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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

12 May 1982

Dear John,

Falkland Islands - US Guarantee

Nicko Henderson's telegram number 1690 of 10 May shows that the US are still evading all commitment on the question of some form of US guarantee for the Falkland Islands, despite repeated approaches which we have made to them on the subject. This is an important element, and we need to pin the Americans down. We think the best way of doing this might be through a message from the Prime Minister to President Reagan, and I attach a draft.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the other members of OD(SA).

*It is not the kind of letter that would spread to him and not the kind of letter I am prepared to write. It is based on the view that I would be prepared to make for a US than John's agreement. ✓ anything - my view are because I think we should write to lobby our people. No. A J Coles Esq 10 Downing Street*

*John's view*

(B J P Fall)  
Private Secretary

Prime Minister

- This has of course been approved by Mr. Pym.
- 2. You may think that the message does not go far enough. but if we ask the U.S. for too binding a commitment that is likely to provoke the reply that it would require legislation which, post-Vietnam, they could not get through Congress.
- 3. Agree that message should be despatched?

A.J.C. 12/5

FALKLAND ISLANDS: MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO  
PRESIDENT REAGAN

We are, as you know, doing all we can to ensure that the UN Secretary-General's peace efforts succeed, as of course we did during the earlier initiatives taken by Al Haig. But a lot of difficulties remain and we cannot be certain whether the Argentines really are looking for a reasonable negotiated settlement. For our part we shall of course go as far as we can in the search for a settlement consistent with our principles. Indeed I shall be willing to accept an agreement which some here might regard as far from perfect. I know you would wish me to do this and I believe it would be right to do so in order to arrive at a peaceful solution.

But I could more readily accept a settlement which was not satisfactory in certain aspects, if I knew that the US was willing to play a part in deterring the Argentines from any further aggression once they had withdrawn from the Islands. I do not have in mind a formal US guarantee, particularly in the event of a settlement with which the United States were not directly involved, for example as a result of the UN Secretary-General's present initiative. But you and I are well aware that the UN, with the best will in the world, would be unable to keep the peace in the area. I do therefore see very great advantage in some written assurance from you which would make it clear that the United States would take a very close interest in the fulfilment by the parties of their obligations under an interim agreement and beyond; that they would take the most serious view of any violation of the obligation to withdraw troops from the Islands and <sup>of</sup> any attempt to use force or the threat of force to frustrate or influence the negotiations for a definitive settlement; and that they would respond appropriately to any such challenge to the international rule of law. The fact of such an assurance would of course need to be made known to the Argentines.

/As you

As you know we have raised this thought before, and I should be grateful to receive your personal reaction.

MAY 1982

