



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

10 May 1982

VB
Dear Mr. Pedmore.

Thank you for your letter of 6 May about the Falkland Islands.

Like your Council, and the people of Sheffield, I grieve over those who gave their lives on HMS SHEFFIELD, and over those who were injured. My heart goes out to their relatives.

It has always been our wish, and it still is our wish, to settle this dispute by negotiation. Our repossession of South Georgia, and the recent military engagements, in no way alter that. These military actions have been intended to support our overall strategy; they have not been and will not become a substitute for it. We seek the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution demanding the withdrawal of Argentine forces, and we seek it by peaceful means if possible. But throughout many years of discussion with Argentina, we have always stressed the importance of the Islanders' rights and wishes, and we cannot allow these to be denied by Argentina's territorial ambitions. Argentina must not profit from its invasion, and no one should doubt our determination to free the Islanders from occupation and to allow them to express their views freely on their future.

Our immediate concern is to implement the resolution passed by the UN Security Council, which called for the withdrawal of Argentine forces, and negotiations on the future, unprejudiced in any way. We are open to any ideas that would achieve this. But so far the Argentines have been intransigent. They have shown no inclination to implement the resolution, and they have rejected the proposals based on the Peruvian President's ideas. We accepted these proposals, and if they had then we could have had a ceasefire in place very quickly

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I hope that the Argentines will reconsider their position; that they will now show the readiness and desire to achieve a peaceful settlement that only we have shown so far; and that progress can be made with the help of the UN Secretary General. Until then, we will continue to exercise our rights of self defence, including the use of force under Article 51 of the UN Charter, if this proves necessary.

Yours sincerely

Raymond D. Haller

I.L. Podmore, Esq.