



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

19 April, 1982.

*Dear Mr. Child,*

Thank you very much for your letter of 11 April and for your appreciation of the Government's response to the terrible situation in which the Falkland Islands now find themselves. The Government are determined to bring to an end as speedily as possible the Argentine occupation of the Islands. This is our first priority and, as you will have seen, it has the full support of the British Parliament.

I was grateful for your interesting ideas on the kind of long term solution which might be applicable to the Falkland Islands. We shall give these very careful attention, particularly since they come from an elected representative of the Islanders (although I appreciate that you put them forward on a personal basis).

Once we have secured the withdrawal of the Argentine forces, we shall be in a position to consult the Islanders once again on their future. We have stressed

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throughout the importance we attach to their wishes. As the Foreign Secretary made clear in this week's debate in the House of Commons, it is not our intention to rush any consultations through before the Islanders have had ample time to discuss the question amongst themselves.

May I assure you, and through you all Falkland Islanders, of our support in the present tragic situation. Our thoughts are with you.

Yours sincerely,  
Margaret Thatcher

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J. E. Cheek, Esq.