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PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 207/82

Draft message to President Reagan

I delayed replying to your message of 2 November about the Falklands until my Cabinet meeting this morning. My colleagues and I have now discussed it and I want you to know our joint view.

The British people would see your vote for this resolution as an American decision to support Argentina against Britain, to support a dictatorship against the home of democracy.

The issue of self-determination is at the heart of Western democracy. Nothing could be more fundamental. The Falkland Islanders want to stay British. The object of these Argentine manoeuvres at the UN is simply to start a process which will deny them that choice.

Negotiations? Argentina simply wants to achieve by negotiation what it failed to achieve by military aggression which cost so many young lives.

I have supported you in every way I know how because of my faith in the Anglo-American relationship and in you personally. Nothing can shake my belief in the values for which you and I stand. But if America votes in the way you propose, my task will be immeasurably harder.

I know very well how difficult a change would be for you now, with all the publicity that has been given to your intentions.

/But

But the free world would understand and applaud a decision to abstain.

I do urge you to look at this again urgently and personally. So much depends on it.