

## 74. Memorandum From Secretary of State Haig to President Reagan<sup>1</sup>

Washington, April 6, 1982

SUBJECT

FALKLAND ISLANDS DISPUTE

In keeping with the initiatives you have taken with both Prime Minister Thatcher and President Galtieri and your offer of our good offices to help settle this most unfortunate dispute, I have begun to explore what we might be able to do. Today, I have talked personally with the UK<sup>2</sup> and Argentine<sup>3</sup> Ambassadors, as well as with the new UK Foreign Secretary, Francis Pym, by phone following receipt of a letter from him.<sup>4</sup> Tonight I met with the visiting Argentine Foreign Minister.<sup>5</sup> My objective in these discussions has been to listen to both sides and look for opportunities for diplomacy. I believe we have found a few.

We need now to move quickly, while there is still uncertainty on both sides and while each is having second thoughts. Furthermore, we should act before we are placed in an untenable position of having to compromise our impartiality if we are to be responsive to escalating

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Haig Papers, Department of State, Day File, April 6, 1982 Falklands. Secret; Sensitive. In the upper-right hand corner of the first page of the memorandum, Goldberg wrote: "End of day report by AMH—day occupied w/diplomatic contesting." At the bottom of the same page, Goldberg added: "The basic strategy was as AMH envisioned it from 4/5/82 & was what he was telling Bill Clark all day on 4/6/82—This memo was necessary for historical record & because Clark, despite 3 times of AMH explanation, did not appear to comprehend what the issue & strategy were."

<sup>2</sup> See Document 71.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 72.

<sup>4</sup> No memorandum of conversation of Haig's April 6 telephone conversation with Pym has been found. In an April 6 letter to Haig, Pym wrote that it "has never been more important that our two countries should work hand in hand," adding that as Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary he would continue to address the "Argentine aggression in the Falkland Islands" on "the lines which Peter Carrington was following." Pym continued: "We are quite determined to secure the withdrawal of Argentine forces and the restoration of the British Administration to the Islands by whatever means are necessary. The role of the United States will be critical on this as on so many issues that concern us deeply. Both what the United States Administration says and what it does will have a profound influence on the Argentine Government and on others." To this end, he expressed his "hope that the US Administration will continue to condemn this aggression, and to bring whatever pressure it can to bear upon the Argentine Government to withdraw its forces." (Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Alexander M. Haig, Jr., 1981-1982, Lot 82D370, (3) Falklands Crisis—1982)

<sup>5</sup> Goldberg underlined this sentence. For Haig's April 6 meeting with Costa Mendez, see Document 73.

British requests for assistance. In this connection you have just received a letter from Thatcher asking us to take a range of economic measures on their behalf.<sup>6</sup>

Subject to your approval, and an indication from the British that they agree, I propose to go to London and Buenos Aires, leaving tomorrow or Thursday.<sup>7</sup> The principal objective of this mission would be to test our understanding of each side's minimum requirements for a solution to the immediate problem of a prospective armed conflict in this hemisphere between two friends. If we are correct that the greatest concerns of the British are withdrawal of Argentine forces and respect for the rights of its subjects, and that the Argentines must have at least a change from UK administration of the Islands with the clear prospect of ultimate sovereignty, we will have a base on which we may be able to build at least a temporary settlement. Only a beginning, but an essential step to avert hostilities and lay the groundwork for a lasting solution.

Neither the British nor the Argentines want the OAS or the UN involved. Consequently, we are thinking of the formation of a neutral force to administer the Islands while the sovereignty issue is settled. This might include ourselves (the British will not accept less), the Canadians and two Latin countries. This will be a high risk mission but one I believe we must take if we are not to suffer a major setback to our policies in this hemisphere.

---

<sup>6</sup> See Document 68.

<sup>7</sup> April 8. Goldberg underlined the portion of this sentence beginning with "I propose."