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UNCLASSIFIED

FM CAPE TOWN EMBASSY 010900Z JUN 82

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 378 OF 1 JUNE

INFO ROUTINE PRETORIA AND JOHANNESBURG

INFO SAVING CG CAPE TOWN AND DURBAN

OUR TELNOS 375 AND 377 AND 58 TO PRETORIA

FALKLANDS ARMS

1. MEDIA REPORTS OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS CONCENTRATE UPON THREE THEMES:

(A) SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT (SAG) INDIGNATION OVER ALLEGED BRITISH USE OF THE MEDIA TO ATTEMPT TO FORCE OFFICIAL RESPONSE OVER ALLEGATIONS OF WEAPONS SUPPLIES TO ARGENTINA.

(B) WARNINGS THAT THE SAG WILL SOON TAKE THIS UP OFFICIALLY WITH HMG.

(C) DAMAGING IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S STANDING ABROAD.

2. A FRONT PAGE ARTICLE IN THE SUNDAY EXPRESS ON 30 MAY HEADLINED QUOTE THE BRITS GROW ANGRIER UNQUOTE REPORTS BRITISH DISSATISFACTION WITH GENERAL MALAN'S STATEMENT. IT ALSO EXAMINES THE REASONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S CHANGING STANCE ON THE ARMS ALLEGATIONS AND REPORTS A QUOTE EXPERIENCED EUROPEAN DIPLOMAT IN CAPE TOWN AS SAYING QUOTE THIS WAS HARDLY THE TIME OR OCCASION TO TRY TO BLACKMAIL THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT INTO LIFTING ITS ARMS EMBARGO UNQUOTE.

3. VADERLAND ON 31 MAY CLAIMED THAT SOUTH AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES WERE DISCONCERTED BECAUSE THE BRITISH HAD APPARENTLY USED THE MEDIA AGAIN OVER THE WEEKEND (29/30 MAY) TO AROUSE ANXIETY OVER SOUTH AFRICA'S ALLEGED PROVISION OF ARMS TO ARGENTINA.

4. TODAY'S (1 JUNE) DIE BURGER REPORTS FROM LONDON THAT A QUOTE DIPLOMATIC STORM IS BUILDING UP IN THE MIDST OF CONTINUING ALLEGATIONS THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS PROVIDING WEAPONRY TO ARGENTINA AND COULD BREAK AROUND SOUTH AFRICA'S HEAD AS SOON AS THE CRISIS AROUND THE FALKLANDS ISLANDS IS RESOLVED UNQUOTE. MRS THATCHER IS REPORTED TO BE FURIOUS OVER REPORTS OF SOUTH AFRICAN AND ISRAELI WEAPONS SUPPLIES TO ARGENTINA. DIE BURGER'S LONDON OFFICE NOTES THAT BOTH ISRAEL AND SOUTH AFRICA ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SIR JOHN LEAHY FORMER BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN SOUTH AFRICA. QUOTE WHY THE SAME OFFICIAL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS TWO COUNTRIES WHICH ARE SO DIFFERENT GEOGRAPHICALLY AND POLITICALLY HAS STILL NOT BEEN MADE CLEAR BY THE BRITISH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS UNQUOTE.

FERGUSON [COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING STREET]

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