

72. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassies in Argentina and the United Kingdom¹

Washington, April 7, 1982, 0437Z

92491. Subject: Falklands Dispute: Secretary's Meeting With Argentine Ambassador.

1. Secret-Entire text.

2. The Secretary called in Argentine Ambassador Esteban Takacs April 6 at 2:30 p.m.² He had just met with the British Ambassador (septel).³ Argentine Foreign Minister is returning from New York for a meeting with the Secretary at 6:30 p.m. April 6.⁴

3. The Secretary laid out the problem as we see it. The way events are going, Argentina and the UK are heading for a major conflict. The Thatcher government is under tremendous pressure and, with a new Foreign Minister, the Ministry of Defense is in the driver's seat. Emotions are very high in London and there are many who look forward to sinking the entire Argentine Navy.

4. The Secretary told Takacs that he had called these meetings as follow-up to the President's offer of our good offices. It is vital to Western interests that we find a way to avoid further conflict between Argentina and the UK. We are willing to devote all our energies to such an effort, but it is important that we move quickly. The closer the British fleet gets to Argentina, the more difficult it will be for the Thatcher government to pull it back; and there may be a similar psychological impact on the Argentine Government. The Secretary suggested that Galtieri's survival might also be at stake.

5. The Secretary noted that, apart from our position on the UN vote, we wanted to be able to mediate neutrally and impartially in order to perform the good offices role. He then asked Takacs for any suggestions he had at this time regarding a possible peaceful solution. Takacs said he was speaking personally and asked that his thoughts be treated accordingly. In Takacs' view, the first requirement is for the two parties to "send signals that they want to negotiate." Second, there is need for an intermediary. In the first instance at least, Takacs would like to see this done by the United States. He does not think an international organization or a group of countries would work as well. Repeat-

¹ Source: Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/07/1982 (1). Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Sent for information Immediate to the White House.

² No memorandum of conversation of this meeting has been found.

³ See Document 71.

⁴ See Document 73.

ing previous GOA statements, Takacs described sovereignty as the one issue that the GOA could not yield on, but he later agreed with a suggestion of the Secretary that there might be some way to defer the question.

6. The Secretary suggested it might be desirable to set up a quadripartite group with Canada, the U.S. and two Latin American countries as members and that a satisfactory solution might involve some form of joint administration of the Islands under OAS or other auspices. Implicit in this context was the withdrawal of Argentine forces. The Secretary did not see how the sovereignty issue could be resolved now; that would take time. Asked for his opinion, Takacs described the Secretary's ideas as "at the extreme of what the Galtieri government might be able to accept."

7. Others present at the meeting were Assistant Secretary Enders and ARA/SC Service.

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