



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

30 August 1984

CF papers

Dear Jim, *[Handwritten signature]*

As requested, I enclose a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature to Lord Kennet's further letter of 10 August about the Falkland Islands and Argentina. Lord Kennet is following up his letter to the Prime Minister of 9 July, in which he enclosed a copy of the memorandum which the South Atlantic Council delegation submitted to the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee on their return from Argentina in June. The Prime Minister replied to that letter on 27 July.

*Yours ever,*

*Peter Ricketts*

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

Tim Flesher Esq  
10 Downing Street



DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM  
PRIME MINISTER

Reference

DEPARTMENT: TEL NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:  
Lord Kennet  
House of Lords

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

Thank you for your further letter of 10 August about the Falkland Islands and Argentina.

CAVEAT.....

I assure you that we share the concern expressed by conservationists and others about the depletion of fishery stocks around the Falkland Islands. We are looking hard at all the options. It is a very complex subject, and we must be careful to avoid measures whose effects would by far outweigh any short-term benefit, in terms either of preservation of fish stocks or of financial benefit for the Islanders.

We had certainly hoped that moves towards the general normalisation of our bilateral relations with Argentina would improve the outlook for progress on the fisheries problems and in other areas. I must emphasise that we had not been contemplating a bilateral arrangement with the Argentines, as had been incorrectly suggested in the press; but a more constructive approach in Buenos Aires towards relations with Britain could we would hope, be helpful in the area of fisheries conservation. There is regrettably little sign of such an approach at the moment: I explained to you in my letter of 27 July how

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Enclosures—flag(s).....



the Argentines reduced the normalisation talks in Berne to deadlock.

You are quite right to point out the absurd state of affairs that would result from taking to its logical conclusion the Argentine claim to sovereignty over the Falklands, based on its claim to possession of the Islands in 1820 (a date when, incidentally, neither we nor any other foreign power recognised the Government in Buenos Aires). We have indeed drawn attention to this fact at the United Nations in the past. I enclose a copy of the speech Sir John Thomson, our Permanent Representative in New York, made to the General Assembly in last year's debate on the Falklands issue. You will see from this that in making clear that for successive British Governments the dispute over the Falklands has largely been about people, and not territory, Sir John pointed out that the 150 years of continuous British occupation of the Falklands went back beyond the foundation of many of the states represented in the General Assembly. Citing one of the cases that you mention, he recalled that the United States had acquired both Texas and indeed California quite some years after our continuous occupation of the Falklands began.