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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

2 June 1982

Dear John,

During recent OD(SA) discussions there have been a number of references to likely Latin American reactions if the United Kingdom were to take some new and dramatic step in the Falkland Islands conflict. The Prime Minister's impression is that Latin American attitudes are at present anything but uniform and that it is unlikely that any action on our part would produce a solid Latin American front giving practical, as distinct from rhetorical, support for Argentina.

Mrs. Thatcher would be most interested to see an FCO assessment of likely Latin American attitudes in the case of (a) action against the mainland and (b) action against Argentine ships within Argentina's territorial waters. I should stress that the Prime Minister is not thinking in terms of such action at present but merely wishes to have a better feel for likely Latin American reactions if we are obliged to embark, at some point in the future, on new steps.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the other members of OD(SA) and to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever  
John Holmes.

John Holmes, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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