

174. Telegram From the Department of State to All Diplomatic and Consular Posts¹

Washington, April 26, 1982, 0050Z

111227. Inform Consuls, ZFF Only Jerusalem, DepSec Stoessel. Subject: Falkland Islands Situation Report as of 1700 EST, April 25. No. 36 Todep 20184.

1. (C-Entire text).

2. UK captures port on South Georgia, damages Argentine sub. British forces were in control of the port of Grytviken, following an attack on South Georgia Island, according to UK's Defense Minister John Nott. He indicated British forces landed by helicopter, met little resistance and suffered no casualties in the assault. Earlier, according to press reports, British forces, claiming their "inherent right to self-defense under the UN Charter," launched a helicopter attack on an Argentine submarine, which was spotted on the surface in the British-declared "zone" near South Georgia. Reports indicate the sub was damaged but not sunk. There were unconfirmed reports of Argentine casualties in the attack. In a later statement, the Ministry of Defense added that, despite the military actions taken on South Georgia, the UK remained committed to the continuing and intensive search for a solution to the crisis by negotiation based on UN Security Council Resolution 502.

¹ Source: Department of State Central Foreign Policy File, D820216-0107. Confidential; Immediate. Drafted by M. Boorstein (FWG); cleared in S/S-O; and approved by Pendleton. Sent for information Immediate to the Department of Defense, USSOUTH-COM, and USCINCEUR.

3. Argentine Foreign Minister in Washington. Argentine Foreign Minister Costa Mendez arrived in Washington at midday on April 25 to attend the April 26 special meeting of OAS Foreign Ministers and to meet with Secretary Haig. On arrival, Costa Mendez characterized the British attack on an Argentine sub as having "very grave consequences for peace." When asked if Argentina were at war with the UK, he answered, "technically, yes."

Haig