

CONFIDENTIAL



088
cc: Sir P. Cradock

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

20 September 1984

FALKLANDS/ARGENTINA: CONTACTS WITH THE SWISS

Thank you for your letter of 19 September enclosing a draft message from Sir Geoffrey Howe to the Swiss Foreign Minister on relations between Britain and Argentina.

The Prime Minister agrees that the ideas apparently being floated by Mr. Brunner are wholly unacceptable and that the Swiss Government should be left in no doubt that an initiative on the Falklands at this stage would be highly unwelcome to us. She is content therefore for Sir Geoffrey Howe to send a message in this sense and to make clear that it represents her views.

The Prime Minister has commented that the draft message is much too long.

Charles Powell

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

CST

CONFIDENTIAL

cc/c



Prime Minister
Agree that Sir
Geoffrey should send
the proposed message?

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 September 1984

Dear Charles,

C.D.P. 19/9

Much too

long

in 437

Falklands/Argentina: Contacts with the Swiss

My letter of 7 August to David Barclay summarised our exchanges with the Swiss following the breakdown of the talks in Berne.

Since then it has become clear that M. Brunner (the State Secretary at the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs) has not been prepared to live up to his undertakings that he would make clear where responsibility lay for the failure of the Berne talks. We have also heard that M. Brunner was considering floating at the United Nations the idea that negotiations about 'the future of the Falkland Islands' might be a way of defusing the sovereignty issue at the forthcoming General Assembly Debate on the Falklands. This would, of course, be wholly unacceptable to us.

We have therefore been considering how best to register our views once more with the Swiss. As I said in my letter of 7 August, we would not wish to allow dissatisfaction over M. Brunner's performance to spill over into other areas of our bilateral relations with Switzerland. And we need to maintain good relations with M. Brunner, who remains an important figure on the Swiss scene. But we consider it essential that the Swiss Government and M. Brunner in particular should understand that any Swiss initiative on the subject of the Falklands at this stage would be very unwelcome to us.

H M Ambassador, Berne, has already made this clear to M. Brunner in Berne, emphasising that the tactical situation at the UN was one which we must handle ourselves and that no Swiss intervention was looked for. M. Brunner appeared to take the point. But Sir Geoffrey Howe considers that it would be right for him to send a message to the Swiss Foreign Minister, M. Aubert, before M. Brunner leaves for New York next week and M. Aubert himself visits Latin America, including Argentina, in October.

/Since

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL



Since the Prime Minister had an opportunity to talk to M. Aubert and M. Brunner at lunch on 23 August, Sir Geoffrey Howe believes that it would be important to make clear that his message to M. Aubert also reflects the Prime Minister's views. I therefore enclose a draft message with which Sir Geoffrey is content, and would be grateful to know whether the Prime Minister agrees with it.

Yours ever,
Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

OUT TELEGRAM

		Classification and Caveats CONFIDENTIAL	Precedence/Deskby IMMEDIATE
--	--	---	---------------------------------------

ZC
S
ASS
VEATS
SKBY
FCO
E/ADD
L NO

1 ZCZC
2 GRS
3 CONFIDENTIAL
4
5
6 FM FCO SEPTEMBER 84
7 TO IMMEDIATE BERNE
8 TELEGRAM NUMBER
9 MIPT: FALKLAND/ARGENTINA: MESSAGE TO SWISS FOREIGN MINISTER
10 1. Following is text of message from me to M. Aubert. Please
11 deliver this as soon as possible.
12 BEGINS:
13 John Powell-Jones has told us of your plan to visit Latin
14 America, including Argentina, in October. I thought it might be
15 helpful if before your departure (and mine for New York and
16 San Jose) I were to let you know how the Prime Minister and I
17 see the question of relations between Britain and Argentina in
18 the aftermath of the talks in Berne in July. I think it right
19 that you should be quite clear about our position, particularly
20 in view of Switzerland's status as our Protecting Power.
21 Let me say at once that we much appreciate all that the Swiss
22 Government and its representatives have done to protect British
23 interests in Argentina. We are equally conscious of the efforts
24 which you have made in support of our own initiative to try to
25 establish a dialogue between Britain and Argentina. I know that

///
//
/

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword you
File number	Dept Private Office	Distribution Falkland Islands Govt
Drafted by (Block capitals) P F RICKETTS		
Telephone number		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

Classification and Caveats

CONFIDENTIAL

IMMEDIATE

Page

2

<<<<

1 >>>>

2 you will have been as disappointed as I was that the Berne talks
 3 ended as they did. The basis on which the talks would take
 4 place was absolutely clear. But, as you know, the Argentines
 5 insisted that discussion of measures designed to promote improved
 6 bilateral relations must be accompanied by the establishment of
 7 a mechanism to address the question of sovereignty. This was
 8 entirely contrary to the agreed basis of the talks. So long as
 9 the Argentine Government persists in its unrealistic demand that
 10 we should address the most difficult and sensitive issue between
 11 us as a precondition for their consideration of more pragmatic
 12 measures to improve our bilateral relations, I find it hard to
 13 see a way forward.

14 This was an important opportunity missed. I said in the
 15 House of Commons on 20 July that we would now need to assess the
 16 implications carefully. Our own approach, as you are aware,
 17 has from the outset been consistent with the policy of dialogue
 18 and confidence-building measures advocated by the Secretary
 19 General of the United Nations in his report to the UN General
 20 Assembly last October. The present Argentine Government bears
 21 no responsibility for the tragically wrong actions of its
 22 predecessor in April 1982, but it cannot ignore their
 23 consequences. One most important consequence is that after the
 24 events of April 1982 the question of sovereignty over the
 25 Falkland Islands is not for negotiation.

26 The Prime Minister and I continue to attach importance to
 27 improving relations between Britain and Argentina. We are
 28 not resigned to immobilism. On the contrary, we are continuing
 29 to search for ways in which we might make progress. But this
 30 must be a gradual process and we shall want to proceed only
 31 after the most careful consideration. In particular we shall
 32 need to judge for ourselves both the substance and the timing
 33 of any new steps. I know that you share our objective of better
 34 relations between Britain and Argentina. I am sure you will

///

//

/

NNNN ends
telegram

BLANK

Catchword

understand

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

	Classification and Caveats CONFIDENTIAL	IMMEDIATE	Page 3
--	---	------------------	------------------

<<<<

1 >>>>

2 understand that we wish to decide for ourselves how best to move
 3 towards that objective. In these delicate circumstances, I have
 4 asked our partners in Europe to refrain from taking any
 5 initiative of their own at the present time. I very much hope
 6 that you will follow the same course.

7 Meanwhile the Argentines are clearly concentrating on
 8 promoting their draft resolution at the forthcoming UN General
 9 Assembly. As you know, we do not believe that a debate at the
 10 UN will serve to advance matters. The resolutions sponsored by
 11 Argentina at the last two General Assemblies were not helpful,
 12 concentrating as they did on negotiations about sovereignty
 13 and with the implication that such negotiations must have a
 14 pre-determined outcome regardless of the legitimate wishes of
 15 the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands. To judge by the
 16 resolution adopted by the committee of 24 in August, this pattern
 17 is likely to be repeated this year. In that event I shall be
 18 instructing our Mission in New York and our posts around the
 19 world to make every effort to ensure that the governments of UN
 20 member states are left in no doubt that such a resolution would
 21 be unacceptable to the British government. I am sure you will
 22 understand if I express the hope that, in view of your special
 23 position as our Protecting Power, Switzerland will avoid
 24 becoming involved in the proceedings related to the debate on
 25 the Falkland Islands at the General Assembly.

///

//

/

26 Turning to your own projected visit to Buenos Aires, we are
 27 not in a position to ask you to convey any specific proposal
 28 to the Argentine Government on our behalf. But it would be
 29 helpful if you were to assure them that we continue to believe
 30 that the restoration of more normal relations between our two
 31 countries would be to our mutual benefit. We remain sincerely
 32 committed to finding ways of bringing this about and indeed,
 33 open to suggestions which the Argentines may have for practical
 34 measures, however modest, which might help to repair the damage

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword done
--------------------	-------	-------------------

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

	Classification and Caveats CONFIDENTIAL	IMMEDIATE	Page 4
--	---	------------------	-----------

<<<<

1 >>>>
 2 done to our bilateral relations by the events of 1982. We had
 3 hoped that the process of reconciliation could have started at
 4 Berne and were disappointed that the Argentines sought to link
 5 our own proposals for improving relations with the question of
 6 sovereignty which, as had been made very clear beforehand, we
 7 were not prepared to discuss. This remains our position. The
 8 Argentines should be under no illusions on this score. That
 9 being so, we believe that the only feasible way forward is to
 10 find areas in which we can work patiently and pragmatically to
 11 rebuild our relationship.
 12 I hope that you have a successful and interesting visit to
 13 Latin America, and I look forward to hearing your impressions.
 14 With all good wishes.
 15 ENDS
 16
 17 HOWE
 18 NNNN
 19
 20
 21
 22
 23
 24
 25
 26
 27
 28
 29
 30
 31
 32
 33
 34

///
 //
 /

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword
-----------------------	-------	-----------

Argentina : relations A 38.