the form of its spokesman Piquet (Minister of Industry), has limited itself to repeating the mantra that the case is in the hands of the British and Spanish judiciary whose decisions it will respect.

4. When I saw Piquet last night on other business, he said that his advice was that it would take many months yet for the case to proceed through the British courts. He made clear that - as far as he was concerned - the longer it took, the better.

TORRY

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