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TEXT

TAGS: NONE

SUBJECT: DAILY MEDIA REACTION REPORT

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PARIS - FRIDAY OCTOBER 31

LEAD: DEBATE ON FRANCO-SYRIAN RELATIONS AND DISMISSAL OF CHEIK YAMANI ARE TOP STORIES.

(A) STORIES COVERED IN REPORT:

1. TERRORISM: DEBATE ON CHARGES THAT FRANCE MADE SECRET DEALS WITH SYRIA
2. U.S. MIDTERM ELECTIONS
3. DISARMAMENT
4. U.S. TRADE DEFICIT
5. FRENCH CULTURE MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE U.S.
6. **KURT WALDHEIM**

(B) SUMMARY OF TYPE OF COVERAGE

1. SPECULATION INCREASES IN THE FRENCH PRESS DESPITE DENIALS BY FRENCH OFFICIALS THAT FRANCE SOLD ARMS TO SYRIA AND ENGAGED IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH TERRORISTS WITH THE HELP OF SYRIA. REPORTS HEADLINE REMARK BY (PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC'S SPOKESMAN) DENIS BAUDOIN YESTERDAY, THAT PRIME MINISTER MAY SOON EXPLAIN HIMSELF ON THE ISSUE. FIGARO'S COMMENTATOR WAJSMAN SAYS EUROPE HAS ONLY ONE STATESMAN WHOSE NAME IS MARGARET THATCHER.
2. MAIN PAPERS REPORT ON U.S. ELECTION CAMPAIGN. (LE MONDE FROM CALIFORNIA; FIGARO FROM MARYLAND; QUOTIDIEN FROM VIRGINIA; LIBERATION FROM NORTH AND SOUTH DAKOTA.) FEELING CONTINUES TO BE THAT, DESPITE PRESIDENT REAGAN'S ACTIVE CAMPAIGN ON BEHALF OF REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES, RESULTS ARE STILL UNPREDICTABLE.
3. SEVERAL PAPERS NOTE PRESIDENT REAGAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SHULTZ-SHEVARDNADZE MEETING NEXT WEEK IN VIENNA. LIBERATION SAYS SOVIETS HAVE JUST MADE ONE STEP TOWARDS ACCEPTING SDI RESEARCH.
4. LES ECHOS SAYS U.S. TRADE DEFICIT CONTINUES BEING TOPIC OF CONCERN FOR U.S. ADMINISTRATION.
5. FRENCH CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE U.S. GETS SIGNIFICANT INSIDE-PAGE COVERAGE IN QUOTIDIEN AND FIGARO. REPORTS HIGHLIGHT FRENCH MINISTER'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT REAGAN NEXT THURSDAY.
6. WASHINGTON POST'S REPORT ON **KURT WALDHEIM** GETS SIGNIFICANT ATTENTION. TELEVISION ANTENNE-2'S WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT QUOTED WASHINGTON POST'S REPORT THAT "WALDHEIM LIED."

(C) HEADLINES:

1. FRANCE-SYRIA:

"PARIS DENIES NEGOTIATIONS" "WASHINGTON'S MODERATE

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ATTITUDE" "A STATESMAN" (FIGARO)
"IS SYRIA FOOLING US?" (PARISIEN)
"CHIRAC WILL EXPLAIN HIMSELF" "MATIGNON TRIPLE DENIAL"
(QUOTIDIEN)
"FRENCH GOVERNMENT ADMITS SELLING 'DEFENSIVE MATERIAL'
TO SYRIA" (LE MATIN)
"PLAYING THE FISH" (LIBERATION)
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2. U.S. ELECTIONS:

"CALIFORNIA: END OF 1960'S LIBERALISM" (LE MONDE)
"U.S. LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS: 'D' DAY MINUS 4" (LE MATIN)
"DIFFICULTIES IN THE REPUBLICAN CAMP" (LIBERATION)

3. DISARMAMENT:

"NEW ROUND NEXT WEEK" (QUOTIDIEN)
"SDI: ONE SOVIET STEP TOWARD COMPROMISE" (LIBERATION)

4. U.S. TRADE DEFICIT:

"WASHINGTON STILL WORRIES ABOUT TRADE DEFICIT DESPITE
RECENT IMPROVEMENT" (LES ECHOS)

5. FRENCH CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION MINISTER'S VISIT TO
THE U.S.:

"FRANCOIS LEOTARD MARATHONMAN IN NEW YORK" (QUOTIDIEN)
"FRANCOIS LEOTARD IN THE U.S.: A MULTIDIRECTIONAL
VISIT" (FIGARO)

(D) SUPPORTING TEXT:

1. FRANCE-SYRIA:

TELEVISION ANTENNE-2 SAYS THAT FRENCH OFFICIAL
CLARIFICATIONS ON RELATIONS WITH SYRIA WERE FAVORABLY
RECEIVED IN WASHINGTON.

POPULAR PARISIEN ON PAGE 2-3: "IS SYRIA FOOLING US?"

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CAN A COUNTRY BOTH MANIPULATE TERRORISTS LIKE HINDAWI AND HAND US OTHER ONES LIKE THE MURDERER OF OUR MILITARY ATTACHE IN BEIRUT?...WHERE THERE'S SMOKE THERE'S FIRE. THIS IS WHY OUR PRIME MINISTER SHOULD PROVIDE US WITH EXPLANATIONS. HE MIGHT DO IT ON TELEVISION IN A FEW DAYS, BEFORE THE EC MEETING IN LONDON ON NOVEMBER 10. A MEETING WHICH WILL CENTER ON SYRIA. HE WILL HAVE A HARD TIME CLEARING THIS COUNTRY COMPLETELY."

RIGHT-OF-CENTER QUOTIDIEN ON PAGE 3: "...WILL THE LENGTHY EXPLANATIONS BE SUFFICIENT TO END THE RUMORS. THIS IS UNLIKELY. DENIS BAUDOIN HIMSELF DOUBTS IT. TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT HE WONDERS WHETHER ALL THE SPECULATION ABOUT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S ACTIONS IS NOT THE RESULT OF A CLEVERLY ORCHESTRATED 'CAMPAIGN'....IF THE GOVERNMENT IS UNABLE TO PROVE ITSELF, CHIRAC MIGHT TAKE HIS CASE TO THE FRENCH PEOPLE WITH A TELEVISED ADDRESS. NOTHING HAS BEEN DECIDED YET BUT OFFICIALS IN MATIGNON ARE SERIOUSLY CONTEMPLATING THE IDEA."

PRO-SOCIALIST LE MATIN: "ON THE SYRIAN AFFAIR, THE GOVERNMENT WAS RAPIDLY HEADING TOWARD A MEDIATIC CATASTROPHY. DENIALS AND CONTRADICTORY ANNOUNCEMENTS WERE FOLLOWING EACH OTHER AND FRENCH POLICY WAS BECOMING TRULY UNINTELLIGIBLE...AFTER A FEW DAYS OF WAVERING, THE GOVERNMENT FINALLY DECIDED TO MAKE AN EFFORT TO CORRECT THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF AN INCOHERENT UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 06 PARIS 50096

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POLICY. YESTERDAY, DENIS BAUDOIN, PRIME MINISTER JACQUES CHIRAC'S SPOKESMAN OPENED HIS FILES AND CONFIRMED THE INFORMATION PUBLISHED BY LE MATIN...."

LEFT-OF-CENTER LIBERATION EDITORIAL BY REPORTER GERARD DUPUY: "SINCE LAST WEDNESDAY, THREE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FIGURES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE SPENT MOST OF THEIR TIME CLINGING TO THE BRANCHES...DENIAL AFTER DENIAL, EVERYTHING ADDED TO THE CONFUSION. BUT THE

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AFFAIR IS IMPORTANT AND EVERYONE KNOWS THAT NEGOTIATIONS MEAN GIVE AND TAKE. IN THE END, THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT SEEMS TO HAVE REACHED A CONSENSUS ON ITS OFFICIAL POSITION, WHICH HOWEVER REMAINS UNCOMFORTABLE....WE HAVE REASON TO WONDER IF, DESPITE THE RITUAL SONG ON 'FRANCE'S ROLE IN THIS AREA OF THE WORLD,' THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT DID NOT FINALLY END UP EXACTLY WHERE ITS INTERLOCUTORS WANTED."

INFLUENTIAL LE MONDE ON PAGE 8: "THE FOREIGN MINISTER DENIED WITHOUT DENYING, THE INTERIOR MINISTER HAD NO COMMENT. SUCH WAS THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S REACTION TODAY ON OUR REPORT ON THE TRUCE OBTAINED BY FRANCE WITH THE HELP OF SYRIA AND ALGERIA....THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT DENY THE DESCRIPTION OF ITS STRATEGY AS PRESENTED IN OUR INVESTIGATION - A GAMBLE THAT SYRIA AND ALGERIA WOULD EXERT PRESSURE ON THE TERRORISTS IN EXCHANGE FOR CLEMENCY FOR GEORGES ABGDALLAH WITH THE THREAT OF RETALIATION IF THE TRUCE IS NOT RESPECTED....THE PLAN COULD RUN INTO DIFFICULTIES. FIRST IT IS NOT CERTAIN THAT THE COURT WILL BE INDULGENT WHEN GEORGES ABADALLAH IS TRIED AGAIN NEXT FEBRUARY. THE AMERICAN CIVIL PARTY DOES NOT SEEM WILLING TO GIVE UP -- THIS IS CLEAR IN THE LETTER SENT BY LAWYER KIEJMAN TO LE MONDE TODAY ON 'THE 'RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL PARTY.' (LETTER ON SAME PAGE.) ALSO, THE DEADLINE FOR THE 'TRUCE' IMPOSED ON THE FARL COULD BE A TRAP....IN SHORT, THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IS A TACTIC RATHER THAN A STRATEGY. THE SHORT-RUN STRATEGY IS TO AVOID A DESTABILIZATION OF PUBLIC OPINION UNDER TERRORIST PRESSURE. THERE DOES NOT SEEM TO BE A REAL FRENCH MIDDLE EAST POLICY. IF FRANCE SEEMS TO BE PLAYING IT ALONE, IT'S BECAUSE THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAS RETURNED TO THE LOGIC OF THE 'SANCTUARY.' FRENCH LEADERS ARE INTERESTED ABOVE ALL IN PREVENTING FRANCE FROM BEING A TERRORIST TARGET."

CONSERVATIVE FIGARO ON PAGE 2 BY REPORTER FRANCOISE VARENNE: "IT WAS NOT DEFENSE BUT A REAL COUNTER-ATTACK. YESTERDAY, THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT ANSWERED ITS CRITICS AND FORMALLY DENIED THE INFORMATION PUBLISHED IN THE PRESS ON ARMS DELIVERIES TO SYRIA AND NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE TERRORISTS...."

ALSO FIGARO ON PAGE 2 BY WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT BAUDOIN BOLLAERT: "FOR THE TIME BEING, THE U.S. IS NOT CONSIDERING A DIPLOMATIC BREAK WITH SYRIA. WASHINGTON EVEN CALLED PRESIDENT ASSAD TO MAKE SURE HE WOULD KEEP HIS PROMISE AND HELP OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF AMERICAN HOSTAGES. THIS BEING SAID, THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT OVER THE LACK OF RESULTS AT THE EC-MEETING IN LUXEMBOURG...."

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ALSO CONSERVATIVE FIGARO ON PAGE 3 BY COMMENTATOR PATRICK WAJSMAN: "THERE IS AT LEAST ONE STATESMAN IN EUROPE. WE HAD HINTS. NOW WE KNOW THERE IS ONE. HER NAME IS MARGARET THATCHER... FINALLY, A EUROPEAN GOVERNMENT REACTED IN A DIGNIFIED WAY. THIS IS ADMIRABLE... ALAS, THE COURAGE OF THE BRITISH LEADER IS NOT APPRECIATED. THE OTHER EUROPEANS ARE DEVELOPING STRANGE ARGUMENTS AIMED AT JUSTIFYING THEIR COMPLACENCY WITH ASSAD... I DO NOT KNOW IF ANYONE WILL DARE REPEAT THAT EUROPE 'MUST TALK WITH ONE VOICE.' WHAT I KNOW IS THAT IF THIS VOICE IS HEARD ONE DAY IT SHOULD NOT CRY OUT FOR ABANDONMENT. THANK YOU MAGGY."

2. U.S. MIDTERM ELECTIONS:

INFLUENTIAL LE MONDE ON PAGE 4 BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IN LOS ANGELES, BERNARD GUETTA: "...THE FATE OF THE WORLD IS AT STAKE. CALIFORNIA IS ONE OF THE STATES WHERE THE SENATORIAL BATTLE IS SO TIGHT THAT POLITICAL SCIENTISTS WISELY PREDICTED THAT THE VICTORY COULD GO EITHER TO THE DEMOCRATS OR REPUBLICANS. ALAN CRANSTON, THE OUTGOING DEMOCRATIC SENATOR, IS FIGHTING FIERCELY... IN THE U.S. AS ELSEWHERE, ELECTION CAMPAIGNS ARE FOUGHT OUT IN THE TRENCHES... NOT THAT THERE AREN'T ANY ISSUES, RATHER THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM. THEY ARE BARELY DEBATED BECAUSE IT'S IN NEITHER SIDE'S INTEREST. ECONOMIC RESULTS ARE WORRISOME. THE REPUBLICANS DON'T WANT TO TALK TOO MUCH ABOUT IT AND THE DEMOCRATS ARE ALSO CAUTIOUS ABOUT THIS ISSUE. ON STRATEGIC ISSUES, REAGAN DOES NOT REMEMBER EXACTLY WHAT HE PROPOSED IN ICELAND. HOWEVER, HIS POPULARITY IS AT ITS HEIGHT AND BOTH SIDES WONDER WHY AMERICA IS SO PLEASED WITH HIM. LACKING INFORMATION, THE REPUBLICANS CONGRATULATE THEMSELVES FOR HIS FIRMNESS ON SDI WHILE DEMOCRATS INSIST ON THE NEED TO REACH AN ACCORD. ALL ARE CAUTIOUSLY VAGUE. RATHER THAN FIGHTING OVER IDEAS, THEY ATTACK THE PERSONALITY OF THE ADVERSARY...."

ECONOMIC LES ECHOS BRIEF ITEM ON BACK PAGE: "PRESIDENT REAGAN LAUNCHED INTO THE LAST STEP OF HIS LAST ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN... IT IS NOT YET POSSIBLE TO ASSESS

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THE RESULTS...."

PRO SOCIALIST LE MATIN: "THE ELECTIONS ARE IMPORTANT FOR THE TWO MAIN PARTIES. THE WINNING PARTY WILL APPEAR AS THE PARTY WHICH WILL DETERMINE THE NEXT PRESIDENT....PRESIDENT REAGAN IS CONSTANTLY ON THE ROAD IN AN EFFORT TO HELP THE CANDIDATES OF HIS PARTY WHO ARE IN TROUBLE.....POLITICAL ANALYSTS ON BOTH SIDES HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL EFFORTS...."

3. DISARMAMENT:

RIGHT-OF-CENTER QUOTIDIEN: "PRESIDENT REAGAN CONFIRMED THAT U.S. AND SOVIET DIPLOMATIC LEADERS WILL MEET IN VIENNA NEXT WEEK TO CONTINUE THE DISCUSSIONS STARTED IN REYKJAVIK...."

LEFT-OF-CENTER LIBERATION ON PAGE 20 BY FOREIGN EDITOR CARLOS DE SA REGO: 'THE U.S.S.R. TOOK A NEW STEP IN THE DIRECTION OF A COMPROMISE WITH THE U.S. ON THE QUESTION UNCLAS SECTION 05 OF 06 PARIS 50096

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OF 'STAR WARS.' WEDNESDAY, AT THE U.N., THE DIRECTOR OF THE SOVIET INSTITUTE OF SPACE RESEARCH, ROALD SAGDEIEV, ADMITTED FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT HIS COUNTRY WAS READY TO ACCEPT TESTING IN SPACE....THE U.S. SEEMED EAGER TO SEIZE THE OCCASION. BOTH SECRETARY SHULTZ AND THE WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN INDICATED YESTERDAY THAT WASHINGTON IS VERY INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT WHAT THE SOVIET MEANS BY LIMITING RESEARCH TO 'LABORATORIES'."

4. U.S. TRADE DEFICIT:

ECONOMIC LES ECHOS ON PAGE 2 BY REPORTER JEAN-LOUIS LEMARCHAND: "IT WAS THE BEST NEWS FOR REAGAN, WHO IS CURRENTLY STRUGGLING TO PRESERVE A REPUBLICAN MAJORITY IN THE SENATE. THE U.S. TRADE DEFICIT NARROWED TO \$12.56 BILLION IN SEPTEMBER. THIS IS THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE MONTH IT HAS GONE DOWN. COMMERCE SECRETARY

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BALDRIDGE IMMEDIATELY INDICATED THAT THE U.S. 'WAS OUT OF THE WOODS.' INDEED THE SECRETARY IS WELL KNOWN FOR HIS OPTIMISM. BUT IT IS TRUE THAT THE FIGURES PUBLISHED YESTERDAY SHOW A REAL IMPROVEMENT...HOWEVER, THE U.S. STILL HAS A TRADE DEFICIT OF SOME 170 BILLION FOR THIS YEAR...THE U.S. STRATEGY IS TO ATTACK TO THE STRUCTURAL FACTORS OF THIS GIANT TRADE IMBALANCE...A STRATEGY WHICH SHOWS THE DETERMINATION OF THE REPUBLICAN ADMINISTRATION TO STOP PROTECTIONIST TEMPTATIONS SUGGESTED BY THE DEMOCRATS...THE U.S. STRATEGY ALSO SHOWS THAT THE WHITE HOUSE UNDERSTANDS THE TRUE CAUSES OF THE U.S. TRADE DEFICIT...."

5. FRENCH CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE U.S.:

RIGHT-OF-CENTER QUOTIDIEN BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IN NEW YORK, ARMELLE HELIOT: "WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF LEOTARD'S VISIT TO THE U.S.? TO FULFILL HIS MINISTERIAL DUTY BY ATTENDING THE REDEDICATION CEREMONY FOR THE STATUE OF LIBERTY, THE LAST CELEBRATION OF A CENTENIAL WHICH, ACCORDING TO OBSERVERS, TRULY STRENGTHENED FRANCO-AMERICAN TIES AND INCREASED THE CURIOSITY OF AMERICAN CITIZENS FOR MISS LIBERTY'S COUNTRY OF ORIGIN? TO ENHANCE HIS IMAGE AS A POLITICAL LEADER WITH A NATIONAL FUTURE (WHY NOT?) BY TESTING HIS BOLD IDEAS IN A NATION WHICH HE SINCERELY ADMIRES? THE MINISTER IS CONDUCTING THE TWO OPERATIONS SIMULTANEOUSLY, AND HE IS DOING IT WITH STYLE...THE VISIT IS JUST BEGINNING. WE WILL TALK ABOUT IT AT LENGTH. THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE VISIT WILL NOT BE HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT REAGAN...BUT RATHER HIS PARTICIPATION IN THE NEW YORK MARATHON WHICH HE HAS RUN IN TWICE BEFORE...."

CONSERVATIVE FIGARO ON PAGE 4 BY CORRESPONDENT IN NEW YORK, JEAN-LOUIS TURLIN: "FRANCOIS LEOTARD DID NOT WAIT FOR THE MARATHON. HIS VISIT IS A TRUE RUN. ON HIS AGENDA, HE HAS APPOINTMENTS WITH HISTORY, ART, BUSINESSMEN AND PRESIDENT REAGAN...."

6. KURT WALDHEIM:

TELEVISION ANTENNE-2 WITH WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT JACQUES ABOUCHAR: "KURT WALDHEIM LIED. HIS SPOKESMAN UNCLAS SECTION 06 OF 06 PARIS 50096

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ADMITTED IT ON THE FRONT-PAGE OF THE WASHINGTON POST....DURING HIS ELECTION CAMPAIGN HE DENIED THE CHARGES....HIS CREDIBILITY COULD SUFFER FURTHER. NEXT WEEK SECRETARY SHULTZ IS GOING TO VIENNA TO MEET SHEVARNADZE. HE HAS DECIDED TO BOYCOTT WALDHEIM. HE WILL NOT MAKE A COURTESY CALL."
INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE - FRIDAY OCTOBER 31

FRONT-PAGE REPORTS: NYT FROM WASHINGTON: "U.S. URGES ENRILE TO STOP CHALLENGE, EXPRESSES STRONG SUPPORT FOR AQUINO;" IHT FROM PARIS: "EXILED TUNISIAN OFFICIAL FEARS MILITARY TAKEOVER;" NYT FROM BONN: "YAMANI'S DISMISSAL MAY BE TIED TO NEW TENSIONS IN MIDEAST;" NYT FROM ATLANTA: "TEST OF REAGAN 'REALIGNMENT'."

EDITPAGE: NYT: "SYRIA GETS OFF THE HOOK;" WP: "YAMANI AND OIL POLITICS;" NYT: 'THE RIGHT NOT TO RETIRE.'

COLUMNS: TURNER: 'WITHOUT ICBMS, A WORLD OF GREATER STABILITY;" PARKER: "ON SYRIA, NO ANSWER BUT THE AGONY OF DIPLOMACY;" GEYELIN: "PERES'S UPBEAT SWAN SONG: JUST A TRAP FOR SHAMIR?" RESTON: "REYKJAVIK: OLD LESSONS UNHEEDED." COURTNEY

END OF MESSAGE

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