

## 294. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom<sup>1</sup>

Washington, May 25, 1982, 0417Z

142651. For the Ambassador from the Secretary. Subject: Secretary's Letter to Foreign Secretary Pym.

1. Secret-Entire text.

2. Please deliver as early as possible Tuesday morning,<sup>2</sup> your time, the following message from me to Foreign Secretary Pym:

Begin text:

Dear Francis:

At this crucial moment in the course of the Falklands crisis, I wanted you to have my latest thoughts on the opportunities and risks we face together. First and foremost, I want you to know that you can continue to count on US support as you do what is necessary.

We are fast approaching the point at which the UK will have a decisive local military advantage, with success clearly within your reach. At that point, which even Argentine self-delusion cannot hide, the Argentines could feel compelled to turn to the Cubans and Soviets as their last hope to avert total humiliation. Should Galtieri resist these pressures, he could be swept aside and replaced by those far more hostile to fundamental Western interests. Even if the Argentines do not open themselves to the Soviets and Cubans, they are virtually certain to want to continue a state of war, which they will pursue with whatever means they can acquire.

If this occurs, however successful you are on the Islands, we will unquestionably face a future of open-ended conflict, possibly supported by the East and at considerable risk and cost to your interests and ours. Whatever disposition to settle there may now be in Buenos Aires will evaporate. Moreover, however unjust, we will together be left isolated in the international community, with relentless pressures to settle on terms favorable to Argentina notwithstanding the justice of our position and the success of your forces.

In the face of these long-term prospects, I see major advantages in an effort by you to put forward terms of a just and reasonable settlement

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Europe and Soviet Union, United Kingdom (04/01/1982-07/31/1982) (4). Secret; Niact Immediate; Nodis. Printed from a copy that was received in the White House Situation Room.

<sup>2</sup> May 25.

as soon as you are sure that you can and will succeed militarily. I appreciate fully your reservations about agreeing, in a settlement, to withdraw British forces without an assurance that the Islands and the inhabitants would be absolutely safe from renewed aggression if a negotiated settlement broke down. Therefore, and in the interest of averting dangerous political developments in Argentina, the US would be prepared to provide a battalion-size force for the purpose of ensuring that there would be no violation of any interim agreement preceding a final settlement. Because of what has happened to our standing with the Argentines as a result of our support for you, there is no chance that a US-only force would be acceptable. We would therefore need to persuade the most trustworthy major hemispheric power—Brazil—to join us. A combined force would present a credible deterrent and assure the security of the Islanders for the period of an interim agreement.

No doubt you are aware of the proposal the Brazilians have introduced in New York.<sup>3</sup> We can appreciate that London would have difficulty with this proposal, particularly as it pertains to force withdrawal and interim administration. However, at the point at which British military success is at hand, it may well be possible to bring about an agreement based on a British proposal that contains elements of the Brazilian text, with provisions for withdrawal and interim administration adjusted to meet your concerns, and with the US and Brazil ready to provide peacekeeping forces. If you agree that such an effort would be worthwhile, we would be ready to assist in such an initiative, perhaps in conjunction with the Brazilians.

I have asked the Brazilians if they might consider participating in a peacekeeping force under a negotiated solution, though without, of course, giving them any reason to believe that you are interested in their proposal, nor commenting in any way on their text.<sup>4</sup>

I would appreciate your personal reaction as soon as possible to these ideas, with regard both to substance and timing. If our willingness to provide a substantial peacekeeping component makes the prospects for an early negotiated settlement more attractive to you, I would welcome your thoughts on other necessary provisions. As you can appreciate, circumstances may alter our ability to offer peacekeeping forces if radical changes occur in Buenos Aires. This argues for moving quickly enough to forestall any such changes.

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<sup>3</sup> Brazil's proposal was in a May 24 letter to the Secretary General. See *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1982, p. 1334.

<sup>4</sup> See Document 295 and footnote 2 thereto.

I hope you will appreciate that what I am suggesting would serve our long-term interests, if it made agreement possible, as well as put you in a better position politically if and as you do what you must militarily.

Sincerely, Al

End of text.

**Haig**