

**170. Memorandum From Secretary of State Haig to
President Reagan¹**

Washington, April 24, 1982

SUBJECT

Call from PM Thatcher on the Falklands Crisis

As I told you, Francis Pym is carrying back to London a text that represents our best judgment of what is fair and just yet stands at least some chance, albeit slight, of acceptance by the Argentines.² Mrs. Thatcher will probably call you about it.³

The text (at Tab A) goes quite far toward meeting UK objections to the text we brought back from Buenos Aires. However, Pym warned me that the Prime Minister would have great difficulty with one partic-

¹ Source: Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Argentina (04/24/1982-04/26/1982). Secret. There is no indication that Reagan saw the memorandum.

² The draft text is attached but not printed.

³ On another copy of this memorandum, Goldberg underlined this sentence and wrote under it: "No such call rec'd." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Haig Papers, Department of State, Day File, April 24, 1982 Falklands)

ular element: the provision (as marked in paragraph 6.1) that the Argentine Government would appoint two representatives to the Executive Council, the senior body involved in local administration of the Falklands before the crisis.

The British have a problem with *any* residual Argentine official presence on the Islands after withdrawal. They have proposed instead that Argentine representatives be selected by the US-UK-Argentine Special Interim Authority.

I believe we must stick with the provision as drafted for several reasons:

—Without this there is absolutely no chance of agreement, especially since we have, for the benefit of the UK, eliminated other provisions that the Argentines told us were critical. In particular, we have removed the bias in favor of Argentine sovereignty from paragraph 8, which establishes guidelines for negotiations on a final settlement.

—The presence of two Argentine appointees does not alter the fact that British authority would be substantially restored, thus meeting Mrs. Thatcher's pledge to Parliament. Indeed, the two Argentines would be clearly out-numbered by British and local appointees in the Executive Council.

—It cannot reasonably be argued that two Argentines represent a reward for aggression. In fact, in her letter to you of April 16,⁴ Mrs. Thatcher said we must avoid "a device that leaves the aggressor in occupation." Two out-numbered Argentines hardly constitutes occupation.

—Finally, the presence of two Argentine appointees can be defended in terms of the unquestionable Argentine interest and stake in the Islands. Indeed, giving them such representation could help relieve the total frustration that led to the crisis in the first place.

Apart from this issue, it would be most useful if you could make clear to Mrs. Thatcher that we now face the last chance for a settlement before hostilities escalate, possibly beyond control. She must be clear that you are prepared to advocate acceptance of the current text with the Argentines, and on the public record, but that you are not prepared to stand behind the text if she makes changes that exclude altogether the possibility of Argentine acceptance. You may want to draw on the talking points at Tab B.⁵

⁴ See Document 132.

⁵ Attached but not printed.