

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

Washington, April 16, 1982, 2048Z

Tosec 60058/102928. Subject: Eagleburger-Dobrynin Meeting on Falkland Islands, SSOD.

1. (Secret)—Entire text.

2. Acting Secretary Eagleburger called in Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin April 16 to present him with following non-paper on Falkland Islands issue:

3. Begin text:

—The disinformation campaign being waged by the Soviet Union regarding the role of the United States in the Falkland Islands crisis has been carefully noted by the United States Government and will not be soon forgotten. Soviet media commentary leaves no doubt that there is a deliberate effort underway to distort U.S. efforts to avert armed conflict. For example, *Pravda* on April 12 asserted that the U.S. effort to play the role of “honest broker” masked the fact that the U.S.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Argentina (04/15/1982–04/17/1982). Confidential; Immediate; Nodis. Sent for information Immediate to Buenos Aires, London, and Moscow. Printed from a copy that was received in the White House Situation Room.

was siding with Britain and was engaged in secret military and political cooperation. TASS on April 13 claimed that the U.S. was planning to set up a "South Atlantic Treaty Organization" and to establish a military base in the Falklands. Radio Moscow broadcasts in Spanish have been even more tendentious, flatly accusing the U.S. of siding with the British and seeking a "foothold" in the South Atlantic.<sup>2</sup>

—The Falkland Islands issue is between Great Britain and Argentina. It is not an East-West issue, and it would serve no one's interest to make it an East-West issue. U.S. actions are aimed solely at preventing bloodshed; we are seeking to prevent further military action by either side, and to lay the groundwork for a process which addresses the critical issues of self-determination.

—As Secretary Haig has made clear to you and to Foreign Minister Gromyko, both in New York and Geneva, Poland and other regional issues have placed a very heavy burden on U.S.-Soviet relations. We have discussed these problem areas at great length, together with arms control, and we are prepared to continue this dialogue. But we must underscore that involvement by the Soviet Union or its friends in the South Atlantic crisis would hopelessly complicate and perhaps irreparably damage our hopes for moving forward in relations with you. There must be no misunderstanding on this point. End text.

4. After reading the non-paper Dobrynin claimed that the U.S. press was also talking about a U.S. tilt toward the U.K. Soviet press accounts were not official government statements and were merely quoting other news sources. In any event, relations between the U.S. and its allies were not the USSR's business. The USSR viewed this issue in the context of colonialism. Soviet involvement in the Falkland Islands issue should not be overstated: the nearest Soviet ships were hundreds of miles away.

5. The Acting Secretary responded that Dobrynin was entirely correct in noting that US-UK relations were none of the USSR's business. Neither, in our view, was the Falkland Islands issue. For some twenty years Dobrynin had been arguing in Washington that Soviet media were entirely unofficial; the Acting Secretary saw no point in debating the point further. On Soviet involvement, the Soviet side should note that our non-paper said Soviet involvement would rpt would complicate our relations.

6. At the close of the meeting, Dobrynin gratuitously asked who would lead the US SSOD delegation. The Acting Secretary said that

---

<sup>2</sup> A more complete translation of the referenced April 12 *Pravda* article, as well as the texts of the April 13 TASS article and April 14 Spanish-language broadcast by Radio Moscow, is attached to a typewritten version of Eagleburger's non-paper for Dobrynin. (Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, P820078-0820)

while, as Dobrynin knew, the President would address the SSOD, we had not yet determined who would head our delegation when the President was not in New York. Dobrynin supposed that permanent representatives would lead delegations but said he certainly hoped Gromyko would head the Soviet SSOD delegation.

**Eagleburger**