

Maxwell-Hyslop

5th May, 1982

Thank you very much for your letter of 30th April, together with its most interesting enclosures.

It is very good of you to have gone to so much trouble about this.

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Robin Maxwell-Hyslop, Esq. M.P.  
House of Commons

From: Robin Maxwell-Hyslop.M.P.

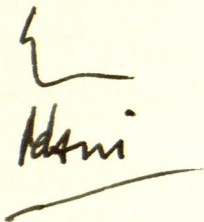


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30/4/82.

I attach:

- a). Current note on Brazil
- b). Note on Britain's history as Liberator in S. America.
- c). My "potted history" of Argentina in context of South America, produced for my local Press.

  
Adams



Confidential.



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Current notes: Brazil.

- 1). President Figueredo of Brazil was Chief of Military Intelligence when Galtieri held that post in Argentina: this has formed the basis of a personal relationship which did not exist previously between presidents of those two countries
- 2). The most plausible explanation for the virulent pro-Argentine stance of Roberto Campos, the present (but about to retire) Brazilian Ambassador, is that he has entered the contest as Senator for Mato Grosso, which is a pro-Argentine state in Brazil. I interpret him as having forsaken his diplomatic office to assist the achievement of his next ambition.
- 3). The Brazilian Navy is extremely apprehensive that if Galtieri falls, a military "Young Turk" movement of the left would supplant it, and offer the Falklands to Russia as a submarine base. Though the Brazilian Navy would have preferred the Argentines to leave well alone, the die being cast, they do not want to see Galtieri's regime destroyed with this consequence.



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British contribution to South American liberation.

- 1). Royal Navy exercises in mid-Atlantic on declaration of Independence by Pedro I of Brazil as warning to Portugal not to re-invade.
- 2). Simon Bolivar granted asylum in Kingston, Jamaica, after first (unsuccessful) attempt to liberate northern mainland. He subsequently liberated Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia and (jointly with Cochrane and San Martín) Peru.
- 3). Cochrane co-liberator of Chile with O'Higgins and San Martín, organised and commanded Chilean Navy, defeated Spanish Navy in Peru, captured Callao and forced the surrender of Lima.
- 4). Then on to Brazil at Pedro I's request, securing the defeat of the Portuguese Naval forces based there, and the capitulation of their bases.
- 5). Edward 7th and his successors appointed Arbitrator between Argentina and Chile (still extant).





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South America.

As a broad generalisation, it could be said that since 1945 Britain has allowed itself to become fascinated with Africa, and has forgotten South America. Yet, while in Africa Britain appeared as a colonising power, in South America except for Argentina, Britain played a historic role in assisting the new nations in securing their freedom from the colonial regimes of Spain and Portugal.

Simón Bolívar took refuge in Jamaica and Britain before launching his successful campaign to free Venezuela, Colombia and Bolivia. Admiral of the Fleet Lord Cochrane (once M.P. for Honiton, but that's another story) was joint Liberator with San Martín of Chile and Peru first, before moving on to Brazil, where he played a major part in expelling the Portuguese armed forces, for which he was made Marquis of Maranhão in the Brazilian nobility.

In Argentina alone did Britain adopt the opposite role, in two conspicuously inept military adventures. In 1807 under General Beresford a British force attempting to capture Buenos Aires had to capitulate ignominiously, and the attempt to reverse this defeat by an expeditionary force under General Whitelock later that year also failed, and the unhappy general was court-martialed for incompetence when he arrived back in England. This was, of course, while that part of South America was still under Spanish rule. Independence from Spain came not in the form of Argentina as we know it to-day, but when the Spanish governor of Buenos Aires was deposed and replaced by local nationalists. Thereafter there followed numerous disputes and civil wars as Buenos Aires sought to establish its ascendancy over the hinterland, and in 1825 Britain signed a Treaty of Friendship with what was then the United Provinces of the Rio de la Plata. Between 1829 and his deposition in 1852, Buenos Aires under the blood-thirsty despot ~~xxxxxx~~ Manuel Rosas gained control of what was to become Argentina, after which he fled to sanctuary in Britain, which scarcely endeared us to the population which he had terrorised, though it was in the British tradition of offering succour to any exiles seeking it, whatever their merit.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century wars of horrifying brutality between the emerged independent states of South America set a pattern which still colours the relationships between them. Chile and Argentina were effectively prevented by the Andes from securing each other's territory, except among the islands at the southern extremity of the continent, where their dispute still endures, and nearly resulted in war last year. Chile therefore expanded northwards, capturing the whole of what had been Bolivia's coastline, rendering Bolivia land-locked, and then pushed northwards to take Peruvian coastline. This set the pattern whereby these two countries tend to ally themselves with Chile's enemy, Argentina. Peru salvaged its national pride at the expense of Ecuador, which therefore tends to favour Chile.

From 1866 to 1872 Paraguay, under the formidable Marshal Francisco Solano Lopes, took on simultaneously Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay, and ended up with more than ten women to every one surviving male Paraguayan. In the mid 1930's Bolivia attacked Paraguay in the Chaco War, attempting to gain easier access to the Atlantic, having lost its Pacific seaboard to Chile as described above. Bolivia suffered catastrophic and humiliating defeat, and became even more dependant upon Argentina. Since then, Paraguay has established its freedom of action more effectively, moving from the Argentine sphere of influence into a greater alignment with Brazil, even though Brazil is Portuguese-speaking, unlike the rest of South America.

In the north, Colombia suffered more than a decade of savage internal slaughter appropriately known as "La Violencia", and Venezuela has emerged ~~from~~





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via military revolt from the brutal and corrupt dictatorship of General Marcos Perez Jimenez into what is, by South American standards, a recognisable system of democratic government.

Returning to Argentina, democratic government signally failed to compete with the economic problems of the 1930's, and there followed a series of military governments led by unremarkable generals. This process terminated with the putsch of the then Colonel Peron. He seized foreign assets, including the British-owned railways, and then transmuted his military regime into a quasi-civil one by holding a referendum at the crest of the nationalistic wave ~~which~~ which he had ~~generated~~ generated.

After Peron's own deposition by the armed forces, there followed every variety of democratic government, from presidential to parliamentary, known to political theory, while the economy fell further into decay and disorder, till Peron was summoned back again by the armed forces, who had proved to their own satisfaction that they, too, were incapable of running Argentina. Peron's magic had gone, his health broke, and he died, to be succeeded by his unbelievably inept widow Isabelita, whom he had met in a Panamanian night-club. (Govt by sooth-sayer not a success).

Isabelita was deposed by the armed forces, and the military merry-go-round started again, first with General Videla, then with General Viola. General Galtieri deposed Viola earlier this year, and is just as incapable of checking the ruin of the Argentine economy as his predecessors.

Seizing the Falkland Islands from Britain presumably gives him the opportunity of emulating Peron, and transmuting his military government into an elective presidency via a referendum, on a wave of nationalistic emotion. And so history repeats itself, as it so often does.

*Robin Maxwell*