

**197. Action Memorandum From the Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs (Burt) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Eagleburger)<sup>1</sup>**

Washington, April 30, 1982

SUBJECT

Argentine Request for LANDSAT Coverage of Falklands Area

NASA has received a "routine" request from Argentina for LANDSAT coverage of the Falklands Islands and surrounding area. The Argentines have requested coverage of:

- the open ocean area west of the Falklands on May 7–8;
- the Falkland Islands on May 9–11, and
- South Georgia on May 10–12.

As you know, we are obliged to honor all such requests under the terms of a US-Argentine Memorandum of Understanding. You also should know that the Defense Mapping Agency (DMA) has requested the same coverage on behalf of the UK through an existing liaison arrangement.

NASA tells us they are obliged to honor all such DMA taskings. Since all LANDSAT photos are in the public domain, it is not practical to reject the Argentine request while honoring the request from DMA.

NASA is expected to reply to the Argentine request promptly, and would appreciate learning our position no later than COB today.

*Recommendation:*

That you authorize me to inform NASA that the State Department has no objection to favorable action by NASA on the Argentine request.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, P820071–1690. Confidential. Drafted by Kanter; cleared by Service, Smith, and Funseth. Kanter initialed for the clearing officials.

<sup>2</sup> Burt added the following notation below the recommendation: "Larry: The critical issue here is the 'depoliticized' character of NASA's programs. I think we must protect it. RB." Eagleburger initialed his approval of the recommendation, April 30.