

289. Telegram From the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State and the White House¹

New York, May 24, 1982, 1528Z

1440. For Secretary of State Haig, Asst Sec Enders, NSC Director Clark, Ass Sec Newell, IO/UNA Tillman, and USOAS Amb Middendorf. Dept pass CIA Director Casey. Subject: Falkland Islands: Possible Resolution in Security Council.

1. Secret entire text.

2. Until now expected tabling of one or more resolutions on the Falklands dispute has been delayed by an unexpected conjunction of three factors. To the anticipated British reluctance to have Security Council action at an early stage of the fighting has been added the desire of the left mischief makers (USSR, and friends including Panama, Mexico, Nicaragua) to prolong the debate to permit maximum opportunity to attack UK and US, and the less expected cooperation of Argentina FoMin and delegation in this "slow down."

3. Despite the clear indications that Argentine military chiefs desire UN action, the FoMin has not encouraged prompt action by such likely resolution authors as Brazil, Ireland, Japan, China, etc.

4. At the end of the day Sunday,² three possible scenarios appeared. First, a resolution calling for a cease-fire with a renewal of the Secretary General's mandate. This is apparently favored by Panama possibly Ireland as well. Second, a more elaborate resolution that incorporates the elements of agreement SYG thinks were essentially present in his mediation efforts: ceasefire; simultaneous, rapid, mutual force withdrawal; introduction of UN force and interim administration. Third, same as two plus a new element: creation of a "contact group" under Article 29 of the UN Charter probably consisting of four countries with two each chosen by the UK and Argentina. This approach is favored by Brazil, Venezuela, and various others, probably including France and China.

5. It is understood that UK would veto first approach, but would have problem with two and three.

6. Brazilian PermRep reported that Costa Mendez has said if there is no UN action by Tuesday³ they will turn to OAS and Rio Treaty.

¹ Source: Department of State, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Miscellaneous Files, March 1981–February 1983, Lot 83D210, Falklands [Folder 2]. Secret; Flash; Nodis.

² May 23.

³ May 25.

This of course would be a great blow to the inter-American system regardless of the number of votes Argentina is able to mobilize.

7. Delay favored by Panama, Mexico, Nicaragua is doubtless in part stimulated by this possibility. Cuba is out of sight in this discussion but its presence is felt at all points, including in the invitation already extended to Costa Mendez to speak at the upcoming meeting of the non-aligned in Havana.⁴ (I understand Costa Mendez currently intends to go and has approached Venezuela about accompanying them.)

8. There will presumably be a resolution tabled today. UK will ask for 24 hours and probably get overnight.

9. Comment: Many fears are being expressed that US might join UK in a veto. I recommend we closely consult with France and Japan and carefully consider the UK record in UNSC on US vetoes (e.g., Nicaragua complaint, Dome of the Rock, etc). At best they abstain. In the process they build national credit for later use in situations such as this.

10. Incidentally, Parsons has turned in a virtuoso performance throughout the Falklands crisis.

11. One version of possible resolution follows:

(A) 1. Immediate cessation of hostilities;

2. Simultaneous withdrawal of Argentine forces to continental Argentine territory and simultaneous withdrawal of British forces in the northeast direction to a minimum distance equivalent to that between Argentine continental territory and the Malvinas/Falkland Islands; plus (B) and (D)

3. Appointment by the Secretary General of the United Nations of a provisional administration of the islands with exclusive competence which will hold consultations with the representatives of the inhabitants to be designated by the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom; plus (C) and (E)

4. Establishment, under Article 29 of the United Nations Charter, of a committee presided over by the Secretary General of the United Nations and composed of the two parties and of four other member states, two of which to be appointed by each of the parties, and with the mandate of conducting urgent negotiations with a view to a permanent settlement of the question; plus (F)

(B) The withdrawal of the British and Argentine forces will be initiated 48 hours after the adoption of the resolution;

⁴ A Ministerial conference of the Non-Aligned Movement countries was scheduled to begin in Havana on May 31.

(C) The administration of the United Nations will be established simultaneously with the beginning of the withdrawal of Argentine and British forces;

(D) All Argentine and British forces would have withdrawn from the area within 21 days and one third of the forces of each party would have withdrawn at each seven days in accordance with criteria established by the Secretary General;

(E) All United Nations member states will grant the Secretary General the support required to the establishment of the provisional administration and to the monitoring (supervision) of the implementation of the provisions of the present resolution;

(F) The committee to be established in accordance with paragraph four will begin its work the day following the completion of the withdrawal of the forces from the area and will submit its report to the Security Council not later than 31 January 1983.

12. Friendly nations regard it as extremely important that fighting not be permitted to continue until one side is humiliated. It is feared that British humiliation would enhance the risk of direct US participation, while Argentine humiliation would further inflame anti-US passions in Latin America and enhance the risk of Soviet participation in the conflict.

Kirkpatrick