

99. Telegram From Secretary of State Haig to the Embassy in Argentina<sup>1</sup>

London, April 12, 1982, 1554Z

Secto 5071. For the Ambassador from the Secretary. Subject: Falkland Crisis.

1. (Secret–Entire text).
2. Deliver, in person if possible, the following message from the Secretary to President Galtieri without delay, and make sure that it

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/12/1982 (1). Secret; Flash; Nodis. Sent for information Immediate to the Department of State.

also reaches the Foreign Minister, either at the Presidential Palace or simultaneously at the Foreign Ministry.

3. Begin quote: I have introduced ideas here<sup>2</sup> along the lines discussed at the Presidential Palace Saturday night.<sup>3</sup> I have confirmed that these ideas were discussed with and recorded on your side by Ros and Iglesias. The talks have been exceedingly difficult, but some progress has been made. I hope to leave here this evening for Buenos Aires, arriving around mid-afternoon tomorrow. Time is of the essence. The British will not withhold the use of force in the exclusion zone unless and until there is an agreement. I hope to bring to Buenos Aires a US proposal that holds the prospect of agreement, thus averting war. I urge you to hold off on any decisions until I have a chance to present the proposal. I am convinced that any substantial deviation by your government from the ideas discussed on Saturday night will doom this mission.<sup>4</sup> End quote.

**Haig**

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<sup>2</sup> See Document 98. For the draft agreement that Haig negotiated with the British, April 12, see Document 112.

<sup>3</sup> April 10. See Document 92.

<sup>4</sup> In his memoirs, Haig wrote that "in the midst of the talks" with the British, April 12, "we were informed that the *New York Times*, in its editions of that day, had carried an article describing the 'personal thoughts' that Costa Mendez had handed to me at the airport in Buenos Aires as the official policy of the Argentinian government." (Haig, *Caveat*, p. 283) On Costa Mendez's "airport paper," see footnote 5, Document 92. The referenced newspaper article is Edward Schumacher, "Argentine Officials Say Prospects of Falkland Settlement Are Dim," *New York Times*, April 12, p. A1. Learning of the article, Haig recalled: "At about 2:30 in the afternoon, I placed a telephone call from No. 10 Downing Street to the Argentinian foreign minister in Buenos Aires and asked for an explanation. Costa Mendez suggested that we talk later, after he had time to discuss the matter with the Casa Rosada." (Haig, *Caveat*, p. 283) No memorandum of conversation of this afternoon telephone call has been found. In telegram 2161 from Buenos Aires to London, April 12, Shlaudeman noted that Costa Mendez, in response to Haig's message contained in telegram Secto 5071, had asked Haig to "await a message from him before departing London" and to "not discard the paper that he gave you on Sunday morning." Costa Mendez "said it was important to recall that he had not participated in the final drafting session at the palace and that he felt some of the principles embodied in the paper he gave you should be incorporated in the proposal." (Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/12/1982 (2))