



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

7 May 1982

~~Prime Minister~~Content for this message to  
be sent?

A.P.C. 7/5

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Dear Sir,

We have been considering what more might be done to impress on our Community partners the reasons for the action we are taking and the importance of their support. Mr Pym suggests that the Prime Minister may wish to consider the possibility of sending a message to Community / Heads of State and Government. I enclose a draft.

I am copying this letter to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ever

B J P Fall

Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing Street

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:  
Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT: TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:  
MESSAGE TO COMMUNITY HEADS OF  
GOVERNMENT

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

The collapse of the US/Peruvian initiative means that the focus of diplomatic activity moves to New York. In approaching this new phase of the crisis there is one point which I should like to put to you urgently, personally and with all the emphasis at my command.

CAVEAT.....

I want you to know that Britain will not acquiesce in the retention of the Falkland Islands by Argentina. The military means to terminate the military occupation are being assembled. They will be used, unless a diplomatic solution can be found.

If events take this course there will be, I fear, the likelihood of destruction and casualties on a scale far exceeding what we have seen already. I am prepared for this and so is my government, and so is my country. You should not be in any doubt about that.

There is one way and one way only to prevent this happening. It is for the Argentines to be brought to accept that what they seek is not available: that the world community is not going to award them sovereignty over the Falkland Islands simply because they seized them by force on 2 April 1982. This is the point on which both the American and the Peruvian initiatives collapsed. Unless the principle of resisting aggression is upheld, every state tempted to resort to force will for decades be encouraged; restraint will decline as a factor in international behaviour, and law and order will be dangerously weakened.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

None of us can afford to see this principle undermined. But, subject to that, we shall be as flexible in the United Nations as we were in our response to Secretary of

/State



State Haig and President Belaunde. We can accept any arrangement, organised by any mediator, reached by negotiations in any framework, which achieves Argentinian withdrawal, respects the wishes of the Islanders and does not prejudge the eventual outcome.

So the two alternatives are clear. Either hostilities continue with mounting severity and losses, or the

/...Argentines

Argentines modify their political demands. I know that your country and you personally are deeply disturbed about the first of these prospects. This means that you and I and all who share the same concern must put our entire weight behind the second. To avoid the escalation of hostilities, the pressure on the Argentine junta must be maintained. This will involve not only renewing the economic embargo on 16 May, though that is vital. It also applies to every statement put out by the Ten as a whole or by member government, and to every piece of guidance given to the media. There is a real danger that the Argentines will gain the impression that resolve is weakening and that if they maintain their intransigence, they will gain the fruits of their unlawful act of aggression.

I have exploited our personal friendship to write to you in these rather stark terms, but I wanted to explain the position in all frankness. We have been greatly encouraged by your support so far, and I do most firmly believe that the only way to achieve the result which we all want - a satisfactory negotiated settlement both in the short and long term - is to maintain both our solidarity and our pressure on the Argentines.