

296. Action Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Enders) and the Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States (Middendorf) to Secretary of State Haig¹

Washington, May 25, 1982

SUBJECT

Falkland Islands: Strategy for the Reconvened XX MFM

ISSUE FOR DECISION

US posture at the reconvened XXMFM beginning Thursday morning, May 27.

ESSENTIAL FACTORS

We know what *Argentina is going for: condemnation of the UK, call on all members of the inter-American system to refrain from support for the UK, call for optimal individual sanctions on the UK, probably censure US or at least urge us to lift sanctions and cut support for the British. Nicaragua and Panama may up the ante and try to go for mandatory sanctions.*

Whether the resolution is mandatory or optional, it needs 14 votes to carry. We went out today in an effort to pick up the 7 votes which, in addition to that of the US, could block. Chile, Colombia, and Trinidad & Tobago are sure. Costa Rica, El Salvador, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic are possible. In addition, *we are approaching Brazil to see whether it would not sponsor some moderate alternative resolution to prevent a deep split in the organization.*²

Once the meeting convenes, *we should make a long and detailed exposition of our views, using the conciliatory and, to a considerable degree, even-handed language you approved for the UNSC. In addition, we should remind members, as we already have in capitals, of what the inter-*

¹ Source: Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, P820078-0673. Secret. Drafted by Johnson; cleared by Thompson, Bolton, and Morley. A stamped notation at the top of the memorandum indicates that Haig saw it.

² Figueiredo sent a message to Reagan, May 25; Enders forwarded a translation of this message to Haig under a May 25 information memorandum, in which he summarized the message: "The thrust is that new Security Council action will be required within 48 hours to head off unfavorable developments at Thursday's OAS MFM" and that Brazil's new resolution "contains the basic elements for UNSC action." Noting that Brazilian participation was "placed back within a UN context," Enders noted, "surprisingly, Figueiredo does allow for possible Brazilian participation in a peace-keeping force, if invited by one of the parties." (Department of State, Executive Secretariat, S/S Special Handling Restrictions Memos 1979-1983, Lot 96D262, ES Sensitive May 25-31 1982)

American system has achieved. After all, South and Central America and the Caribbean are that part of the developing world that has the least per capita military expenditures, the least incidence of war in the post-war generation, and has been under the least pressure from the communist bloc.

We will, of course, if the Irish-Ugandan resolution makes it,³ argue that a new UNSC mandate creates new opportunities for peace, and that no action should be taken in Washington at the OAS which might prejudice it.

We should participate in negotiations on the resolution, although it is unlikely that anything will be worked out that we can support.

In sum, we should attempt

(a) to get the blocking minority in place to prevent the worst excesses, and

(b) to use the occasion to reassert our interest in, and the value of the inter-American system.

Clearly whatever we do, the chances are that the outcome will be to some considerable degree unfavorable to our interests. Within 48 hours we should know whether we can let on that there is some Brazil/US peace activity underway, and that could go far towards controlling damage.⁴

We expect that the Foreign Ministers of Argentina, Venezuela, Panama, Nicaragua, and Uruguay (Chairman) will attend. Of them, we recommend you see only the Venezuelan (useful to keep the dialogue open even if he will not listen to reason now).

RECOMMENDATION:

That you approve the approach outlined above.⁵

³ The resolution introduced by Uganda was adopted as UNSC Resolution 505. See Document 301.

⁴ Haig underlined a portion of this sentence beginning with the word "within" and ending with "underway." He added "?" in the right-hand margin next to the sentence.

⁵ Haig initialed his approval of the recommendation on May 26. Below this, he added the following notation: "See me re our intervention! AMH."