

**94. Telegram From the Department of State to Secretary of State Haig in Buenos Aires<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 11, 1982, 2110Z

Tosec 50149/097203. For the Secretary from Eagleburger. Subject: The Falklands Dispute: The Soviet and Cuban Angle.

1. S-Entire text.

2. I have been contemplating, rather unproductively, the Soviet/Cuban aspect of the Falklands dispute for several days. Your most

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Files of Lawrence S. Eagleburger, Lot 84D204, Chron—April 1982. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted and approved by Eagleburger and cleared by Bremer and in S/S-O.

recent report to the President<sup>2</sup> has rekindled my concerns. The following are some suggestions for your consideration; I have discussed them with no one.

3. That the Soviets and Cubans have decided to play on the Argentine side should not surprise us. It was probably inevitable under any circumstances, but USG involvement and/or evident British intent to move toward confrontation would have removed any doubts in Moscow and therefore Havana. It is another example of Moscow's inability to restrain itself (partly because we have given the Soviets so little reason for constraint).

4. Thus, in the abstract, there is probably reason to warn Moscow that hanky panky in our hemisphere won't be tolerated. But the "abstract" becomes less compelling when we contemplate the "or else" side of the equation. We have had enough of US warnings of dire consequences; we should not lightly engage in that game again.

5. On the other hand, there is a potential for real trouble should your efforts to get London and Buenos Aires to show some maturity fail. I can conceive of a scenario (though I think it unlikely) of escalation between the UK and Argentina leading to a threat of Soviet military involvement—particularly if the British are not able to pull off a quick military victory. The longer the stalemate the more the Soviets may be tempted to try to tip the balance.

6. Thus, I believe we need to do something with the Soviets (I'll discuss timing below) although we need to be careful about the tone and content of any "threats." I would suggest that Walter (or I, if Walter has left) could call in Dobrynin and do the following:

—Outline in very repeat very general terms the objectives of your involvement. While we should not repeat not give him any detail about what you have heard, we should emphasize your desire to be "helpful" in finding a peaceful solution.

—Talk a bit about our concerns, in a global context, should fighting begin and outside powers become involved. The point here would be to emphasize (without being explicit) that Monroe Doctrine-like concepts come into play for us at some point.

—Remind him that we are at a "threshold" (Reagan-Brezhnev at the SSOD, experts talks on Afghanistan, etc.) in our relations; that Poland has already set back the process; that the circuits can't bear any more overloads. In other words, without getting very specific, remind Dobrynin that bad as things are, they can get better or worse, and that little we can think of would make things worse faster than getting involved in the South Atlantic.

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 92.

7. There are obvious drawbacks in doing anything, particularly if it gives the Soviets a chance to tell us they are ready to help us solve the problem. On the other hand, should we reach a stage where Soviet mischief-making leads to a potential confrontation we will be in better public shape if we can argue we warned the Soviets.

8. As to the Cubans, I believe we should, at least for now, do nothing. We can keep this under review, but it would be unwise to be talking to them for a host of reasons you well understand.

9. I do not believe there is any reason for haste re the Soviets; these are thoughts for you to consider. If you see any merit in the idea let me know and we will send for your approval fleshed out talking points. My bottom line is that I believe we should talk to Dobrynin soon, but it could certainly wait for your return if you come directly back from your London stop.<sup>3</sup> If you return to B.A., then I believe we should call him in by Tuesday or Wednesday.<sup>4</sup>

**Stoessel**

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<sup>3</sup> On April 12, Stoessel, then serving as Acting Secretary, raised with Dobrynin the Soviet media's allegations "that the U.S. was not serious about its efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Falkland Islands problem." "The U.S.," Stoessel informed Dobrynin, "was doing everything possible to find a peaceful solution. Unfounded allegations regarding U.S. motives were unhelpful, to say the least." Dobrynin "responded that the Soviet Union definitely favored a peaceful solution and had been much more critical of the UK than of the US," a position justified by the 1963 UNGA resolution listing the Falklands/Malvinas as a territory to be decolonized. "But this resolution did not provide grounds for military actions," Dobrynin continued, and "admitted that there might be an anti-U.S. bias in the Soviet media on this issue and undertook to convey the Acting Secretary's demarche to Moscow." The Department transmitted a summary of the Stoessel-Dobrynin meeting in telegram Tosec 50182/97917 to Haig in Buenos Aires, April 13. (Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820191-0965)

<sup>4</sup> April 13 or 14. On April 13, Gompert responded to Eagleburger and Bremer: "Please give further thought to the ideas offered in reflet, in view of recent developments. Assuming we have returned to Washington by this evening (Tuesday), the Secretary would like to have upon his return (or [garble] Wednesday) your recommendation on whether and how he should raise this matter with Dobrynin, including talking points." (Telegram Secto 5079 from London, April 13; Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, [no film number])