

#### 409. Message From British Prime Minister Thatcher to President Reagan<sup>1</sup>

London, November 4, 1982, 1322Z

Begins

I delayed replying to your message of 2 November about the Falklands<sup>2</sup> until my Cabinet meeting this morning. My colleagues and I have now discussed it and I want you to know our unanimous view.

The British people would see your vote for this resolution as an American decision to support Argentina against Britain, to support a dictatorship against the home of democracy.

The issue of self-determination is at the heart of Western democracy. Nothing could be more fundamental. The Falkland Islanders want to stay British. The object of these Argentine manoeuvres at the UN is simply to start a process which will deny them that choice.

Negotiations? Argentina simply wants to achieve by negotiation what it failed to achieve by military aggression which cost so many young lives.

I have supported you in every way I know because of my faith in the Anglo-American relationship and your personal commitment to fundamental principles. Nothing can shake my belief in the values for which you and I stand. But if America votes in the way you propose, my task will be immeasurably harder.

I know very well how difficult a change would be for you now, with all the publicity that has been given to your intentions. But the free world would understand and applaud a decision to abstain.

I do urge you to look at this again urgently and personally. So much depends on it.

**Margaret Thatcher**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Reagan Library, William P. Clark Files, Falklands War (UN/Kirkpatrick/Haig) 06/06/1982-11/04/1982. Secret; Strictly Personal. Sent in a telegram from the Cabinet Office to the White House. A stamped notation at the top of the telegram indicates that Clark saw it.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 408.