

## 154. Telegram From Secretary of State Haig to the Embassy in the United Kingdom<sup>1</sup>

April 20, 1982, 0445Z

Secto 6059. Subject: Falklands Crisis—Message to Foreign Secretary Pym.

1. Secret. Entire text.
2. Please deliver following to Foreign Secretary in response to his latest message (London 08484).<sup>2</sup>
3. Begin text

I can appreciate your disappointment with the Argentine position. Your off-the-record press guidance is entirely proper.

As you know, my aim in Buenos Aires was to squeeze as much as I humanly could out of the Argentines so that you and we could know what we are really up against. At no point did I tell them that what was developed in Buenos Aires would be acceptable to you. Nor did I associate the United States in any way with the position produced. I have not yet received direct reports of the Argentines "agreement" with us. I'll refute any such claims swiftly and unequivocally, as I warned the Argentine Foreign Minister I would do.

Let me suggest that you now reflect on the text. In identifying specific areas where you believe changes are imperative, I suggest you work up formulations of your own. This will give us a precise idea of where we stand. It would have the additional advantage of denying the Argentines any basis for saying that they and they alone have taken a step toward peace. Needless to say, with the stakes so great, it would be helpful if you could limit your reformulations to the minimum essential points.

I further suggest that you and the Prime Minister consider your coming to Washington as soon as you have arrived at a considered view of the text. I agree with you that this is not the time for me to come to London, but I also believe that we need a face-to-face discussion, so that I can clarify points and convey my feeling of Argentine attitudes and aspirations. I cannot reduce to writing the bitterness, resentment and sense of historic frustration I encountered in Buenos Aires. I could also give you a better sense of the tradeoffs within the text, in particular

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Europe and Soviet Union, United Kingdom (04/01/1982–07/31/1982) (2). Secret; Flash; Nodis. Sent for information immediate to the Department of State. Sent from the Secretary's aircraft. Haig was then en route to Washington from Buenos Aires.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 2, Document 153.

between prospects for sovereignty and those for an expanded de facto role in the interim.

If you agree to my idea that you come to Washington, I recommend you not arrive at a definitive position before. I have tried to stay in close touch with you despite being involved in exceedingly long and complex discussions with the Argentines. You certainly would not have found it helpful had I sent every detail in a constantly moving situation in Buenos Aires. Could I ask you to correct the impression that has been created by repeated statements out of London to the effect that I have not been keeping the Prime Minister informed?

You and the Prime Minister have been most sensitive and prudent on the question of American support for actions taken against Argentina. I do not know if I can help avert war, but I am convinced that war would become inescapable if I lose my credibility in Buenos Aires. I see that the British press and some political sectors are becoming increasingly harsh and impatient concerning the US role. Another word from you or the Prime Minister along the line you have previously taken on this delicate issue would, I think, be appropriate.

As I have said before, it is imperative that you maintain military pressure. I see no other way of bringing the Argentines to a position satisfactory to you. It is equally important, as I hardly need to say to you, that we be clear in our minds and with each other concerning those points of disagreement between you and Argentina, including the principles at stake, that are worth the tragedy of war.

As you know, Argentina has asked for an OAS Council meeting to convoke an Organ of Consultation under the Rio Treaty. The question will be considered and, no doubt, decided tomorrow morning April 20. We propose to abstain on the ground that the Rio Treaty was not designed to apply to cases in which members themselves took acts of force, and in view of our peace effort. We do not expect a date to be set for convoking the Foreign Ministers as long as our peace efforts continue and there is no military action.

Please get back to me shortly on the idea of an early visit by you to Washington, hopefully no later than Thursday.<sup>3</sup> Such a visit will avoid the appearance of diplomatic stalemate while military pressures grow. In the meantime, let me assure you, as the President assured the Prime Minister, that you can indeed count on us. Warm regards. Al.

**Haig**

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<sup>3</sup> April 22. Pym agreed on April 20 to come to Washington for 2 days of talks concerning the paper developed in Buenos Aires. Haig confirmed Pym's trip in a letter to Costa Méndez transmitted in telegram 105610 to Buenos Aires, April 20. (Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/20/1982)