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FALKLANDS: BRAZILIAN OFFICIAL POSITION

1. THE ITAMARATY ISSUED A SHORT STATEMENT YESTERDAY AFTERNOON COMMENTING ON THE BRITISH AIR ATTACKS CARRIED OUT EARLIER IN THE DAY AGAINST TARGETS IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS (TEXT IN MY IFT).
2. THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED IN MOST BRAZILIAN NEWSPAPERS TODAY UNDER HEADLINES SUCH AS QUOTE BRAZIL CONDEMNS BRITISH ATTACK AND SEEKS URGENT UN ACTION UNQUOTE. THE BEC HAS ALSO CITED IT AS AN EXAMPLE OF LATIN AMERICAN CONDEMNATION OF OUR MILITARY ACTION YESTERDAY. THE STATEMENT ITSELF, HOWEVER, CAREFULLY ESCHEWS THE WORD QUOTE CONDEMN UNQUOTE, AND DOES NOT MENTION THE BRITISH AUTHORSHIP OF THE ATTACKS. GIVEN THE FACT THAT THE BRAZILIANS FELT THEY HAD TO SAY SOMETHING, THE LANGUAGE THEY CHOSE SEEMS TO ME TO BE ABOUT AS INNOCUOUS AS WE COULD POSSIBLY HAVE WISHED. THE ITAMARATY SPOKESMANN IN COMMENTING ON THE STATEMENT, REFERRED YET AGAIN TO THE FACT THAT BRAZIL MAINTAINS EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH GREAT BRITAIN AND THAT SHE REGRETTED THAT TWO FRIENDLY COUNTRIES SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN A CONFLICT.
3. IN PARAGRAPH 5 OF MY TELNO 114 OF 20 APRIL I SUGGESTED THAT, IN THE EVENT OF AN ARMED CONFLICT BETWEEN THE UK AND ARGENTINA, OPINION WOULD HARDEN SOMEWHAT AND THAT THE BRAZILIANS WOULD PROBABLY CHOOSE TO VIEW THE UK AS THE AGGRESSOR AND MIGHT TAKE US TO TASK PUBLICLY. IN THE EVENT, OUR MILITARY ACTION HAS SO FAR CAUSED RIPPLES RATHER THAN WAVES AMONG BRAZILIAN PUBLIC OPINION: AND THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT, WHILE CONTINUING TO PAY SOMEWHAT MUTED LIP-SERVICE TO THE SOUNDNESS OF THE ARGENTINE CLAIM, SEEMS TO BE AT PAINS NOT TO BE KNOCKED OFF ITS NEUTRALIST PERCH. RESPONSIBLE EDITORIAL COMMENT (EG IN THE JORNAL DO BRASIL AND THE ESTADO DE SAO PAULO) DRAWS ATTENTION TO THE DANGER FOR BRAZIL OF BEING DRAWN INTO THE VORTEX OF LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY IN WHICH HER INTERESTS IN AND RELATIONS WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD MIGHT BECOME SUBMERGED.

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