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DESKBY 241800Z TO ALL

FROM F C O 241713Z NOV 82

TO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK

TELEGRAM NUMBER 954 OF 4 NOVEMBER

AND TO IMMEDIATE PARIS.

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON.

INWARD

FROM GOULDEN NEWS DEPARTMENT

YOUR TELNO 1795: FALKLANDS DEBATE : PRESS LINE

1. IN HANDLING INTERVIEWS AFTER THE VOTE, YOU WILL WISH TO BE GUIDED BY THE LINE IN MIFT, ON WHICH THE SECRETARY OF STATE INTENDS TO BASE A RADIO INTERVIEW FOR HOME AND OVERSEAS CONSUMPTION AS SOON AS THE OUTCOME IS KNOWN. THE RESIDENT CLERK WILL LET YOU KNOW OF ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES AND WILL TELEPHONE YOU AS SOON AS THE STATEMENT HAS BEEN USED.

2. THE THREE MAIN THEMES WE WILL PRESS IN BRIEFING ARE:

I) THE REMARKABLE THING IS THE WAY IN WHICH WORLD OPINION FORCED ARGENTINA TO MODIFY ITS DRAFT. THEY HAVE BEEN COMPELLED VIRTUALLY TO CONDEMN THEIR USE OF FORCE OUT OF THEIR OWN MOUTHS. THEY HAVE HAD TO GIVE UP ALL REFERENCE TO THE DECLARATIONS OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT WHICH GAVE CATEGORIC SUPPORT TO THEIR CLAIM, AND WHICH THEY HAD WORKED SO HARD TO SECURE. MANY NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES NOW THINK THEY WERE A MISTAKE.

II) GIVEN THE WATERED-DOWN NATURE OF THE RESOLUTION AND THE NATURAL INCLINATION OF MEMBERS TO VOTE FOR NEGOTIATIONS, THE VOTE WAS LOW BY GENERAL ASSEMBLY STANDARDS:

III) GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS ARE ONLY RECOMMENDATIONS, WHICH WE ARE FREE TO REJECT IF WE THINK IT RIGHT TO DO SO. WE REJECT THIS ONE. IT WILL NOT DEFLECT HMG FROM THEIR POLICIES ON THE FALKLANDS.

3. ON OTHER QUESTIONS WHICH MAY ARISE, WE INTEND TO TAKE THE FOLLOWING APPROACH:

I) REACTION TO ANY POSITIVE VOTE BY CLOSE FRIENDS: REGRET AND DISAPPOINTMENT (BUT NOT QUOTE DISMAYED UNQUOTE AS HAS BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO SOME GOVERNMENT SOURCES). UNATTRIBUTABLY WE WILL COMMENT THAT MANY OF THOSE WHO VOTED YES CLEARLY DID SO FOR REASONS UNCONNECTED WITH THE FALKLANDS ISSUE. VERY APPRECIATIVE OF THOSE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED US BY VOTING AGAINST OR ABSTAINING.

II) WHY SO FEW SPEAKERS ON OUR SIDE: THERE WERE IN FACT SEVERAL GOOD SPEECHES ON OUR SIDE. BUT THERE WAS NO NEED FOR OUR FRIENDS TO MATCH THE REPETITIOUS RHETORIC OF THE LATINS AND THE COMMUNISTS WHICH DID THE ARGENTINES LITTLE GOOD.

III) EFFECT ON HMG'S VOTING ON OTHER ISSUES: WE WILL CONTINUE TO VOTE AT THE UN ON THE MERITS OF EACH RESOLUTION.

4. PARIS: UKMIS NEW YORK WILL TELEPHONE YOU AS SOON AS THE NEWS OF THE VOTE BREAKS. IF THAT HAPPENS BEFORE THE SECRETARY OF STATE GOES TO BED, HE MAY MAKE THE STATEMENT TO THE BBC AND COI. I ASSUME THAT THIS COULD BE ARRANGED AT THE RESIDENCE IF NECESSARY. IN THAT CASE, PLEASE INFORM RESIDENT CLERK AS SOON AS IT HAS BEEN DONE.

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MIPT

LINE TO TAKE AFTER UN FALKLANDS VOTE

THIS IS THE SORT OF RESOLUTION WHICH THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY USUALLY PASS BY A LARGE MAJORITY. BUT MANY GOVERNMENTS - HOWEVER THEY CAST THEIR VOTES - MUST HAVE RECOGNISED THAT THIS ONE IS A HYPOCRITICAL SHAM.

- HOW CAN LAST APRIL'S AGGRESSOR TALK NOW ABOUT THE NON-USE OF FORCE?
- HOW CAN A GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS VANDALISED THE ISLANDS NOW CALL FOR NEGOTIATIONS WHEN THE DESTRUCTION IS THERE FOR ALL TO SEE AND THE DANGER FROM MINES PERSISTS?
- HOW CAN THE INVADER OF THE ISLANDS NOW CALL FOR THE ISLANDERS' INTERESTS TO BE RESPECTED?

THE ARGENTINE POSITION IS SIMPLY NOT CREDIBLE. THIS HAS BECOME CLEARER AS THEY HAVE WATERED THEIR RESOLUTION DOWN IN ORDER TO ATTRACT SUPPORT. BUT IT REMAINS OBJECTIONABLE. IT ENTIRELY OVERLOOKS THE WISHES OF THE ISLANDERS AND THEN CALLS FOR EARLY NEGOTIATIONS AS IF THE ARGENTINE INVASION HAD NEVER HAPPENED. THIS IS PHONEY DIPLOMACY. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT IT WILL HAVE NO EFFECT ON OUR POLICY IN THE ISLANDS.

OF COURSE A VOTE IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IS NOT THE END OF THE WORLD. WHAT MATTERS IS WHAT HAPPENS IN THE ISLANDS. THERE WE WILL NOT BE DEFLECTED FROM OUR THREE PRIORITIES:

- REPAIRING THE DAMAGE
- PROVIDING FOR THEIR DEFENCE
- PLANNING FOR THEIR FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LATER ON, WHEN THINGS HAVE SETTLED DOWN, WE WILL CONSULT THE ISLANDERS ABOUT HOW THEY SEE THE FUTURE. BUT AFTER THE TRAUMA OF THE INVASION, IT IS NOT YET TIME FOR THAT. IT IS EVEN LESS TIMELY TO TALK ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS WHEN THE ARGENTINES HAVE CLEARLY NOT CHANGED THEIR SPOTS.

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CONFIDENTIAL

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

DIPLOMATIC REPORT No. 205/82

UNP 040/14

General Distribution

UNITED NATIONS

16 November, 1982

THE FALKLANDS DEBATE AT THE 37TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

United Kingdom Permanent Representative to the United Nations at New York to the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

Prime Minister
You may like to read para 37 to the end.

SUMMARY

The despatch describes the four-month diplomatic battle which culminated in the General Assembly's adoption of a resolution on the Falklands on 4 November and its implications for future British policy on the Falklands at the UN (paragraph 1).

A.S.C. 30/11

2. In June Mexico proposed that the Latin American countries should take a joint initiative at the General Assembly for a resumption of negotiations between the UK and Argentina. After some misgivings, the Argentines accepted this idea (paragraphs 2-4).

3. It was decided that we should resist it to the hilt, both in the Non-aligned Movement and at the General Assembly. We would not table a draft resolution of our own but might table spoiling amendments to an Argentine draft resolution (paragraphs 5-10).

4. We won two procedural skirmishes at the opening of the General Assembly but were unable to block the election of Cuba as Chairman of the Decolonisation Committee (paragraphs 11-14).

5. The Non-aligned Movement's Ministerial meeting at the beginning of October went well for us, thanks to the readiness of the moderates to stand up to the Argentines (paragraphs 15 and 16).

6. The Argentines were prevailed upon to tone down the first draft of their resolution but the version tabled on 1 October was entirely unacceptable to us (paragraphs 17 and 18).

7. We considered getting our friends to table an amendment which would be unacceptable to the Argentines but would command wide support amongst the membership at large. But there were dangers in this course and it was decided to concentrate instead on mustering as many No votes and abstentions as we could (paragraphs 19-22).

8. Both we and the Argentines lobbied intensively. We hoped for an American abstention but were less confident of the Ten. We encountered good support in the Third World, especially the Commonwealth. Under pressure of our lobbying the Argentines further watered down their draft. President Reagan's decision to vote in favour was a major blow (paragraphs 23-29).

CONFIDENTIAL

9. The debate in the General Assembly went well for us, although most speakers supported Argentina. The Falkland Island Councillors put up a good performance in the Fourth Committee (paragraphs 30-33).

10. The vote, taken on 4 November, was 90 for, 12 against and 52 abstentions. In UN terms this was a good result for us, though it would have been better but for the American defection (paragraphs 34-36).

11. For the future, we must continue to emphasise the principles on which our position is based and to take advantage of the Commonwealth which stood us in good stead on this occasion. We must resist any attempt by the Argentines to remove UN discussion of the Falklands from the Decolonisation context. We should bear in mind the possibility of splitting Latin American solidarity. Finally, we should consider next year whether we can give our friends something positive to vote for rather than asking them to vote against the "motherhood" principles in the Argentine draft (paragraphs 37-43).

(Confidential)
Sir,

New York,
16 November, 1982.

On 4 November 1982 the General Assembly adopted by 90 votes for, 12 against and 52 abstentions General Assembly resolution 37/9 which requests Argentina and the UK to resume negotiations for an early, peaceful solution to the sovereignty dispute over the Falkland Islands and asks the Secretary General to use his good offices to that end. The vote was the culmination of a diplomatic battle which had lasted for more than four months. This despatch contains an account of that battle and some thoughts on its implications for our future policy on the Falklands at the UN.

The Mexican initiative

2. After General Menendez's surrender on 14 June, it was clear that we would soon come under pressure to negotiate with the defeated Argentines. It was equally clear that this would be totally unacceptable to the UK. We did not have to wait long. At a press conference on 23 June the Foreign Minister of Mexico urged that, at the forthcoming General Assembly, the Latin American countries should jointly propose negotiations between the UK and Argentina under UN auspices. This seems to have been a personal initiative of Sr. Castaneda. We did not like it and we told him so. At first the Argentines too were unhappy; they wanted a strong resolution which would characterise the Falklands as a colonial situation and endorse Argentina's claim to sovereignty. But the Mexicans won them round to their initiative which was endorsed in a joint Argentine/Mexican communique on 12 July.

3. Thereafter the Argentines made the running, sending senior envoys round the capitals of South and Central America. They deliberately excluded the Caribbeans (except Cuba and Haiti) and the two continental Anglophones (Belize and Guyana). Even so, their task was not altogether easy. Several of the Foreign Ministries concerned told Her Majesty's Representatives of their misgivings about what was proposed. Chile was especially reluctant. But by mid-August the Argentines had got the Foreign Ministers of all 18 Spanish-speaking countries, plus Brazil and Haiti, to sign a joint letter to the Secretary

General. This proposed the inscription of a new item entitled "Question of the Malvinas Islands" on the agenda of the 37th Regular Session of the General Assembly. It went on to say that the persistence of "this colonial situation in America" had led to serious armed conflict; the "countries of America" believed that negotiations should be held under UN auspices.

4. While the Argentine envoys were telling their fellow Latins of their moderation, their colleagues were singing a different tune elsewhere. Throughout July and August they raised the Falklands in every possible international forum. The summer meeting of the Economic and Social Council was treated to a series of vituperative statements, including allegations of "nuclear pollution" and "economic aggression". The Argentines made much of the "illegality" of economic sanctions against Third World countries but with Commonwealth support we succeeded, by a procedural ploy, in preventing any vote being taken on a draft resolution to that effect. At the UNESCO conference on World Cultural Policies in Mexico City, however, Argentina did secure adoption of extreme resolutions on the "Elimination of Continued Colonial Situations" and on our alleged interference with Argentine "scientific activities" in the South Sandwich Islands. But we won a clear victory at the UN Committee of 24's session in August when Councillors Cheek and Blake from the Falkland Islands defied a flood of Latin rhetoric with dignified and forceful statements about the Islanders' right to determine their own future and the outrageous treatment they had received from the Argentine occupiers.

United Kingdom strategy

5. On 16 August the letter signed by the 20 Foreign Ministers was delivered to the Secretary General. The die was cast. Any attempt by us to block the new item would be sure to fail. We were thus faced with the certainty of a major debate in Plenary and the possibility of another one in the Fourth (Decolonisation) Committee (though in the event this did not materialise). Our greatest danger would be a mild resolution which called simply for a resumption of negotiations without prejudging their outcome. This would attract an overwhelming majority and we would be almost alone in opposing it. It was time to determine our strategy.

6. The strategic choice ranged between fighting the Argentines all the way and "letting the wave break over us". The latter course would be based on the calculation that a General Assembly resolution would not be binding and that to fight against it would give it an importance it might otherwise lack. That course had its attractions. But I had little hesitation in recommending that we should fight all the way. We had an excellent case, based on the principles and purposes of the Charter, especially self-determination and the non-use of force; this would help us to chip away at the prejudicial text which the Argentines had pushed through the General Assembly and the Non-Aligned Movement in previous years; our friends and allies would not understand if we suddenly gave up the fight; we would never have better ground to fight on; and if we let a bad resolution go through this year it would become a permanent feature of the UN scene. Fighting all the way would mean a massive lobbying campaign here and in capitals. We would first have to try to prevent the Non-Aligned Movement, who were to meet at Foreign Minister level in September, from endorsing the Movement's previous support for the Argentine claim to sovereignty and exclusion of the Falklands from the otherwise universal principle of self-determination. Thereafter we would have to lobby world-wide to keep to a minimum the votes in favour of the Argentine draft resolution; we would not be able to defeat it but we had a chance of denying it a convincing majority.

7. On 3 September you accepted my recommendations. You decided that we should discourage our friends from entering into discussions about the draft resolution which the Argentines were by then touting around the world; we did not want to see any improvements to it. Our objective was to be that the number of votes in favour of the Argentine draft should be less than half, and preferably much less than half, the total membership of the UN.

8. With this decision on strategy behind us, we turned to the tactics we should employ against the Argentine draft resolution. Herr Genscher had suggested to you at the end of August that we might get a friendly country to table a counter-draft acceptable to us. I did not like this idea. The counter-draft would be vulnerable to amendment, above all to an amendment proposing negotiations, which would be unacceptable to us but would command overwhelming support here. Moreover the Latin draft would have priority in the voting and the Latins might even be able to prevent our draft coming to the vote at all.

9. There was, in fact, a kind of symmetry between our position and that of the Argentines: each of us rested his case on certain "motherhood" principles (negotiations for the Argentines; non-use of force and self-determination for us); whichever of us tabled a resolution based on his "motherhood" principles became vulnerable to an amendment containing the other side's principles. I therefore believed that we should let the Argentines table their draft and then get our friends to put down spoiling amendments to it, in the hope of either converting it into something the Argentines could not accept or obliging them to withdraw it. In recommending this course, I recognised that there were two risks. First, our friends' amendments could be subjected to counter-amendment by the Argentines. Secondly, the success of our friends' amendments might depend on our being able to say that we would support the resolution if the amendments were accepted; and that could mean that the resolution would have to be amended more than our friends thought reasonable.

10. On 20 September you decided that we should not pursue Herr Genscher's idea of a draft resolution of our own. You expressed interest in spoiling amendments but preferred to defer a decision until the Argentine draft had been tabled. You were particularly concerned not to run the risk of the Assembly's voting down an amendment calling for self-determination for the Islanders.

Opening of the General Assembly

11. We had some procedural skirmishes with the Argentines and their friends as soon as the General Assembly opened in late September. We and the Americans failed in an attempt to block the candidacy of the Permanent Representative of Cuba for the Chairmanship of the Fourth Committee, which was where the Island Councillors and other petitioners would be heard. The Finns were prepared to take the job but only if the Cuban withdrew voluntarily; this he refused to do. In the event Mr. Roa-Kouri gave us no cause for complaint.

12. Our second skirmish we won. In the General Committee on 22 September we successfully moved an amendment to change the title of the new item from "Question of the Malvinas Islands" to "Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)", the latter being the normal UN usage. We had been ready to force this to a vote but did not need to do so as the Latins recognised that they would be beaten and therefore acquiesced in our amendment.

13. We were also successful two days later in getting the General Assembly to decide that "bodies and individuals with an interest in the question" (which

for us meant the Falkland Island Councillors) should be heard in the Fourth Committee when the new item was being discussed in Plenary. (Individuals cannot be heard in Plenary.) The Argentines had earlier given an informal undertaking through the Secretariat that they would not make difficulties about the Councillors being heard. But when we tried to firm this up, they reneged. I decided that as the Councillors' testimony was such an impressive part of our case we must take the risk of forcing the question to a vote. We won it by 41-33-24, with African support tipping the vote our way.

14. The Falklands crisis featured of course in the Assembly's General Debate (27 September to 15 October) and was mentioned by just over half the speakers. You included in your own speech on 29 September a powerful statement of our policy, which provoked a right of reply from Argentina that evening. On 1 October the Argentine Foreign Minister, Sr. Aguirre Lanari, made a long and emotional statement devoted almost entirely to the Falklands. With the exception of Vice-President Illueca of Panama, the rest of the Latin speakers were studiously moderate. Most other speakers referred to the Falklands only in passing, as an example of the conflict-ridden state of the world. I decided not to reply to each and every criticism of our policy—I did not want to seem, like the Argentines, boringly obsessed with this issue—so I confined myself to a brief right of reply to Argentina at the end of the debate.

Non-Aligned Movement

15. Our main preoccupation during September was the Non-Aligned Movement. Following the cancellation of the Baghdad Summit, the Movement's Co-ordinating Bureau was to meet in New York at Foreign Minister level on 4-5 October. The communiqué adopted on that occasion would be the only opportunity we would have before the Falklands debate erode the previous NAM language endorsing the Argentine case. On 16 September you sent messages to your colleagues in many non-aligned countries and followed these up with several of them during your visit here at the end of the month.

16. The Cubans prepared the first draft of the communiqué. The paragraph on the Falklands was strongly pro-Argentine. A number of moderate non-aligned, most of them from the Commonwealth, objected and pressed for the inclusion of references to the non-use of force and self-determination. Belize, Botswana and Jamaica were especially brave and determined. It took three days of heated argument before agreement was reached and even then a number of countries said that they were not satisfied and would enter reservations. The text finally adopted was still very unsatisfactory from our point of view. It reiterated support for the Argentine claim to sovereignty and called for the resumption of negotiations. But it did say that these should take into account the principles and decisions of the Non-Aligned Movement; as those principles include self-determination and the non-use of force, we could at least console ourselves that our friends had begun to turn round the unqualified endorsement which the Movement had given to the Argentine case since the Lima Summit in 1975. Moreover the readiness of the moderates to do serious and prolonged battle with the Argentines was unprecedented and made it difficult for the latter to claim that there was NAM consensus on the subject (but it also of course alerted them to the limited support their resolution, as then drafted, would receive).

Evolution of the Argentine draft resolution

17. On 1 October the twenty co-sponsors tabled their draft resolution. Since mid-August Argentine envoys had been scurrying round the world to lobby support for it. In its first version it contained preambular paragraphs

characterising the Falklands as a colonial situation incompatible with world peace, recalling previous General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and taking note of the NAM's recognition of Argentina's right to sovereignty. The operative paragraphs requested the Argentine and UK Governments to begin negotiations for a peaceful solution, taking into account the General Assembly resolutions and the NAM declarations, and asked the Secretary General to undertake a new mission of good offices and report back to next year's Assembly. Even some of Argentina's Latin friends felt that the references to the NAM declarations went too far in prejudging the issue in Argentina's favour and that such a resolution would not command overwhelming support in the Assembly.

18. By early September the Argentines had been prevailed upon to remove from their draft the explicit statements that the NAM declarations supported Argentina's case and the requirement that the proposed negotiations should take those declarations into account. But the revised draft now characterised the dispute as "the sovereignty dispute". Some of our friends, notably the Americans and the French, showed a disturbing readiness to negotiate further changes with the Argentines, despite our protests, and the version finally tabled was softened further to meet some of the points they had been making; it now contained only the minimum possible reference to the NAM declarations and omitted the requirement that the negotiations should take account of previous General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

United Kingdom tactics

19. The tabling of the Argentine draft resolution on 1 October led us to take decisions on our tactics. At that stage no date had been fixed for the debate but it was likely to be during the first week in November (I resisted attempts by the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Imre Hollai of Hungary, to bring it forward at Argentine request). I began by exploring with my Australian, Canadian and New Zealand colleagues whether it would be possible to get some of our friends to table spoiling amendments. The Australian and New Zealander liked the idea; the Canadian was less keen. But it became clear that they saw difficulty in tabling amendments unless (a) they had the company of a representative group of other Commonwealth countries; and (b) we could undertake not to oppose, and preferably to vote for, the draft resolution if the amendments were adopted; they did not like the concept of "spoiling" amendments.

20. This was obviously a major difficulty, given the complete unacceptability to us of any call for negotiations. But I nevertheless recommended that you should authorise me to examine the possibilities further. I had in mind an amendment which would delete the Argentine draft's call for a resumption of negotiations on sovereignty and would instead request the two governments to "bring about conditions which would permit a resumption of the search, with the participation of the representatives of the population of the Falkland Islands, for a peaceful solution to their differences within the framework of Article 73 of the UN Charter".

21. I had three main reasons for making this recommendation. First, I had encountered wide sympathy for our view that it was too soon for anyone, least of all the Argentines, to talk about the resumption of negotiations; there would therefore be support for "bringing about conditions". Secondly, I had been impressed by how well our position was protected by the Charter itself, Article 73 of which defines the obligations of the Administering Powers of non-self-governing territories and provides that the interests of the inhabitants are

paramount. By relying on Article 73 we could show that our opponents were pressing us to do something contrary to our obligations under the Charter. Sympathy for our position and that of the Islanders might enable us to reverse the trend of previous General Assembly resolutions which had implicitly favoured the principle of territorial integrity at the expense of that of self-determination. Thirdly, our lobbying had revealed that, for all this sympathy for our position, delegations were going to find it very difficult to vote against the "motherhood" principle of negotiations; if we were to enlist their help in defeating the Argentines we would have to give them something positive to vote for. My proposed amendment provided that. It was not without risks, especially the risk of Argentine counter-amendment. But I believed that it offered a good chance of inflicting a diplomatic defeat on the Argentines, whereas it was we who were likely to suffer a defeat if we confined ourselves to lobbying against the apparently innocuous Argentine draft, especially as the latter might well be further softened by its co-sponsors.

22. On 20 October, however, you informed me that you and your colleagues had decided not to pursue the idea of an amendment. The one I had proposed did not meet all your concerns. We would not therefore be able to promote it ourselves and we would still have to vote against the draft resolution even if the amendment succeeded. You also felt that Article 73 was an inadequate substitute for the principle of self-determination. The phrase referring to it in the amendment was in any case vulnerable to counter-amendment. You feared that we could easily lose control of the exercise. You concluded that we should abandon the idea of amendment and should concentrate our efforts on obtaining votes against, or at least abstentions on, the existing Argentine draft.

The competition for votes

23. With this decision taken, our worldwide lobbying campaign moved into its final phase. The Argentines had been very active in September but I had the impression that their campaign had lost momentum and that they might have peaked too soon. This was an opportunity we could seize. The Prime Minister sent personal messages to nearly 50 of her colleagues, including President Reagan, and you similarly addressed some 25 Foreign Ministers. In New York we mounted a systematic lobbying campaign of over 100 delegations (having written off the Latins, the Soviet bloc and the radical non-aligned).

24. At the beginning of this campaign, on 20 October, our tentative estimate was that the existing Argentine draft was likely to be adopted by 102-2-50. There were two groups of Third World states whose votes would be of critical importance but were difficult to predict—the Arabs and the more important Commonwealth Africans. We worked hard on these, enlisting the support in the latter case of the Commonwealth Secretary-General in London.

25. But our main problem lay with our closest friends and allies the Americans and the Ten. Since the late summer, the Americans had been telling us here, in London and in Washington that it would be very difficult for them not to support a non-prejudicial call for negotiations. But on 17 September Secretary Shultz had told Sir Oliver Wright that the US would not support a resolution which made any mention of sovereignty or prejudged the outcome or urged us to start negotiations soon. The Argentine draft still did all these things; in particular the Argentines had told a number of our friends that "sovereignty" was a *sine qua non* for them. I was reasonably hopeful therefore that we could count on an American abstention.

26. I was much less confident of the Ten. At the Political Co-operation dinner here at the end of September, Ministers and Political Directors alike had shown every sign of wanting to vote for the Argentine draft. Since then, the Danish Presidency had worked helpfully for a joint abstention by our nine partners but it had become common talk here that France, Greece, Italy and Ireland would vote in favour and that Germany and the Netherlands were likely to join them. This was most damaging. Third World delegations kept on saying to us: "If your close friends will not support you, how can you expect us to?". We also encountered repeated pleas that we should introduce amendments of our own; many delegations said that they wanted to support us, would vote for almost any alternative to the Argentine draft but could not bring themselves to vote against, or even abstain on, a call for negotiations. The Argentines, they said, lived in dread of our tabling an amendment on the Islanders' right to self-determination.

27. After a week's hard work, both here and in capitals, our lobbying returns were quite promising. A number of countries, not only the small Island states of the Caribbean and Pacific, but also Gambia, Oman and Sri Lanka, had revealed an unexpected readiness to join us in voting against the draft; and many Africans, both Commonwealth and Francophone, seemed ready to abstain. By the weekend of 30-31 October, on the eve of the debate, our revised estimate of the vote was 87-7-61, and I did not exclude the possibility of getting the Yes votes down into the 70s.

28. But we were about to receive a double blow. Late on Sunday evening, 31 October, the Japanese Mission told us that the Argentines had just given the Japanese in Tokyo a revised draft resolution which would be tabled here the next day. It contained a number of cosmetic changes: deletion of one of the references to the Falklands as a colonial situation; the addition of preambular paragraphs about the *de facto* cessation of hostilities, the need to "take due account of the interests of the population" and the non-use of force; deletion of the remaining reference to the NAM declarations; and a strengthening of the request to the Secretary-General to exercise his good offices. It was later reported in the press that these amendments had been negotiated between Mr. Enders, the Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs in the State Department, and the Argentine Ambassador in Washington, in order to devise a text which the Americans could vote for and which would command wide support. They had been cleverly drafted, within the limits of Argentine policy, to answer some of the points we had been making in our lobbying. They threatened to undo much of our work.

29. Late the following day, Monday, 1 November, the Resident Clerk told us that President Reagan had informed the Prime Minister that the Americans had decided to vote in favour of the revised draft. The next morning, 2 November, Mrs. Kirkpatrick quickly informed the Argentine Foreign Minister of this decision and her Mission assiduously spread the word round the UN. By lunchtime, everyone knew that we had been deserted by our major ally. A stampede to follow the American lead seemed imminent.

The debate

30. It was in this unpromising atmosphere that the debate opened on 2 November. The Argentine Foreign Minister spoke first, Mr. Hollai, with his now customary partiality to Argentina, having rejected my argument that as the

representative of the Administering Power I had the right to do so. Sr. Aguirre Lanari made a long and legalistic speech concentrating on Argentina's claim to sovereignty and on the irrelevance of self-determination in the Falklands. My own speech set a different tone. Its themes were the Argentine act of aggression earlier this year, the UN principles at stake, the rights of the Islanders and the inadequacies of the Argentine draft resolution, even in its revised form. I also set out to sow doubts about how far the historical record of 1833 supported Argentina's case, citing the "Four Myths" on which Sr. Aguirre Lanari rested his entire argument about colonialism, territorial integrity and self-determination.

31. The afternoon of 2 November was devoted to the hearing in the Fourth Committee of Councillors Cheek and Blake from the Falkland Islands and of four petitioners produced by the Argentines. Two of these were long-term residents who had settled in Argentina after the conflict and two were Island women married to Argentines. Panama, on behalf of the Latin American group, sought to undermine the credentials of Messrs. Cheek and Blake to speak for the Islanders. I rebutted this and took the Latins to task for their attempts to stifle free speech. Mr. Cheek and Mr. Blake then put up their usual skilful performance, dealing confidently and with impressive honesty with an hour of over-orchestrated cross-questioning by the Latin pack. Of the four *Malvinenses*, the two women had nothing to say but the two renegades spoke quite effectively. Nevertheless the overall effect of their testimony was to reinforce our arguments about the traumatic impact of the invasion on the Islanders and the need for them to have time to consider their wishes for the future. The general view was that we had had very much the better of the day, both in Plenary and in the Fourth Committee.

32. Thereafter the debate degenerated into a flood of Latin and Communist rhetoric. Of the 49 speakers, only 4 (Antigua and Barbuda, Canada, Fiji, Jamaica) spoke on our side. I had considered mustering more of our friends to match Argentina's hordes. But I decided not to do so. All but our closest supporters would have had to say something in favour of negotiations and that would not have helped us. The better tactic seemed to be to get our friends to speak *en masse* in explanation of vote immediately before the vote. They would not then have to cover the whole subject and could confine themselves to explaining why they would not vote for the draft resolution.

33. I did, however, take the floor at the end of the second day's proceedings to deliver a right of reply to the Argentine speech of the previous day. This provided me with an opportunity to restate clearly our case on self-determination. Finally, I made a brief explanation of vote before the vote itself on 4 November as a final forceful reminder of the principles for which we stood and the failures of the draft resolution to acknowledge them. To my surprise, Sr. Aguirre Lanari failed to speak again in right of reply until the very close of the proceedings. I was thus able to concentrate in my statements on the defects of the draft resolution and the patently unconvincing nature of his opening speech, without being distracted by the need to rebut Argentine propaganda themes. The Argentines seemed to be in an agony of indecision about their tactics. On the last morning, they made a despairing attempt to have themselves inscribed to explain their vote on their own draft resolution (something which the General Assembly's Rules of Procedure specifically exclude). It looked as if the Spanish Permanent Representative, Sr. de Pinies (who had been, for him, strikingly muted in the debate) was behind this procedural move, but the Secretariat stood fast, although Mr. Hollai was originally minded to give in to the Argentine request.

The vote

34. During the two and a half days of debate we maintained relentless lobbying, as did the Argentines. Posts in capitals put up a persistent and valiant performance; telegrams reporting the results of their lobbying peaked at 63 on the day of the vote. Our support stood up better than I had feared; our arguments continued to convince and most of our friends saw through the cosmetic nature of the Argentine amendments. Of the Ten all except Greece were finally instructed to abstain (contrary to Mrs. Kirkpatrick's confident predictions to the press that most of them would vote Yes). This was a major gain for us but it came only at the last moment and was too late to have much effect on other delegations. The Arabs remained admirably firm. But Japan followed the US. And on the morning of the vote it became clear that the bulk of the more important Commonwealth African countries had eluded us. We had to work hard to prevent a general African slide into voting Yes.

35. The vote was taken on the evening of 4 November, after a long series of statements and explanations of vote, more than two-thirds of which had been on our side. The result was 90 votes in favour, 12 against and 52 abstentions. It was greeted with prolonged applause by the Latin American clique and an emotional closing speech by Sr. Aguirre Lanari.

36. In UN terms, the vote was a sensation. It was the largest turnout ever recorded, only three members (Djibouti and Seychelles, and of course South Africa) being absent. The normal patterns were broken. Except for the Latins and the Eastern Europeans, every regional group and sub-group was split. The US voted with the Soviet bloc and the radical non-aligned, with no Western company other than Austria, Greece, Malta and Spain. Israel voted with the radical Arabs and against the moderates. Of the 91 members of the Non-aligned Movement, only 56 (less than two-thirds) supported Argentina; the myth of non-aligned endorsement of her case was exposed. Although the Argentines hailed the result as a victory, many here thought it a pretty hollow one. We were widely congratulated on having forced the Argentines to water down their draft and even then having mustered 12 Noes and 52 abstentions. But for the American defection we would have forced the Yes votes down to the low 80s; and if we could have additionally carried the Front Line States with us we could probably have just achieved your objective of more abstentions and Noes than Yes votes.

Conclusions

37. Because of the Argentine invasion, the Falklands in effect became this year a new item on the agenda. There was thus a lot to play for in an unfamiliar situation where the usual rôles were reversed. It was Argentina, a Third World country, which was insisting, in 19th century fashion, on its claim to territory and trying to impose its sovereignty on an unwilling population; and it was Britain, in many eyes still an arch-imperialist, which was championing the principles dear to the Third World, especially self-determination and non-use of force. Many Third World countries found it difficult to adjust to this situation, being torn between Third World solidarity and their attachment to cherished principles. Our lobbying showed that the solidarity could be splintered whereas the nominal attachment to the two principles remained strong. My first conclusion is that we must continue to take every opportunity generally and not only in the Falklands context to drive home that it is we who are adopting "a principled stand".

38. My second conclusion derives from the nature of the support we received. It is striking that whereas Argentina, an unpopular régime with few friends even in its own continent, managed to manipulate all its Latin American

brethren into co-sponsoring its resolution and even extorted support from the US, we did not get a single European country to vote for us. Indeed the uncertainty until the last moment about whether the Ten would even abstain was a signal weakness of our position; even worse was President Reagan's decision to vote against us and Mrs. Kirkpatrick's assiduity in making this widely known, contrary to normal American practice, 48 hours before the vote. Our true friends turned out to be in the Commonwealth. All but one of the No votes and 40 per cent of the abstentions were from Commonwealth countries; only 12 of them voted Yes. The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth was unstintingly helpful throughout. This leads me to wonder whether we may not in the past have underestimated the potential value to us of the Commonwealth at the UN. I am not suggesting that we should try to convert the Commonwealth into a bloc which regularly votes together; that would be impracticable. But I do think that we should exploit the Commonwealth link as a means of plugging our views on key issues into the various regional sub-groups, most of them containing some Commonwealth countries, which are assuming growing importance here.

39. Finally, I draw four conclusions more specifically about our future policy on the Falklands at the UN. For there is no escaping the fact that, unless there is some remarkable change in Buenos Aires or Port Stanley, the new Falklands item will remain on the agenda of Plenary for the indefinite future. It may be that in due course Ministers will come to the conclusion that it is better "to let the wave break over us" and to allow the Argentine resolution to be adopted with steadily increasing majorities year after year. But it seems to me more likely that we shall continue, for both domestic and international reasons, to resist this process. It is not too soon to start thinking how we can best do so.

40. First, we must watch like lynxes for any attempt by the Argentines to try to remove the Falklands from the "decolonisation" context in which they have always been considered at the UN. This year's debate brought home how much it helps us that the Falklands are an Article 73 territory. Any Argentine attempt to change this, *e.g.* by trying to prevent discussion of the Falklands in the Committee of 24 next year, will have to be firmly resisted.

41. Secondly, we must keep up the work of educating governments about the principles on which we stand, especially Article 73 with which they are not entirely familiar, drawing their attention to the reversal of rôles to which I have referred in paragraph 37 above.

42. Thirdly, I believe that we should not lose sight of the possibility of splitting Latin American solidarity. We will not be able to achieve this in public; it is probably inevitable that next year there will be another Argentine draft resolution co-sponsored by the same states as this year. But in private many Latin American representatives speak openly of their disagreement with Argentine policy. This year they, and of course the Americans, succeeded in getting the Argentines to water down their resolution to a degree which must have caused some worries in Buenos Aires. This showed that private pressure from the Latins can move the Argentine position. The consequences for us this year, in terms of the vote here, were unwelcome. But in the real world they may not be wholly without value; at the very least, they show that the Argentine position is open to erosion. It is also for consideration whether we should mobilise others of our friends to put pressure on the Argentines, *e.g.* the major Commonwealth Africans who voted for negotiations without supporting the Argentine case as such (my Nigerian colleague has just floated this idea with me).

43. Fourthly, I believe that in our tactics next year, we must, if we possibly can, give our friends something positive to vote for. If we do not, there is likely to be a considerable falling away from the support we received this year. A number of abstainers told us that they could see that it was too soon to expect us to negotiate with Argentina now but that in time we would have to do so. Their votes will be difficult to retain next year. Indeed, I still have some regrets that you decided this year not to pursue the amendment proposal I had put to you in mid-October, though I readily recognise that its admitted risks must have looked much less acceptable in London than they did in New York. But the reactions to our subsequent lobbying more than confirmed my belief that if we are to obtain maximum benefit from the sympathy and support we enjoy here it will be by asking our friends to vote for our "motherhood" principles rather than against those of the Argentines.

44. I am sending a copy of this despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador in Washington.

I am Sir

Yours faithfully

J. A. THOMSON.