

432. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom¹

Washington, October 20, 1983, 0404Z

298653. Subject: Assistant Secretary Burt's Discussion With UK Charge Derek Thomas on the UN Resolution on the Falkland Islands, October 18, 5:30 p.m.

1. Confidential entire text.

2. Summary: Assistant Secretary Burt called in UK Charge Derek Thomas to inform HMG that the US will vote for the Argentine resolution on the Falkland Islands if no objectionable language is added.² Thomas thanked him for the clarification and expressed British concern about possible certification of Argentina. Burt assured him that the USG is mindful of HMG views and explained the basic US position. Thomas was accompanied by Christopher Woodley, while on the US side C.K. Stocker EUR/NE/UKB was notetaker. End summary.

3. As a follow up to Under Secretary Eagleburger's talks with Ambassador Wright on October 13,³ EUR Assistant Secretary Richard Burt called in UK Charge Derek Thomas to inform HMG of the US position on the Argentine resolution on the Falkland Islands. He stated:

—It appears to us that the draft resolution on the Falkland Islands which Argentina has provided to the Department is legally equivalent to last year's. Primarily on grounds of policy consistency, the US will vote for the resolution if no objectionable language is added to this draft.

¹ Source: Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D830609-0992. Confidential; Exdis. Sent for information to Buenos Aires and USUN. Drafted by C.K. Stocker (EUR/NE/UKB); cleared by W. Montgomery (P), J.R. Binns (EUR/NE), E. Barnett (IO/UNP), D. Jett (ARA/SC), and in S/S-O; approved by Burt.

² On October 4, the Department informed the Embassy in Buenos Aires that it was advising the Argentine Ambassador of the U.S. decision to vote in favor of the resolution "provided no objectionable language is added." (Telegram 285699 to Buenos Aires, October 6; Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D830580-0900)

³ Meeting with Eagleburger on October 13, Wright presented a British *démarche* on the Falklands/Malvinas and the certification of Argentina. In telegram 295004 to London, October 15, the Department reported on the *démarche*: "While HMG recognizes that the US has interests in Latin America, it hopes that our desire to balance those interests and our relationship with the UK would lead to an abstention on the Falklands resolution. The US role, he [Wright] asserted, would have an important demonstration effect on other countries." Wright also "hoped the US would not vote for language which ignored self-determination, a principle enshrined in the US Constitution and the UN Charter." On Argentine certification, Wright added that "sales of US arms to Argentina would force HMG to maintain troops in the South Atlantic rather than where they are needed to confront the common enemy." Eagleburger "termed the question of certification not to be 'if' but rather 'when, before or after the inauguration.'" (Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D830600-0325)

—We continue to support a negotiated outcome acceptable to both parties as the best means to settle this dispute and do not believe attempting to apply pressure will enhance the prospects for successful negotiations.

—We also hope both sides will refrain from taking steps which will heighten tensions.

Burt commented that he understood Prime Minister Thatcher to believe that the British public would not understand such an action by the USG but he hoped that HMG would.

4. Thanking the Assistant Secretary for his “helpful clarification”, Thomas explained that HMG had hoped that the USG would abstain on the resolution, given the GOA’s refusal to end formally the state of hostilities or to abjure the use of force, and in light of the stronger language in this year’s resolution. He continued that HMG expects the USG to forego the temptation to lobby others to vote for the resolution in the same way HMG believes we did last year. Burt noted the Charge’s remarks and agreed to look into the matter.

5. Thomas observed that the British want to begin talks with the GOA. In the British view as the GOA moves toward democracy, the USG should be in a position to urge wise counsel on them, i.e., lessening of tensions in the South Atlantic through a declared end to hostilities and the renouncing of the use of force. When democratic institutions have returned, the USG will look into all options Burt replied. Both sides have to engage in give and take. Despite the legacy of constraints on HMG on this issue, the USG hopes that the British will do what they can to find a solution; it would be in the British interest as much as ours. Burt suggested that the British position toward Gibraltar might serve as a model. Thomas acknowledged that it had prior to the war.

6. Thomas then raised British concerns about a USG human rights certification of the GOA. Commenting that this is a bilateral issue, Burt assured Thomas that the USG is aware of British views. The US has a law on this; when its requirements are met we will certify the GOA. We are continuing to review the situation regarding certification. He stated that certification, however, is not the same as arms sales. Thomas countered that human rights is an indivisible concept and that infringement of human rights took place on the Falkland Islands. He acknowledged, however, that this is a complex topic. In closing, he thanked Burt again for the clarification of the US position on the UN resolution and said he would report it immediately to his authorities.

Shultz