

## 140. Telegram From the White House to the Embassy in Argentina<sup>1</sup>

Washington, April 17, 1982, 0806Z

WH2077. State Department: Eyes Only for Assistant [*Acting*] Secretary Eagleburger.

Begin text

To: U.S. delegation Secretary in Buenos Aires

From: The President

Subject: Memorandum for the Secretary of State From the President.

Begin text

1. I have reviewed your report of negotiations with President Galtieri and other officials of the Argentine Government.<sup>2</sup> From this distance, it appears that the President lacks the strength to carry the Junta even though he must surely know that failing to act with courage now merely forestalls his ultimate decline. I agree with your assessment that the terms offered provide no basis for compromise—especially the assertion of preconditions on negotiations for the final outcome.

2. It is conceivable as you say that enlightenment may occur overnight and, as a consequence, you should go ahead with tomorrow's meeting.<sup>3</sup> Failing such a change, you are directed to return to Washington to await a change in attitude.

3. At your meeting you should make clear to President Galtieri and his government the following points: (1) From the outset the United States believed it worthwhile to make a serious effort to bring the parties together in the interest of finding a peaceful solution, notwithstanding the considerable political vulnerabilities and criticism it would engender. (2) It did so because of our concern for the preservation of peace and our confidence that that concern was shared by both Argentina and Great Britain. (3) In that spirit it has come as a great disappointment now to receive a position of such retrogression as to call into question the value of continued efforts on our part. (4) Negotiations require a measure of good will and serious intent on both sides. (5) The United States remains willing to lend its assistance to the parties in seeking a solution. (6) The position of the Argentine Government

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Argentina (04/15/1982–04/17/1982). Secret; Flash; Nodis; Exclusively Eyes Only. Sent for information to the Department of State. Reagan initialed the telegram, indicating that he saw it.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 139.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 142.

at this time is not, however, one which holds promise of continued progress. (7) Therefore, you have been instructed to discontinue your mission and return to Washington.

4. You may modify these points as may be necessary to underscore that by its shortsightedness the Junta has brought this upon itself.

5. I can understand your personal frustration and disappointment. You undertook an extremely difficult task and have carried the burden to its fullest potential at great personal sacrifice. For that you have my deep personal thanks, Al. I look forward to hearing of your sessions in some detail upon your return.

Warm personal regards.

Ronald Reagan

End text