

164. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, April 23, 1982, 10:35–11:45 a.m.

SUBJECT

Falkland Islands Framework—Haig/Pym Meeting with Staff

PARTICIPANTS

US

The Secretary
Assistant Secretary Thomas O.
Enders
Lt. General Vernon Walters
Deputy Assistant Secretary Stephen
W. Bosworth
Deputy Assistant Secretary Robert L.
Funseth
Deputy to the Under Secretary for
Political Affairs David Gompert
Ambassador John J. Louis, Jr.
L/ARA—Scott Gudgeon
EUR/NE—John Campbell
(Notetaker)

UK

Foreign Secretary Francis Pym
Deputy to the Permanent Under
Secretary, Julian Bullard
Ambassador Sir Nicholas
Henderson
Ian Sinclair, Legal Adviser
John Ure, FCO
Brian Fall, Private Secretary to the
Foreign Secretary
Francis Richards, Assistant Private
Secretary to the Foreign
Secretary
Nicholas Fenn, FCO News
Department
Stephen Wall, UK Embassy
Christopher Crabbe, UK Embassy

SUMMARY: Foreign Secretary Francis Pym visited Washington April 22–23, his first as Foreign Secretary. His visit followed Secretary Haig's two trips to London (April 8–9 and April 12–13) and two trips to Buenos Aires (April 9–11 and April 15–19) in his search for a diplomatic solution to the South Atlantic dispute between Argentina and the UK. At the April 23 meeting reported here, Secretary Haig and Foreign Secretary Pym considered the attached draft of the Falkland Islands Framework which had been developed out of Secretary Haig's conversations in Buenos Aires and London.² This draft (attached) also incorporated working-level US and UK changes made the previous evening. (See separate memorandum of conversation for the afternoon/evening

¹ Source: Department of State, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Miscellaneous Files, March 1981–February 1983, Lot 83D210, D. Gompert. Secret; Sensitive. Drafted by Campbell; cleared by Goldberg. The meeting took place in the Secretary's Conference Room at the Department of State.

² Attached but not printed.

of April 22.)³ The two sides worked through the text paragraph by paragraph until the Foreign Secretary ended the meeting to keep a previously-arranged appointment with the British press. The Secretary and Foreign Secretary agreed to resume their discussions at lunch at the British Embassy later in the day. (See separate memorandum of conversation.)⁴ Following Foreign Secretary Pym's Washington visit, Secretary Haig transmitted a revised text of the Framework to the Argentine and British governments the night of April 26–27.⁵ END SUMMARY.

Secretary Haig opened the conversation by observing that UK and American experts had been working together on the texts. He wanted the UK to understand that we were not trying to advocate the Argentine position. Rather, we were searching for what might be achievable in Buenos Aires, recognizing that such a text might not necessarily also be acceptable in London. The Secretary said that we needed to consider carefully whether or not we should begin another round of negotiations under the current formula—or whether we should try another approach.

The Secretary said that the pressure to achieve a negotiated, political settlement would not dissipate once military action began. Military action was unlikely to be decisive, and would probably drag on. World public opinion would insist on a solution. Pym agreed with the Secretary's observation, but said that once military action began, "people will have different perceptions." Haig commented that it was easy to slip into thinking in terms of negotiations versus war. This was false. A political solution would become even more imperative if a war started. The Secretary then suggested to Pym that they work through the text of the Falkland Islands Peace Framework.

Paragraph 2.1: The Secretary said that we agreed with the paragraph as rewritten. Assistant Secretary Enders urged the British that they work within the structure of the Buenos Aires concept—the "elastic band"—combined with US verification. Alternatively, the UK should consider carefully our new, second, concept: here the modalities of

³ During the April 22 meeting, held in the Secretary's Conference Room at the Department of State, the U.S. and British sides considered proposed British amendments to the text of the draft agreement transmitted by Haig from Buenos Aires, April 19. The memorandum of conversation, along with the Buenos Aires draft text bearing the British amendments, is in the Department of State, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Miscellaneous Files, March 1981–February 1983, Lot 83D210, D. Gompert. Enders sent a shorter summary of the discussions, including U.S. judgments of the British amendments, to Haig under a covering action memorandum, April 22. (Department of State, Executive Secretariat, S/S Special Handling Restrictions Memos 1979–1983, Lot 96D262, ES Sensitive April 20–23 1982)

⁴ See Document 165.

⁵ See footnote 4, Document 181.

withdrawal were based on how long it would take to reinsert forces into the Falkland area once they had been withdrawn.

Pym said he was interested in the modality for withdrawal based on time rather than distance: "our military people must look at this." Pym thought, however, that this concept would be possible to sell to British public opinion. The Secretary observed that this operational modality would also help the Argentine military accept the framework. Sinclair objected that this modality retained the principal difficulty of the previous one: it was a-symmetrical. The British would be withdrawing all of its fleet while the Argentines would be withdrawing their forces in stages. The Secretary observed that this became irrelevant once a US presence was established on the Islands. Once we were there, Buenos Aires would not seek to reoccupy the Islands because it would face American power.

Enders noted that this second concept depended on the presence of US personnel to verify that withdrawal was taking place. This would require US personnel on the Islands, with the fleet, and in Argentine ports. The Secretary said that placing American observers on the fleet posed physical problems. It would be foolish of us to propose placing them there because it could not be done. ("Would we drop them from helicopters?") What was important was to get the US physically present on the Islands. We could also use aerial surveillance with respect to the British fleet and Argentine ports. The important principles were also that the US would assume responsibility for verification. Gompert noted that our redrafted language referred to redeployment of military forces to "normal duties". This language was more ambiguous than what had appeared in previous drafts. It was designed not to constrict British naval operations in the South Atlantic. Pym observed that he would have to consult his military experts.

Paragraph 4: The Secretary observed that with the redrafting, there was a reasonable consensus on this paragraph. Pym observed that the Prime Minister was concerned about initiating approaches of this type before the completion of withdrawal, "but I will put this to her (meaning PM Thatcher). I find it reasonable."

Paragraph 5: Enders observed that the problem here involved the number of personnel. The Secretary said that Buenos Aires accepted the concept of a limitation on numbers. Pym said that Prime Minister Thatcher's view was that the population of the Islands was very small; therefore, the number of officials should also be small. Pym said that the US suggestion of a distinction between the staff of the Interim Administration and the US verifiers might well meet her concern. The Secretary said that he expected the US presence to be headed by an experienced official of ambassadorial rank. Pym observed that the Prime Minister would not accept an interim administration with offices

on the Argentine mainland. Enders observed that the Argentines had suggested Geneva as a headquarters site. Pym said the suggestion was absurd, given the distance and the tiny numbers involved.

Paragraph 6 (A): Enders said that under this rewritten paragraph, local administration would continue, except that the Legislative and Executive councils would be enlarged. This language was designed to let the office of the governor continue—even though there would be no governor on the Island.

Sinclair said that there must be an executive authority in the absence of the governor. This requirement was met by the draft language. Enders said that this concept would be difficult for the Argentines. The Secretary observed that Argentine acceptance of this position would be a major concession on their part. Enders said that the reduced number of Argentine appointments to the two councils under this redraft would also be difficult for Buenos Aires to accept. Sinclair observed that Argentine representation would now be more in proportion to their numbers. There was general agreement that it was preferable that Argentine representatives be appointed rather than elected.

The Secretary emphasized that the entire agreement could fail on this paragraph. Costa Mendez had told him that Argentine flexibility on the negotiations paragraph was directly tied to UK flexibility here. Pym observed that this paragraph contemplated the restoration of UK administration—it did not exclude British administration.

Paragraph 6 (B): Pym accepted it.

Paragraph 7 (A & B): Pym observed that this paragraph was fundamental to London. London looked for an international authority which would oversee the restoration of normal life on the Islands with self-determination on the future. But Argentina wanted to expand its presence in the Islands, and this would be unacceptable. The House of Commons would see that 7A “opened the door to the Falklands being overrun by a lot of Argentines.” The Secretary observed that here language was more difficult than reality. London would retain what amounted to a veto. Enders argued that by combining 7A and 7B, 7B became a safeguard. But, Pym observed, the flavor here would be unacceptable to the Prime Minister. Pym said that the Argentines were trying to jump the gun on self-determination of the Islands by increasing the Argentine presence. The Secretary observed that this paragraph was not very different from language used by the UK with Argentina in a 1971 agreement. Sinclair observed that the 1971 agreement was quite different in context, and its language was rather restricted in nature.

Pym observed that the Prime Minister was highly sensitive about questions of property. Initially expansion of communication and trade links between the Islands and the mainland had been talked about—

now this was expanded to property. Pym said, "you can imagine what they will say in the House of Commons." But, Pym went on, "you are saying that we will have a veto." The Secretary agreed, arguing that B provided a straightjacket around A. Pym observed that therefore the paragraph was really a "slight of hand"—with good intentions. "The Prime Minister will have enormous problems. She is a slight purist."

The Secretary argued that these paragraphs attempted to approach the question from the point of view of equity. Pym observed that the proposal looked to the Interim Authority making specific suggestions for enlarged links with Argentina. HMG would then say no. "Where would we be after a month or so? Tension would build. Picture the scene on the Islands." Enders observed that the US presence could function as a shock absorber. Pym returned to his earlier point: the paragraph misled the Argentines. The Secretary said that the paragraph guaranteed the present *status quo* of the character of the Islands.

Pym argued that the question of compensating the Islanders should be left out of the agreement. It provided the wrong kind of flavor and implied that the inhabitants were being bribed to leave.

At this point, Foreign Secretary Pym returned to the British Embassy to meet with the press. He and the Secretary agreed to continue their discussion over lunch and at an afternoon session at the British Embassy.