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 Argentine President Menem Pursues Resumption Of Relations With Britain

by John Neagle
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On Aug. 13, the Sunday Times (London) reported that Argentine President Carlos Menem hopes to win the 1990 Nobel Peace Prize with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher if the two governments can resolve their disagreements over the Malvinas/Falklands Islands. According to the weekly, Menem is hopeful that such a prospect would "mollify" Thatcher enough to obtain a useful short-term deal for Argentina. The Times predicted that by the end of this month, Buenos Aires will terminate the official state of war with Britain which has been maintained since 1982, while Thatcher's government will terminate its exclusive maritime zone around the islands. The two foreign ministers, said the Times, are scheduled to meet at the United Nations in September. If an agreement is concluded, Buenos Aires is expected to invite British petroleum companies to prospect for oil in Argentine territorial waters. According to the Times, Menem wants to regain complete sovereignty over the Malvinas after a period of joint administration. Meanwhile, on Sunday Argentine Foreign Minister Domingo Cavallo told reporters that the only way of defending his government's sovereignty over the islands lies in "negotiation and dialogue via reestablishing relations between Argentines and the people of the Malvinas." Deputy Foreign Minister Juan Archibaldo Lanus said that instead of "surrendering" the Malvinas, Argentines must "resume an attitude of conscience as a protagonist in the struggle." According to Lanus, such attitude does not preclude reestablishing relations with Britain "when we have achieved our strategic objectives." (Basic data from AFP, 08/13/89; Xinhua, 08/14/89)

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