

Interviewer: Can we take it your preference when you were in Government was for some kind of deal with Argentina involving handing over sovereignty to Argentina but getting the Islands back on some sort of lease-back?

Mr. Luce: Well the choice was quite clear as it had been for previous Governments, either you pursued the policy of Fortress Falklands which would have involved considerable expenditures of money as we now know to defend the Islands and which it is questionable how much support there would have been for that particular policy or you decided to hand over the Islands to the Argentine or took the middle course which was to see whether it was possible to find a modus vivendi between the wishes and the interests of the Islanders and the aspirations of the Argentine and that it seemed to me is the policy which successive Governments have been following for the past fifteen years or so and that is the policy that we were trying to pursue ourselves.

Interviewer: Surely that was indeed the view of the Labour Government. The Labour view was that the Falklands were really indefensible at any price we were prepared to pay, so you had to do some kind of deal with Argentina and as early as the summer of 1977 the Labour Defence Committee came to the conclusion that it would probably be leased back in the end. Now why did the Labour Government not pursue that policy more vigorously?

Mr. Healey: We did pursue it but we never got to the point where the matter became the central element in negotiation and it took the Conservatives two years actually to get the lease-back proposal formally on the agenda and as you know the tragedy was that when Mr. Ridley put it to the Islanders it was turned down flat, there was an explosion in the House of Commons against it and from that moment on, as the Franks Committee reports, there was really no <sup>British</sup> policy except to string the Argentines along in the hope that they would not do anything.

/Interviewer:

Interviewer: But stringing along was really the policy of both Governments and the question arises why did first the Labour Government not set about trying to explain to the country, trying to explain to the House of Commons, that there was really in the end no option but either to build up Fortress Falklands massively or else to do a deal with Argentina.

Mr. Healey: I think the central problem always was that the Falklands problem, important as it was and as it turned out to be in the end, was never given a high enough priority to justify a major expenditure of political effort and there is no doubt that in the end it proved to be a very grave error. But I was Chancellor at the time and when we took the decision I think in '77 to try to negotiate on lease-back we did have one or two other problems to deal with you know at home as well as abroad and I think the problem was that Mr. Rowlands started negotiating with the Argentines, indeed we were deeply concerned at the end of '77 that if we didn't have forces in the area the Argentines might take military action against us then and it turned out that proved not to be the case.

Interviewer: You read the Falklands Report - it is very striking that Ted Rowlands goes to New York in December 1977 and he comes back and almost sounds proud about the fact that he didn't propose lease-back. If both Governments - I will begin with yours - believed that that was the policy in the end why should a Junior Minister negotiating with the Argentine actually be proud of not making this rather sensible proposal?

Mr. Healey: I don't know that he was particularly proud of not making it and I don't think that anybody would say that the lease-back proposal was the only way forward. What we were trying to do the whole time, as Mr. Luce has said, was to find some agreement with the Argentines which would be acceptable to the Falkland Islanders and, I think, it was very difficult to reach such an agreement without a real effort to show the Falkland Islanders the real nature of their problem. I think they understand that now as they have seen a British Government under a very nationalistic Prime Minister fall to defend them against enemy occupation and all

the evidence we now get from the Falkland Islanders is that they will find it difficult to feel confident in the future that they may not suffer the same fate again and I think from that point of view oddly enough the tragedies of the last 12 months may have produced a new element in the situation.

Interviewer: But let us go back briefly to that extraordinary episode in the House of Commons in December 1980 when Mr. Ridley gets up in the House of Commons, Junior Foreign Policy Minister, and produces a proposal, which is approved of by the Government, which is very much on the lines Labour had been pursuing and he meets a very hostile reception. Now Mr Luce why wasn't he at that time backed up by the Government because from the Prime Minister you had silence, from the Foreign Secretary you had silence, he was left completely out on a limb.

Mr. Luce: Well, as I recall it at the time, because I wasn't dealing with it then, he was reporting back to the House on his findings as a result of going to the Falkland Islands and consulting them about various alternatives which included lease-back and he was, I think, indicating that so far not much progress had been made. Now at that stage the House of Commons reacted very violently indeed, led I might say by Mr. Peter Shore, who produced a very strong reaction against any form of discussions at all, despite the fact that the previous Government had been involved in discussions, and in my view quite rightly and I think successive Governments have pursued that course correctly in my view. So I think the problem we face and there are lessons to be learnt from this, was whether or not successive Governments had tried to explain fully enough and forcefully enough to Parliament what the real issues are at stake and I think perhaps looking back over the years this is one of the failures.

/ Interviewer:

Interviewer: Mr Healey, could I ask you about why Mr. Shore was allowed to savage Mr. Nicholas Ridley in the way he did in the House of Commons in December 1980, that had been the policy of the Labour Government yet no member of the Labour Defence Committee in '77/<sup>which</sup> had come to that conclusion spoke for Mr. Ridley and nothing Mr. Shore said was subsequently repudiated by anybody on the Labour Front Bench.

Mr. Healey: I think the reason is easy to explain but not easy to justify and that is that Mr. Ridley came along without notice to make a statement on the Falklands, Mr. Shore had not been a member of the Cabinet Committee which considered these matters, he didn't know what the Labour Government's policy had been, he is himself a man deeply patriotic and his reaction was a gut reaction. Why did nobody disavow him. Well people don't disavow their own appointed statesman/spokesmen in the House and in a sense this was an almost inevitable consequence of the way in which Governments and opposition organise their affairs. What I would say however is that since the Government at that time as now had a majority of over 60 it didn't have to worry very much about what one Opposition spokesman said, what really worried the Government was that there was a very powerful Conservative lobby which was totally opposed to any discussion of sovereignty, it had never been explained to them, Mr. Braine for example was one of their leaders, this was the Government's policy. It came to them as a great shock and with great respect it is quite unfair to blame Mr. Shore's remarks at that time for Government policy, Governments often find themselves criticised by Opposition fairly or unfairly. What terrified the Government was the realisation that they hadn't support in their own party for the policy they were following and the great tragedy as revealed by Franks is that although the Foreign Office then at the official level recognised the need for a campaign to try to teach the country and the Tory Party the facts of life the Foreign Secretary felt insecure about trying it because he said that although Mrs. Thatcher had supported him in trying to get lease-back the moment she had seen the strength of Tory backbench feeling she wouldn't support him if he went on trying to sell lease-back to the Tories, this comes out doesn't it in the Franks Report.

/Interviewer:

Interviewer: But even if all that is true wasn't it still the duty of the official Labour Opposition, having adopted a line of policy in Government, prepared to get up in Opposition, and say the Government made these proposals, we think they are broadly right.

Mr. Healey: I believe so, yes. I think it was. I deeply regret that we didn't but unfortunately it wasn't my personal responsibility to play the central role at that time.

Mr. Luce: May I just add one other point to this - and I don't disagree with Denis Healey that there was very strong opposition in our Party, in fact there wasn't I don't think a single person who stood up on that day and supported Nick Ridley and the Government. But I think there was also very very strong opposition in the Labour Party and in other parties and I got the impression very much so far as the Labour Party was concerned and this is not a reason I criticise at all, that here was a regime in the Argentine, it was a Fascist regime, and they would not countenance the possibility of handing over the Islanders to the Argentine. That was a very strong feeling in the Labour Party and I think it was therefore almost the whole Parliament that felt very strongly.

Interviewer: If the Government was reduced to playing for time, it was warned repeatedly by the Joint Intelligence Committee, by people in Buenos Aires, that if you played for time sooner or later time was going to run out. Wasn't that a very dangerous policy to pursue?

Mr. Luce: I think we ought just to remind ourselves there was one agreement between the Argentine and the British and the Islanders which took place under Mr. Heath's Government in 1971 when the Communications Agreement was signed, designed to bring the Islanders and the Argentine and the British closer together in communications terms. Now the purpose of that I think was a very sensible one. A form of bridge building. The Islands are only 400 miles from the Argentine and that was a constructive approach. Now the hope at that stage was that it would then persuade all the parties of the dispute that it was worth their while getting even closer together. That in fact didn't happen.

/Mr Healey:

Mr. Healey: I think what emerges from the Franks Report in this area, with horrifying clarity, is that the Parliamentary response to Mr. Ridley's mission, which was approved by the Prime Minister, left the Government without any policy at all except to try to string the Argentines along. Now the Joint Intelligence Committee in its last and only full scale examination of this issue in the 18 months before the Argentines actually invaded had warned that if the Argentines once felt that negotiations would not succeed their response might be violent and very rapid and involve direct attack on the Islands. Now for some reason the Foreign Office, the Foreign Secretary as he said many times in the last week, ignored that part of the recommendation and chose to believe that any build up of Argentine pressure would be slow and over a long period and most extraordinarily he rejected advice from his own officials to take some military contingency steps in case the Argentines did do something and I think the thing that emerges most clearly from the report is that the likelihood of an Argentine attack on the Islands was there from the moment that the Argentines themselves effectively put off negotiations in February.

Interviewer: Now you have raised issues that we want to come back to and I would like to bring in Sir Michael Palliser. Now you were the Permanent Head of the Foreign Office during the great bulk of this period in 1975 to 1982. Now the Government's policy was to string the Argentines along. Both Governments pursued the same policy. In hindsight it was almost certainly the same policy. The wrong policy. Now officials can only advise, Ministers have to take these decisions, but were you ...

Mr. Healey: it was not the wrong policy it was an unsuccessful policy, which isn't quite the same thing ..

Interviewer: Well, we can come back to that issue too. But how unhappy were you at the time with the line of policy which the Government was pursuing? Did you dissent from it? Did you register your dissent?

/Sir Michael Palliser:

Sir Michael Palliser: No, I personally did not and that is why I would like to comment on what Denis Healey said just now because I think that in a way he is shortening the situation at that time. I don't disagree fundamentally with what he has been saying but if you carry your mind back to the middle of '81 which is the period we are talking about, the Falklands Review Body described very accurately and very clearly in the report the discussion that took place in the Foreign Office, under Mr Ridley's chairmanship, with the Ambassador from Buenos Aires and a number of us, and the conclusions that we reached then, and then as Mr. Healey said there was subsequently at the end of July a report by the JIC - Joint Intelligence Committee. Now what that actually said was that - and that is why I think Denis Healey is shortening things a bit - it in fact said that if at a given point which it didn't identify and didn't try to identify - quite rightly - if at a given point it became clear to the Argentines that there was no mileage whatever out of negotiation - I mean I <sup>am</sup> paraphrasing but I think this is a fair paraphrase - then we must expect military action. But they also thought that military action would be preceded by other action and ..

Interviewer: What incidentally was the logic of this i.

Mr. Healey: That is not what the report says with respect.

Sir Michael Palliser : Well why don't you read it to us.

Mr. Healey: Well let me read it. The final paragraph of the assessment stated that if Argentine had concluded there was no hope of a peaceful transfer of sovereignty there would be a high risk of their resorting to more forceable measures against British interests and it might act swiftly and without warning. In such circumstances military action against British shipping or a full scale invasion of the Falkland Islands couldn't be discounted. Now with great respect that is not compatible with the picture you have drawn of their warning or indeed that was the Foreign Secretary .....

Interviewer: They got it right didn't they?

Mr. Healey: Yes they got it absolutely right.

Interviewer? And you ignored it?

Sir Michael Palliser: No, that's the final paragraph, we didn't ignore it. The final paragraph in those reports is as you very well know, those of you who are Privy Counsellors and have been in Government, is a summary of the conclusions and the bulk of the report sets out the process by which they come to that and I don't think I am in the least distorting that report in saying that they thought that there would probably be a progression of measures, including forceful action, and culminating maybe in military action against the Islands.

Interviewer: Can I press you on this question of the build up. Throughout the Franks Report one gets the impression that everybody supposed that except the times the Joint Intelligence Committee that their might be some kind of slow build up of pressure, attacks on British ships, cutting of the airlink.

Sir Michael Palliser: This is the point I wanted to answer. This of course was actually the situation that confronted the Labour Government in the - whenever it was '76/'77 - and at that time the military action that was taken by the Labour Government, the secret despatch of warships to the area, was because they were expecting action, not actually against the Falklands, but against British shipping because that was what Argentina had been doing. Coming back to 1981, and I would like to be allowed to conclude this, what the Government thought was, as I say, that if negotiations resulted in a situation where - I am sorry you shake your head, but this is correct - resulted in a situation where the Argentines concluded that they were getting nowhere, then we must expect forceful action. Now I think that - it is not for me to speak for him - but I think I can say in the light of the previous discussion, that what Lord Carrington felt in September when he considered these matters at the meeting in the Foreign Office as described in the report and in the subsequent weeks was that we had to see whether it was possible to carry the process further forward - this was simply a repetition of what previous Governments had done and had done actually with success in the sense that there had not been forceful action. And he did this because having seen earlier reactions in Parliament and those have been very well described by Mr Luce and Mr Healey, he felt that it was necessary



to be able to demonstrate, and we felt and I agreed with him, to demonstrate convincingly, what the alternatives were. Now don't forget that we were due to have another round of negotiations with Argentina at the end of '81, those had been preceded by a discussion between Lord Carrington and the Argentine Foreign Minister which again is described in the report and I won't repeat what it says. It was Argentina which asked for those negotiations to be postponed and it was quite clear that at that point they were not asking for that in order to take military action. So I don't actually think - we can discuss maybe if you like what happened in March - I don't think that the decision taken by Lord Carrington was an unreasonable one in either political or diplomatic terms at that time.

Mr. Healey: I must take this point up because to me it was one of the seminal issues in the whole report and that is that after the Argentines had effectively broken off negotiations after Mr. Luce had had his talks in New York and they had been disavowed in Argentina which was in February, Lord Carrington did in fact meet his officials and one of them told him, which he hadn't known owing to the odd rules we have in Britain that the previous Government had entered negotiations where they thought there was a risk of Argentine military action, taking the precaution to put forces in the area in case they were needed and I took part in that decision which was never announced and Winston Churchill we now know from the papers released 30 years later made a similar decision in '52 and when in fact the negotiations proceeded without any Argentine action we withdrew them. Now what to me is astounding is that having been told the Government did this, the Labour Government, Lord Carrington said did the Argentines know about it and was told no, and he said in that case I am not interested but the funny thing is justifying not sending the forces down in the last week if we had sent forces down they would have found out it would have torpedoed the negotiations. Now that with great respect, those two positions are quite inconsistent. Secondly, Lord Carrington made it clear that he and Government did expect that if the Argentines took action it would take place later in the year when incidentally Endurance would have left the area and we would already have handed over our aircraft carrier Illustrious to the Australians. So that we were /prepared

prepared for military action later in the year but took no steps to discuss the problem with his colleagues.

Interviewer: Now we could argue that particular point for hours.

Mr. Healey: It is a very important point. It is crucial to the whole affair.

Interviewer: It is indeed and I hope we can come back to it but I would like to bring in Enoch Powell who has very much ...

Mr. Powell: I do enjoy this ... I am quite used to it in the House of Commons.

Mr. Healey: /<sup>I never</sup> noticed you enjoying it Enoch.

Mr. Powell: Oh yes, I enjoyed your speech the other day.

Mr. Healey: I am so glad.

Interviewer: Mr. Powell, what do you conclude from all this? You once described the Foreign Office as a nest of vipers, does listening to this conversation lead you to reinforce that conclusion?

Mr. Healey: That nursery of traitors and nest of vipers - a phrase that has become classic if not actually authorised description of that Department since then. What we have been shown in the report and what has emerged from this discussion is that for some 15 years we engaged in a game of blind-man's bluff, we engaged in the game of looking for something which did not exist - looking for something between sovereignty and not sovereignty. Something which the Argentines were in no circumstances going to settle for and anybody could have told them that and anybody knew that. There was nothing between sovereignty and not sovereignty. But we hoped that something could be found. You know you go on looking for a solution to this difficult problem. That is the formula by which you get yourself nearer to disaster. And in addition to that as Governments knew that the House of Commons would not be agreeable, the polite phrase is had not been educated up to, the acceptance

of a transfer of the sovereignty of the Islands, an additional ingredient was thrown in, that this wouldn't happen except it had the consent sometimes, and I fear Nick Ridley fell into this, he wobbled over .... after consultation.

Mr. Healey: Even Mr. Pym made the same wobble.

Mr. Powell: Yes, it is a very dangerous wobble and it helped to make the House of Commons very anxious and very angry. I am saying in addition that that either meant that the thing was going to be vetoed anyhow by the Falkland Islanders and that therefore even if Britain wanted to get rid of sovereignty she wasn't going to get rid of it in terms of her own statement or that the Falkland Islanders were going to be put under so much pressure, we needn't go into the details of what is meant in those connections, but the pressure, I am sure the Foreign Office will supply the details if requested, would be put under so much pressure that eventually they would collapse and give way. Now that was what we were doing. We were playing a silly game which had not a tragic outcome, it had thanks to the mercy of providence, a fortunate outcome, but it had an outcome which was not one which statecraft should either aim at or be proud of having achieved.

Interviewer: Simon Jenkins - now you are the author of the Battle for the Falklands - the co-author, you probably know more about this than just about anybody outside Government, do you think that the Foreign Office, successive British Government, were playing a silly game.

Simon Jenkins: No I disagree with Enoch Powell on that. I think the Foreign Office was trying to pursue the only sensible policy as it perceived it at the time right through the entire period since 1965 and the policy existed - the aim did exist, the aim was lease-back ultimately, and lease-back was a respectable policy and I think was they were desperately trying to do ....

Mr. Healey: ..... Hong Kong ....

/Mr Jenkins:

Mr. Jenkins: ... and no-one wanted to end up as Mr Healey said with Fortress Falklands. No-one was prepared to pay that price. That is where we have now got. That is why I don't regard it as a success - I regard it as a tragedy. But the nub of the Franks issue, as far as this is concerned, seems to me only in part that - I mean why was it that the Foreign Office failed to sell its policy to the House of Commons?

Interviewer: Was it the Prime Minister?

Mr. Jenkins: Well it sold it to successive Prime Ministers.

Mr. Healey: The Prime Minister agreed to lease-back and Lord Carrington repeated that again in his press interview on Wednesday.

Mr. Jenkins: I don't think the Prime Minister did fully agree to lease-back, I think she tolerated the attempt to sell lease-back which is a different thing. But the Foreign Office failed - the policy was not sold to the House of Commons and it therefore collapsed. The charge against the Government and I think it is a substantive charge is that it did not realise the consequences of the collapse of that policy and the consequence was a serious risk of Argentinian military action. Now the second point to which Franks is trying to address himself and this is where I think Franks itself collapses, was what were the sequence of events which led up to the April 2nd invasion and what was the Government's role in them. By not talking to any Argentinians, by not attempting in any sense to get some view of why they invaded on April 2nd not as we now know their original intention of invading much later in the year. Franks was unable to come I think to any coherent statement as to what part the British Government's decisions played in that. Now there were two key decisions. One was the decision to shift Endurance and ..... which we dealt with before but which are very important in allocating ..

Mr. Healey: .. and which the Opposition strongly attacked at the time.

/Mr Jenkins:

Mr Jenkins: The Opposition strongly attacked the decision to move Endurance but the Opposition had its part in the other decision or the other consequence of that which was the leaking of the news about the sending of a submarine and indeed Denis Healey played party politics on this issue.

Mr. Healey: Absolutely nonsense.

Mr. Jenkins: Richard Luce on the Tuesday of the invasion week. Now those two things I believe precipitated .....

Mr. Healey: That is absolutely disgraceful and untrue and try to justify what you are saying.

Mr. Jenkins: You said in the House of Commons on the Tuesday of the invasion week that it was absolutely disgraceful that the Government had left the Falkland Islands undefended.

Mr. Healey: That's right.

Mr. Jenkins: You must have know at the time that Richard Luce had ordered submarines to go.

Mr. Healey: Of course I didn't know. How would I have known?

Mr. Jenkins: If you did not know that, if you did not know that you were goading him into saying it.

Mr. Healey: Nonsense. How on earth should I know something which is a Government secret? You are really talking the most unutterable dribble.

Mr. Jenkins: It was the talk of the Lobby at the time.

Mr. Healey: It may have been the talk of the Lobby but the Lobby says many things, it is absolutely nonsense. Absolutely untrue - you must withdraw that.

/Mr Luce:

Mr. Luce: Now I am going to answer a general point which I think needs exploring a bit further. This seems to be turning into a Franks Mark II enquiry and I think there are dangers that we go all over precisely the same ground again. But one thing I think should be made absolutely clear and it is important to be absolutely frank about this, there has always been a danger of an Argentine attack upon at least an island belonging to the Falkland Islands, or part of the Falkland Islands and it had happened over the past 15 years and the fact is that no successive Government, no Government has ever decided that they were prepared to spend a sizeable/large amounts of money in order to set/<sup>up</sup>a permanent and effective deterrent force and there is in fact a very substantial difference between what happened in early March and what happened in November 1977 with the Task Force which Lord Franks sets out very very clearly, that the tensions were far greater in November 1977 at that particular time with no Ambassadors between both countries, with harrassing of shipping by the Argentines, with intelligence reports saying that there were dangers of invasion and so it is very false to say that there are parallels between November '77 and early March.

Mr. Healey: That wasn't true of March 5th. By March 5th ..

Interviewer: I am a little worried that we really will conduct a Mark II Frank enquiry.

Mr Jenkins? But March 5th is terribly important because it was on March 5th that any sensible person reading back through all that material must say to themselves why on earth didn't they send covert submarines. 5

Interviewer: But surely the problems had been created long before March 5th. I want to pull back and look at again at what seems to a lot of people to be the central issue and this was Sir Michael that successive British Governments were pursuing a line of policy which had attached to it enormous risks, the risk was in the end an invasion of the Falklands and that the only reason it wasn't pursuing, successive Governments weren't pursuing the policy they really believe in, which was lease-back, was that they wanted to quiet life on the domestic front in the short-term.

Sir Michael Palliser: I think that is over-simplifying it. I mean I suppose in this discussion I am what you might call - I am in a sense the chief viper and head traitor, I must say the competition this evening is powerful, but I think that it was not in that acuteness the situation at that time the - there is a very powerful element of hindsight in this March 5th business because all of us know that on March 18th or 19th the events began in South Georgia and I think it was that which actually helped to trigger an Argentine invasion which would otherwise more probably have taken place later, not least because it would have been a much better time to do it later from their point of view for obvious reasons. .... would have happened unless and that is why I want to finish, unless it had become clear after the next round of negotiation, which I think probably would have done, that talks about talks had come to an end and at that point it is quite clear to me that Lord Carrington would have had to say to <sup>his</sup> colleagues we now have the option either of in effect of giving way to Argentina which is politically, morally and in every other way unacceptable, or of sending a proper force down there to defend it and I think that that was probably what was in his mind in waiting for the psychological moment to do it. I would just like to make one more point not directly related to this but related to what Mr. Powell said earlier because I think his formidable talent lies in formidable over-simplification of problems and he said that lease-back never had any hope of being accepted by Argentina. If you read the Falkland Islands Review you will see that the idea of lease-back was first proposed by the Argentine Foreign Minister some years ago.

Mr. Powell: They played with it but in the end they were going to settle for nothing but sovereignty.

Sir M. Palliser: I don't think that is true because lease-back gave them that opportunity. That is precisely the point. Lease-back gave them sovereignty but gave it to them with British administration continuing. ....

/Mr Powell:

Mr Powell: ... but why should they have had any qualification whatever upon their sovereignty. The only reason for having lease-back was if they didn't intend to honour the lease. Because they knew, they knew what we knew, they believed at any rate that they had us by the scruff of the neck, they knew that Britain was anxious to get out, they knew that we were putting all the pressure we could to bear upon the sole obstacle of getting out.

Sir M. Palliser: You say they knew, what you mean is they believed, because what actually happened was they were shown - I mean we are talking about misjudgment, misunderstanding ..... who made the plain misjudgment in all this, Argentina.

Mr. Powell: The misjudgment was that of successive Governments...

Sir M. Palliser: ... successive Argentine Governments ..

Mr. Powell: ... successive British Governments who did not know what would be the mind of the House of Commons and of a British nation in the event towards which it was steering events knowing they were steering events towards that.

Interviewer: But what about the mind of the House of Commons because surely the House of Commons can be held partly responsible for the fact that collectively it prevented the Government from pursuing the policy it wanted to be pursue but didn't insist the alternative policy was actually to build up some kind of military presence in the South Atlantic.

Mr. Powell? The House of Commons says we wont wear that. It is then for the Government to go away and find what it will wear.

Mr. Healey: Could I try to drag the discussion back to where it started and that is the element of Greek tragedy in this. I mean I agree very much with Michael Palliser that Enoch has a formidable talent for over-simplification - comic strip stuff - I remember him arguing in '54 that we should leave NATO and concentrate all our military effort on helping the French to stay in Indo-China.

/Mr Powell:



Mr. Powell: It is remarkable how we are coming back to that view ..

Mr. Healey: Well we can follow that argument. I don't think we should try to concentrate our military effort in keeping the French in Indo-China as you then argued but the point I really want to put is this, because I have been Secretary for Defence and as Chancellor I have been involved in many similar problems. In foreign policy a country which has inherited an imperial position, a possession for example, even now of hundreds of islands scattered over the oceans of the world, which it has no power to defend, faces enormous problems in bringing the reality into its policy, particularly since public opinion not carefully or indeed sincerely educated by the press was liable to close option after option. There is a very similar problem facing the Government today in Belize. We have accepted responsibility for the defence of Belize. It is neighboured by military dictatorship with an appalling human rights record which has reasserted last week not a claim to the whole of Belize but a claim to a fifth of it. Now we want to try to negotiate a situation in which Belize can live with its neighbours as we did in the case of the Falklands. We cannot guarantee a success but we have thank God, partly because of the Falklands, taken steps in the case of Belize, to ensure that we have something on the ground which is a powerful deterrent to attack. These problems I fear exist in many parts of the world and we may face them later over Gibraltar and Hong Kong, where incidentally a lease-back situation has worked for 85 years in spite of the fact that the Chinese Government for many years has not accepted the validity of the treaty under which it took place. Foreign affairs and national affairs are full of problems where it is extremely difficult to devise policies which are viable in the real world and acceptable at the same time to politicians. Many people all over the world throughout history have wondered whether democracy is consistent with the conduct of an intelligent foreign policy, I believe it is. But please with respect it is very easy for a professor to point to the situation and the problem but with great respect your suggestions that by talking to the Falklanders or talking to the House of Commons or talking to the Argentines we could have guaranteed to produce a solution flies in the face of historical experience and we must all be a little more humble and modest when we face these very difficult problems.