

*Falklands Wars - the History of the Falkland Islands: with particular regard to Spanish and Argentine pretensions and taking some account of South Georgia, the South Sandwich Islands and Britain's Antarctic Territories by Roger Lorton*<sup>1</sup>

## Paper 12

### 74 days in 1982

#### Trial by Combat

**“between a heavyweight diplomatic machine which had been playing power politics on the world stage for more than four centuries, and a foreign ministry that could just about manage relations with a few of its Latin American neighbours”<sup>2</sup>**



United Nations support for negotiation on the issue of Falklands sovereignty had not proven to be enough. Negotiations had not proven fruitful for Argentina which simply could not persuade the UK to accept that it had any historic claim to the archipelago. Unwilling, or unable, to take a case to the International Court of Justice, or any other arbitration panel, Argentina chose the one route left open to it – war. By taking such drastic action the military junta in Buenos Aires hoped to present the British with a *fait accompli*; a situation that could not be overturned. Their hope was that Britain would see the futility of its position and that any attempt to restore islands 8,000 miles away was tactically doomed to failure. This was naïve. After 150 years of dealing with the British, Argentina had clearly learned nothing. Traditionally, trial by combat was always the final act – for someone.

#### Day 1<sup>3</sup>

**April 2<sup>nd</sup>** – at 0127, London time, HM Ships *Hermes*, *Invincible*, *Fearless*, *Alacrity*, *Antelope* and *RFA Resource* are put on four hours notice for operations in the South Atlantic. *Antrim*, *Glamorgan*, *Glasgow*, *Coventry*, *Brilliant*, *Arrow*, *Plymouth* and *RFAs Applefleet* and *Tidespring* are ordered to Ascension Island.<sup>4</sup>

British Petroleum tankers *British Esk* and *British Tamar* are taken up from trade (STUFT).<sup>5</sup>

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1 *Falklands Wars - the History of the Falkland Islands: with particular regard to Spanish and Argentine pretensions and taking some account of South Georgia, the South Sandwich Islands and Britain's Antarctic Territories* Roger Lorton LL.B(Hon), M.Phil. 2011 – 2019. Roger Lorton has asserted his rights under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 to be identified as the author of this work.

2 *The Falklands War 1982* Duncan Anderson 2002

3 Coincidentally (?) the 215<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Spain first raising its flag over East Falkland Island. See 1767

4 It would be the 5<sup>th</sup> before the first of these was ready to sail. *RFA Tidepool* had been sold to Chile and was en-route when London asked if the UK could have her back. Chile promptly agreed and the ship (a tanker) was turned around. Ascension Island was a British Dependency (now part of the St. Helens Overseas Territory) albeit leased out at various times to the USAF, NASA, Cable & Wireless and the BBC. Wideawake airfield, built by the USA in the 1940's, has a 10,000 ft runway and was operated by the USAF in 1982. Currently operated jointly by the RAF and USAF, the airport is a military base and only available to military and diplomatic flights. There were rumours in 1982 that the USA had initially objected to any use of the airfield. There is little evidence to support this.

5 *British Tay* was taken up shortly after.

At 0325 in the Falkland, Governor Hunt declares a state of emergency before deploying his available forces; with the men of the local Defence Force positioned as observers on Sapper Hill and in Cape Pembroke.<sup>6</sup>

*"Norman based one third of his small force in and around Government House, and the remainder he split into sections to cover the airport peninsula and the approaches to the harbour and the town.... The airport runway was blocked with vehicles and oil drums."*<sup>7</sup>

0530 Moody Brook barracks is attacked by Lt.-Commander Sabarots' specialist force.

*"It was still completely dark. We were going to use tear-gas, to force the British out of the buildings and capture them. Our orders were not to cause casualties if possible.... We surrounded the barracks with machine-gun teams, leaving only one escape route along the peninsula north of Stanley harbour, so that anyone who did get away would not reach the town and reinforce the British there. Then we threw the tear-gas grenades into each building. There was no reaction; the barracks were empty."*<sup>8</sup>

Governor Hunt radios to the people of Stanley.

*"This is just to let you know that the first Argentine ships have been sighted in Port William and one landing craft approaching the narrows. Everything is under control, we are keeping them under surveillance. That is all for now. There have been one or two bangs at Moody Brook, but we consider that this is a diversion... That's all for now."*<sup>9</sup>

0615 Giachino's detachment attack Government House.

*"The lack of detailed plans caused an early failure. Giachino and his party did find a door, broke it open and entered, but they were in a separate, smaller building which contained the servant's quarters. It was empty. The five Argentines came out again and made for the back of the main building. ... A hail of fire from the defenders in the rear of the house fell on Giachino and his men. Giachino fell..."*<sup>10</sup>

*"At Government House, the initial assault was repulsed, leaving one Argentine dead and three wounded, although the Marines believed that they had inflicted much greater casualties. Later three commandos who had got into the servants quarters were disarmed and taken prisoner. As dawn broke, it was relatively quiet, but the local radio transmitter was off the air and some 120 Argentine troops were on the hillsides overlooking them."*<sup>11</sup>

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6 Hunt's radio messages were either heard by the invaders, or the contents were transmitted to them by someone on the islands, as Allara was fully aware that he was expected. He also knew about the increased size of NP 8901; information which had not been broadcast. Suspicion later fell on the LADE representative, Hector Gilobert, who had returned to Stanley on March 31<sup>st</sup>. Phillips (2017 p.125) suggests that a message had been received in Stanley the night before the invasion, from the Argentine fleet, calling for the surrender of the Islands. I can find no evidence to support this.

7 *Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 2: War and Diplomacy* L. Freedman 2005 vol.2

8 Lt.-Commander Sabarots quoted in *Argentine Fight for the Falklands* M. Middlebrook 2003. The sheer quantity of bullet holes discovered in the walls of the buildings question later Argentine claims that the primary objective of the invasion was to take control without inflicting casualties. After the war, Argentina would allege that the barracks had been strafed by British aircraft. cf. Phillips 2017

9 Quoted in *The First Casualty* R. D. Phillips 2017 p.161

10 Middlebrook 2003. Giachino died of his wounds. His death certificate notes that he died in Puerto Rivero, possibly the only person to ever do so (the name would only last for 14 days). Posthumously he was awarded Argentina's *Cruz-La Nacion Argentina al Heroico Valor en Combate*. Another of the group, Lt. Quiroga was wounded. In the attack on Government House, Royal Marines reported three Argentine soldiers shot and there is some controversy over the actual numbers of casualties on April 2, 1982.

11 Freedman 2005 vol.2. The failure of radio contact with London remains intriguing. Freedman puts this down to *Cable & Wireless* having problems with their emergency circuits, however the timing being so convenient for the Argentines, some doubt must remain. cf. Phillips 2017 for a detailed account of the first hours from witnesses.

Argentina's main invasion force arrives off Port Stanley; units deploy onto a beach four miles away.

0715 Argentine troops moving towards Stanley are engaged by a section of Royal Marines commanded by Lieut. Trollope: 2 missiles hit an Argentine Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) before British troops retire.

*"Six Armoured Personnel Carriers began advancing at speed down Airport Road. The first APC was engaged at a range of about 200 to 250 metres. The first three missiles, two 84mm and one 66mm, missed. Subsequently one 66mm fired Marine Gibbs, hit the passenger compartment and one 84mm (Marines Brown and Betts) hit the front. Both rounds exploded and no fire was received from that vehicle. The remaining five APCs which were about 600 to 700 metres away deployed their troops and opened fire. We engaged them with GPMG, SLR and sniper rifle (Sergeant Shepherd) for about a minute before we threw a white phosphorus smoke grenade and leap-frogged back to the cover of gardens. Incoming fire at that stage was fairly heavy, but mostly inaccurate."*<sup>12</sup>

*"The fact that no one was observed to emerge from the first Amtrac to be engaged encouraged the Royal marines to think that one of their rocket rounds had punched a hole in it and that some of the machine-gun fire had penetrated the hole and caused serious casualties among the men inside. Local civilians who observed the action optimistically supported this view later. There was no rocket hit, however, just the scars of ninety-seven machine-gun bullets. Only one Argentine marine was slightly wounded by a sliver of metal cutting his hand."*<sup>13</sup>

In London, Sir Humphrey Atkins makes an announcement to the House of Commons.<sup>14</sup> Telegrams are sent to British Embassies in Commonwealth nations instruction that a message be passed to the Head of Government.

*"The Argentine Government's invasion of the Falkland Islands, ... will I fear have the gravest consequences. I am sending this... to seek your support in giving the strongest and earliest possible condemnation... You should of course bear in mind that the right of self-defence is applicable."*<sup>15</sup>

Albeit with little solid information to hand, instructions are sent from London to the UK's Mission at the UN to make an approach to the Security Council.

0800 Argentine commanders in Stanley broadcast a message calling upon the, now surrounded, British forces to, "act prudently" and surrender.

0915 Governor Hunt negotiates a ceasefire with Rear-Admiral Carlos Bussers; formally surrendering the town to General Osvaldo Garcia at 1030. Hunt refuses to shake Garcia's hand, telling the General that; *"This is British property and you are not invited"*. Garcia responds; *"It is very ungentlemanly of you to refuse to shake my hand"* to which Hunt replies; *"It is very uncivilised of you to invade my country."*<sup>16</sup>

*"Hunt was told that he would be flown out of the Falkland Islands that evening. It was agreed that he could broadcast to the islanders so long as he also contacted the Royal marines at Grytviken in South Georgia to tell them of the position in Stanley. Hunt refused to ask them to surrender without resistance."*<sup>17</sup>

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12 Report of Lieutenant William Trollope quoted in Phillips 2017 pp. 169-170. Argentina's official report (Phillips 2017 p.168) notes that one APC (#07) was hit by machine-gun fire only, without serious casualties.

13 Middlebrook 2003

14 The announcement was limited as the lack of contact with Stanley meant that the Government was still unable to confirm that the town had been captured. It would be another hour or so before reports were received from *Endurance*.

15 *Telegram No.99* of 2 April

16 *FCO 7/4490 f57*

17 Freedman 2005 vol.2

It is announced that the captive Royal Marines, together with their families, are to be deported to Argentina.<sup>18</sup>

*"We carried Cheryl Black's bags across for her... Felt dreadfully sad for Cheryl and the other wives... It was here for the first time I turned and saw in the pale evening sunlight the Argentine flag flying from the mast at Government House. I really felt physically sick and emotionally drained; the cold light of awful reality set in."*<sup>19</sup>

Rex Hunt, in full regalia, together with his family and the surrendered Royal Marines, are airlifted to Montevideo via Comodoro Rivadavia.<sup>20</sup>

*"The agents of British authority were quickly removed. ... Major Norman commented that his men were reasonably treated by their original captors, the amphibious Commandos, but that the men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Infantry Battalion acted as 'arrogant victors' who had done no fighting and who set out to humiliate the Royal marine prisoners."*<sup>21</sup>

An Argentine Decree No.681 creates the *Gobiernacion Militar de la Malvinas Islands, South Georgias y Sandwich del Sur*. Brigadier General Mario Menendez is appointed as Governor and ordered to make his way there. Port Stanley is renamed *Puerto Rivero*.<sup>22</sup>

*"Statement from the Military Junta No. 10: The Military Junta informs the Argentine people that it has decided to constitute the territory of the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia and the Sandwich Islands in the military government, discarding them from the national territory of Tierra del Fuego, Antarctica and the South Atlantic Islands, starting at 00:00, April 3, 1982. In addition, he has been appointed military governor of the territory of the Malvinas, Georgia and South Sandwich Islands, Mr. Brigadier General Mario Benjamín Menéndez, who will exercise all the powers of the military and civil government in its jurisdiction. This resolution has been promulgated by Decree No. 681."*<sup>23</sup>

*"The warships under Rear Admiral Allara returned to the mainland while the transports completed the unloading of heavy equipment. Stanley airport became Base Aerea Militar Malvinas, and four Pucara aircraft flew in on 2 April. General Garcia and Rear Admiral Busser returned to the mainland... As the Governor and the Royal Marines left, the civilian population at Stanley was allowed to carry on 'as usual'. By and large Argentine forces behaved properly towards the islanders. There were some exceptions. Major Patricio Dowling soon got a reputation for being tough and threatening."*<sup>24</sup>

At a rally outside the Casa Rosada, General Galtieri tells a jubilant crowd that the members of the Junta have *"interpreted the sentiments of the Argentine people."*

*"The reaction of the Argentine people was extraordinary and much greater than expected. Many believed we could keep the Islands forever, without concessions. This reaction limited the Government's negotiating stance."*<sup>25</sup>

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18 One section of Marines under the command of Corporal York, stationed on the Camber Peninsula, were not captured. They surrendered on April 4<sup>th</sup>.

19 *74 Days: An Islanders' Diary of the Falklands Occupation* John Smith 1984 p.31.

20 There is some suggestion that the original intention had been to parade the captured Marines in Buenos Aires; but that this was changed at the last minute. Many of the Marines of NP 8901 volunteered to return with the forces that would recapture the archipelago, and formed the nucleus of J Company, 42 Commando, Royal Marines.

21 Middlebrook 2003

22 A controversial choice even within Argentina. See April 16, 1982. cf. 1833

23 Repealed by decree No. 879 of 1985 which restored these islands, in Argentina's terms, to Tierra del Fuego.

24 Freedman 2005 vol.2

25 Costa Mendez quoted in *Signals of War: The Falklands Conflict of 1982* Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990 p.149

President Galtieri makes a short broadcast to the Argentine nation.

*“Compatriots: We have recovered, safeguarding the national honor, without rancor, but with the firmness that the circumstances require, the Austral Islands that make up the national heritage ... by legitimate right. The step just taken was decided without taking into account any political calculation. It was designed on behalf of each and every one of the Argentines, regardless of sectors or factions and with the mind set on Governments, institutions and people that in the past, without exceptions; and through 150 years, have struggled to claim our rights. I know, and we acknowledge with deep emotion, that already the whole country lives the joy of a new gesture and it is preparing to defend what you own regardless of sacrifices, ...”*

In early afternoon London time, the BBC reports from Buenos Aires that people are dancing in the streets; *“Buenos Aires now erupted in a day of ecstasy ... Galtieri announced that his government ‘had no alternative than to do what has been done.’ ... the square was filled with men and women weeping tears of joy.”*<sup>26</sup>

*“... the news of the recovery of sovereignty, accompanied by the publication of photographs of the Argentine flag at Port Stanley, ..., elicited one of the most enthusiastic popular responses that the regime had ever experienced, with the possible exception of the organization of the World Cup in 1978.”*<sup>27</sup>

From Geneva, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) offer their good offices to both Argentina and Britain. London accepts immediately, Buenos Aires does not respond.

Britain breaks off diplomatic relations, giving Argentina's Ambassador four days to leave the country and recalling the British Ambassador from Buenos Aires; *“... four British officials remained behind to man a British Interest Section in the Swiss Embassy in Buenos Aires.”*<sup>28</sup>

Staff at the Argentine Embassy in London instruct Banco Nacion to start transferring funds out of the UK.

Lord Carrington seeks advice from the FCO's legal advisor, Sir Ian Sinclair.

*“Any action Britain now took could depend upon the ‘inherent right of individual or collective self defence’ as confirmed in Article 51 of the UN Charter. Not only was a firm declaration (of war) unnecessary it would also attract considerable baggage in international law. States at war not only acquire a distinct legal status but so do states not at war, who become neutrals, a status with its own rights and duties. A British declaration of war in 1982, for example, would have had immediate implications for all Argentines resident in or carrying on business in British territory. They could be subjected to a variety of restrictions, up to internment, and the process could lead to the effective abrogation of all contracts involving Argentine nationals, and turn any trading with Argentina into a criminal offence, allowing for the seizure and requisitioning of Argentine merchant ships in British ports and the suspension of all bilateral treaties.... Because of these far-reaching implications the tendency, unsurprisingly, is to consider entry into a state of war as a technical legal matter rather than as a reasonable description of events.... The absence of such a state might suit both parties to a conflict as a means of keeping it limited and avoiding difficult questions in relation to third parties. ...”*<sup>29</sup>

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26 *The Battle for the Falklands* M. Hastings & S. Jenkins 1997

27 *Argentine Soldier Known unto God: The Darwin Cemetery and Conflicts in the Retelling of the Falklands/Malvinas War* Jeremy Rubenstein 2011 in *Le Mouvement Social* 2011/4 no.237

28 Freedman 2005 vol.2

29 *Ibid*

Shridath 'Sonny' Ramphal, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, sends a message to all the Commonwealth Heads of Government.

*“... stand by Britain in this matter, consistent with your support for the principles of territorial integrity, the right of self-determination and the rejection of the use of force..”*<sup>30</sup>

From Washington, Secretary Haig instructs the US Mission at the United Nations to vote for a resolution; “.. which the British have informed us they will introduce in the Security Council calling on all parties to refrain from the use of force in the Falkland Islands dispute ..”<sup>31</sup>

*“(Parsons) persuaded Kamanda to allow him to introduce the resolution at a meeting called for another purpose at 1030 New York time on 2 April.”*<sup>32</sup>

Secretary Haig speaks to President Reagan.

*“We must proceed cautiously and objectively on this question—not endorsing Argentine force while not unnecessarily jeopardizing our relations with Argentina.”*<sup>33</sup>

America's Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), caught unawares by Argentina's invasion, can only rely upon public media outlets for information; “... Argentine press reports indicate that some 4,000 to 5,000 troops are on the Islands, and the 10 to 14 naval ships in the area include the country's only aircraft carrier as well as several guided missile destroyers, frigates, corvettes, transport and amphibious craft, and at least one submarine.”<sup>34</sup>

At 1930 in London, the Cabinet meet and approves the formation of a Task Force to retake the islands.

*“I received advice from the Foreign Office which summed up ... that Department. I was presented with the dangers of a backlash against the British expatriates in Argentina, problems about getting support in the UN Security Council, the lack of reliance we could place on the European Community or the United States, the risk of the Soviets becoming involved, the disadvantage of being looked at as a colonial power. All the considerations were fair enough. But when you are at war you cannot allow the difficulties to dominate your thinking:... And anyway what was the alternative? That a common or garden dictator should rule over the Queen's subjects and prevail by fraud and violence? Not while I was Prime Minister.”*<sup>35</sup>

*“This decision was assumed as much as taken, a reflection of genuine indignation at the Argentine act of aggression and a determination to demonstrate that the Government was not completely helpless. Once it became apparent that a Task Force could be sent there was never any doubt that it would be sent.”*<sup>36</sup>

Chief of the Defence Staff, Sir Terence Lewin, in New Zealand, is ordered to return to London.

At the UN, Parsons speaks to the Security Council; “As we sit here, a massive Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands is taking place.”<sup>37</sup>

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30 PREM19/614

31 Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820173–1064

32 Freedman 2005 vol.2

33 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Agency File, Secretary Haig's Evening Report (03/25/82–04/21/82)

34 CIA Situation Report #1 CIA-RDP84B00049R000701780020-2

35 The Downing Street Years Margaret Thatcher 1993

36 Freedman 2005 vol.2

37 Ibid.

*“(I) set out the salient facts and read out, in final form, the text of the resolution which I was tabling. I took the almost unprecedented step of bypassing the customary stages of circulating a 'working paper' leading to a preliminary draft resolution, a 'blue draft', in order to put the Council on notice that (a) we would not accept amendments to our draft, and (b) we would, according to the conventions, insist on a vote within 24 hours of tabling. My first intention was to demand a vote the same day but I readily acceded to pressure from members of the Council to wait until 3 April as the Foreign Minister of Argentina, Mr Costa Méndez, was en route for New York to present his government's case to the Council.”<sup>38</sup>*

Ambassador Roca responds by emphasising the refusal of British negotiators to address the issue of sovereignty, and restating his country's belief that the Islands had been taken from them in 1833. He suggests that the Security Council should be pleased that the long-running dispute has now been settled.

The meeting is deferred in order that the various representatives can contact their governments for instructions.

Jeanne Kirkpatrick, the USA Ambassador to the UN, attends a dinner given in her honour by the Argentine Embassy together with other leading figures of the US political establishment. Following criticism in both *The New York Times* and *Washington Post*, Britain's Ambassador Henderson is asked to comment.

*“I wouldn't have done so. If I had been asked by the Iranian Embassy to go to a banquet the night your hostages were taken, I wouldn't have done so.”<sup>39</sup>*

## **Day 2**

**April 3rd** – in London's *The Guardian*.

*“At a .. press conference in the Foreign Office Mr. Nott denied as "ridiculous and quite untrue" rumours at Westminster that he had offered his resignation.., and Lord Carrington rejected with a shake of his head any suggestion that he might resign. But the irony of a government elected to strengthen Britain's defence posture finding itself in this position will not be lost on MPs ...”*

At 0730, on South Georgia, the commander of the ARA *Bahia Paraiso* demands the surrender of British troops at Grytviken.

*“I have important message for you involving the successful operation by Argentine forces at Malvinas, the ex-Governor has surrendered the islands and Dependencies unconditionally and I suggest you do the same.”<sup>40</sup>*

Lacking accurate information, Lieut. Mills, commanding the platoon on South Georgia, ignores the message.

In London, PM Thatcher speaks to an emergency session of Parliament.

*“The House meets this Saturday to respond to a situation of great gravity. We are here because, for the first time for many years, British sovereign territory has been invaded by a foreign power.*

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38 Parsons 1983

39 Quoted in *Gambling with History: Ronald Reagan in the White House* L.I. Barrett 1984. In his memoirs, Alexander Haig noted that Kirkpatrick; “.. persevered in her intention to attend.” Kirkpatrick would later claim that she was misled.

40 Quoted in Freedman 2005 vol.2

*After several days of rising tension in our relations with Argentina, that country's armed forces attacked the Falkland Islands yesterday and established military control of the islands.... I must tell the House that the Falkland Islands and their dependencies remain British territory. No aggression and no invasion can alter that simple fact. It is the Government's objective to see that the islands are freed from occupation and are returned to British administration at the earliest possible moment....*

*The Government have now decided that a large task force will sail as soon as all preparations are complete. HMS Invincible will be in the lead and will leave port on Monday. ...*

*The people of the Falkland Islands, like the people of the United Kingdom, are an island race. Their way of life is British; their allegiance is to the Crown. They are few in number, but they have the right to live in peace, to choose their own way of life and to determine their own allegiance. It is the wish of the British people and the duty of Her Majesty's Government to do everything that we can to uphold that right. That will be our hope and our endeavour and, I believe, the resolve of every Member of the House."*

*"Even with action in hand, however, the experience was a painful one. MPs from all parties spoke of their anger and disbelief. For a Government that was so avowedly patriotic it was galling to be castigated by an Opposition that was so clearly to its left for losing sovereign British territory to a military dictatorship..."*<sup>41</sup>

The US Embassy in London reports.

*"The military difficulties for Britain of sustaining operations in the South Atlantic are awesome. If they want to go beyond gesture, Mrs. Thatcher's government must reckon that the task would be not only to dislodge the Argentines and restore the status quo, but to defend the Falklands for an indefinite time in the face of continued Argentine hostility. This certainly could not be done without a large and protracted diversion of military assets to the South Atlantic— where no other U.K. security interests are at stake. Conceivably, it could not be done at all."*<sup>42</sup>

Back on South Georgia, at 1140: Argentine troops are transported by helicopters from the *Bahia Paraíso* to King Edward's Point on South Georgia. Royal Marines engage bringing one down; damaging another. 1147: ARA *Guerrico* provides supporting fire for Argentine forces, but her guns jam. 1159: Small arms fire, and anti-tank rockets fired by the Royal Marines on shore kill a seaman on *Guerrico* and inflict damage.

*"The Argentines later disclosed that 1,275 hits were scored on the Guerrico. The ship's detachment had knocked down two helicopters, killed an entire landing party and crew, and pretty much put a corvette out of action .."*<sup>43</sup>

Further reinforcements from the *Bahia Paraíso* land to cut off the Marines withdrawal. Outnumbered, Royal Marines commander Lieut. Keith Mills surrenders South Georgia, together with 22 marines and 13 BAS staff.<sup>44</sup>

*"One Royal Marine had been wounded, while the Argentines had suffered several killed (Endurance later reported three) and wounded, lost a helicopter and had the Guerrico extensively damaged."*<sup>45</sup>

41 *Ibid*

42 *Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820177–0587*

43 *Beyond Endurance: An Epic of Whitehall and the South Atlantic* N. Barker 1997

44 Another 13 BAS staff in field parties were distributed around the Island. Also wildlife film-maker, Lucinda Catherine "Cindy" Buxton. Buenos Aires was informed of the locations of these groups on the 5<sup>th</sup> but no action appears to have been taken as they were all still in radio contact with the BAS station at Signy Island on the 12<sup>th</sup>. cf. *PREMI9/617*. The Royal Marines arrived back in the UK on April 20, 1982. Mills was awarded a DSC.

45 Freedman 2005 vol.2



At the United Nations, the Security Council resume the debate on the Falklands invasion.

*“Costa Mendez spoke first, the burden of his statement, backed by a lengthy historical survey, being that Argentina had done nothing more than recover national territory which had been seized by the British by an illegitimate act of force in 1833. ...*

*The debate continued and I spoke in refutation of the statement by the Argentinian Foreign Minister, in particular of the dangerous proposition he had put forward that the peaceful settlement Articles of the UN Charter applied only to disputes which had arisen since the Charter entered into force in 1945.*

*At the close of the debate the Panamanian Foreign Minister tried to rob me of my vote by claiming that, under Article 27(3) of the Charter "in decisions under Chapter VI [Pacific Settlement of Disputes] of the Charter a party to a dispute-in this case the United Kingdom-shall abstain from voting".*

*I counter-attacked that the resolution had been drafted in relation to a breach of the peace and had been proposed with Chapter VII [Actions with respect to threats to the peace . . .] of the Charter in mind: hence the provisions of Article 27(3) did not apply. I was supported by the Permanent Representative of Spain, an accepted expert on UN procedures, and Panama decided not to call for a procedural vote.*

*Then, during the debate, he (Mendez) made one enormous mistake. I was really basing all my arguments, and I spoke again and again, on the breach of Article 2 of the Charter, about "peaceful settlement of disputes" and non-use of force. He asked to speak in right of reply to me at one stage. He said he thought that I, the British representative, did not realize that this provision only applied to disputes which had come into existence after 1945, when the Charter came into effect.*

*When he said this, I could feel the whole atmosphere in the Security Council changing – because just about every delegation came from a country which was embroiled in disputes going back to the nineteenth century, if not the eighteenth century... That error of judgement on his part was very helpful to my cause.”<sup>46</sup>*

Australia's envoy to the UN, David Anderson, denounces Argentina's invasion; *“We have considered carefully the statements made in this Council yesterday and this morning... Nothing contained in those statements could justify the act of aggression which has been committed by the Argentine armed forces in clear violation of Article 2.3 and Article 2.4 of the Charter of the United Nations.”*

US Ambassador Kirkpatrick is notably absent throughout the Security Council debate.

*“Britain's most strident opponent on the Security Council was Panama. Foreign Minister Illueca, whose statement was described by Parsons as 'long and vicious,' introduced his own draft resolution which went through all past UN and non-aligned resolutions on the topic and called upon Britain 'to cease its hostile conduct, refrain from any threat or use of force and cooperate... in the decolonization of the ... islands.' Illueca proposed suspending the meeting so that a draft could be prepared in all working languages for tabling. He lost the vote...”<sup>47</sup>*

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46 Sir Anthony Parsons interviewed in *Little Platoon* M. Charlton 1989 p.201. Also Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990 p.138

47 Freedman 2005 vol.2

Britain's resolution is agreed.

*"The result was better than we had dared to hope for - ten in favour (United Kingdom, United States, France, Guyana, Ireland, Japan, Togo, Zaire, Uganda and Jordan), one against (Panama) with four abstentions (China, USSR, Poland and Spain)."*<sup>48</sup>

*"Only Panama voted against. The three communist states and Spain abstained. Illueca spoke again in heated tones but did not insist on a vote on his resolution... Costa Méndez spoke again to maintain Argentina's rights and express disappointment without explicitly rejecting the resolution. Parsons reminded him of Argentina's obligations under Article 25 to carry out the decisions of the Security Council."*<sup>49</sup>

*"It could hardly have been a worse setback for Argentina."*<sup>50</sup>

### *Security Council Resolution 502 -*

*"Recalling the statement made by the President of the Security Council at the 2345th meeting of the Security Council on 1 April 1982 calling on the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to refrain from the use or threat of force in the region of the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas),*

*Deeply disturbed at reports of an invasion on 2 April 1982 by armed forces of Argentina,*

*Determining that there exists a breach of the peace in the region of the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas),*

- 1. Demands an immediate cessation of hostilities;*
- 2. Demands an immediate withdrawal of all Argentine forces from the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas);*
- 3. Calls on the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom to seek a diplomatic solution to their differences and to respect fully the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations."*<sup>51</sup>

*"Predictably, Costa Méndez hastened to reject the terms of this resolution. The position would alter later when Argentina declared itself as accepting the mandate "in its entirety," stating that it only objected to the British interpretation of it."*<sup>52</sup>

*"... in many instances, it is difficult to tell who violated the rules: which state "started" the crisis. But when that is clear, as it was in the Falklands invasion, then states tend to lean on the violator, as did Mexico, Colombia, Brazil and Chile, even while occasionally genuflecting to the cherished icons of hemispheric solidarity."*<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> *The Falklands crisis in the United Nations, 31 March-14 June 1982* A. Parsons 1983. Surprisingly, the Soviet Union did not use its veto despite having been requested to do so by Argentina. Russia's Ambassador later blamed communication problems for his abstention.

<sup>49</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

<sup>50</sup> Middlebrook 2003

<sup>51</sup> See [https://undocs.org/S/RES/502\(1982\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/502(1982))

<sup>52</sup> *Falklands: The Secret Plot* O. Cardoso, R. Kirschboom & E. van der Kooy 1983. Argentina's attempt to reinterpret SC Resolution 502; "...depended on separating this first operative paragraph from the second..." (Freedman 2005 vol.2)

<sup>53</sup> *Dulce et Decorum Est: The Strategic Role of Legal Principles in the Falklands War* Thomas M. Franck in *The American Journal of International Law* vol.77 no.1 (Jan 1983)

*“Resolution 502 was taken as a clear statement of opposition to the Argentine action. It linked Argentina to a breach of the peace. Only Argentina was asked to withdraw its forces. ... The Resolution was a blow for Argentina. ... if implemented there would be nothing to stop Britain retaking the Islands ... It could then refuse to negotiate seriously in the future.”*<sup>54</sup>

*“It did not, however, go so far as to denounce Argentina as an aggressor. This would have implied an expectation of a collective response, in the form of economic sanctions if not military action. This could not have been extracted from the Council at this time. The objective was therefore more modest: to put the onus on Argentina to withdraw its forces after the cessation of the current hostilities but then respond to inevitable Security Council concerns by suggesting a peaceful, negotiated route out of the dispute.”*<sup>55</sup>

In Buenos Aires, the Argentine Government issues a statement rejecting UN Security Council approval of SC resolution 502 and claiming that it violates Argentine rights.

Arriving too late to assist its Marines, *Endurance* takes up station close to the southern tip of South Georgia from where they can send observations teams to overlook Grytviken.

The Bank of England freezes all Argentine assets and Argentine imports are banned. Argentina responds by a tit-for-tat freezing of British assets and imports but to avoid the possibility of a technical default on its debts, Buenos Aires announces that it will continue to pay interest via an escrow account in New York.<sup>56</sup>

*“The value of the Argentine assets involved was estimated to be approaching \$1.5 billion, almost one-quarter of Argentine total liquid assets in all financial centres. They would remain frozen except in rare cases where the Treasury might grant permission for release. Only later, after the higher figure had been given to journalists, was it realised that in the first few days of April substantial sums were transferred from London to New York, meaning that the actual amount frozen was \$900 million.”*<sup>57</sup>

Britain approaches the European Economic Community (EEC) and, in particular, West Germany - Argentina's largest trading partner within the EEC - for an embargo of Argentine imports and exports.<sup>58</sup>

At the same time, British Embassies throughout the world initiate approaches to the various Heads of State with requests for support.

*“... a most unequal competition between a heavyweight diplomatic machine which had been playing power politics on the world stage for more than four centuries, and a foreign ministry that could just about manage relations with a few of its Latin American neighbours”*<sup>59</sup>

The head of Chilean Air Force Intelligence contacts General Fernando Matthei, a member of Chile's ruling Junta, headed by General Pinochet to say; *“.. that a Wing Commander of the Royal Air Force had arrived in Chile with a personal message from the Chief of the Air Staff of the RAF.”*

*“It was Wing Commander Sidney Edwards, who at once presented his credential and asked me if I would be inclined to help the British at this hour. The help they were requesting was mainly in matters of intelligence... He also told me that he was empowered to negotiate directly any urgent requests in aeroplanes, spares or*

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54 Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990 p.141

55 Freedman 2005 vol.2

56 Already in financial difficulty, the effect was to push Argentina further into debt; borrowing \$7 billion in the remaining months of 1982. *cf. Institutions and Cooperation: Sanctions during the Falkland islands Conflict* Lisa L. Martin in *International Security* vol.16 issue 4 1992

57 Freedman 2005 vol.2

58 In 1980, EEC trade with Argentina had been worth \$4 billion.

59 *The Falklands War 1982* Duncan Anderson 2002,

*other equipment that the Chilean Air Force needed, .. He further pointed out that we should bypass diplomatic channels. That neither the British Ambassador in Chile, nor the British Defence Attaché had any knowledge of him...”*<sup>60</sup>

Argentina's President summons the German Ambassador.

*“Galtieri, who looked nervous, began by saying that he wished to explain the Argentine position to friendly countries with the aim of bringing about a diplomatic solution to the Falkland crisis.... the German Ambassador asked whether Argentina was still prepared to hold talks aimed at reaching an honourable solution ... Galtieri replied that everything was negotiable with the exception of final recognition of Argentine sovereignty over the Islands.”*<sup>61</sup>

France agrees to stop supplying Argentina with *Exocet* missiles, *Super Etendard* aircraft and *Pucara* aircraft engines and to withdraw her technical teams.

*“Using the Defence Attaché in Paris as a conduit, the British sought lists of military sales to Argentina, details of any imposed modifications/limitations to systems, precise capabilities of key aircraft as well as serviceability rates, spares consumption and know shortages, and proficiency of those Argentine pilots trained by the French. The French even sent over some aircraft to conduct mock dogfights against British pilots. Detailed technical information on the Exocet was also provided. Nott later observed that: In so many ways Mitterand and the French were our greatest allies.”*<sup>62</sup>

America's Central Intelligence Agency presents an assessment for President Reagan.

*“The Argentines continue to provision and reinforce their initial landings ... The British, who will lack a land base and probably face logistical problems, will be hard pressed to oust a force of the size anticipated. ... Brazil, Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador have given unqualified support to Argentina's claims, but have expressed hope for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Venezuela, traditional supporters of Buenos Aires's claims, has thus far withheld open support and called for a negotiated settlement. The Chileans, now negotiating with Argentina for control of the Beagle Channel, refuse to support Argentine claims.”*<sup>63</sup>

### Day 3

**April 4<sup>th</sup>** – in Whitehall, the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) conclude that a daily briefing paper is required to cover Argentine military dispositions and intentions.<sup>64</sup>

HMS *Conqueror* sails for the South Atlantic from Britain. Senegal offers staging facilities via Dakar airport for British military aircraft.

In the Falklands, the settlements at Goose Green and Darwin are occupied by Argentine troops. Reg Silvey, Falklands lighthouse keeper, establishes radio contact with the UK.

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60 *Matthei Memorandum to Margaret Thatcher March 25, 1999*. This remains unconfirmed but would appear to fit in with the circumstances at that time.

61 *PREM19/614*

62 Freedman 2005 vol.2

63 *CIA-RDP84B00049R000701780020-1*

64 75 daily assessments were produced between April 4<sup>th</sup> and June 18<sup>th</sup>

In Stanley, the Islanders have to deal with a new reality; *"I spent part of the day burning up papers and documents which I had collected during my service as an elected member of the Falkland Islands Executive and Legislative Councils – nothing really incriminating but certainly not the sort of thing which should be allowed to fall into Argentine hands. I also put our large Union Jacks in a place of safety where hopefully they will not be found. With things as they are at the moment, though, it seems a bit doubtful if we will ever need them again."*<sup>65</sup>

In Buenos Aires, newspapers report that the loss of the Falkland Islands means that Britain will also have to forgo its claims to its Antarctic territories. *La Prensa* tells its readers that; *"The recovery of Malvinas, by our country, was a matter of international priority in the entire world."*<sup>66</sup>

Rear-Admiral Eduardo Girling summons the German *military attaché* to announce that the Falklands would be defended with all available means, including Soviet assistance which would be accepted for this purpose.<sup>67</sup>

Two Argentine postal officials travel to the Islands.<sup>68</sup>

A CIA telegram from Buenos Aires reports on information received; *"When the decision was made to seize the Islands, the certainty that the British would not intervene militarily was shared by President Leopoldo (Galtieri) and by Brigadier Basilio ((Lami Dozo)), Commander in Chief of the Air Force and a member of the governing Junta. (Field Comment: The source has no information on the attitude of the Commander in Chief of the Navy.) The Argentine planning for the seizure was based on the premise that the British would react to the seizure as gentlemen react to a duel: when the first blood was drawn (the Argentine seizure), the winner (Argentina) would be declared, and the loser (the UK) would gracefully retire from the field."*<sup>69</sup>

In *The Washington Post*.

*"Britain's Prime Minister spoke the simple truth when she labelled the Argentine act, 'unprovoked aggression.' It is more than likely that the Argentines have made a serious mistake ... for Mrs. Thatcher is a tough woman... the British do not appear to be in a mood to be pushed around."*

## Day 4

**April 5<sup>th</sup>** – aircraft carriers, HMS *Invincible* and HMS *Hermes*, sail for Ascension Island, as do *Alacrity* and *Antelope*. HMS *Yarmouth* and HMS *Broadsword* are ordered to Gibraltar.<sup>70</sup>

Following recriminations in the press, Lord Carrington resigns as Foreign Secretary, together with Foreign Office Ministers Richard Luce and Humphrey Atkins. Lord Pym is appointed as the new Foreign Secretary. The Defence Secretary, John Nott, also offers his resignation but the Prime Minister refuses to accept it.

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65 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.35

66 Article by Manfred Schonfeld quoted in *Representations of the enemy during Malvinas War. A contribution to the bicentennial* Federico Lorenz 2010

67 PREM19/615. The report was passed to the British Government on April 8, 1982

68 Argentine stamp clubs were ecstatic. During April the post office at Stanley recorded a daily average of over 7,000 letters and packages. cf. *Miniature Messages: the semiotics and politics of Latin American postage stamps* J. Child 2008.

69 *Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/06/1982*

70 Stores were still being embarked as the vessels sailed down the English Channel.

Governor Rex Hunt and NP8901 arrive back in the United Kingdom. Hunt reports.

*"The Argentine occupation forces have imposed strict military rule ...The Islanders are under house arrest until further notice, and anyone defying this order is threatened with immediate imprisonment. ...*

*Other penalties have been imposed in the face of growing hostility from the Islanders. These include 30 days in prison for rude gestures against the military, 60 days for irreverence to the Argentine flag...*

*Messages from radio hams ... say that troops are searching homes and confiscating equipment."*

Royal Marine Majors Norman and Noott also brief the Prime Minister.

*"The Prime Minister congratulated the party on the courage they had shown ... She .. enquired whether those in Port Stanley in the days preceding the invasion had been any more aware of the likelihood of an invasion. The Governor replied in the negative. He had been inclined to think that the Argentine President was sabre rattling as on previous occasions. ... Major Noott said that the Argentine forces had not appeared to be particularly skilled or brave. They had, for example, shown reluctance to go outside Port Stanley because they had heard that a section of six marines were still at large ..." <sup>71</sup>*

Foreign Minister Costa Méndez speaks to the Secretary-General, who is in Rome, about the possibilities of a negotiated settlement.

*"The Secretary-General now wanted to talk to the British to see if he could do anything. Parson's immediate response was that the only action open to him at present was to urge the Argentine Government to implement SCR 502 in all its parts. Perez de Cuellar did not see the merit in making a move at this stage... and had no intention of cutting short his trip lest he give the impression that he was seeking to mediate." <sup>72</sup>*

Messages of support from the Dominican Republic, Sri Lanka, Belize, Nepal and Mauritius, arrive in London. Other countries make statements deploring the Argentine invasion. Portuguese Foreign Secretary, Dr. Leonardo Mathias, is reported as saying that if Britain asks to use the Lajes Air Base, in the Azores, to refuel, that request would probably be granted.

The Government of New Zealand breaks off diplomatic relations with Argentina, while Australia recalls its Ambassador to Buenos Aires. Canada also recalls its Ambassador and imposes an arms embargo on Argentina. Chile condemns Argentina's use of force. HMS *Endurance* sails north to rendezvous with HMS *Antrim*.

In Stanley, Argentina issues instructions that from henceforth, all vehicles will drive on the right.

*"The post office has now been closed until further notice. Cable & Wireless open for distress cables only ... Two armed guards on duty at the counter aged about eighteen, very dirty and fed up; gave one a cigarette." <sup>73</sup>*

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<sup>71</sup> PREM19/614 f72

<sup>72</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

<sup>73</sup> Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.37

## Day 5

**April 6<sup>th</sup>** – Margaret Thatcher writes to President Reagan.

*“I seek your personal backing for the urgent introduction of economic and financial measures against Argentina. I am already approaching our Community partners on this, since we are bound to consult together on many economic matters. But I very much hope that you will join us too. Coordinated action by the Community, the United States, Japan, Canada, Australia and New Zealand would bring home to Argentina the consequences of their illegal actions.”*<sup>74</sup>

In London, the Cabinet meet again; *“... the prime Minister explained that day-to-day political oversight was to be provided by a special Ministerial Sub-Committee of the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee (OD) on the South Atlantic and Falkland Islands (OD(SA)), which came to be known as the War Cabinet... Its terms of reference, as set down that day, were 'to keep under review political and military developments relating to the South Atlantic and the Falkland Islands, and to report as necessary to the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee.’*<sup>75</sup>

Robert Runcie, Archbishop of Canterbury, sends his envoy, Terry Waite to the Vatican with a request for the Pope to appeal to Argentina to obey international law.

*“The Archbishop believes the Pope has already done this privately but the Archbishop (whose Province includes the Falklands) believes that a public utterance by the Pope would have an impact on Argentinian opinion as it is a strongly Catholic country.”*

Argentina reinforces its Falklands garrison; despatching the 8th Regiment from its barracks at Comodoro Rivadavia. Orders are issued for the 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Infantry Battalion to follow.

A letter is smuggled out of the Falklands.

*“On behalf of the civilian population of the Falkland Islands, we, the undersigned Civil Servants and Administrators, request that a protecting power be appointed to help to arrange the temporary evacuation of the civilian population of these Islands under the terms of the Geneva Convention. We further request the immediate dispatch to Port Stanley of an Observer from that power.”*<sup>76</sup>

In Stanley, the Argentines demand that all civilians must carry identification documents and that all local (ham) radio transmissions must cease with the equipment to be handed over to the military forces.

*“... now all communication between Camp settlements is cut off, resulting in complete isolation from each other and from Stanley.”*<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Department of State, Executive Secretariat, S/S Special Handling Restrictions Memos 1979–1983, Lot 96D262, ES Sensitive April 1–9 1982

<sup>75</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2. Comprising the PM, Foreign Secretary Francis Pym, Defence Secretary John Nott, Home Secretary William Whitelaw, Chancellor of the Exchequer Geoffrey Howe and Conservative Party Chairman Cecil Parkinson. The full Cabinet met twice a week throughout the campaign to review the situation.

<sup>76</sup> Received in London on the 9<sup>th</sup> but signed by only 13 people. The Island's community were appalled once the contents of the letter became known. Signatures included those of the Chief Constable and the Registrar General. cf. PREM 19/617 Telex 14 April 1982

<sup>77</sup> Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.42

*“Daily life under occupation, with uncertainty about the long term, was inevitably difficult. The Islanders were, at least in Stanley, able to talk to each other and even hold meetings in the West Store... Argentine preparations for the civil administration had been rushed and were inadequate. Comodoro Carlos Bloomer-Reeve was appointed Head of the Secretariat and acted as a liaison officer between the civilian population and military administration. He was an Air Force officer who had spent time in the Falklands some years previously and was well known to and respected by many islanders. During the occupation he managed to retain that respect by being fair and considerate in his dealings with the islanders, in contrast to Dowling.”*<sup>78</sup>

The US Embassy in London provides its view to the Department of State in Washington.

*“So far our performance has been highly rated. But memories of Suez are just below the surface, especially in the Conservative Party. We cannot be sure HMG will do our bidding if we simply tell them to stop. They already fear being presented with an ultimatum by us, tying their hands militarily when diplomatic options fail. But they are anxious to have our help, knowing that probably only we have the weight to achieve a diplomatic solution. Indeed, their pugnaciousness aims in part to get us to act.”*<sup>79</sup>

In New York, Costa Mendez speaks to Kamanda, the President of the Security Council, to say that while Argentina respects SCR 502, the British Task Force is clearly in breach of the call for a cessation of hostilities. Parsons responds that SCR 502 is clear and that Britain will negotiate when Argentine forces are withdrawn.<sup>80</sup>

Secretary Haig and Ambassador Henderson meet in Washington.

*“The Secretary said that while we are confident of British naval superiority, a military clash would be politically disastrous for everyone. Therefore, we must accelerate diplomatic efforts over the next seven days in an attempt to achieve an agreement before the British fleet arrives near Ascension Island, which is close to the regional area covered by the Rio Treaty. Henderson said the fleet would not stop at Ascension and Article One of the Rio Treaty should prevent Argentina from invoking mutual assistance measures in the pact...”*

*When pressed by the Secretary about HMG views on the elements of a possible agreement, Henderson would only reply that the Argentine military must withdraw from the Falklands, even if it meant the fall of the Galtieri government. Anything less would topple Mrs. Thatcher.*

*The Secretary asked if the British fleet might be temporarily slowed if the Argentines agreed to a phased military withdrawal from the Falklands, and if there was an understanding that the task force would not return home until the US or some group of impartial nations assured the complete military evacuation. He added that it would assume no prior agreement on sovereignty, that the customs and way of life of the British Islanders be guaranteed, and that a UK-Argentine condominium- type administration could be arranged.*

*Henderson reacted to the Secretary's suggestions. He noted that the British had poor experiences with condominium arrangements, that after what has happened, in the past weeks, a joint administration would not work, and in any case he could not imagine the Argentines accepting the formula.”*<sup>81</sup>

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78 Freedman 2005 vol.2

79 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Europe and Soviet Union, United Kingdom (04/01/1982–07/31/1982 (3))

80 Freedman 2005 vol.2

81 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Western Europe and Soviet Union, United Kingdom (04/01/1982–07/31/1982 (4))



After Henderson leaves, Haig meets with Argentina's Ambassador Takacs.

*"The Secretary told Takacs that he had called these meetings as follow-up to the President's offer of our good offices.... The Secretary suggested it might be desirable to set up a quadripartite group with Canada, the U.S. and two Latin American countries as members and that a satisfactory solution might involve some form of joint administration of the Islands under OAS or other auspices. Implicit in this context was the withdrawal of Argentine forces. The Secretary did not see how the sovereignty issue could be resolved now; that would take time. Asked for his opinion, Takacs described the Secretary's ideas as "at the extreme of what the Galtieri government might be able to accept." <sup>82</sup>*

Haig also has a meeting with Minister Méndez.

*".. the Secretary said he needed to know from the GOA if we can keep the sovereignty issue out for now, yet find a formula that will represent a sufficiently great change from the previous status so that the GOA can explain the partial back-down to its own people. The Secretary suggested that if the GOA can agree to defer the sovereignty issue in this fashion, he would be willing to go to London immediately and, depending on the response from Prime Minister Thatcher, from there to Buenos Aires. Costa Méndez said he would talk to President Galtieri tonight and get back as soon as possible." <sup>83</sup>*

*"Having met with Costa Méndez, ... Haig reported back to Henderson on what sounded to the latter like Argentine intransigence, arguably confirming the pressure was needed. This led Henderson to suggest that Buenos Aires should be Haig's first stop, on the grounds that he already knew the British position and he needed to see whether there really was any Argentine room for manoeuvre. Haig took the view that he had to go to the ally first, if only to dispel any suggestion that he was colluding with Argentina. Henderson was unconvinced..." <sup>84</sup>*

Shortly after leaving the meeting, Mendez telephones Haig to inform him that the offer of US assistance was acceptable to Argentina and that Haig would be welcome in Buenos Aires. <sup>85</sup> Secretary Haig reports to Reagan.

*"In keeping with the initiatives you have taken with both Prime Minister Thatcher and President Galtieri and your offer of our good offices to help settle this most unfortunate dispute, I have begun to explore what we might be able to do.*

*Today, I have talked personally with the UK and Argentine Ambassadors, as well as with the new UK Foreign Secretary, Francis Pym, by phone following receipt of a letter from him. Tonight I met with the visiting Argentine Foreign Minister. My objective in these discussions has been to listen to both sides and look for opportunities for diplomacy. I believe we have found a few.*

*We need now to move quickly, while there is still uncertainty on both sides and while each is having second thoughts. ...*

*Subject to your approval, and an indication from the British that they agree, I propose to go to London and Buenos Aires, leaving tomorrow or Thursday. ..." <sup>86</sup>*

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<sup>82</sup> Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/07/1982 (1)

<sup>83</sup> Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Argentina (04/06/1982– 04/10/1982). No memorandum of conversation from this meeting has been found. GOA = Government of Argentina.

<sup>84</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

<sup>85</sup> Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/08/1982 (1)

<sup>86</sup> Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Haig Papers, Department of State, Day File, April 6, 1982 Falklands

America's Bureau of Intelligence and Research submits its analysis; *"The British fleet will reach the Falkland area around April 20. We believe that Thatcher will be under heavy pressure to order it into action if no compromise has been negotiated or is in prospect. She will not have the option of delaying indefinitely while diplomatic efforts continue. The effectiveness of the fleet, far from its maintenance bases, will rapidly deteriorate after its arrival on station. Her damaged leadership could not survive a futile "voyage to nowhere."*

To this, the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs adds a military perspective which; *".. concludes that the UK naval force could inflict high casualties on the Argentinian Navy and possibly retake some territory, but recovering the main territory of the Falklands would be extremely difficult."*<sup>87</sup>

## Day 6

**April 7<sup>th</sup>** – Britain's War Cabinet (OD(SA)) meet in London. Part of the discussion focuses on how to remove the nuclear depth charges from the ships carrying them before they are engaged in combat operations.<sup>88</sup>

Foreign Secretary Francis Pym addresses the House of Commons.

*"The whole House and the country is struck by the appalling nature of the aggressive action the Argentine regime has committed... The British ambassador in Buenos Aires and most of his staff are being withdrawn. ... A small British interests section will continue to work in the Swiss embassy, and we are most grateful to the Government of Switzerland, who are most expert in these matters, ....*

*What we in Britain must now do, with the support and backing of all freedom-loving countries right across the world, is to see to it that Argentina's illegal and intolerable defiance of the international community and of the rule of law is not allowed to stand."*<sup>89</sup>

A 200 mile 'maritime exclusion zone', to take effect on the 12<sup>th</sup>, is declared by the British Government.<sup>90</sup>

*"From the time indicated, any Argentine warships and Argentine naval auxiliaries found within this Zone will be treated as hostile and are liable to be attacked by British Forces. This measure is without prejudice to the right of the United Kingdom to take whatever additional measures may be needed in exercise of its right of self-defence, under article 51 of the United Nations Charter."*<sup>91</sup>

*"It was called a 'maritime exclusion zone' and was set up initially because the first force to arrive there was the nuclear submarine. A nuclear submarine is very limited in what it can do. By international law it cannot sink*

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<sup>87</sup> Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, P850056–1413

<sup>88</sup> A number of options were considered, all of which would have meant at least a 36 hour delay for the vessels concerned. This was unacceptable at this time, and so the decision was made on the 11<sup>th</sup>, that the depth charges would have to stay with the fleet but transferred to the aircraft carriers *Hermes* and *Invincible*. The instruction was that the vessels carrying the nuclear weapons could at no time sail into the 3-mile territorial waters of the Falklands as this could be viewed as a breach of the Tlatelolco Treaty of 1967. A further decision of May 28, 1982, to move the weapons back to the UK, still hit inevitable problems and it was June 26<sup>th</sup> before the last of them were taken off *Hermes*. cf. 1967 & April 30, 1982 & December, 2003

<sup>89</sup> HC Deb 07 April 1982 vol.21 cc959-1052

<sup>90</sup> Pym provided Haig with advance warning; albeit without sufficient time to allow Haig to present an argument.

<sup>91</sup> John Nott in HC Deb 07 April 1982 vol.21 cc1045-1046

*merchant ships without first stopping them, warning them and giving the crew a chance to abandon ship. A nuclear submarine will not expose itself on the surface, because it is then at its most vulnerable... We set up the maritime exclusion zone at two hundred miles, which is where the submarines were operating to try and dissuade the Argentines from reinforcing the Falklands.”*<sup>92</sup>

SS *Canberra* is requisitioned as a troop carrier by the British Government.

Working up some ideas for a meeting of the newly formed National Security Planning Group in Washington, Haig notes; *“Proposals: .. Argentina and Britain to negotiate ultimate disposition of Islands within framework of respect for sovereign rights and for the right of the inhabitants of the Islands to self-determination.”*<sup>93</sup>

Brigadier General Benjamin Menéndez arrives in the archipelago to be sworn in as Garrison Commander and Military Governor of the Falkland Islands; a ceremony at which Archbishop Desiderio Elso Collino, the chaplain general of the armed forces, officiates.<sup>94</sup>

*“Brig. Gen. Mario Benjamin Menéndez was inducted as Governor of the Falklands, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands, formalizing Argentine sovereignty, as foreign diplomats here reported that troops and equipment continued to pour into the Falklands to defend them militarily.”*<sup>95</sup>

As part of the ceremony, a large flag of the Argentine Republic is hoisted on the only available flagpole outside the government offices.

*“By 10 o’clock the wind had got up again to 30-35 knots from the north-west, increasing during the afternoon to something over 50 knots... The tents up at the Ionospheric Observatory blew down; then the huge Argentine flag hoisted on the pole outside the Secretariat flapped itself out of control, snapped the pole and flew off in great confusion down Ross Road, chased by anguished soldiers and watched by delighted locals.”*<sup>96</sup>

Menéndez circulates a message to the people of Port Stanley.

*“Message of the Military Governor of the National Territory of the Malvinas and South Atlantic Islands.*

*To All Inhabitants of the National Territory of the Malvinas Islands, Georgias and South Sandwich.*

*The Argentine Republic has returned to these Islands on the sovereignty of which has undeniable titles, after 150 years of useless claims to the United Kingdom, which occupied them by force in 1833. Furthermore, we have had discussions for 15 years with the British Government to re-establish that sovereignty, without achieving any progress, notwithstanding the repeated resolutions issued by the General Assembly of the United Nations on this subject. The only progress made consisted in actions intended to improve our links with the Islands, to provide a minimum knowledge about our country and contribute to improve the standard of Living of their inhabitants, even at a high cost for us, in acts of good will often not appreciated.*

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92 Lord Lewin interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.214

93 *Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Haig Papers, Department of State, Day File, April 7, 1982 Falklands.* No official memorandum of this meeting has been found.

94 Burns 2002

95 *The New York Times* April 8, 1982

96 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.43. Apparently taken as a poor omen by some of Argentina's more superstitious troops.

*We had no other way than the occupation to achieve the definitive integration of the National Territory waving our Flag again over the Malvinas that belonged to us since 1810, date of our Independence and as territorial heirs of Spain, whose possession of these Lands was effective and undisputable (sic).*

*I am deeply sorry that this fact has taken place in this way, in such circumstances that had to be violent instead of being pacific due to the obstinacy and stubbornness (sic) of the Colonial Government, with a sad toll of casualties on our side. This covers with grief and sorrow a day which we could have wished to be one of calm and shared joy. But this will not change our spirit and attitude.<sup>97</sup> Therefore, I wish to state very clearly to you that we have not come here as conquerors to take possession of your property or to consider you our prisoners or vassals.*

*On the contrary, I reaffirm in this act that, as it has been pointed out permanently during the discussions held since 1967, we wish to respect in every possible way the present style of life of the inhabitants of the Islands, to make the strongest effort to maintain their present level of economic activity and personal welfare, respecting private property and the basic freedoms and rights of all. We also wish to perform a steady action to fully achieve the “Malvinas Program” which is being carried out, and study other tending to propel the rational exploitation of the natural resources of the Islands and their area of influence, so in this way provide better possibilities and progress for their inhabitants.*

*We wish, as soon as possible, to work together, in cooperation, with all men and women of this Land who wish to come to us with ideas, discuss measures in benefit of the Community or criticize what could be wrong. In this sense you will always be welcome, with an open spirit, either by me or by my assistants.*

*It should be clear that as from today on, we consider you all inhabitants of the Argentine Republic, with the full rights established by its Constitution, listed in its Article 14, such as, to work and perform any lawful industry, to navigate and to trade, to petition the authorities, to enter, to stay, to travel and to leave the Argentine territory, to disseminate their ideas through the press without previous censorship, to use and to dispose of their property, to associate with useful purposes, to profess freely their worship, to teach and to learn.*

*You can see that the Argentine Constitution, sanctioned in 1853, establishes the rights, freedoms and privileges of Citizens which are similar to those the British Subjects are accustomed to enjoy. Although some of these rights have been suspended on the mainland due to the anti-terrorist struggle, we hope that here they will be absolutely in force.*

*I know that you must have serious doubts and prejudice (sic) towards our presence here and your future life as inhabitants of the Argentine Republic. Anyone who wishes can take steps to become full citizens, as many aliens, including British subjects, have become since many years ago. We hope that future acts will allow us to clarify those doubts and open a venturous period of work and progress together.*

*Therefore, I ask for the protection of God and I hope to count with the cooperation and good will of everybody, putting at the service of this enterprise, all my will, my strength of spirit and understanding. At the same time I engage myself, my word as general of the Argentine Army to you.”*

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97 The official figures were one dead and two wounded.

The US State Department announces that the President has; *“... directed Secretary of State Haig to continue consultations with the Governments of the United Kingdom and Argentina on the interests of assisting both parties in the search for a peaceful resolution of the dispute in the South Atlantic.”*

An American intelligence report notes; *“Second thoughts are surfacing among Argentine politicians about the wisdom of President Galtieri's adventure as it becomes clear that the cheap victory so confidently expected may still elude them..”*

## Day 7

**April 8<sup>th</sup>** – economic retaliation continues, with operating rights allowing Argentine airlines to fly into London's Heathrow airport suspended. Australia bans Argentine imports; *“Mr. Fraser said that his Government would not have done this for any other country in the world.”*

Britain's Chiefs of Staff propose an operation (*Paraquet*) to retake South Georgia before the end of the month; *“... the Defence Staff have drawn a distinction between an operation against South Georgia (which they regard as certain) and operations against the Falkland Islands (which they regard as subject to parallel political or diplomatic activity).”*<sup>98</sup>

Before the arrival of Secretary Haig, PM Thatcher is briefed.

*“... you should be aware that the United States intelligence agencies are helping and supporting our own intelligence effort with unreserved openness and generosity. Mr. Haig himself has assured Sir Nicholas Henderson that if there is anything we need in the area of covert support and assistance we have only to ask. Profiting from this, a telegram of requests has already gone over to Washington.”*<sup>99</sup>

Haig meets with Foreign Secretary Pym for a preliminary discussion between the two teams.

*“Thomas Enders asked point blank what way out the British were giving Argentina. Sir Antony Acland... asked about the way out the US would give Cuba if it invaded Puerto Rico.”*<sup>100</sup>

Prime Minister Thatcher meets Alexander Haig at 7.30pm. During the discussion Secretary Haig admits that, although it failed to see the invasion coming, British intelligence had put together a compendium that was; *“.. much better than anything which the United States had compiled.”*<sup>101</sup>

*“The Secretary said he viewed the next 72 hours as very important in Argentina. While we need to demand withdrawal and achieve it, we need to do it by Monday (4/12/82). London was chosen to visit first because the British are our closest friends and allies and we wished to start discussions with them; it was pointless to go to Buenos Aires first and listen to macho rhetoric without a fundamental feel for Britain's limits. ...*

*He foresaw that the British could succeed in military terms in a limited way. However, the Argentines would go into port and land-based air would become a problem. ...*

*The Secretary said the hope was to work for withdrawal in such a way that Galtieri is not toppled and replaced by someone more rigid. He emphasized withdrawal of military and security related forces; to get that step he thought the Argentines need to be convinced that they are not losing face in the process.*

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98 FCO 7/4472

99 AO8091 signed by the Secretary of the Cabinet, Sir Robert Armstrong on April 8, 1982

100 Freedman 2005 vol.2

101 PREM19/616 f165

*At the same time, there must be a victory for principle. ... The Secretary said he wanted to find some approach that protected principle ...”*<sup>102</sup>

Haig suggests a three part solution involving - a) Argentine withdrawal, b) a return to the administrative *status quo* that had existed before the invasion, and c) a return to negotiations between Britain and Argentina. He adds that stages a) and b) would be supervised by an international body.

*“The Prime Minister said she would not negotiate under duress. ... Thatcher insisted the people have a right to stay on the Islands. The Secretary replied that was what he was seeking to achieve in conformity with the UN Charter. The Prime Minister said rights under the UN Charter were removed by force. She indicated the Secretary was suggesting the Argentines get by force what they failed to get before. The Secretary said his intention was to achieve withdrawal of the force, restoration of an administration that could guarantee the freedom of the people while negotiations go on. The Prime Minister said the people had everything they wanted before. She sought withdrawal and restoration of British administration— which merged with sovereignty. Then there could be negotiations. As a guardian of the Islanders' rights, she cannot put up something these people turned down, she said. ...*

*The Secretary said principles would be preserved; but the only way to get the problem turned around in the short term is to achieve an interim arrangement on authority in the Island. ... The Secretary asked what happened if we don't find a solution and conflict develops. The Prime Minister said it had developed and was initiated by the Argentines. The first principle of America, she said, is the right to use force to recover your own home. Once British administration is restored of course Britain will negotiate. ... she could not tolerate their getting by force what they failed to get otherwise.”*<sup>103</sup>

*“The Secretary assured the Prime Minister that the U.S. had no intention of forcing the UK to negotiate under duress. Nothing could be further from the truth. The U.S. stood by the UK, we were allied, we had already shown we were not treating the UK and Argentina as equals through our vote on UNSC 502. ... all we could do now was continue on to Buenos Aires and probe the Argentines. We would be sure to carry with us the message of British unity and resolve and convey to them the strength of feeling which exists over the Falklands dispute. The Secretary went on to say that in all frankness he felt the British should be fully aware of the many factors at play in the present crisis, including the substantial interests we have in the hemisphere and the potential for Soviet exploitation of the crisis.”*<sup>104</sup>

*“The British assessment after the meeting, ... was that Haig did now understand the strength of British feeling. Ideas on an interim administration were imprecise, and apparently largely geared to saving Argentine face.. The only work that it seemed necessary to set in motion was on how Argentine withdrawal could be organised and supervised, supposing it could actually be secured.*

*The American assessment was slightly different. There was no doubting the Prime Minister's resolve... Nor had she actually tried to persuade the Americans against going to Buenos Aires. By the end of the evening she was prepared to see advantages if Haig was able to bring home to the Argentines the potential consequences of their action... The Americans had also been struck by the sharpness of Thatcher's exchanges with Pym, indicating that the British Cabinet was not of one mind...”*<sup>105</sup>

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102 *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1981-1988 vol.XIII: Conflict in the South Atlantic 1981 – 1984* p.162

103 *Ibid* p.165

104 *Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/11/1982 (1)*

105 *Freedman 2005* vol.2

America's Embassy in Buenos Aires, telegrams the US Embassy in London.

*"Under Secretary Ros called me in this morning to discuss arrangements for the Secretary's visit. He complained about the harsh statements coming out of London .. He emphasized that the Foreign Ministry wants and has always wanted a negotiated solution. The problem is that Ros and Costa Mendez do not speak for the navy. We are getting ultra-tough sounds out of that quarter, including statements that the Secretary (Haig) should not come here ... feelings are running high in the navy. One bitter complaint is that the commandos failed to have complete surprise and thus took casualties .. because we had given the British advance intelligence obtained by 'satellite'."*<sup>106</sup>

Haig reports to Washington.

*"The Prime Minister has the bit in her teeth, owing to the politics of a unified nation and an angry Parliament, as well as her own convictions about the principles at stake. She is clearly prepared to use force, though she admits a preference for a diplomatic solution. She is rigid in her insistence on a return to the status quo ante, and indeed seemingly determined that any solution involve some retribution. .. All in all, we got no give in the basic British position .."*<sup>107</sup>

At the UN, Argentina condemns the 200-mile maritime exclusion zone announced by the UK.

*"... Roca, denounced this as a blockade and so an act of aggression as defined in Article 3 (c) of General Assembly 3314 (XXXIX). The response was that this was not aggression as Britain was not the first to use force and could not blockade its own territory."*<sup>108</sup>

Roca adds that his country are also entitled to exercise a right of defence under Art.51 of the UN Charter.

Ambassador Henderson reports from Washington.

*"There is an intense debate among the OAS delegations here, including the American one, about the legal questions involved in invoking the Rio Treaty. Some contend that the Falklands dispute falls outside the legislative (not geographic) scope of the Treaty .... others are reluctant to see the Treaty invoked lest it be used by Argentina to legitimize its invasion. ... To convene the OAS under the Rio Treaty and to pass a Resolution requiring action would need 15 to 16 votes which it (Argentina) is not at present finding it easy to obtain."*<sup>109</sup>

The Washington Post reports:

*"Argentina will have to give first, for Britain is determined, as it must be, that the English-speaking Falklanders choose their own fate and affiliation. At issue is not so much a disputed claim to abstract sovereignty as the principle of negotiated self-determination on which Britain's peaceful dissolution of the Empire has been based since World War II."*<sup>110</sup>

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106 State Department No.093478

107 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Falklands War [Cables 090131, 091000, 091154, 091640, 181715, 191650, 191754, 192115]. This memo is dated April 9, 1982.

108 Freedman 2005 vol.2

109 PREM19/615

110 The Washington Post April 8, 1982

## Day 8

**April 9<sup>th</sup>** – 3 Commando Brigade (Royal Marines) sails from England aboard the SS Canberra.

In Brazil, the *Jornal do Brasil* publishes an editorial:

*“We are on the edge of a confrontation. The fact that a powerful fleet was ready to sail after only 5 days preparation when the normal time for an operation of such scope is usually much greater, is a clear indication of English intentions. ... It is important, however, not to lose sight of the fact that there took place a violent action – and that any possibility of a successful outcome to any negotiations depends on the fact that acceptable satisfaction is given to the country that suffered the action – in this case England.... The possibility that Argentina could invoke, in its defence, the Rio Treaty, is fading away: .. it cannot, because it was, in this case, the aggressor. ...”*

American intelligence reports; “... the Argentines are reportedly lengthening the air strip in Port Stanley to accommodate A-4, MIRAGE, PUCARA, and C-130 aircraft and reinforcing the island with additional troops and air defence equipment...”

At Brasilia, a Cuban plane bound for Argentina is found to be loaded with electronic surveillance equipment.

En-route to Buenos Aires, Haig sends a message to President Reagan.

*“In it, he expanded on his assessment of Thatcher's outlook on the crisis, noting that “it is virtually as important to us” that Thatcher achieve “success” in this situation “for the principle at stake is central to your vision of international order, in addition to being in our strategic interest.” Haig also observed: “The key question is whether I can bring back enough from the Argentines to convince her [Thatcher] that she has within reach a successful, peaceful solution. Obviously, if Galtieri accepts a political defeat it's the end of him. Just as Mrs. Thatcher must be able to show that Galtieri got nothing from his use of force, he must be able to show that he got something. Whether this rules out a diplomatic solution, or whether there is a narrow band in which some ambiguity will permit both parties a way out of their respective corners, I do not know.”<sup>111</sup>*

In Buenos Aires, US envoy Vernon Walters speaks to President Galtieri.

*“I explained that I came at Secretary Haig's request to convey privately some thoughts to consider before our general discussion later in the evening. We understood that President Galtieri had unified his people in a way none of his predecessors could. His mandate in the Malvinas affair is clearly broad and sound. If we can resolve the matter without war, Galtieri will go down in Argentine history as the man who reconquered the Malvinas Islands without firing a shot. He will be perceived as a leader of the free world and a man of peace. If his government accepts a proposal that is recognized as reasonable and fair his place in history is secure even if the British reject it. A war between Argentina and England will serve only the Soviets and their allies. ... If he would not insist upon having his own governor, we would insist that the negotiations conclude by December 31, 1982 and in a manner to suit his domestic needs. Both sides must make concessions if peace is to continue. History, however, seems to favor the Argentines. The matter has been pending for 130 years and has now come to a head. An interim arrangement can hardly be seen as anything other than progress for Argentina. .. The Argentine choice today is to accept a half loaf now and wait to gain the rest in a year or to face a war. We*

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111 *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1981-1988 vol.XIII: Conflict in the South Atlantic 1981 – 1984* p.171



*are working on a draft we hope he will find acceptable. President Galtieri replied, "Walters, the one thing you cannot ask me to do is to haul down the Argentine flag. If I do that, I will be kicked out of this building. You must work out something that does not leave me empty-handed."*<sup>112</sup>

Secretary Haig arrives in Argentina where he is met by Foreign Minister Costa Méndez.<sup>113</sup>

*"Haig arrived in Argentina late in the evening of 9 April to a mass demonstration organised for his benefit. The Argentine Government was determined that the United States should be aware not only of the strength of patriotic feeling in Argentina, but also the extent to which support for Britain would jeopardise its position in Latin America."*<sup>114</sup>

## Day 9

**April 10<sup>th</sup>** – in Moscow, *Pravda* reports.

*"The times when disputes could be settled by gunboat diplomacy are gone ... it is clear that Britain is responsible for the consequences of this reckless policy, for it is precisely Britain that over many years stubbornly refused to carry out UN decisions on decolonization."*

Sanctions for one month are approved by the EEC.

*"The third aspect of our pressure against Argentina has been economic. We have been urging our friends and allies to take action parallel to our own, and we have achieved a heartening degree of success. The most significant measure has been the decision of our nine partners in the European Community to join us not just in an arms embargo but also in stopping all imports from Argentina. This is a very important step, unprecedented in its scope and the rapidity of the decision. Last year about a quarter of all Argentina's exports went to the European Community. The effect on Argentina's economy of this measure will therefore be considerable and cannot be without influence on her leaders in the present crisis. I should like warmly to thank our European partners for rallying to our support. It was an effective demonstration of Community solidarity. The decision cannot have been easy for our partners, given the commercial interests at stake, but they were the first to realise that if aggression were allowed to succeed in the Falkland Islands, it would be encouraged the world over."*<sup>115</sup>

*"... most EEC members were willing to support Britain with sanctions prior to military engagement, as long as they were assured that the rest of the Community would act in the same manner. ... Since the EEC accounted for approximately 20 percent of Argentina's exports, a Community-wide ban on imports could, politician's believed, put intense economic pressure on Buenos Aires."*<sup>116</sup>

*"As it took time to sort out all the legal aspects of the ban, the sanctions did not come into effect until 17 April, and were to last, initially, for four weeks. Most member states were unlikely to authorise further export credits under the circumstances. The provision of new loans was also unlikely."*<sup>117</sup>

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112 Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Alexander M. Haig, Jr., 1981–1982, Lot 82D370, (2)

113 No record of this conversation survives.

114 Freedman 2005 vol.2

115 HC Deb 14 April 1982 vol.21 cc1148-1149

116 Institutions and Cooperation: Sanctions during the Falkland islands Conflict L. L. Martin 1992

117 Freedman 2005 vol.2

In London, the legality of the maritime exclusion zone is considered.

*"The General Assembly's definition of aggression (contained in Resolution 3314 (XXIX) recalls that it is for the Security Council, in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter, to determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of peace or act of aggression.*

*Article 2 of the definition states that - "The first use of armed force by a State in contravention of the Charter shall constitute prima facie evidence of an act of aggression." Resolution 502 (1982) adopted by the Security Council on 3 April 1982 referred to - "an invasion on 2 April 1982 by armed forces of Argentina" - and went on to determine that a breach of the peace existed ...*

*Article 3(a) of the definition states that - "the invasion ... by the armed forces of a State, of the territory of another State" - qualifies as an act of aggression.*

*Accordingly, a true reading of the definition of aggression together with resolution 502 (1982) leads inexorably to the conclusion that it is Argentina which is committing aggression by its invasion and first use of force in defiance of the appeal made by the President of the Security Council on behalf of the Council on 1 April 1982 (S/14944).*

*Moreover, Resolution 502(1982) leaves no doubt that it is Argentina which bears responsibility for the current breach of the peace in the region. ...*

*Article 3(c) of the definition of aggression lists - "the blockade of the ... coasts of a State by the armed forces of another State" – as an example of aggression. ...*

*The UK is not "another State" because the maritime exclusion zone surrounds British territory.<sup>118</sup>*

HMS Antrim leads the first group of Royal Navy ships into anchorage at Ascension Island.

Letters start to appear in the Falklands, addressed to the Argentine conscripts.

*"Dear Friend, Argentine Soldier - From the depths of my heart, today I send you these few lines and hope that as you receive them you find yourself in very good health. I hope that in defending our sovereignty you do it for the love of God and love for the Motherland. Every day we pray that God help you and that it might end soon, we are proud of you."<sup>119</sup>*

*"... among many examples is the corny, sentimental song popularized during the Falkland/Malvinas war, "Las Hermanitas Perdidas" ("The lost little sisters"). In terms of the fallacious discourse, the Falklands/Malvinas Islands are "sisters" of the "great Argentine family." This metaphor helps to consolidate a culture in which very few people think seriously and honestly about the people who inhabit the islands, at least as a priority issue. And the human rights or the right to self-determination of the Falkland Islanders becomes a laughable consideration when what is at stake is the amputation of one of the nation's hands or feet. One does not abandon a little sister who has been abducted and raped by perfid(ious) Albion. The call is to a holy war."<sup>120</sup>*

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118 PREM 19/616 Telegram No. 440 of 10 April

119 Child 2008. Mostly from school children, and obviously dictated - many examples were found after the surrender.

120 Foreign Policy Theory in Menem's Argentina Carlos Escude 1997 p.44

At an initial meeting, Galtieri tells Haig why Argentina is justified in its action.

*"Since 1833 when the British took the Malvinas Islands by force, the Argentines have never ceased to claim sovereignty and to demand their return. The United Nations in 1965 recommended negotiations between the two powers in order to accomplish the transfer of sovereignty to Argentina. The United Kingdom accepted under the framework of decolonization.*

*The Argentines tried for the next 17 years, by every possible means, to convince the British government to arrive at a solution. The British have never conducted any substantial discussions concerning the transfer of sovereignty of the territorial integration of the Malvinas into Argentina. No one can accuse the Argentines of a lack of patience or prudence throughout this period. Unlike the United Kingdom, the Argentines have not used diplomatic legerdemain and evasion. The Argentine claims are and have always been clear. We are patient, but patience, like water, can run out. We now face a crisis initiated perhaps by Argentina but aggravated by the over-reaction of the United Kingdom government.*

*The British reaction to the Argentine occupation of the Malvinas is out of all proportion to the Argentine action. ... I will talk to you about something quite frankly that the Argentine government does not like, and that is the furnishing of intelligence to Great Britain and the use of Ascension Islands for supply for the British. ...*

*The measures taken by Mrs. Thatcher are creating a delicate domestic situation for us. Her statements lack balance. We want to help her to achieve a balanced position. ... The Argentine people tend to react instinctively and emotionally.*

*I must lead them to a solution which will not recreate an Argentina of the 1940s. Our crisis today can easily result in the destabilization of South America and thereby weaken the defense of the West. The Argentine people took the decision on the second of April to recover our legitimate heritage. Our fleet and five thousand Marines acted. If the British want to send an expedition, we will receive this anachronistic colonial expedition with the appropriate honors..."<sup>121</sup>*

Haig responds; *"... he had watched over the years with special concern the valiant struggle of the Argentine people against the dark forces of Marxism and radicalism. "Too often in my own country people forget the basic stake that we have is a fundamental struggle that is going on in the world against the threat of Russian and Marxist imperialists. We are grateful for the direction in which Argentina is moving." ... Today the same vital struggle continues in Central America. I know the President understands the character of this struggle and understands the essential character of the partnership which we have forged in recent months. We cannot allow this to be broken up by a "thousand Scottish shepherds." ... the reports that the US has furnished intelligence and satellite information to the UK are untrue. We denied the British request. ... In the face of all these difficulties it is vital that we maintain an understanding and cooperation. ... We desire to work out an interim solution that will provide two important and friendly leaders with a success. If the Secretary had a proposal that he could return to London with which the United States considers just and fair it would be almost impossible for Margaret Thatcher to refuse. She could not. The problem for us now is how to structure such a proposal."*<sup>122</sup>

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121 *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1981-1988 vol XIII: Conflict in the South Atlantic 1981 – 1984* pp.184-190

122 *Ibid.*

Galtieri tells Haig that; “.. there will be no question about Argentine sovereignty. Everything else Argentina is disposed to negotiate.”<sup>123</sup>

*“Secretary Haig said perhaps he should now speak in specific terms. The first thing to be done is to break the ultimative character of Margaret Thatcher's proposals. We must find an integrated comprehensive program based on the UN resolution which includes simultaneous withdrawal, creation of a zone excluding UK forces, an interim administration, perhaps with an international entity of some sort to break the umbilical line of control from London to the islands, recognition of autonomy or local government or local institutions that will permit avoiding, from the Argentine point of view, appearing to return to the status quo ante. Mrs. Thatcher's interests seem to be primarily in the local population and in maintaining a line of authority to the island.*

*General Galtieri said that this would be very difficult. ... (and added) that with regard to the cessation of hostilities, the withdrawal of the Argentine fleet, and armed forces there are two points. He said there is one problem he could not see how to resolve. It is the question of the government of the islands. He was really regretful but the government must be Argentine with whatever entity the UN, the British, the US, or the Canadians might set up until normalization. The Argentines are prepared to offer the British facilities of every sort to join in developing the resources of the seabed, resources of fishing, for refuelling British naval ships or aircraft; but Argentina is not disposed to step back from what it considers to be its rights.”*<sup>124</sup>

Galtieri agrees to a further meeting that evening so that the negotiating teams could draw up some proposals.

Haig is persuaded to return to his hotel by helicopter so that he can see the crowds gathered in the Plaza de Mayo; *“The Secretary of State was frankly alarmed: the combination of Argentine-style demonstrations and men like Galtieri evoked fearful memories of Hitler and Mussolini.”*<sup>125</sup>

Haig telegrams Thatcher noting “intense discussions” and urging that any military confrontation be avoided.

Galtieri speaks to an organised rally.

*“The people of Britain have not yet heard a single word of attack or a single word outraging their honour and reputation, until now. I ask as President of the Nation to the English Government and the English people to moderate their expressions and show restraint in their actions. This Argentine Government together with the Argentine people, represented here in this meeting, will be very angry and will reply with strong emphasis if you continue to offend us. You know and the world knows that the Argentine people have a strong will.*

*If they want to come, come and we will offer battle.”*

President Galtieri receives the Cuban Ambassador, Emillio Aragones Navarro, who conveys from Fidel Castro an offer for Cuban troops to fly to the Falklands in support of the Argentine garrison there.

*“However, Argentinean leader General Galtieri turned down the offer because he feared it would turn Ronald Reagan's US administration against him.”*<sup>126</sup>

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123 *Ibid.*

124 *Ibid*

125 Cardoso, Kirschboom & van der Kooy 1983 p.144

126 *Revealed: Tyrant Fidel Castro wanted to bomb British Ships in Falklands War* Steven Taylor in *The Sunday Express*, December 4, 2016

Prime Minister Thatcher responds to Haig's call for restraint.

*"I should certainly prefer to avoid military confrontation. But Argentina is the aggressor, and is still trying to build up the occupying force in the Falklands. The right way to prevent naval incidents is therefore for Argentina to remove all her naval vessels from the maritime exclusion zone. The Argentine Government has had plenty of warning. I am sure that you will have impressed this point upon the Argentine leaders."*<sup>127</sup>

Haig, resuming talks with Galtieri and Méndez, is presented with the Junta's "minimum requirements."

*"In the eyes of the State Department officials, the only thing to emerge as a half-hearted sign of flexibility was the fact that the draft memorandum suggested that Argentina would accept a British refusal to recognise its claims of sovereignty prior to negotiations. For compensation, the document contained provisions to ensure that the ... form of administration during this transition period should guarantee effective control by Buenos Aires."*<sup>128</sup>

## Day 10

**April 11<sup>th</sup>** – interviewed on BBC radio, Francis Pym is asked whether Argentine shipping will be sunk if found within the exclusion zone. Pym replies; *"That is the position."*

Information is received from the Swiss *charge d'affairs* in Montevideo, that the 22 Royal Marines, and 3 civilians, captured on South Georgia are being moved, but their destination is unknown.

*"It was assumed that one reason why Argentina had repatriated British prisoners so quickly was to frustrate ICRC attempts to get to the Islands."*<sup>129</sup>

Jeanne Kirkpatrick, interviewed on US national television, says that she does not see a need for the US to make a choice between Argentina and Britain and that the only appropriate action is for the US to help both countries avoid war. Kirkpatrick states that the US has never taken a position on the Falklands, adding; *".. that if the islands rightly belonged to Argentina its action could not be considered as 'armed aggression'."*<sup>130</sup>

Peru calls for a 72 hour truce; *"In order to avoid ... a serious threat to international peace and security."*

HMS *Plymouth* and RFA *Tidespring* sail from Ascension, with HMS *Antrim* due to follow when unloaded. Designated TG 317.9, their orders are to sail towards South Georgia to rendezvous with *Endurance*.

Argentine troops continue to arrive at the Falklands.

*"... we are told that 9,000 are here now. Hardly seems possible but I think probably true. They are in tents as far out as Mount William, out along the Darwin Road and all over the Common towards Eliza Cove and Mullett Creek. God help them when the weather breaks. ... It has now been announced by the military that any soldier asking the civilian population for food will be shot. The civilian population may, however, give food if they wish."*<sup>131</sup>

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127 *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1981-1988 vol XIII: Conflict in the South Atlantic 1981 – 1984* p.193

128 Cardoso, Kirschboom & van der Kooy 1983

129 Freedman 2005 vol.2

130 *PREM19/616*

131 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.54

Secretary Haig sends a message to the White House.

*"I have concluded nearly twelve hours of gruelling and emotion filled talks with President Galtieri and his Foreign Minister, amidst a public mood approaching frenzy.*

*The proposals I introduced here were accepted in large part, except with regard to the pivotal question of interim governing arrangements .. and Argentine insistence on an early date certain for completion of negotiations on a final settlement. These two issues will have to be resolved in order to trigger Argentine withdrawal and thus avert war. We made some progress on these issues, though very probably not enough to secure British agreement. The Argentines began by demanding that they, in effect, administer the island in the interim period, and that the British agree a priori that the outcome of the ensuing negotiations would provide for a transfer of sovereignty. In the end, we came up with a formula that would involve interim U.S.-UK-Argentine tripartite supervision of local administration, and we have blurred the question of whether the negotiations would result in Argentine sovereignty. We have specified December 31, 1982, as the date for completion of negotiations...*

*At one point late in the day the Argentines returned to their demand for sovereignty, ... I am not optimistic ..."*<sup>132</sup>

Secretary Haig telegrams Thatcher.

*"... I now expect to arrive in London about 0630 am Monday April 12. ... In the meantime, I am sure you would agree that any military confrontation must be avoided at all costs until you have been able to consider this draft proposal. Although it is clear serious problems remain; some progress has been made."*

*"Haig's request for restraint had in fact come at an awkward moment. As Haig well knew, the MEZ was about to come into force and in principle submarines might start attacking Argentine ships... If the new orders were implemented just as Haig was stepping off his plane, then it would appear, whatever the intention, as a serious rebuff and could have damaging political consequences internationally... There was a further problem. It might seem the easiest thing to send an order to an SSN to hold fire, but when the FCO first made investigations... they were told that, unfortunately, it took some 30 hours to be sure of communicating with SSNs... the Prime Minister did not make any promises."*<sup>133</sup>

About to depart, Secretary Haig is met by Costa Méndez.

*"At the airport, ... Costa Méndez handed me a paper. It contained some personal thoughts of his own, he said. He hoped that I would read them on the plane. Aloft, I scanned the paper Costa Méndez had given me. It constituted a retreat from everything we had accomplished at the Casa Rosada the night before. The Argentinians were demanding either de facto authority over the islands through administrative arrangements that would give them immediate control of its government, or a British promise that sovereignty would be transferred to Argentina no later than December 31, 1982, regardless of the outcome of negotiations. This was a formula for war."*<sup>134</sup>

*"They were not aware that Haig thought he had a major concession. To the extent Haig did think this he was soon disabused."*<sup>135</sup>

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132 Reagan Library, Executive Sec., NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Argentina (04/11/1982–04/14/1982)

133 Freedman 2005 vol.2

134 Foreign Relations of the United States: 1981-1988 vol.XIII: Conflict in the South Atlantic 1981 – 1984 p.195

135 Freedman 2005 vol.2

## Day 11

**April 12<sup>th</sup>** – 0400: Britain's declared 200 mile maritime exclusion zone comes into effect.

*“... defined as a circle of 200 nautical miles from Latitude 51° 41' South and longitude 59° 39' West, approximately the centre of the Islands. The advantage of a circle was precision, although it did mean that some parts of the Islands were only 100 miles from the edge.”*<sup>136</sup>

*La Prensa* announces that Peruvian armed forces have been put on alert; subsequently denied by Lima.

Just prior to landing at Heathrow, Haig sends a message to Thatcher.

*“... our conversations have revealed tentative cracks in the Argentine stone wall on the withdrawal of military forces and the restoration of British administration... We are more than ever convinced that an Anglo-Argentine War would severely damage Western interests in containing Soviet expansionism.”*<sup>137</sup>

Haig arrives in London to be greeted with the information that there are 34 Soviet fishing vessels in the area of the Falkland Islands, providing intelligence to the Soviet Union.<sup>138</sup>

At the first of three meetings with Thatcher's team, Haig describes events in Buenos Aires.

*“The approach I took in BA was true to our discussion here. I was brutally frank with them. I said the UK was ready for war and that the nation was united. I said this was inevitable if Galtieri did not alter course. He was not bellicose but he has whipped up the people almost out of hand, though many of them are more pacific than jingoistic. The air force is fearful, the army is moderate, and the navy wants a fight. Your pressure has worked. There is an undercurrent of fear down there. The basic problem is that the threat of force alone is not enough to bring about withdrawal. Your fleet could be down there a long time. I think what they will try to do is run the blockade with Eastern European and Soviet ships. We have worked up proposals that they may be willing to accept. ... Every effort we made in BA was to support your aims: (1) withdrawal of the Argentines; (2) restoration of British administration; (3) preservation of self-determination. It was ideal for me to stop here first. The Argentines were totally intransigent. They wanted Argentine rule or a commitment on sovereignty within a fixed, short period. We brought them a long way. If they could confirm our final ideas, your needs would be met. The basic concept we have developed necessarily provides for some Argentine presence and a commitment on negotiations.... but they pulled back. ..”*<sup>139</sup>

*“Questioned by Thatcher, Haig agreed that Argentina probably was trying to seek practical arrangements that would enable them to change the character of the Falkland Islands, but he did not think that they could get very far by the end of 1982... If he could reach an agreement with Britain then he proposed to fly back to Buenos Aires. The meeting ended at 1100 to enable the British Government to consider the American text.”*<sup>140</sup>

At 1545 the War Cabinet meet to discuss the American proposals.

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<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> Quoted in Freedman 2005 vol.2

<sup>138</sup> See PREM19/616 f165, PREM19/617 f221, PREM19/617 f227 and PREM19/617 f189

<sup>139</sup> Department of State, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Miscellaneous Files, March 1981–February 1983, Lot 83D210, D. Gompert.

<sup>140</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

The British and American teams reconvene at 1755.

*“Haig did want the Task Force to stop and stand off, though not turn back, once the agreements were signed. The Prime Minister insisted that she would not survive in the Commons if the Task Force stopped before Argentina had completed its withdrawal... There was no basis of trust... The meeting ended at 2030.”*<sup>141</sup>

Haig telegrams the US Embassy in Buenos Aires with messages for Galtieri and Méndez.

*“I have introduced ideas here along the lines discussed at the Presidential Palace Saturday night. ... The talks have been exceedingly difficult, but some progress has been made. I hope to leave here this evening for Buenos Aires, arriving around mid-afternoon tomorrow. Time is of the essence. The British will not withhold the use of force in the exclusion zone unless and until there is an agreement.*

*I hope to bring to Buenos Aires a US proposal that holds the prospect of agreement, thus averting war. I urge you to hold off on any decisions until I have a chance to present the proposal. I am convinced that any substantial deviation by your government from the ideas discussed on Saturday night will doom this mission.”*<sup>142</sup>

British submarine, HMS *Spartan*, arrives on station off Port Stanley.

The US Ambassador in Buenos Aires informs Haig that Méndez is denying that negotiations have taken place, describing them merely as “conversations.”

Secretary Haig and Minister Méndez speak on the telephone.

*“(Méndez) Let's take things as they stand today. Our point - where we have control of the island - and then we can discuss self-determination and by the end of the year when all other points are decided on and we are assured self-determination will be granted by the end of the year, and then we can have a different way of governing the island. In order to comply with the solution, we will retreat from the islands by the end of April. Then, an interim government could be discussed along the lines you mentioned.*

*(Haig) I think that is very, very different from the conditions under which we started this talk - at least on which the U.S. entered the process.*

*(Méndez) It is the only thing that would constitute the same situation as before the 2nd of April. Even public opinion in Argentina is this.*

*(Haig) I think we have understood from the beginning - that is why substantial change was discussed in your place and here today. It is just patently impossible for us to go along a route where a priori it is decided this is concluded as a consequence of the actions of the earlier part of this month.*

*(Méndez) If Britain doesn't give us any assurance concerning transfer but, on the contrary, insists on discussion, what is our decision then? Where are we?*

*(Haig) The only thing Britain has been firm on is self-determination. Everything else is very, very easy. I thought I made it clear down there. How you will show that would be very clear in my view after another 9 months.*

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141 *Ibid*

142 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/12/1982 (1)



*(Méndez) I am absolutely sure if this discussion were held . . . Britain has retreated every year from what they said the year before. In 1968, when the document was drafted, they retreated. What are the assurances we could have? ... An Argentine island will be governed by an Argentine governor - if that is not done, the public reaction will be in a very negative way. We cannot tell them there were two governors and a committee and then we will discuss self-determination - after all the risks we have taken. .. Mr. Secretary, I think you have witnessed the best good will possible. We have analyzed it with open mindedness. ...*

*(Haig) I think you have answered my question. I am in the position that the only alternative is to suspend this effort. We would stand by to be helpful if there is some interest in what I call negotiating solutions, but I don't see any. You answered in a way I hoped you wouldn't. No progress is not good enough. I hardly consider that a diplomatic solution.... This forces me to tell my President we are given an ultimatum.*

*(Méndez) I don't think this is an ultimatum if you bear in mind all the collateral offers we are making in order to give to the people on the Island. We mustn't forget the ultimate aim of this exercise. England has always fought. England at one time will be compelled to relinquish something. The whole idea in the UN came when Britain presented a list of places to be decolonized. Britain's list included the Falkland Islands. When we saw in the list the name of the Falkland Islands, then our presentation was made to the UN. This was created by Britain herself. We don't see why they would retreat now when they were the first to include it in the list of countries or colonies to be decolonized. I'm sorry to hear from you this is an ultimatum. On the contrary, we are ready to consider every aspect of lives and properties of the Island and of ourselves. ... What is the real difference that has not been reached yet.*

*(Haig) I think it is significant that you now insist on unilateral solution on the Island and on an interim solution in which the US engages to keep peace and being sure our relationships, which have taken a new and positive turn, will go sour, which will ultimately happen. That is a tragedy for both of us... Is there any sense in my coming down there and discussing this matter further?*

*(Méndez) I'm afraid you have to ask yourself. You know our position. We are willing to receive you; we are happy with you; we are optimistic about the possibility of discussion. You know our position.*

*(Haig) Then, you are giving an ultimatum.... You are saying 'come, if I am ready to give what you insist you must have.' That means there is no chance in coming, and that is clearly what I will have to say to the public in my own country.*

*(Méndez) We have made an offer. We haven't received the best answer to our position.*

*(Haig) I think you say take it or leave it—that is shorthand for an ultimatum.*

*(Méndez) I feel it is too early to negotiate.*

*(Haig) I am not dealing with that. I finished 12 hours with them.*

*(Méndez) To put it in other words, if you don't think there is room for continuing negotiations, I can't force you to continue.*

*(Haig) You are saying total sovereignty in 9 months or total control of the Island. .. This will be interpreted as insistence on your way totally - after you have applied force. We could realize*

*every objective you are seeking with some clever drafting and clever negotiating, and some give and take. I can't see how it could ever be realized by insistence that it be black and white.*

*(Méndez) You know our position.*

*(Haig) I must admit I did not leave your country knowing it.*

*(Méndez) Our position has been very clearly stated.*

*(Haig) I made it clear in your country that would be grounds for not coming in the first place, with a clear indication that would not be the case. You have departed from the assurances which I had going into the negotiations. I must say it was the feeling of my colleague and myself.*

*(Méndez) I don't think it compares with my notes.*

*(Haig) I don't understand. We have ourselves in a very difficult position. ... think it is a tragedy if you tell me no negotiating can be done; then, you see, I am in an untenable position to try to be of help, and that is all I am trying to do. I am very happy to come down there under circumstances similar to the conditions I started on Friday. We are willing as rational men to craft some language that constitutes a political solution. ... ”<sup>143</sup>*

Haig tells Francis Pym of his conversation with Méndez.

*“I have been on the phone with this lad for about an hour. He quibbles right and left. On the one hand, he says we cannot break this off; he would send somebody to London or he will come to Washington. On the other, he doesn't change his ultimatum at all.”<sup>144</sup>*

At 2155, Haig rings Thatcher; *“The Prime Minister urged that, if the ultimatum was still in place, then Washington should let it be known publicly why the effort to find a diplomatic solution had collapsed. Haig agreed.”<sup>145</sup>*

A further conversation takes place between Haig and Méndez, before Haig informs Thatcher that he is undecided about flying back to Buenos Aires and will sleep on it.

At Stanley, the Argentine Governor announces military exercises for the new troops.

*“A new flagpole has been erected outside the Secretariat to replace the one blown down a few days ago. It was made by our locals in the dockyard, who have cleverly arranged the band supporting the stays so far up the pole that it is impossible to fly anything larger than a very small flag from it.”<sup>146</sup>*

Argentina writes to the UN stating; *“... its readiness to withdraw its forces as called for under the 3 April Council resolution, on condition that the United Kingdom ceased hostilities and did not attempt to use the resolution to justify a return to the previous colonial situation...”*

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143 *Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Alexander M. Haig, Jr., 1981–1982, Lot 82D370, (2)*

144 *Ibid.*

145 Freedman 2005 vol.2

146 Diary entry in Smith 1984 pp.57-58

## Day 12

**April 13<sup>th</sup>** – New Zealand bans all imports from, and exports to, Argentina.

In London, the American and British negotiators meet again. Secretary Haig tells them of his conversations with Méndez; “... he had heard overnight from the Argentine Foreign Minister that his Government needed an outcome to the negotiations which embodied a *de facto* change in the administration of the Islands and a process leading to ultimate Argentine sovereignty. ... the proposal for an interim Commission did not represent a sufficient degree of change towards *de facto* Argentine administration. The provision for negotiations on the definitive status of the Islands was inadequate as a commitment to ultimate Argentine sovereignty.”<sup>147</sup>

“Haig handed over the paper embodying the five points that Costa Méndez described as being essential:

1. The governor of the islands must be appointed by the Argentine government. The Argentine flag should continue to be flown on the islands;
2. Assurances should be given to the Argentine Government that at the end of negotiations there will be a recognition of Argentine sovereignty. Any formulation implying that sovereignty is being negotiated should be avoided;
3. Equal rights should be recognised for Argentines coming from the mainland as for the inhabitants of the islands;
4. The agreement on demilitarisation should be considered as complying with Resolution 502 of the United Nations Security Council;
5. The draft agreement should be made compatible with the above mentioned elements. Costa Mendez had implied that the first two of these points were the most important, and Argentina needed at least one of them.”<sup>148</sup>

“Commenting on the ... Argentine points, the Prime Minister said that they amounted to a demand for the handing of the Islands to Argentina with no provision for democratic processes. ... it was essentially an issue of dictatorship versus democracy. Mr. Haig said that he had made it abundantly clear to Argentina that if conflict developed the United States would side with the United Kingdom.”<sup>149</sup>

“By this stage it was becoming obvious that the proposals the Americans had presented to us the previous day had no measure of Argentine approval. In fact, the status of all these proposals was doubtful. The more closely I questioned Al Haig on this point, the more uncertain it became. Since these proposals had not been agreed by the Argentinians, even if we accepted them, they might therefore not form the basis of a settlement. ... This fact was made painfully clear at the meeting that morning when Mr Haig handed us a document embodying five points which he described as essential to the Argentine position. As he himself said, the practical effect of the Argentine tactics was to buy time. I always thought that this was their main purpose in negotiating. I was becoming impatient with all this. I said this was essentially an issue of dictatorship versus democracy. Galtieri wanted to be able to claim victory by force of arms. The question now was whether he could be diverted from

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147 PREM19/617 f189

148 Freedman 2005 vol.2

149 PREM19/617 f189

*his course by economic sanctions or, as I suspected all along, only by military force. Mr Haig replied that he had made it abundantly clear to Argentina that if a conflict developed the United States would side with Britain. But did he wish to bring negotiations to an end today? He could say publicly that he was suspending his own efforts, making it clear that this was due to Argentine intransigence. But if he did so other less helpful people might try to intervene. I was keenly aware of that and I also felt that public opinion here required us not to give up on negotiations yet.”*<sup>150</sup>

The London meeting ends at 1040.

*“There appeared to be no point in Haig returning to Buenos Aires unless he could take assurances on these matters, yet he also did not want to break off talks. Thatcher did not push for an immediate break, although she had a strong case for doing so. Instead she asked for definite progress to be registered 'this week.' ..”*<sup>151</sup>

Secretary Haig and Minister Mendez speak again on the telephone.

*(Méndez) We have been working the whole night. I have a formula. What would you like me to do?*

*(Haig) Can you give me an idea what it contains. I have been waiting until I spoke with you before I speak to the press.*

*(Méndez) We will yield.. add “both parties affirm absolute sovereignty on the Island, but the British will relinquish their claim in the UN.” The interim period would be by government along the lines we discussed.*

*(Haig) The interim period would be along the lines we discussed?*

*(Méndez) Provided Britain says she will decolonize the Islands as announced in the UN. ...*

*(Haig) That offers some possibilities. What about in the context of self- determination. Would that then come in?*

*(Méndez) The General Assembly has ruled out self-determination in the case of the Malvinas. We can imagine some sort of minority status for the Islands in the meantime.*

*(Haig) Let me consider this. ...”*<sup>152</sup>

At 1240 Haig informs Pym of his conversation with Méndez. Pym promises to consider the matter; *“... if the Secretary of State believed that the Argentine suggestion was an opportunity to keep the dialogue going it was difficult for them to call a halt.”*<sup>153</sup> Haig decides to return to Washington, meeting Pym just before his flight. Haig assures Pym that he stood by the rights of the individual and mentions that a referendum on the Islands could be part of the solution.<sup>154</sup> At London's Heathrow Airport Haig speaks to the press.

*“As you know, yesterday I had planned to go on to Buenos Aires in continuation of our effort to help in this crisis, but difficulties developed to change those plans. We have now received some new ideas, and while the parties are considering those ideas it will provide an opportunity for me to return to Washington to report to President Reagan.”*

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150 Thatcher 1993 p.198

151 Freedman 2005 vol.2

152 *Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Alexander M. Haig, Jr., 1981–1982, Lot 82D370, (2)*

153 Freedman 2005 vol.2

154 See 2013

Stanley's Chief of Police, Registrar General and Chief Secretary, plus 10 other civil servants, are deported. Executive Council member, Bill Luxton, and his wife, are included for "political reasons."

*"They have been picked up by helicopter from their farm at Chartres and brought to town... We shall all have to watch our step a bit now, if this sort of thing is going to happen ... A party of Argentine troops has been today searching the beach down past the FIC offices for bodies from one of their landing craft which was sunk during the invasion. Some have already been washed up."*<sup>155</sup>

Calling Buenos Aires from London's main airport, Secretary Haig tells Costa Méndez that he believes there are grounds for a breakthrough and that he'll return to Argentina after he's spoken to President Reagan.

As Haig flies out, news reports arrive of US assistance to the UK in the form of intelligence, fuel and satellite communications.<sup>156</sup>

Responding to Peru's 72-hour truce proposal, the UK tells the UN that; "... since Argentina had initiated the armed confrontation, the first requirement for any solution was the withdrawal of Argentine forces from the Islands and their dependencies, in accordance with the Council resolution of 3 April." Argentina answers; "... the UK committed an act of armed aggression by decreeing a naval blockade..."

*"Within the UN three countries on the (Security) Council appeared to anticipate any failure of the Haig mission as an opportunity for the UN to step in; Ireland, Spain and Japan, along with Ahmad of the Secretariat. On 13 April Parsons briefed the representatives of European Community members, including Dorr, the Irish delegate, explaining that so long as Haig was still in business Britain could not entertain any other moves at the UN, although nothing was ruled out for later. He then quizzed Dorr about reports from Dublin suggesting an Irish initiative, involving proposals for a tripartite administration with the UN as the third party. Dorr protested that the Irish had no intention of wrong footing Britain or of bringing anything into the Security Council that Britain might oppose."*<sup>157</sup>

In Brazil, General Medeiros, the Minister in charge of Brazil's National Intelligence Service, speaks to Ambassador George Harding.

*"Medeiros ... said that he thought the Argentine action in invading the Falklands was completely crazy and incomprehensible. He did not see an easy way out of the present impasse."*

In Venezuela, at a meeting of the OAS Permanent Council, claims that Security Council resolution 502 is biased against Argentina, which had suffered the theft of its territory and was; "justly responding to that robbery."

The final OAS Council resolution only expresses the organisation's; "profound concern."

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155 Diary entries in Smith 1984 pp.58 & 60

156 This as a result of US Secretary of State Casper Weinberger's instructions to provide the British with everything requested; "short of our actual participation." cf. PREM19/617 f76

157 Freedman 2005 vol.2

## Day 13

**April 14<sup>th</sup>** – *Atlantic Conveyor* is commandeered by the British Government.

Prime Minister Thatcher speaks to Parliament.

*“..we seek a peaceful solution by diplomatic effort. This, too, is in accordance with the Security Council resolution. In this approach we have been helped by the widespread disapproval of the use of force which the Argentine aggression has aroused across the world, and also by the tireless efforts of Secretary of State Haig, who has now paid two visits to this country and one to Buenos Aires.*

*On his first visit last Thursday we ... made clear to Mr. Haig that withdrawal of the invaders' troops must come first; that the sovereignty of the islands is not affected by the act of invasion; and that when it comes to future negotiations what matters most is what the Falkland Islanders themselves wish.*

*On his second visit ... Mr. Haig put forward certain ideas as a basis for discussion – ideas concerning the withdrawal of troops and its supervision, and an interim period during which negotiations on the future of the islands would be conducted. Our talks were long and detailed, as the House would expect. Some things we could not consider because they flouted our basic principles. Others we had to examine carefully and suggest alternatives. The talks were constructive and some progress was made.*

*At the end of Monday, Mr. Haig was prepared to return to Buenos Aires in pursuit of a peaceful solution. Late that night, however, Argentina put forward to him other proposals which we could not possibly have accepted, but yesterday the position appeared to have eased. Further ideas are now being considered ...”*<sup>158</sup>

HMS *Antrim*, RFA *Tidespring* and HMS *Plymouth*, together with Royal Marines and the SAS, rendezvous with HMS *Endurance*.

*“As we steamed up towards Antrim they 'cleared lower deck' for us. All their sailors manned the sides, hands on guard-rails, as we approached, and, as we passed them, they cheered to a man. It was quite unexpected.”*<sup>159</sup>

Brazil's *Jornal do Brasil* argues that the issue is not one of sovereignty, but the right of self-determination and the duty of Governments to put an end to colonialism. The article questions; “.. *the right of Buenos Aires to replace British colonisation with Argentine colonisation ...*”<sup>160</sup>

In letters to the UN, Panama expresses; “... *concern and indignation at ... the punitive expedition by the United Kingdom whose naval combat forces, including nuclear submarines, were on their way to Argentine territorial waters..*,” while Venezuela reaffirms its solidarity with Argentina and deplores; “.. *the fact that the alarming movement of British armed forces was being observed in silence by the Council,..*”

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158 HC 21/1146-50

159 Barker 1997

160 PREM19/618

From Washington, Haig telephones Méndez to deny the reports of US assistance to Britain. They also discuss the *Rio Treaty*.

*"... (Haig) our position is that the Rio Pact is going to be a very difficult legal question as to whether it is applicable. So we would be opposed to invoking it at this time. Secondly, if we were faced with a two-thirds majority, the great difficulty would be it would entail our having to apply sanctions and we have refused, as you know, to join the efforts to have us apply sanctions against you. You understand that. (Méndez) ...*

*If we get into an OAS debate while these talks are still going on, it would serve no purpose other than to complicate our position of sketching a position."*<sup>161</sup>

Haig then calls Thatcher to outline his concerns regarding the news leaks of US assistance and his plans to counter those reports with a statement reaffirming US neutrality.

*"Thatcher was appalled... After discussing the matter with Pym, Thatcher rang back and insisted that this statement... would cause an adverse reaction in the UK. .. "There was already a feeling that the US was doing less for us than we deserved, given the support we had given to President Reagan and the help which Argentina seemed to be getting from the Soviet Union"... The British Government could not accept being placed "on an equal footing with the Junta.".." "*<sup>162</sup>

Secretary Haig informs President Reagan.

*"I am convinced that Mrs. Thatcher wants a peaceful solution and is willing to give Galtieri a fig leaf provided she does not have to violate in any fundamental way her pledge to Parliament... Her strategy remains one of pressure and threat; by and large, it's working. ... Galtieri's problem is that he has so excited the Argentine people that he has left himself little room for maneuver. He must show something for the invasion -- which many Argentines, despite their excitement, think was a blunder -- or else he will be swept aside in ignominy."*

Haig calls a press conference.

*"As a result of my conversations in London, plus telephone conversations today,... I have developed new ideas which I have described to the Argentine Government. Based on these new ideas, the Argentines have invited me to return to Buenos Aires. I propose to do so tomorrow."*<sup>163</sup>

*The New York Times* reports.

*"The Argentine position, as outlined by officials here today, is that while it is willing to allow some form of transitional government that could include Britain and a third party such as the United States or the Organization of American States, Argentine sovereignty would have to be recognized by the transitional government. In addition, Argentina would be the final authority on the island even in the transitional phase. One high-ranking military official said that only the Argentine flag could fly."*

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161 Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Alexander M. Haig, Jr., 1981–1982, Lot 82D370, (1)

162 Freedman 2005 vol.2

163 Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D840626–0175

## Day 14

**April 15<sup>th</sup>** – Britain's destroyer group hold position in mid-Atlantic.

Galtieri telephones Ronald Reagan.

*“(Galtieri) Mr. President, I think it is highly important for Argentina, for us to have assistance, the assistance of your government, in this very difficult situation, that we are experiencing in our relationship with Great Britain which, among other things, is affecting the solidity of the Western World.... Mr. President, it is the profound wish, my personal wish, and that of the government, and the people of Argentina, to see to it that this situation does not continue to deteriorate. And it is furthermore our wish that with the assistance of the United States, that both countries seek an acceptable solution within the framework of UN Resolution 502 taking into account the whole background of this problem that goes back 150 years both from the standpoint of the bilateral relationship as well as all that has been debated, all that has been, the way the problem has been dealt with, the whole record of the UN in its debates of the problem of the past 16 years with reference to the issue of decolonization around the world. ... I also wish to have you realize that with the advance of the British fleet toward the South Atlantic region we feel that there is an increasingly dangerous situation, not only between our two countries, between the two countries involved in the South Atlantic, but it also our concern that this issue not deteriorate to a point where other nations might become involved and that this might not become tangled up and exacerbated by outside interests. ... it is my fear that if the British continue their hostilities in the direction of the South Atlantic region the situation may slip out of our grasp; may slip out of our control and become an extremely delicate issue for the world at large....”*<sup>164</sup>

Reagan passes the gist of the conversation on to Thatcher, who responds; *“Any suggestion that conflict can be avoided by a device that leaves the aggressor in occupation is surely gravely misplaced. The implications for other potential areas of tension and for small countries everywhere would be of extreme seriousness. The fundamental principles for which the free world stands would be shattered.”*<sup>165</sup>

In Buenos Aires, Argentina's Foreign Ministry deliver proposals to the US Embassy calling for - (1) cessation of hostilities, (2) withdrawal of both sides from the Falklands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich islands – Argentine forces to withdraw to the mainland and British forces to a distance of 3000 nautical miles within 7 days and to their *“usual operating bases”* with 15 days, and (3) Britain to adopt measures to comply with *Resolution 1514*, completing the decolonization by 31 December 1982 in accordance with *Resolution 2065*; *“in this case the principle of Argentine territorial integrity is applicable.”* In the interim period the Governor is to be an Argentine appointee.

Argentina's *Junta* announce the *South Atlantic Operations Theatre*, the creation of which; *“... is an important element of the defence of our national sovereignty in the large area it covers: 200 maritime miles from the continental coast and around the reconquered islands of Malvinas, Georgias and South Sandwich. Once the “Theatre” has been established, the military Committee may order actions of self-defence in situations that could endanger national security. Vice-Admiral Juan Jose Lombardo, Commander of Naval Operations, has been appointed Commander of the South Atlantic Operations Theatre.”*<sup>166</sup>

<sup>164</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1981-1988 vol XIII: Conflict in the South Atlantic 1981 – 1984* p.278

<sup>165</sup> Thatcher 1993. Also PREM19/618 f106 (T73/82)

<sup>166</sup> Announced to the public in *La Nacion* on April 23, 1982



## Day 15

**April 16<sup>th</sup>** – Task Force ships start to sail from Ascension while HMS *Sir Tristram* arrives from the West Indies. Ascension Island registers 300 aircraft movements making Wideawake Airport the busiest in the world for a day.

Secretary Haig arrives back in Buenos Aires and immediately cables President Reagan in Washington.

*“Today's Argentine press has an especially dark tone. Despite the fact that the British fleet is now entering the South Atlantic, Argentine commentary has become more inflexible and bellicose. ... More than anything, it betrays a self-hypnotizing war hysteria that may be taking over in Buenos Aires, with the prospect of military defeat, political isolation, and economic ruin eclipsed by patriotic fervor.*

*I have also received the first detailed Argentine negotiating proposal. Although this gives us a clearer framework in which to engage the Argentines, the substance is little different than their basic demand all along: Control of the Falklands, de facto, if not de jure. ...*

*It may well be that the Argentines make significant concessions and adopt a position that is fair and reasonable when seen in the historical context of this crisis. In that case, we should certainly go on to London and be prepared to place heavy pressure on the British, ... The burden of flexibility, and the onus for failure to achieve a peaceful outcome, will then be squarely on the British. If the Argentines are intransigent, we will have to consider having me return to Washington. We may find that we are not in a position to make a basic decision on our role until after a full round in both Buenos Aires and London. But we must be ready to decide as early as this time tomorrow.*

*At this point, the odds of avoiding war still appear very long.”*<sup>167</sup>

Thatcher also writes to Reagan.

*“...We have done our utmost to put Al Haig in a position where he has reasonable proposals to offer the Argentine Government. I regret we have seen no corresponding flexibility on the part of the Argentines. ... General Galtieri has reaffirmed to you his desire to avoid conflict. But it seems to me ... that he fails to draw the obvious conclusion. It was not Britain that broke the peace but Argentina. The mandatory Resolution of the Security Council, to which you and we have subscribed, requires Argentina to withdraw its troops from the Falkland islands. That is the essential first step ...”*<sup>168</sup>

In Stanley, a delegation of Anglo-Argentines arrive.

*“It appeared their task was to allay the fears of the islanders about becoming part of Argentina ... 'in effect .. a form of plea to the islanders to accept what had happened and try and make a new life out of the situation.'... The visitors were allowed to hold a public meeting at Stanley, but all this produced were some bitter exchanges.”*<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/16/1982 (1). Freedman (2005 vol.2) gives the date of Haig's arrival as April 15, 1982.

<sup>168</sup> PREM19/618 f86 (T77/82)

<sup>169</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2. The group remained until the 23<sup>rd</sup> before returning to Buenos Aires where they had a meeting with Galtieri to report their conclusions. Nothing very much seems to have come out of the visit.

*"Eight members of the British Community in Buenos Aires arrived for the day. ... The eight got a very cool reception from the locals. They were accompanied by some press and TV people, said to be Italian.... People travelling into town on the Darwin Road during the past couple of days have passed several heaps of dead soldiers – the total varies between thirty and fifty – stacked up on the side of the road up near Sapper Hill. There are also a large number of soldiers on stretchers. Our climate is not agreeing with them; exposure seems to be the problem."*<sup>170</sup>

Prior to the arrival of Secretary Haig, Galtieri issues a Presidential decree (no.757).

*"Buenos Aires, April 16, 1982*

*HAVING SEEN that on April 2, 1982, the Argentine Nation has recovered for its patrimony the effective possession of the Malvinas Islands and their dependencies in the South Atlantic, and CONSIDERING: That by Decree No. 681 of April 3, 1982, it constituted in the Military Government the territory of the Malvinas, Georgias and Sandwich del Sur Islands and its owner was designated. That the Military Governor currently exercises his functions with a seat in the town known as "Stanley Port", a name that is alien to the history and traditions of our country. That the realization of sovereignty over the aforementioned islands allows for the realization of government actions that demonstrate the will of the Argentine People and its Armed Forces, sustained throughout its history. That the Ministry of Culture of the Presidency of the Nation has proposed as the new denomination of that town that of "Puerto Argentino". For this reason, the President of the Argentine Nation Decrees:*

*Article 1.- The name of "Puerto Argentino" is hereby referred to the town of the Malvinas Islands, currently the seat of the Military Governor, which was previously known as "Stanley Port". ..."*

Haig arrives at the Casa Rosada, where Galtieri greets him.

*"... he wished to assure the Secretary that he had full confidence in the U.S. Government, in President Reagan, and in the Secretary himself. But speaking with the frankness that is possible between members of a family, he would tell the Secretary that he is not pleased with the fact that a number of people in the American Embassy were asking for visas to go to Uruguay. After all, it is not the summer season for people to go to the beaches in Uruguay, and this evidence of evacuation by Embassy people caused a bad impression and gave people the feeling that the U.S. might be preparing for a break in diplomatic relations. ... there was a British Community here of over 20,000 people who, with the other members of their families, must total some 100,000 people, and they did not feel themselves in any danger. ..."*

*Secretary Haig must seek a peaceful solution for all of the reasons he had expressed; otherwise, we run the risk of splitting the Americas in two - those north of the Rio Grande and those south of it; some more and some less but such a split would alter substantially the strategic panorama of the world."*<sup>171</sup>

Before meeting the Argentine negotiating team, Haig proposes a 7 point scheme:

- 1) withdrawal of Argentine troops and a halt to the progress of the British fleet;
- 2) Argentina's flag to remain flying on the islands under a tripartite administration (UK, Argentina & USA);

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<sup>170</sup> Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.71

<sup>171</sup> Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Vernon Walters, Lot 89D213, Trip to Buenos Aires

- 3) an expansion of Argentina's role in the islands during the interim period;
- 4) negotiations to conclude by the end of 1982;
- 5) negotiations to be guided by the principles of decolonization;
- 6) normalization of relations between the Islands and South America; 7) lifting of sanctions.

*"The negotiations proceeded throughout the whole of that day in two sessions ... Haig believed it appropriate on more than one occasion to warn that he was ready to call a halt to the whole procedure."*<sup>172</sup>

Costa Méndez informs Haig that Buenos Aires can accept the establishment of an interim government and undertake further negotiations, but that this had to be done within a framework guaranteeing sovereignty for Argentina. Also the UK must abandon its interpretation that the Islanders' wishes have to be paramount.

*"The Secretary, after reading it, said that it was certain to be rejected in London. He asked whether the Foreign Minister had any flexibility on that paragraph. Costa Méndez replied that he had none;... The Secretary then said, "This means war." Ambassador Enders added that this is tantamount to a declaration of war. Costa Méndez replied that this was simply the position Argentina had always maintained and that the UN Resolution affirmed. Ambassador Enders said that there was quite frankly no mention of Argentine sovereignty in those resolutions. Costa Méndez replied that he honestly felt that the wording included the territorial integrity of Argentina. .. Ambassador Enders then asked whether the authorities of this country knew that their inflexibility meant war. Costa Méndez replied that if the Secretary wanted to see the President and/or if President Reagan wanted to talk to the President, they could.*

*He then asked whether the Secretary wanted to talk to the Junta. The Secretary replied that he did. He had earned and deserved the opportunity to speak to them and tell them the consequences of their decision. Costa Méndez replied that the Secretary had made superhuman efforts and deserved anything he wanted. The Secretary said he would not want to go home without having had the opportunity to tell the Junta that their position probably means war as a consequence. He would not be hesitant to tell them.*

*Costa Méndez, visibly shocked, said that he felt he had been clear and honest and had been consistent in what he was saying all along. The Secretary said that this would be a disaster for Argentina, and we would have to take a position in the case of an armed conflict. Costa Méndez said it was not a consequence of any intransigence on the part of the Argentines. The Secretary said he had made a real effort to bridge the gap between the two positions. He had told the Foreign Minister that neither side could obtain everything it wanted. He thought that everyone had seemed to accept that. Costa Méndez then said that the Argentines had done their best. ...*

*Secretary Haig said that he was sure the British would shoot when they received the message. ... Ambassador Enders asked whether they had any doubt that this meant war with the British. Costa Méndez said that the Argentines had not been in touch with the British; but he would rely on our word for it. He was surprised that the United Kingdom would go to the edge of war for such a small problem as these few rocky islands. Ambassador Shlaudeman said that they would. Ambassador Enders said they would fight for the same reason as the Argentines would fight - for honor."*<sup>173</sup>

Nicanor Costa Méndez agrees to arrange a meeting between Secretary Haig and the junta.

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<sup>172</sup> Cardoso, Kirschboom & van der Kooy 1983

<sup>173</sup> Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Vernon Walters, Lot 89D213, Trip to Buenos Aires (w/Secretary Haig); Spin-off to El Salvador/Honduras April 15–April 22, 1982.

## Day 16

**April 17<sup>th</sup>** – Secretary Haig telegrams Washington.

*“It has become increasingly clear that we are not dealing with people in a position to negotiate in good faith. I have spent hours negotiating with the Foreign Minister, as well as time with Galtieri himself, only to find that what is agreed ad referendum is then toughened substantially each time the Junta gets in the act. ... If, as I anticipate, I make no headway in the morning, I should depart immediately for Washington. It would be fruitless and unfair to Mrs. Thatcher for me to carry these proposals to London, thereby shifting the spotlight and onus onto her.”*<sup>174</sup>

Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser telegrams the American President; *“In the aftermath of a failure of Al Haig's efforts, ... it would amount to a serious blow to western values, and to the western alliance itself, if the United States did not unequivocally support Britain.”*

Russia's Foreign Ministry also issues a statement; *“We consider impermissible the attempts by the United Kingdom to re-establish colonial status and we openly oppose such attempts. We qualify them as contradictory to the decision of the UN General Assembly on decolonization .. and as creating a threat to peace and security.”*

EEC sanctions take effect

*“... Italy continued to express reservations about the proposed sanction and refused to approve the official documents until the last minute, on Friday, April 16<sup>th</sup>. Ireland and Belgium also showed a notable reluctance to impose sanctions. President Mitterand and the rest of the government fully supported the British effort ... In West Germany, public, government and press support appeared strong.”*<sup>175</sup>

In the South Atlantic, ARA Santa Fé leaves Puerto Belgrano with a compliment of marines and fresh supplies for their troops garrisoning South Georgia.

*“... papers subsequently captured in the submarine, and discussions with her officers, indicated that she had been instructed to sink any British ships that she found off South Georgia.”*<sup>176</sup>

In London, the JIC notes a classified report.

*“A large part of the Argentine fleet is believed to be at sea. Argentina has requested LANDSAT photographic coverage of the Falkland Islands for 21-23 April. ... The Soviet Union is reported to be ready to offer Argentina ships, aircraft and land based missiles in exchange for grain. ... The high level of soviet photographic coverage of the area is unusual.”*<sup>177</sup>

Bill Luxton, back in England, is debriefed; *“Perhaps 40% of the former population of the town have moved out into the hinterland, where morale is high ... There has been no collaboration with the occupying forces. Indeed several Islanders have been openly defiant. ... Mr. Luxton was confident that many were determined to stay as long as possible, even if there was fighting. But some might well wish for temporary evacuation ...*

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<sup>174</sup> Reagan Library, Exec. Secretariat, NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Argentina (04/15/1982-04/17/1982)

<sup>175</sup> Martin 1992

<sup>176</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

<sup>177</sup> *Spying on the World: The Declassified Documents of the Joint Intelligence Committee 1936 – 2013* Richard J. Aldrich & Rory Cormac 2014. LANDSAT was a NASA programme which entitled subscribing nations to satellite images.

*Nor is the Argentine's attitude to evacuation clear. They are making those who want to leave pay for their passage .. it may be that the Argentines would not wish to see a mass exodus."*

Submarine, HMS *Splendid*, arrives on station off the Falkland Islands.

Haig speaks to Galtieri, Anaya and Dozo.

*"We must find a way to change the internal arrangements on the Islands but not in such a way as to cause a breakdown in relations between the US and the UK and, consequently, Western Europe. All of the Soviet efforts and policies were directed at splitting Europe away from the U.S. This we had to avoid at all costs. We could not, as a government, accept that the use of force, no matter how justified, could bring about changes. President Reagan himself could not survive such an acceptance.*

*The Secretary had been in communication with other European governments, France, West Germany, Italy, and had found no support for the use of force, whereas there was widespread support for evolutionary change. .. he had last night received proposed wordings that would inevitably lead to war. That was the unanimous view of all of his colleagues. ... Where are we now? We are at a point that would lead straight to armed conflict. The tragedy is that such a conflict would inevitably push the US toward support of Great Britain... They would win. Our analysis is that, at the first shot fired, Argentine ports would be mined, the Argentine forces on the islands would be isolated, the first British objective would be the destruction of the airfield, and surface and air resupply for the Argentine forces would be increasingly difficult. Since both nations are limited in what they could do to one another, the only winner under such circumstances would be the Soviet Union. ..."*<sup>178</sup>

*"I can't speak for Mrs. Thatcher, at times I don't speak very well to her, but I know they don't care about the sovereignty of the islands. They are prepared to re-negotiate but we must permit her to do it gracefully and on honorable terms. But I can assure you we will drive it to a solution. Secondly, I personally am convinced that Britain wants this problem off the plate. They will never be able to face another crisis of this kind. They could not politically, and they could not by their own assessment of the cost."*<sup>179</sup>

Reagan telephones Thatcher.

*"I know how far you've gone and how much you've compromised in an effort to settle this peacefully, and I don't think you should be asked to go any further than you have."*<sup>180</sup>

Governments in Peru, Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador and Colombia announce that they will increase trade with Argentina to compensate for the economic embargo imposed by the European Union, and other countries.

Argentina announces that three British journalists have been arrested for espionage in Ushuaia. Simon Winchester (*Sunday Times*), Tony Prine and Ian Mather (*Observer*) are reported to have been taking photographs near a naval air base.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>178</sup> Dept. of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Alexander M. Haig, Jr., 1981–1982, Lot 82D370, (2) Falklands Crisis

<sup>179</sup> From a transcription obtained for BBC's *Panorama* programme of April 16, 1984

<sup>180</sup> Reagan Library, Executive Sec., NSC Subject File, Memorandums of Conversation - President Reagan (April 1982)

<sup>181</sup> According to a New York Times report of April 25, 1982 seven other journalist had been detained in the two weeks leading up to these arrests. These British journalists were detained for 11 weeks before being released on \$20,000 bail. No trial was ever scheduled. See <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2007/apr/01/pressandpublishing.business>

## Day 17

**April 18<sup>th</sup>** – in the early hours, Haig is handed a revised Argentine text referring to 1) a Special Interim Authority; 2) administration on the islands to return to that which existed before the invasion but to include Argentines with limited participation; 3) a 'definitive solution' to take account of the inhabitants' 'rights' but also to recognise the 'principle of territorial integrity'; 4) December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1982 to be the final date for agreement.<sup>182</sup>

Secretary Haig telegrams London.

*"The Argentines delivered to me at the hotel at 2am this morning a revised text resulting from yesterday's marathon session.*

*Although their revisions are still unsatisfactory, I believe we now have – for the first time since we began this mission – some movement towards a workable solution ... We will renew our deliberations at the Casa Rosada at 2pm local ..."*<sup>183</sup>

A 2pm meeting is scheduled for negotiations to continue at the Casa Rosada.<sup>184</sup>

*"... there was another marathon negotiating session from 1500 on 18 April until 0155 the next day. Haig now believed that he was getting somewhere and praised the progress already made. But he needed more.*

*For the Argentine team the problem was that they had no idea of whether or not Britain had shown any flexibility, whether their concessions were to be reciprocated. Moreover, they had interpreted Haig's encouraging views on the prospects for an eventual British climb down on sovereignty as being somehow subject to an American guarantee, rather than just the quality of the Secretary of State's political analysis...*

*All the Junta could see was the creation of more opportunities for British procrastination."*<sup>185</sup>

29 Royal Marines and 13 BAS personnel, deported from South Georgia, arrive in Montevideo.

After a series of threatening telephone calls, the British born editor of the English language newspaper *The Buenos Aires Herald* moves to Uruguay.

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182 Cardoso, Kirschboom & van der Kooy 1983 p.178

183 *Telegram Secto 6037 to London, April 18; Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Argentina (04/18/1982–04/19/1982)*

184 There is no record of the conversation from this meeting.

185 Freedman 2005 vol.2

## Day 18

**April 19<sup>th</sup>** – Haig informs Washington of the negotiation.

*“It is now 3 a.m. and I have returned to the hotel after another 12 hours of up and down talks. Once again we were treated to the now familiar Argentine tactic whereby with agreement almost in hand the Junta stepped in and overruled its negotiators.*

*There followed a soulful meeting at 10 p.m. with President Galtieri who then reconvened the Junta and the impasse was broken. We returned to the negotiating table and put together a draft text except for the single important paragraph covering the modalities for the respective withdrawal of forces. However, the text as it now stands will in all likelihood give the British genuine problems.*

*We resume our talks later this morning at the Casa Rosada. At the conclusion of the round, I should be in a position to recommend – on the basis of the text then in hand—whether to proceed to London for consultations with Prime Minister Thatcher and her Ministers or to return to Washington briefly en route to London.”*<sup>186</sup>

In Madrid, the extreme right-wing Falangist Organisation stage a march in support of Argentina's take-over of the Falkland Islands and call on the Spanish Government to seize Gibraltar.

Negotiations between Secretary Haig and the Junta recommence at the Casa Rosada.

*“Later in the morning, I met with the Argentinians to clear up a number of unresolved points. This, too, was a strenuous session, but by 1 P.M., we had in hand a modified text that anticipated some of the British objections”*<sup>187</sup>

Ambassador Henderson in Washington contacts the FCO.

*“I have just seen McFarlane at the White House who told me that Haig had been on the secure line. He was transmitting to the State Department ... the latest text of what the Argentinians were prepared to accept. Clearly, Haig did not think that it would be satisfactory ...”*<sup>188</sup>

The revised proposals are: - (1) an immediate cessation of hostilities, (2) neither side shall introduce more forces into the 'zone', (3) within 24 hours the UK is to rescind its *exclusion zone*, (4) withdrawal of half of Argentina's force within 7 days to Argentina and all of the UK's to a distance of 1750 nautical miles, (5) the UK's Task Force and submarines to return to their normal bases within 15 days, (6) Argentina to withdraw its remaining forces within 15 days, (7) all economic and financial sanctions to be terminated without delay, (8) a Special Interim Authority to verify compliance which will also oversee the local authority on the Islands, (9) the Executive and Legislative Councils to have Argentine members, (10) the flags of the UK, Argentina and the members of the Special Interim Authority to fly together, (11) rights of residence, and ownership of property, to be the same for

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<sup>186</sup> Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Argentina (04/18/1982–04/19/1982) in *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1981-1988 vol.XIII: Conflict in the South Atlantic 1981 – 1984* p.323. Francis Pym in London received a similar telegram from Haig.

<sup>187</sup> Haig 1984 p.289

<sup>188</sup> PREM19/619 Telegram 1343 of 19 April 1982

Islanders and Argentinians, (12) *“December 31, 1982, will conclude the Interim Period during which the signatories shall conclude negotiations on modalities for the removal of the Islands from the list of non-self governing territories .. and on mutually agreed conditions for their definitive status, including due regard for the rights of the inhabitants and for the principle of territorial integrity applicable to this dispute. ..”*

Haig sends a personal telegram to Foreign Secretary Pym in London.

*“My own disappointment with this text prevents me from attempting to influence you in any way. As you will see, there are significant steps back from the text you and I discussed in London...”*

*It is not clear who is in charge here, as many as 50 people, including Corps Commanders, may be exercising vetoes. Certainly I can do no better at this point... My best immediate judgement in this situation is that I should return to Washington and report to the President.”*<sup>189</sup>

At the airport Costa Méndez has a final meeting with Alexander Haig and hands Haig an Argentine copy of the agreement before Haig flies back to Washington. Some of the wording does not match the US copy.

*“It is absolutely essential and conditio sine qua non,... that negotiations will have to conclude with a result on 31 December 1982. This result must include a recognition of Argentine sovereignty.. '...”*<sup>190</sup>

Junta member, Admiral Anaya, flies to the Falklands.

At South Georgia, submarine HMS *Conqueror*, commences a reconnaissance sweep of the Island.

UN Secretary-General, Pérez de Cuéllar, offers his good offices and assistance should the Haig mission fail, while Argentina calls for an emergency meeting of the OAS so that an invocation of the reciprocal defence agreement under the Rio Treaty can be discussed.

Britain's Government issues a press statement.

*“We have just received the proposals which Mr. Haig has brought out of Buenos Aires. They are complex and difficult, and at first sight they do not meet the requirements strongly expressed by Parliament, particularly on the need to regard as paramount the wishes of the Islanders. We shall be studying them carefully ...”*<sup>191</sup>

*“British patience with the American effort was starting to run out. Leaving aside the very attempt to broker an agreement as if Argentine claims had any real legitimacy, and that somehow saving Galtieri's face was a matter of real strategic importance, the American determination to put on a show of impartiality had been a cause of incessant irritation in London.”*<sup>192</sup>

In Washington, Ambassador Henderson, accompanied by Britain's Naval and Air Attachés, meet with Senator John Tower, Chairman of the Senate armed Service Committee. Tower asks Henderson to let him know what assistance the US could provide. Presidential permission has already been granted for the supply of Stinger missiles and night goggles.

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189 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Falklands War [Cables 090131, 091000, 091154, 091640, 181715, 191620, 191740, 191754, 192115]

190 Quoted in Freedman 2005 vol.2. This was not forwarded to London.

191 PREM19/619

192 Freedman 2005 vol.2



## Day 19

**April 20<sup>th</sup>** – HMS *Hecla*, a hospital ship, sails from Gibraltar. <sup>193</sup>

An RAF Victor from Ascension Island, overflies South Georgia conducting a radar reconnaissance. <sup>194</sup>

In India, the British High Commission, aware that a meeting of the the *Coordinating Bureau* of the *Non-Aligned Movement* (NAM) is being urged by Argentina, ask the Indian Government to press for a statement that is consistent with *SC Resolution 502*.

In information attached to the request, the *Commission* explains; *“The fundamental element of the British Government's approach to the dispute with Argentina over the Falkland Islands is that the wishes of the Islanders themselves must be paramount. For their part, the Argentine's deny that the Islanders have the right to determine their own future and maintain that the issue is simply one of decolonisation.*

*The Falkland Islands issue is not one of decolonization. As normally understood, decolonisation has consisted of the withdrawal of an alien administering power and the transition of new states to independence in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of their people, to whom sovereignty and the powers of sovereignty are transferred.*

*The UN has never countenanced the decolonisation of a territory by agreeing to hand over its people to alien rule in the face of their persistent opposition. For Argentina to incorporate the Falkland Islands in its territory on the pretext of decolonisation would simply constitute the imposition of colonial status on the Islands by force in violation of all UN agreed norms of conduct ... It would offend the principle of self-determination...”*

From Washington, Haig sends a message to Pym in London.

*“I can appreciate your disappointment with the Argentine position. Your off-the-record press guidance is entirely proper. As you know, my aim in Buenos Aires was to squeeze as much as I humanly could out of the Argentines so that you and we could know what we are really up against. At no point did I tell them that what was developed in Buenos Aires would be acceptable to you. Nor did I associate the United States in any way with the position produced. ...*

*Let me suggest that you now reflect on the text. In identifying specific areas where you believe changes are imperative, I suggest you work up formulations of your own. This will give us a precise idea of where we stand. It would have the additional advantage of denying the Argentines any basis for saying that they and they alone have taken a step toward peace. ...*

*I further suggest that you and the Prime Minister consider your coming to Washington as soon as you have arrived at a considered view of the text. I agree with you that this is not the time for me to come to London, but I also believe that we need a face-to-face discussion, so that I can clarify points and convey my feeling of Argentine attitudes and aspirations. I cannot reduce to writing the bitterness, resentment and sense of historic frustration I encountered in Buenos Aires. ...*

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193 The border between Spain and Gibraltar was closed at this time. A limited opening had been planned by the Spanish authorities for April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1982, but with nationalism in Britain running high, this was postponed until December.

194 Two more of these missions, some 7000 miles from Ascension, took place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. No Argentine ships were seen in the area.

*It is imperative that you maintain military pressure. I see no other way of bringing the Argentines to a position satisfactory to you. ...*

*As you know, Argentina has asked for an OAS Council meeting to convoke an organ of consultation under the Rio Treaty. ... We propose to abstain on the ground that the Rio Treaty was not designed to apply to cases in which members themselves took acts of force...”*<sup>195</sup>

In London, Prime Minister Thatcher speaks to the Commons.

*“The proposals are Argentine proposals. We are grateful to Mr. Haig for the patience and stamina that he has shown over the proposals, both in Buenos Aires and in his visits to this country, but they are Argentine proposals. He has kept us fully informed, when he has been able to do so, about precisely what they are. We now have full details. ...*

*We regard this as a stage in the negotiating process that must now be continued. We are examining the proposals very closely and will seek to put forward our own proposals to Mr. Haig. With that in mind, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary plans to visit Washington on Thursday. I do not believe that there is much point in reporting to the House before my right hon. Friend has seen Mr. Haig in Washington.*

*Among the many problems presented by the Argentine proposals is that they fail to provide that the Falkland Islanders should be able to determine their own destiny. The House has always said that the wishes of the islanders are paramount. As regards the proposals put forward by the right hon. Member for Leeds East that referred to United Nations administrators, we are in the process of one negotiation through Mr. Haig, and it would be better not to get our wires crossed but to go steadily forward on that proposal. I accept what the right hon. Gentleman said. We are trying to secure implementation of United Nations resolution No. 502, which is clear, but not so easy to implement.*

*We also have rights on self-defence under article 51 of the charter... the House, in exercising its duty, has always said, not only in these negotiations, but on many previous negotiations, that the wishes of the islanders are paramount. Many previous negotiations have been on the basis that the Argentines wanted what is called decolonisation—that has a particular meaning in United Nations terms—but they have not been able or willing to grant self-determination to the islanders.”*<sup>196</sup>

Junta member, Lami Dozo (air force), visits the Falklands, while in Montevideo, 12 teachers from the Islands arrive having refused to work with the Argentine administration.

*“Cold, dull, windy and wet. Real April weather. Reports of more Argentine deaths from exposure during the night; numbers vary from three to ten.”*<sup>197</sup>

In New York, the OAS convene. While the majority of member countries are supportive of Argentina, there is no decision on any action. Mexico's representative says that his country will not impose sanctions on Britain regardless of whether or not the OAS vote for it, declaring that his country; “.. continues to believe that, except

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195 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Europe and Soviet Union, United Kingdom (04/01/1982–07/31/1982) (2)

196 HC Deb 20 April 1982 vol.22 cc119-22

197 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.80

*in the case of legitimate defence, the collective measures referred to in Article 8 cannot be applied in an obligatory form, given their coercive nature, without the authorisation of the Security Council of the United Nations.”*

Further discussion is deferred to the 26<sup>th</sup>.

*The New York Times* reports.

*“Argentina has invoked the wrong Treaty at the wrong time to promote the illusion that all Latin American nations support its seizure of the Falklands. They don't, and some that do serve only their own territorial ambitions.”* <sup>198</sup>

Asked at a Washington press conference whether Secretary Haig's effectiveness as a mediator is now at an end, President Reagan responds.

*“No, it is not. He's done a magnificent job. And let me just lay one thing to rest now regarding some of the rumours that have gone on. This idea of whether or not we've endangered any prestige of ours in doing what we've done -- I think we would have lost prestige if we had not been willing to undertake this job of trying to broker an agreement between these two parties and forestall violence. ... All I can tell you is, there have been some changes made; they've been relayed to the United Kingdom.”*

## **Day 20**

**April 21<sup>st</sup>** – Sir Anthony Parsons telegrams London from the United Nations building in New York.

*“Yesterday's vote in the OAS is seen here as a diplomatic setback for us, the first serious one we have encountered since the crisis began. If the Argentines succeed on 26 April in getting a two-thirds majority in favour of economic or other measures against the UK, this will be a major defeat for us in UN terms. ...*

*The Argentines are continuing to press hard for the early adoption of a communique by the [Non-Aligned Movement] Coordinating Bureau. A drafting group has been set up under Cuban Chairmanship consisting of Argentina, Bangladesh, India, Nigeria and Yugoslavia. The present plan is for the Coordinating Bureau to meet on 23 April.*

*The Argentines have apparently shown some flexibility and indicated a readiness to accept a reference to SCR 502, provided that there is a resounding reaffirmation of previous NAM pronouncements on sovereignty. We are working hard on the Commonwealth members of the drafting group, amongst whom Bangladesh is being particularly helpful. ...”*

Intelligence suggests that elements of Argentina's navy, including the aircraft carrier *25 de Mayo*, are located between the Argentine coast and the Falklands Maritime Exclusion Zone.

Francis Pym makes a statement to Parliament regarding his imminent departure to Washington.

*“Any negotiation which is concluded satisfactorily must deal with certain critical points: in particular the arrangements for the Argentine withdrawal; the nature of any interim administration of the islands, and the framework for the negotiations on the long-term solution*

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<sup>198</sup> *The New York Times* April 22, 1982

*to the dispute for which the United Nations resolution calls. We put to Mr. Haig, when he was in London, ideas which we believed would commend themselves to the House and accord with the wishes of the islanders. He subsequently took them to Buenos Aires.*

*The latest Argentine proposals—despite Mr. Haig's efforts—still fail to satisfy our essential requirements in certain important respects relating to these points. They reflect continuing efforts by Argentina to establish by her aggression and her defiance of the United Nations ... what could not be established by peaceful means.”*

In London, the final decision is taken for the recovery of South Georgia, and TG 317.9, including *Endurance*, is ordered to proceed. In appalling weather conditions, and only after two failed attempts, SAS Mountain Troop, are placed on the Fortuna Glacier.<sup>199</sup>

Off Port Stanley. Argentine helicopters bomb some of the islets.

*“This afternoon the Pucarás again bombed the Tussac Islands in Port William. Savage flames cover the ground while a huge pall of dense smoke rises hundreds of feet into the air. God knows what all this is doing to the wildlife out there. It is being said, though it is difficult to find evidence to support it, that the Argentine dead still being recovered from the invasion, and the deaths from exposure, are being put on the islands so that no trace remains of their losses, which during the invasion period were far heavier than admitted.”*<sup>200</sup>

Argentina's Foreign Minister sends a letter to Secretary Haig.

*“You are aware that Argentina is willing to continue negotiations. ... As it has been remarked so many times, (the) result must include a recognition of the Argentine sovereignty over the Islands. Although said recognition may not be expressly stated in the agreement, nevertheless, the principle and the concept should arise clearly and unequivocally from the wording of the agreement.”*<sup>201</sup>

Argentine Boeing 707's, equipped with Israeli reconnaissance systems, identify the *Hermes* group sailing south.

*“Lewin made the point to the War Cabinet that by shadowing the Task Force, the 707s could direct combat units, including submarines, to attack positions. He proposed that all Argentine aircraft engaged in surveillance should be treated as combat aircraft... The FCO was uncertain about the advantages this surveillance gave to Argentina but very clear politically about how the Argentines might exploit the downing of a civilian aircraft. They would undoubtedly claim this was on a normal transatlantic flight with a filed flight plan. At this sensitive moment,... the diplomats wanted a more cautious approach.”*<sup>202</sup>

SBS reconnaissance teams land on South Georgia from *Endurance*.

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199 Permission to proceed with the reconnaissance missions had been given on April 20, 1982.

200 Smith 1984 pp.83-84. It is difficult to know what this eye-witness was seeing although there has long been a suspicion that Argentina suffered more fatalities during the early days of the invasion than it was prepared to admit.

201 *Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, P820069–0211*

202 Freedman 2005 vol.2. Following legal advice, a warning was issued to Argentina via the Swiss Embassy on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Britain's naval units were also observed by Soviet reconnaissance aircraft operating out of Angola and it is now known that the Soviets were passing intelligence material to Buenos Aires.

In Washington, Ambassador Henderson quietly informs Haig of the decision regarding South Georgia.<sup>203</sup>

*“Haig's immediate reaction, when I told him, was one of surprise and concern ... He thought that our proposed action would aggravate the problem and make a return to negotiation more difficult ...*

*After he had had time to think about it a bit longer, Haig seemed to me to come round more in support of our proposed action, he quite saw the need for us to show firmness, which was all that the Argentine leaders would understand ...”*

*“A few hours later, however, Haig recalled him, having been worrying about the implications of the British decision if the Argentines could then accuse Washington of colluding with London. As the Americans now had their own independent intelligence about the British operation (although it is unclear where this could have come from) he felt he should give the Junta advanced notice, although not so advanced that they could act on the information. This would help him maintain a display of even-handedness. Henderson was aghast... Haig then assured him that no prior notice would be given.”<sup>204</sup>*

US Ambassador Shlauderman in Buenos Aires contacts Washington to report that Argentina is expecting an attack on South Georgia.<sup>205</sup>

## Day 21

**April 22<sup>nd</sup>** – FCO advice to all British nationals in Argentina is that they should now leave the country.

In Brussels, the European Parliament announces that it is; *“.. profoundly shocked by the invasion of the Falkland Islands by Argentina and more than ever convinced that territorial disputes should be resolved by peaceful negotiations, ... Condemns unreservedly the invasion of the Falkland Islands...”*

General Galtieri<sup>206</sup> arrives in the Falkland Islands where his speech is recorded for a television broadcast.<sup>207</sup>

*“I am sure and confident that the pale blue and white will not be lowered,.. The necessary defensive measures have been taken on the island. .. Here is the Argentine flag and, with all due respect to Great Britain and its people, they will have to understand that the world has changed and certain things cannot come back”*

*“The official news agency Telam said Galtieri was tearful as he spoke from Puerto Argentina, the island capital that was known as Port Stanley during 149 years of British rule.”<sup>208</sup>*

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203 Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, P820069–0211

204 Freedman 2005 vol.2. Pym would criticise Haig's thinking when he met the Secretary of State the next day. Haig appeared largely unrepentant. Freedman notes that from then on the British checked all the information being passed on to Washington fearing that; *“our greatest ally is not wholly on our side.”* Haig had attempted to pressure the Argentines into a deal on the 17<sup>th</sup>, by telling them of 'imminent' British action and may even have mentioned South Georgia as he was aware of the Task Group being deployed in that direction.

205 Ibid.

206 Apparently, Galtieri's visit was as 'military commander' rather than as Argentina's head of State.

207 *Our flag will stay in the Falklands, Argentine Chief says* George de Lama in the *Chicago Tribune* April 23, 1982

208 Ibid.

Galtieri reviews his forces' defences.

*"... the British were most likely to land near to Stanley, in which case the Argentine reserves were inadequate. It was also agreed that a further regiment of infantry was needed, although the local commanders stressed the need to address the logistical issues that the extra men would raise. On his return to Buenos Aires, and without consultation, Galtieri decided to send an extra brigade..."*<sup>209</sup>

On South Georgia, still in severe weather, an attempt to pick up the SAS team on Fortuna Glacier results in two Wessex helicopters crashing in "whiteout" conditions. There are no casualties and the group, plus pilots, are successfully taken off by *Antrim's* helicopter. *HMS Brilliant*, with its two helicopters, is ordered to reinforce the ships at South Georgia.<sup>210</sup>

Now in Washington, Francis Pym has a two hour meeting with Secretary Haig.

*"Secretary Haig opened by describing the negotiating process in Buenos Aires, emphasizing its incoherence, the difficulty of finding a negotiating partner who could speak authoritatively, the relative weight of the Argentine Navy and Admiral Anaya in particular, and the role of the corps commanders. Returning here after three days of negotiation he had asked Foreign Minister Costa Méndez for a letter indicating that Argentines would accept the text established if it were acceptable to Britain, and been promised it, only to have Costa Méndez fail to deliver the letter at the airport, and indeed to advance the specious and unacceptable proposal that Argentina assume the governorship of the islands if the negotiations on their long-term status were to fail. The Secretary described Galtieri as a "Patton-type", not particularly bright, and intensely worried about his survival. ...*

*The Secretary concluded that Galtieri's life expectancy as President was very short, that Costa Méndez was not a valid interlocutor and thus that there was no point in having Costa Méndez sit down with Pym, as the former had proposed. The Secretary said that he saw no alternative but to return to Buenos Aires. ...*

*Foreign Secretary Pym thought the gap between the British position and the Buenos Aires text was enormous, particularly when it was so hard to tell whom one could deal with. If it were possible for the Secretary's mission to succeed, he would be all for it. But one must face the probable outcome. Clearly time is running out. ... Prime Minister Thatcher is resolute and not inclined towards further compromise. ...*

*Foreign Secretary Pym asked the Secretary what possibility of success he saw and what chance of success there is if he returns to Buenos Aires.*

*Secretary Haig said he was not optimistic and would have given up much earlier if that had been the criterion. He was only going on because of the historic consequence of failure. If there is war, Latin America will (regardless of the finer judgments of some of its leaders) line up against Britain. This would come to a head at the OAS meeting. ... Secretary Haig said that there was also no question but that the U.S. would shift if talks collapsed. We had told that repeatedly to the Argentines, and we believe they do not question it.*

*What they do question is whether Britain will actually go to war."*<sup>211</sup>

Pym and his team work to amend Argentina's proposals in an attempt to find some middle ground. As amended, the proposals are - (1) an immediate cessation of hostilities, (2) neither side shall introduce more forces into the 'zone', (3) within 24 hours the UK is to rescind its exclusion zone, (4) both sides will withdraw half of their forces

<sup>209</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2. No consideration appears to have been given as to how these men would be housed.

<sup>210</sup> Further attempts to insert reconnaissance teams over the next two days were also hindered by the weather and glacial conditions, but eventually TG 317.9 managed to put men on the ground and *HMS Antrim* stayed near South Georgia to monitor their communications.

<sup>211</sup> *Department of State, Executive Secretariat, S/S Special Handling Restrictions Memos 1979–1983, Lot 96D262*

and equipment within 7 days; with the UK's force standing off to a distance equivalent of 7 days steaming at 12 knots. Argentina's forces to be put into a condition whereby they could not be reinserted within 7 days, (5) both sides forces to return to their usual operating areas or normal duties within 15 days, (6) the USA to verify compliance, (7) all economic and financial sanctions to be terminated without delay, (8) a Special Interim Authority to verify compliance which will also ratify decisions made by the local authorities on the Islands, (9) the Executive and Legislative Councils to have Argentine members drawn from the local community, (10) the flags of the UK, Argentina and the members of the Special Interim Authority to fly together at its HQ only, (11) residence and ownership of property to be equal between Islanders and Argentinians without prejudice to the rights of the inhabitants, (12) *"December 31, 1982, will conclude the Interim Period during which the signatories shall complete negotiations on removal of the Islands from the list of non-self governing territories .. and on mutually agreed conditions for their definitive status, including due regard for the rights of the inhabitants and for the principle of territorial integrity .."*

Foreign Secretary Pym asks the USA to be the third member of the proposed Special Interim Authority and to offer guarantees for compliance; a request passed to President Reagan for consideration. Haig telegrams a message to Méndez regarding the need for a negotiated settlement and including a reminder.

*".. you will recall I indicated to you on Monday (19 April) that we should all be concerned about the possibility of imminent military action in the area of South Georgia."* <sup>212</sup>

Buenos Aires requests NASA to provide satellite images of South Georgia on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, under the LANDSAT agreement. NASA is also asked for images of the South Atlantic to the west of South Georgia on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. Washington informs London, explaining that they have little alternative but to honour the agreement. <sup>213</sup>

From Argentina's Washington Embassy, Ambassador Takacs contacts the US State department seeking further information about an attack by British forces on South Georgia.

## Day 22

**April 23<sup>rd</sup>** – in London, Defence Secretary John Nott supports the MoD's suggestion for an early deployment of Vulcan bombers to Ascension Island.

*"The Vulcans with air refuelling has a radius of action and bomb carrying capability to reach the Falkland Islands from Ascension Island which is 3,350 miles away. A force of 10 Victor tankers would be required to support a single Vulcan round trip from Ascension Island. There is enough fuel at Ascension to support this operation. ..."*

In Buenos Aires, the Swiss envoy is asked to deliver a warning to the Argentine Government.

*"In announcing the establishment of a Maritime Exclusion zone around the Falkland Islands, Her Majesty's Government made it clear that this measure was without prejudice to the right of the United Kingdom to take whatever additional measures may be needed in the exercise of its right of self-defence under article '51 of the United Nations Charter."*

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212 Freedman 2005 vol.2

213 The images were not of a high resolution and there is some doubt that they would have provided much information.

*In this connection, Her Majesty's Government now wishes to make clear that any approach on the part of Argentine warships, including submarines, naval auxiliaries, or military aircraft which could amount to a threat to interfere with the mission of British Forces in the South Atlantic will encounter the appropriate response.*

*All Argentine aircraft including civil aircraft engaging in surveillance of these British Forces will be regarded as hostile and are liable to be dealt with accordingly.”*<sup>214</sup>

*“It is clear from the above text that the warning applied outside the Exclusion Zone as well as within it. This message was notified to the United Nations Security Council and circulated accordingly on 24th April. It was also released publicly.”*<sup>215</sup>

A copy of the warning is passed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Inglesias Rouco, in *La Prensa*, writes; “.. this is a time for arms and war is now inevitable.”

In Washington the UK and US negotiating teams meet to discuss the amendments worked out overnight.

*“The Secretary said that the pressure to achieve a negotiated, political settlement would not dissipate once military action began. Military action was unlikely to be decisive, and would probably drag on. World public opinion would insist on a solution. Pym agreed with the Secretary's observation, but said that once military action began, "people will have different perceptions." Haig commented that it was easy to slip into thinking in terms of negotiations versus war. This was false. A political solution would become even more imperative if a war started. The Secretary then suggested to Pym that they work through the text ... “*<sup>216</sup>

At the UN, Sir Anthony Parsons considers another approach to the Security Council.

*“Recent conversations which I have had confirm that the longer we can keep out of the Council the better. The Non-Aligned members are already feeling slightly uneasy that a combination of our tactics and Panamanian/Argentine clumsiness led them to support a Resolution which contained nothing about the Argentine case on sovereignty. I have also had reliable confirmation that, if we use force, and particularly if we inflict casualties, there will be an immediate return to the Council ... and that we will be seriously isolated. ...*

*If the Haig mission collapses, someone is bound to call the Council fairly soon and there will be precisely those calls on us which we wish to avoid, eg. the suspension of military preparations combined with some time-consuming and ineffective mechanism such as the Secretary-General's good offices.*

*All the above reinforces my conviction that we should for the moment continue to soldier on here for as long as we can,... avoiding recourse to the Council..”*

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214 PREM19/621

215 Thatcher to Foukes September 19, 1984

216 Department of State, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Miscellaneous Files, March 1981–February 1983, Lot 83D210, D. Gompert



Off South Georgia, HMS *Antrim* and HMS *Plymouth* rendezvous with HMS *Brilliant* while HMS *Endurance* remains in contact with the observation teams. Commander Young on *Antrim* hears on the BBC World Service that a British fleet is approaching South Georgia.<sup>217</sup>

*Endurance* picks up emissions from a submarine's radar and issues a warning that an Argentine vessel is in the area of South Georgia. Britain's two tankers withdraw to the south.<sup>218</sup>

From London, Defence Secretary Nott orders the British submarine HMS *Splendid*, to patrol north-west of the Falklands in the area that Argentina's aircraft carrier was reported to be on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

*"This would create the option of being able to execute retaliation should ministers so decide following an attack upon a British ship in the South Georgia area. This indicates that politically the critical consideration was where, when and against whom the first shots were to be fired rather than the second shots."*<sup>219</sup>

Following an evening round of discussions between Pym's team and that of Secretary Haig, Minister Pym considers the results; "... although the Secretary had tried very hard, the Prime Minister would certainly have great problems with the US draft. Nevertheless, he would face that problem tomorrow."<sup>220</sup>

*"Most of these two days was taken up with Pym's team going over the issues again with Haig and his officials. At first Haig was hoping to go once again to Buenos Aires to present 'reasonable proposals from London'..."*<sup>221</sup>

Haig contacts Argentina's Foreign Minister Méndez.

*"Have just ended our second day of tiring discussions with Francis Pym and his colleagues. As we had anticipated, the text that I brought with me from Buenos Aires is unacceptable to the British. We found strong resistance in those areas I told you about. Nevertheless, we have made a serious effort and are trying to achieve some progress. Now I hope to have a new text soon that you and I can review when we meet..."*<sup>222</sup>

*"Nicholas Fenn, the British spokesman, said there was still 'life to the Haig mission' but all signs tonight were gloomy, because Mr. Haig had clearly been unable to persuade Mr. Pym to accept compromise ideas that he could bring to the Argentines."*<sup>223</sup>

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217 This was also reported in the *Chicago Tribune* on Friday, April 23, 1982 and would seem to have followed comments from a 'US intelligence source.' British reporters were embedded among the various elements of the British Task Force and there was often conflict over what should, and what should not, be reported. A full discussion of this issue can be found in Freedman 2005 vol.2

218 *Brambleleaf* had joined *Tidespring* with TG 317.9

219 Freedman 2005 vol.2

220 *Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Alexander M. Haig, Jr., 1981–1982, Lot 82D370, No folder. Drafted by Smith. The meeting took place in the Secretary's Conference Room at the Department of State.*

221 Freedman 2005 vol.2

222 Quoted in Freedman 2005 vol.2

223 *New York Times*, April 24, 1982

## Day 23

**April 24<sup>th</sup>** – acting on Galtieri's instructions, but without suitable equipment, Argentina's 3<sup>rd</sup> Mechanised Infantry Brigade starts to deploy to the Falklands archipelago.<sup>224</sup> Meanwhile, Argentina's air force commence reconnaissance missions over South Georgia. A Boeing 707 overflies *Endurance*.

NASA tells Buenos Aires that the LANDSAT images requested on the 22<sup>nd</sup> cannot be taken due to “technical problems.”

*“Eagleburger made two further points. First, it was vital that this should not leak. Second, it was obvious that the longer the “technical problems” continued, the more clear it would become to the Argentinians what was happening. ... It would be of great help to him ... to know whether ... this could be of some military value to the Argentinians.”*<sup>225</sup>

Alexander Haig telegrams PM Thatcher.

*“Francis Pym and I have just concluded our discussions ... He will be bringing back to London a text which I put forward as a basis for a peaceful settlement. Francis made it very clear that some of what I suggested presented problems ... Whether the text we have suggested would be accepted in Buenos Aires I cannot say. It would certainly require the Argentines to move well beyond their positions at the end of my latest visit there. ...”*<sup>226</sup>

Haig also messages President Reagan.

*“... it would be most useful if you could make clear to Mrs. Thatcher that we now face the last chance for a settlement before hostilities escalate, possibly beyond control. She must be clear that you are prepared to advocate acceptance of the current text with the Argentines, and on the public record, but that you are not prepared to stand behind the text if she makes changes that exclude altogether the possibility of Argentine acceptance.”*<sup>227</sup>

Pym sends his own message to Thatcher.

*“Although I was able to persuade him to modify his position in some important respects during our two days of talks, his final draft still falls far short in several places of what we have regarded as acceptable, notably in respect of Argentine representation in the Islands Councils (para 6), Argentine scope for influence in the economic and related fields (para 7) and in precluding the continuation of the present colonial status (para 8).”*

Pym flies back into London with the latest version of the peace plan, which he presents to an OD(SA) meeting.

Whilst the Foreign Secretary is inclined to accept the plan, Margaret Thatcher announces that she is prepared to resign if the Cabinet agree with him.

*“The document [Pym] brought back was a complete sell-out.. a Foreign Secretary of Britain recommended peace at any price. Had it gone through, I could not have stayed.”*<sup>228</sup>

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224 Lacking suitable accommodation, much of this Brigade were sent on to West Falkland.

225 PREM19/621. Telegram No. 1441

226 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Europe and Soviet Union, United Kingdom (4)

227 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Argentina (04/24/1982-04/26/1982)

228 Thatcher quoted in *The Daily Mail* April 15, 2013

*"The moment was a tense one: the operation to retake South Georgia was still uncertain... (Pym) later told the Ambassador (Henderson) that "he failed to realise how feelings were hardening at home so that when he got back he felt light-years away from the sentiment there." To the Prime Minister Pym had come back with a document she saw as "conditional surrender." ..."* <sup>229</sup>

The Cabinet's decision is not to reject the plan outright, but to rely on President Galtieri rejecting it first.

PM Thatcher telegrams Secretary Haig.

*"This whole business started with an Argentine aggression. Since then our purpose together has been to ensure the early withdrawal by the Argentines in accordance with the Security Council Resolution. We think therefore that the next step should be for you to put your latest ideas to them. I hope that you will seek the Argentine government's view of them tomorrow and establish urgently whether they can accept them. Knowledge of their attitude will be important to the British Cabinet's consideration of your ideas."*

Haig agrees to talk again to Costa Méndez, which he does.

*"We believe that full-scale conflict with the United Kingdom is imminent. This information comes from our own sources; the British do not consult with us on such matters; nor do we have any means of restraining them."* <sup>230</sup>

*"As far as the British understood, Argentina was being asked for a straight 'yes or no' answer by midnight on 27 April on a text that the Americans had put beyond alteration. This indeed was the case."* <sup>231</sup>

General Oscar Joffre, with the Argentine 10th Infantry Brigade, and Brigadier General Omar Parada, with the 3rd Infantry Brigade, arrive to reinforce the Falklands.

HMS *Brilliant*, HMS *Antrim* and HMS *Plymouth* regroup at South Georgia while SSN *Conqueror's* area of operation is moved to the north and north-east of South Georgia. <sup>232</sup>

## Day 24

**April 25<sup>th</sup>** – Britain's War Cabinet and Chiefs of Staff meets at Chequers.

*"This was the critical day in the battle for South Georgia. The Haig plan was on the table and the Argentine reaction was awaited, and there was anxiety about the extent of the American pressure Britain would face if Argentina replied positively."* <sup>233</sup>

ARA *Santa Fé*, having landed 50 reinforcements and supplies for the garrison on South Georgia, is seen leaving Grytviken by HMS *Antrim's* helicopter. The helicopter crew attacks the submarine with depth charges while helicopters from the other British ships join in.

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<sup>229</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

<sup>230</sup> Quoted in Freedman 2005 vol.2

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>232</sup> An issue that kept reoccurring was how to identify whether a submarine was friendly or an enemy; anti-submarine operations always had to consider that a contact could be either. Time was therefore always wasted in making sure that the friendly submarines were out of the area, which could take up to 30 hours.

<sup>233</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

Badly damaged and with a casualty, *Santa Fé* is abandoned in shallow water at King Edwards Point and its submariners flee towards Argentina's Grytviken base.

*"There was no sign of any activity ashore, not of distinct observations posts or defensive positions, although machine gun fire was reported. All agreed that the momentum must be maintained and the garrison attacked as soon as possible."* <sup>234</sup>

Seizing the initiative, albeit contrary to the original plan, the British commander at South Georgia orders an immediate attack by an *ad hoc* company of 72 men formed from those Royal Marines, Special Boat Service and Special Air Service personnel who are at hand. This diverse assortment of specialists land under covering fire from *Antrim* and *Plymouth's* 4.5" guns.

*"The first troops moved forward cautiously, but when they got close to King Edward Point at 1705 they saw a white flag flying, which had in fact been raised soon after the start of the intense naval bombardment"* <sup>235</sup>

Argentina's 137 troops, together with the submarine's crew, surrender without a fight. <sup>236</sup>

*"The fall of South Georgia marked the start of a massive distortion of events by the junta. Official communiques described a prolonged and heroic defence against overwhelming British forces, with commando parties dispersing into the wilderness and holding out long after the main fighting ended – the last part of which was completely untrue."* <sup>237</sup>

BBC Radio reports.

*"... at about 6 pm London time, the white flag was hoisted in Grytviken beside the Argentine flag. Shortly afterwards, the Argentine forces there surrendered to British forces. The Argentine forces offered only limited resistance to the British troops. Our forces were landed by helicopter and were supported by a number of warships, together with a Royal Fleet Auxiliary. .. So far, no British casualties have been reported..."*

A message from South Georgia is relayed to London;

*"Be pleased to inform Her Majesty that the White Ensign flies alongside the Union Jack in South Georgia. God Save the Queen."*

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher speaks to reporters.

*"Just rejoice at the news and congratulate our forces and the Marines... Just rejoice."*

Recently arrived in Washington, Argentina's Foreign Minister, Costa Méndez, says, in an off-the-cuff remark, that Argentina is now at war. <sup>238</sup>

Argentina complains to the UN about British, "*armed aggression.*"

The BBC reports anti-British demonstrations in Buenos Aires, while in Venezuela shipping workers boycott British ships.

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<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>236</sup> With Davidoff's scrap-metal party, the total was 180 prisoners.

<sup>237</sup> Middlebrook 2003

<sup>238</sup> Both London and Buenos Aires decided to ignore this remark due to the implications of a formal declaration.

From the UN, the Secretary-General appeals; “... to both parties to comply immediately with the provisions of Security Council Resolution 502 (1982) and to refrain from any action that would broaden yet further the conflict which threatens to have serious consequences for world peace.”

*“Parsons immediately went to see the Secretary General to explain that this suggested that Britain had failed to comply with SCR 502, yet only Argentina was in breach. Perez de Cuellar took the point and 'was most apologetic.' He had tried to produce a neutral text but now saw that it could be regarded as equivocal.”*<sup>239</sup>

Ambassador Charles Wallace reports to London from Lima.

*“Sources close to the President told me yesterday that he was deeply worried about the present situation. It was also suggested to me that there might be in existence a secret undertaking between the Argentine and Peruvian armed forces dating from ... 1979. ...*

*The terms of the undertaking would commit the armed forces of each country to the defence of the other in case of aggression by a third, clearly with Chile uppermost in mind.”*

## Day 25

**April 26<sup>th</sup>** – Margaret Thatcher sends a message to Secretary Haig.

*“Our repossession of South Georgia has radically changed the situation. In particular it enables us to deal with the Falkland Islands in isolation. Equally it should bring home to Argentina her interest in negotiating for a settlement, but time is desperately short. Our task force is approaching the MEZ and the next stage of operations will have to start very soon. ...*

*There is now no time to negotiate in detail. What we have in mind is as follows.*

*If the Argentinians withdraw their forces from the Falkland Islands we will stop our task force and turn it back once Argentinian withdrawal is completed, provided that from that time onwards the United States will militarily guarantee the security of the Falkland Islands. This would secure the withdrawal of Argentinian forces in accordance with Security Council Resolution 502 and would secure the way for immediate negotiations in a conference to resolve the dispute. ...*

*In the meantime the traditional Administration would be restored to the Falkland Islands but for the time being we should be prepared not to send back the Governor and to appoint an officer to administer the Government ad interim. We should be ready, during that time, to have an Argentinian Resident at Port Stanley to look after the interests of the Argentinians living in the Falkland Islands.*

*If this proposal commends itself to you we need to decide how it should be launched. It would of course need your own wholehearted agreement and backing. ...”*<sup>240</sup>

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239 Freedman 2005 vol.2. Parsons would not allow the apology given by Pérez de Cuéllar to be passed on to the press, as he feared that it would be to the detriment of the relationship that he had forged with the Secretary-General. The result, however, was that Thatcher had an uncomfortable few days under fire from the official Opposition for appearing to ignore an appeal from the UN.

240 Department of State, Executive Secretariat, S/S Special Handling Restrictions Memos 1979–1983, Lot 96D262

Australia's Prime Minister issues a press statement.

*"The British Government's decision to use force to re-establish its administration in South Georgia is a natural consequence of the invasion of the Falklands and South Georgia by Argentine forces, and the failure of Argentina to comply with the demands of the United Nations Security Council to withdraw its forces. Argentina has refused to take effective action to settle the dispute by peaceful means, and has ignored repeated warnings ... The British military action should therefore not have come as a surprise..."*

Britain's Prime Minister tells the House of Commons.

*"There is no lack of will on our part to negotiate. The trouble is in getting Argentina to withdraw. It may not be possible to achieve an Argentine withdrawal by negotiation, but that is what we are seeking. Argentina has had more than three weeks in which to comply with the Security Council resolution, but it has shown no inclination to do so. Indeed, it has reinforced its troops."* <sup>241</sup>

A 'defence area' is declared around the main body of the British naval Task Group as it sails towards the Falklands archipelago.

Thatcher tells the BBC that the time for diplomacy is running out.

*"Democratic nations believe in the right of self-determination. ... The people who live there are of British stock. They have been for generations, and their wishes are the most important thing of all. Democracy is about the wishes of the people."* <sup>242</sup>

At Leith, on South Georgia, Lieutenant-Colonel Alfredo Astiz <sup>243</sup> agrees to surrender his forces.

*"It was decided that we would go in at 08.30 and accept the surrender on the football pitch. However, at about 07.30, I had second thoughts about trying to land in an area which was still effectively controlled by enemy troops. I changed the rendezvous at the last moment and Astiz reluctantly agreed.*

*The surrender went smoothly enough and Astiz confirmed our assumption that the building was heavily mined. In fact ... our suspicions were further aroused. ... There were wires leading out to the middle of the football pitch where they had marked an H for the helicopter landing. ... Astiz told me he had found the prospect vaguely amusing. I told him that the white flag obviously meant nothing to him..."* <sup>244</sup>

*"... Captain Astiz formally surrendered on board Plymouth. Together with the 39 scrap metal workers this now meant that the Task Group had nearly 200 detainees and prisoners of war."* <sup>245</sup>

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241 HC Deb 26 April 1982 vol.22 cc609-17

242 BBC's *Panorama* April 26, 1982

243 Astiz had previously been associated with an interrogation centre in Argentina known as the School of Naval Mechanics and was wanted by a number of countries with regard to the disappearance of their nationals.

244 Barker 1997

245 Freedman 2005 vol.2

On the Falklands, Governor Menéndez appoints himself as Head of the 'Malvinas Joint Command'.<sup>246</sup>

*"It is Argentine Army Day, which was celebrated on the radio with a great speech to the troops by Gen. Menéndez, preceded by lots of inspiring music. The theme seemed to be that they are to fight like lions for their fatherland. He obviously has not seen some of his lions lately. A vet might come in useful."*<sup>247</sup>

Speeches to the OAS meeting in Washington are reported to London.

*"... Most Rio Treaty signatories were represented ... Costa Méndez's violent speech was followed by warm applause. A firm statement by Haig that force had been used by an American State and Security Council Resolution 502 laid down the basis for a settlement was greeted with total silence. ... Costa Méndez claimed ... British aggression threatened not only Argentina but the peace and security of the whole Latin American region. The British attack on South Georgia demonstrated how the UK disregarded the course of peaceful negotiation. The UK had answered Argentina's peaceful intentions with "an act of war. ... Argentina would defend itself to the maximum extent: the Argentine flag would not be lowered until the last drop of blood had been expended by the Argentine soldiers.."*

Ambassador Henderson reports; *"Haig has telephoned me following his speech at the OAS which he said went down like a lead balloon. Nobody was likely again to call him even handed. He had spoken to Costa Méndez and told him that time had run out. Haig said that he would be presenting his proposals to the Argentinians on a take it or leave it basis. They would have 24 hours in which to answer yes or no."*<sup>248</sup>

Estanislao Valdes Otero, the President of the OAS, sends a message to PM Thatcher.

*"I have been instructed to transmit the appeal of the Foreign Ministers of the Americas that the Government of the United Kingdom .. immediately cease the hostilities it is carrying on within the security region defined by Article 4 on the Inter-American Treaty of reciprocal Assistance, and also refrain from any act that may affect inter-American peace and security and immediately to call a truce that will make it possible to resume and proceed normally with the negotiation aimed at a peaceful settlement of the conflict, taking into account the rights of sovereignty of the Republic of Argentina over the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands and the interests of the Islanders."*

Secretary Haig notes.

*"I met with Costa Méndez, telling him that within forty-eight hours, the British would almost certainly strike again, bombarding airfields, launching commando raids. 'We have no more time,' I said. 'The American proposal is fair and reasonable. If necessary, we will go public with it and let the world judge why these negotiations have produced no result.' In Costa Méndez, I sensed a reluctance to forward the U.S. proposal. He told me that there was a virulent anti-American and anti-Haig atmosphere building in the country and in the junta. I offered to return to Buenos Aires and deliver the text to Galtieri and the junta myself. ... I asked that the junta inform me within twenty-four hours whether they could receive me. Costa Méndez promised to pass on the message."*<sup>249</sup>

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246 As Mendez was actually junior to both Joffre and Parada, his orders were often viewed as 'suggestions'.

247 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.102

248 PREM19/621 Washington to FCO Telegram No. 1465 of 26 April

249 Haig 1984 p.291

## Day 26

**April 27<sup>th</sup>** – London is informed that Haig has transmitted his proposals through the US Embassy in Buenos Aires rather than fly there.

*“US Ambassador is on way to see Galtieri. He has delivered proposals to Costa Méndez. He will give him one hour to study them..”*

Plans for the retaking of the Falklands, *Operation Sutton*, are presented to the War Cabinet.

Sir Ian Sinclair QC advises the British Government that Argentine prisoners must be treated as prisoners-of-war under the terms of the Geneva Conventions.<sup>250</sup>

The *Daily Star* newspaper speculates about Chilean cooperation with Britain in exchange for arms sales.

Argentine naval forces are deployed to intercept the British fleet.

On the Falklands, 14 Islanders, deemed 'troublemakers' are detained at Fox Bay East.<sup>251</sup>

*“... we saw large numbers of fresh troops, who had clearly just arrived on some of the C-130's which came in during the latter part of the morning. They seem to be a sort of commando unit, very professional in appearance And somewhat older than the majority of those already here; about mid-twenties to early thirties... Hard looking men.*

*We were just having tea in the front room when I happened to look out of the window in time to see Martyn being taken into a military vehicle by the new men... Captain Ramanov said that they were Special Forces whose authority superseded all other military, that those detained were about to be taken to a nearby settlement... life is going to be a trifle different from now on.”*<sup>252</sup>

The US State Department sends an update to its embassy in Buenos Aires.

*“Events are moving quickly here and we will have to take action tonight to continue our effort to find a peaceful solution. The Secretary has talked to Costa Méndez and proposed that he travel to Buenos Aires immediately with the agreement text, as it has been refined since we departed Argentina. The President is prepared to call Galtieri if that is necessary.”*<sup>253</sup>

Haig sends a message to Francis Pym.

*“We believe that your success on South Georgia may now give us greater reason to hope that the Argentines will regard the presently drafted framework as a preferred alternative to*

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250 Thatcher had previously told the House of Commons that Argentine prisoners were not POWs as war had not been declared. Arrangements were needed to secure the POWs in an area that was sufficiently far from the area of operations to be safe and, as a result, the UK would choose to repatriate Argentine POWs as soon as it could be arranged – with exceptions, including Astiz. Eventually 151 POWs were repatriated via Ascension Island where they were first seen by the ICRC. Astiz would remain at Ascension while a decision was made as to the legal requirements of his disposal; representations having been made by the Swedish and French Governments.

251 There are many instances of the Islanders passing information back to the UK. Reg Silvey, Terry Peck, Vernon Steen and Trudi Morrison to name only a few. *cf.* Bound 2002

252 Diary entry in Smith 1984 pp.103 & 104

253 *Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File, 04/27/1982 (1)*



*further armed conflict. ... we have proposed to the Argentines that I leave for Buenos Aires as soon as that can be arranged – perhaps in the next few hours. .. If I do not go to Buenos Aires, I will instruct our Ambassador there to deliver our text and ask for a prompt Argentine reply, thus .. we should know within a day or two whether there is reason to hope that a settlement can be reached..”*<sup>254</sup>

Haig receives an answer from Méndez; “Costa Méndez informed me that his government could not receive me in Buenos Aires at this time.”<sup>255</sup>

Ambassador Henderson in Washington telegrams John Nott that he; “.. had a general discussion with Weinberger, .. he is delighted by the South Georgia operation and tells me that the President is also. He is sceptical whether the current negotiations are going to get anywhere. ..”

As the OAS continue its discussions in Washington, only Guatemala and Nicaragua endorse Argentina's invasion while Mexico, Trinidad, Costa Rica and Colombia are all critical.

A 5pm to 7am curfew is imposed upon the remaining residents of Stanley.

## **Day 27**

**April 28<sup>th</sup>** – Haig telephones Pym; “Mr. Haig said that there was still no word from Buenos Aires. There appeared to be a stalemate, with the Navy in favour of action, and the Air Force and Army preferring negotiation. ... if there was still no reply by the morning of 29 April, the United States would go public. ..”

“Pym and Henderson pressed Haig to acknowledge failure and blame Argentina. This he was reluctant to do, and anxiety about how far he might be prepared to go in search of a deal grew in London. Haig appeared to be expecting Argentine amendments and while he was prepared to dismiss most of their likely demands, he seemed to think that it might be possible to offer more on Argentine representation on the Legislative Council. He was even suggesting that midnight on 27 April had not been so much a deadline as a time when, absent an Argentine reply, the 'whole situation would change.' When pressed by Henderson on Argentine stalling tactics he said that he had 'to go right down to the end of the line before coming down on our side.'...”<sup>256</sup>

Francis Pym instructs Ambassador Henderson in Washington; “.. report to us immediately, when there is any clear response from Galtieri and the Junta...”

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) appeals to both Britain and Argentina to discharge their obligations under the Geneva Conventions.<sup>257</sup>

Britain's Defence Secretary Nott makes a statement to the House of Commons.

*“The following statement was issued by the Government earlier today: From 1100 GMT on 30th April 1982, a Total Exclusion Zone will be established around the Falkland Islands.*

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254 PREM19/622

255 *Caveat: Realism, Reagan and Foreign Policy* A. Haig 1984 p.291

256 Freedman 2005 vol.2

257 PREM19/622. The Conventions applied in any state of war; any other type of armed conflict or when territory was occupied. The Junta would not declare the first; was reluctant to recognise the second and denied that it occupied foreign territory. As a result Argentina viewed the ICRC with suspicion.

*The outer limit of this Zone is the same as for the Maritime Exclusion Zone established on Monday 12th April 1982, namely a circle of 200 nautical miles radius from latitude 51 degrees 40 minutes South, 59 degrees 30 minutes West.*

*From the time indicated, the Exclusion Zone will apply not only to Argentine warships and Argentine naval auxiliaries but also to any other ship, whether naval or merchant vessel, which is operating in support of the illegal occupation of the Falkland Islands by Argentine forces. The Exclusion Zone will also apply to any aircraft, whether military or civil, which is operating in support of the illegal occupation.*

*Any ship and any aircraft whether military or civil which is found within this Zone without due authority from the MOD in London will be regarded as operating in support of the illegal occupation and will therefore be regarded as hostile and will be liable to be attacked by British Forces.*

*Also from the time indicated, Port Stanley airport will be closed; and any aircraft on the ground in the Falkland Islands will be regarded as present in support of the illegal occupation and accordingly is liable to attack.*

*These measures are without prejudice to the right of the UK to take whatever additional measures may be needed in exercise of its right of self-defence, under Article 51 of the UN Charter.”*<sup>258</sup>

In Buenos Aires, the Swiss Embassy inform the junta of the new exclusion zone around the Falklands.

In Washington, a final resolution is adopted by the OAS urging Argentina and the UK to; “.. call a truce that will make it possible to resume and proceed normally with the negotiation aimed at a peaceful settlement of the conflict, taking into account the rights of the sovereignty of the Republic of Argentina over the Malvinas Islands and the interests of the Islanders.”

On leaving the OAS meeting, Costa Méndez tells the waiting press that; “The first phase – OAS endorsement of Argentinian sovereignty – is complete.”

Pym telegrams Haig.

*“The (OAS) Resolution is not acceptable to us. We cannot forego our undoubted rights of self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter, as the Resolution suggests we should. The OAS Resolution is to be conveyed to the President of the Security Council. Argentina may additionally seek an early debate in the Council and the adoption of a Resolution on similar lines. We have so far been successful in keeping the issue out of the Council since the adoption of SCR 502. ... We will be working hard to achieve this.”*<sup>259</sup>

Argentina, in a letter to the UN, describes the declaration of the TEZ as a, “new act of aggression” and calls the British use of force; “... an unjustified act of reprisal aimed at restoring colonial occupation of the Argentine islands;...” Argentina also asserts that it is; “... impossible for the United Kingdom to claim the right of self-defence, under Article 51, in islands situated 8,000 miles from British territory.”

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258 HC Deb 28 April 1982 vol.22 cc296-7W

259 Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Alexander M. Haig, Jr., 1981–1982, Lot 82D370, (2) Falklands Crisis-1982.

At the UN, Sir Anthony Parsons provides details of the TEZ to the President of the Security Council, adding; *“Port Stanley airport will be closed, and any aircraft on the ground in the Falkland islands will be regarded as present in support of the illegal occupation and, accordingly, is liable to attack.”*<sup>260</sup>

Parsons also raises the issue of self-determination.

*“... Self-determination is usually referred to these days in the United Nations not as a principle, but rather as an "inalienable right"; in other words, it is a right which cannot be taken away. This right derives principally from the Charter and the Covenants on Human Rights. Article 1(2) of the Charter refers to self-determination of "peoples" and article 73 recognises that "the interests of the inhabitants" of territories such as the Falkland Islands are paramount.*

*Article 1 of the two international Covenants on Human Rights contains the following provision: "1. All peoples have the right to self-determination. ..."*

*Paragraph 3 of the same article establishes that the duty to promote the realisation of this right is imposed upon all state parties and not only upon those administering territories. The Falkland Islanders are a people. The United Kingdom ratified both the Human Rights Covenants on their behalf. They are a permanent population. ...*

*The United Kingdom cannot accept that the right of self-determination as enshrined in the Charter and the Human Rights Covenants is subject to a special exception in the case of the Falkland Islands. This conclusion is confirmed by the Friendly Relations Declaration, adopted by consensus in 1970. ...*<sup>261</sup>

*Whilst no doubt much time and energy could be spent in reviewing the history of the Falkland Islands between the first settlement in 1764 and 1833, and whilst the United Kingdom is confident about the strength of its legal case over that period, these factors cannot be allowed to override the right of self-determination. ...*

*If the international community were to discount 149 years of history, there would hardly be an international boundary which did not immediately become subject of dispute.”*<sup>262</sup>

Peruvian airport workers impose a boycott of British aircraft and cargoes.

Secretary Haig meets with Costa Méndez in Washington.

*“The essential message Costa-Mendez conveyed was the following: the GOA believes the Rio Treaty MFM resolution<sup>3</sup> strengthened its position with Argentine and world opinion, but realizes there are only two options for resolving the Falklands dispute: a continuation of the U.S. effort or through the U.N. The U.N. route would require major readjustments in Argentine foreign policy which the GOA does not want to make (and Costa-Mendez even less), and the outcome would be uncertain. Therefore, Argentina wants the U.S. effort to continue. However, it cannot accept the proposal as it stands; the GOA has difficulties with what it perceives as lack of a deadline for resolving the sovereignty issue, with the administrative arrangements for the interim period, and with the political resolution article, particularly the reference to the wishes and interests of the inhabitants.*

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260 PREM19/623 telegram No.627 1 May 1982

261 Resolution 2625 (XXV) - Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations A/RES/25/2625 1970

262 UN Doc A/37/582

*The Secretary told Costa-Mendez that only the U.S. is in a position to achieve a satisfactory solution. He understood the reference to adjustments in Argentina's foreign policy, but did not believe any Argentine Government could undertake a close alliance with the Soviets. As for the text of the proposal, the Secretary told Costa-Mendez that we see no prospect for any significant changes being accepted by the British. The UK has serious problems with it as it stands; however, if the GOA agrees to the proposal, we are confident that we can prevail upon the UK to accept, provided full-scale fighting has not yet begun. According to our information (the Secretary stressed again that the British are keeping their plans to themselves), a British attack could begin as early as Friday. ...*

*The Secretary and Enders went over the three points Costa Mendez had listed as stumbling blocks, pointing out that the essential concerns of the GOA have been preserved with only minor modifications from the text at the time the Secretary departed Buenos Aires.... It is in our judgment a fair and reasonable proposal, one which the U.S. can stand behind. ... if the GOA concludes definitively that it cannot accept the proposal, there should also be no doubt that the U.S. will have to come down strongly on the side of the UK.”* <sup>263</sup>

Alexander Haig gives Costa Méndez 24 hours to respond.

*“Costa Mendez did not make any proposals but went out and told the press that the American draft had not been rejected and negotiations continued.”* <sup>264</sup>

Haig telephones Pym from Washington.

*“Costa Méndez .. had made a clear and plaintive request for the negotiating process to continue. Costa Méndez has said that the alternatives were for Argentina to bring in “the others” (by which Haig presumably meant the Russians: Haig commented that he doubted that they would be interested) or go to the UN. He had asked Haig whether he would forward further suggestions to us. Haig had told him that the proposals as they stood offered Argentina more than she could reasonably have expected. There was no hope of improving them. ...”* <sup>265</sup>

## **Day 28**

**April 29<sup>th</sup>** – British medium-range Vulcan bombers arrive at Ascension Island. Intelligence suggests that Brazil is selling aircraft to Argentina's Air Force.

*Britain's Cabinet meet in Downing Street; “... that morning the Cabinet were being prepared for a possible situation in which it could no longer be assumed that Britain would retain American support, important though it was... The American effort to remain conspicuously neutral politically had taken its toll. There had been no economic measures taken by Washington, a refusal to take a stand on the sovereignty issue, and a readiness to conduct business as usual with Buenos Aires. After the Cabinet Pym wrote to Haig expressing the surprise of his colleagues that deadlines had passed without an American response...”* <sup>266</sup>

Margaret Thatcher sends a message to President Reagan.

*“.. the proposals must now be regarded as having been rejected by the Argentines, who have ignored the deadline and publicly restated that they are not prepared to alter their position on*

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263 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/28/1982

264 Freedman 2005 vol.2

265 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/28/1982

266 Freedman 2005 vol.2

*sovereignty. Al made clear to Francis last week that, if Argentina did reject the proposals, the U.S. would consider its current peace-making efforts to have ended and would from then on give full public support to Britain. In the Cabinet's view, this point has now been reached. I cannot conceal from you how deeply let down I and my colleagues would feel if under these circumstances the U.S. were not now to give us its full support. ”*<sup>267</sup>

President Reagan responds to PM Thatcher.

*“ .. There can be no doubt about our full support for you and the principles of international law and order you are defending. You can count on that support in whatever forum this issue is debated. You can also count on our sympathetic consideration of requests for assistance.”*<sup>268</sup>

Argentina announces a 200 mile exclusion zone against British shipping and aircraft, extending from the Falkland Islands and South Georgia as its fleet prepares to intercept Britain's Task Force. One Argentine attack group moves towards the north-west of the Falklands, while another approaches the Islands from the south.

Ernesto Sabato, a staunch opponent of the junta writes in *La Nacion*.

*”In Argentina it is not a military dictatorship that is fighting. It is the whole people, her women, her children, her old people, regardless of their political persuasion. Opponents to the regime like myself are fighting for our dignity, fighting to extricate the last vestiges of colonialism. Don't be mistaken, Europe, it is not a dictatorship that is fighting for the Malvinas; it is the whole nation.”*

In Washington, Costa Méndez finally reports his Government's rejection of Haig's final proposal.

*“As my Government has already indicated to you, Argentina's objective is the recognition of its sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands. That central element of our discussions is the ultimate justification for the actions undertaken by my country and .. is for us an unrenounceable goal. ...*

*To the extent that the provisions relating to the recognition of our sovereignty are imprecise, we deem necessary, if we wish to avoid a return to the frustrating situation that existed prior to April 2, the establishment of mechanisms that give us greater powers for the administration of the Islands...*

*As concerns the question of sovereignty, all precision regarding the concept of territorial integrity has been abandoned, and a new element has been introduced, a virtual referendum to determine the “wishes” of the inhabitants, in open opposition to United Nations Resolution 2065 .... we cannot accept these changes...”*<sup>269</sup>

*“Haig had another tough meeting with Costa Méndez at which he indicated what he considered to be the dire consequences of the Argentine position... When Costa Méndez asked whether the UK had rejected the American proposal, Haig replied that they did not like it all as the document offered a fundamental change in the status quo of the islands. Yet if Argentina accepted it, he would force Britain into doing likewise. He would not contemplate further changes to the draft.”*<sup>270</sup>

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267 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/29/1982 (1)

268 PREM19/622 Prime Minister's Personal Message T91/82

269 PREM19/622 Telegram 1517 of 29 April. Also Department of State, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Miscellaneous Files, March 1981–February 1983, Lot 83S210, Falklands [Folder 1]

270 Freedman 2005 vol.2

Updating Parliament, PM Thatcher deals with a suggestion of arbitration.

*“Although we have no doubt about our sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, South Georgia, South Sandwich or British Antarctic Territory, some of my right hon. and hon. friends have suggested that we refer the matter to the International Court of Justice.*

*Since Argentina does not accept the compulsory jurisdiction of the court, the issue cannot be referred for a binding decision without her agreement. We have never sought a ruling on the Falkland Islands themselves from that court, but we have raised the question of the dependencies on three separate occasions—in 1947, 1949 and 1951. Each time Argentina refused to go to the court. In 1955, the British Government applied unilaterally to the International Court of Justice against encroachments on British sovereignty in the dependencies by Argentina. Again, the court advised that it could not pursue the matter since it could act only if there was agreement between the parties recognising the court's jurisdiction.*

*In 1977, Argentina, having accepted the jurisdiction of an international court of arbitration on the Beagle Channel dispute with Chile, then refused to accept its results. It is difficult to believe in Argentina's good faith with that very recent example in mind. There is no reason, given the history of this question, for Britain, which has sovereignty and is claiming nothing more, to make the first move.*

*It is Argentina that is making a claim. If Argentina wanted to refer it to the International Court, we would consider the possibility very seriously. But in the light of past events it would be hard to have confidence that Argentina would respect a judgement that it did not like.”*<sup>271</sup>

US Secretary Haig updates his country's Foreign Affairs Committee.

*“We went first to London, then to Buenos Aires, and then again to Buenos Aires, as you know. We had extensive discussions at the highest level. In Great Britain it was relatively easy because the government is structured and organised pluralistically and democratically. The Cabinet sits down with the Prime Minister, and business is done.*

*In Argentina .... there is no one who can make a decision. There are variously from 20 to 40 people who can cast a veto on any decision that is made. And so instead of a consensus of what you would call a majority view, it is the lowest common denominator of the most extreme view that prevails....*

*I must say that the British Government, from the outset, has been reasonable and easy to deal with. Their position has been that sovereignty is not a critical issue. What is a critical issue is that the will of the population, self determination is the key issue. And if the population decides to go with Argentina, so be it; if they decide to stay aligned with Britain or seek independence, so be it. The British are prepared to accept that. ...*

*On the Argentine side, despite all our effort .... the Argentines have insisted bedrock, fundamental a priori relinquishment of sovereignty, either in the near term ...*

*So it's not just a question of decolonization; its a question of recolonization on top of decolonization.”*

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271 HC 22/980-85

Asked about taking the issue to either the ICJ or the World Court. Haig tells the Committee that such an approach would not be acceptable to Argentina.<sup>272</sup>

*"I have talked adjudication by the World Court, by the UN, or by a special commission. It was rejected all."*

The US Senate resolves.

*"... the United States cannot stand neutral with regard to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 502 and recognizing the right of the United Kingdom, and all other Nations, to self-defence under the UN Charter, should therefore prepare, through consultations with Congress, to further all efforts .. to achieve full withdrawal of Argentinian forces from the Falkland Islands."*<sup>273</sup>

At the UN, Argentina accuses the UK of; *"unleashing a new colonialist war."*<sup>274</sup>

From New York, Sir Anthony Parsons informs London; *"I have spent most of the day in the company of all other members of the Security Council. There is an atmosphere amongst them of great tension and expectation e.g., of a dramatic military move by us any day now, but no sign that any of them are contemplating calling the Council. This hesitation may disappear if Haig announces failure .. tomorrow..."*

At midnight in Buenos Aires, the US Ambassador has an audience with General Galtieri.

*"I asked to see President Galtieri and was received at midnight .. I told Galtieri that we came without instructions and with the only purpose of seeing what we could do to head off a fatal confrontation. I pointed out to the President that we had not received an adequate response to our proposal and that we would announce tomorrow several measures against Argentina. During more than an hour's conversation, he demonstrated no give whatsoever..."*<sup>275</sup>

## Day 29

**April 30<sup>th</sup>** – general censorship is imposed across Argentina, for reasons of - *"national security."*

Investigative journalist Jack Anderson, speaking on the *Good Morning America* television programme, alleges that the British Task Force is armed with tactical nuclear weapons that they have permission to use.<sup>276</sup>

*"Even taking nuclear weapons into the South Atlantic could appear as a violation of the Treaty of Tlatelolco (1967), which had established Latin America and surrounding waters (including the Falkland Islands and the Dependencies) as a nuclear weapon free zone. Strictly speaking there could be no violation because not all states had signed and ratified the Treaty, while extra-continental states with responsibilities for territories*

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272 Briefing by the Honorable Alexander M. Haig Jr. Secretary of State before Key House Leadership and House Foreign Affairs Committee – Room 2172, Rayburn Building, Washington DC 4/29/82

273 PREM19/623 79 votes for, 1 against (Helms)

274 UN Yearbook 1982

275 AMEMBASSY Buenos Aires to SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 3485

276 In April, 2010 an MoD spokesman confirmed: *"... that we did have some nuclear depth charges. We did have some being carried with the Task Force and they were being transferred from ship to ship for safety reasons and to meet our obligations under the Treaty of Tlatelolco. The weapons themselves were not deployed in the course of the conflict. We said in 1982 that there was no question at all of our using nuclear weapons in this dispute. ..."*

*within the intended zone of application were required to sign and ratify Additional Protocol I, with nuclear weapons states also acceding to an Additional Protocol II. Argentina had signed the Treaty in 1967 and while it had publicly announced its intention to ratify it had not yet done so. The United Kingdom had signed both protocols in 1967 and ratified them in 1969. ... The presence of a nuclear-powered warship in Falkland islands territorial waters would not contravene the Treaty as it was so clearly unrelated to nuclear weapons.”*<sup>277</sup>

Secretary Haig reports to a US National Security Council meeting.

*“Unfortunately, the Argentine government which is, in fact, made up of many moving and conflicting parts could not agree to the plan. The Navy holds the veto and is even more intransigent after losing South Georgia, whose Argentine garrison surrendered without firing a shot - a fact known to the Argentine government, but not to the Argentine people.”*

Bud McFarlane informs President Reagan that the Soviet Union has repositioned a satellite in order to keep track of the *Task Force*.

In a press statement following the meeting, Haig announces Argentina's rejection of his peace proposals.

*“Argentina's position remains that it must receive an assurance now of eventual sovereignty, or an immediate de facto role in governing the islands, which would lead to sovereignty. For its part, the British Government has continued to affirm the need to respect the views of the inhabitants in any settlement. ... in the light of Argentina's failure to accept a compromise, we must take concrete steps to underscore that the U.S. cannot and will not condone the use of unlawful force to resolve disputes ... The President has therefore ordered: the suspension of all military exports to Argentina; the withholding of certification of Argentine eligibility for military sales; the suspension of new export-import bank credits and guarantees; and the suspension of commodity credit corporation guarantees.”*<sup>278</sup>

In New York, and coinciding with Haig's press conference, Costa Méndez tells Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar that his country does not see the negotiations as being 'dead'. He asserts that Argentina is ready to abide by SC resolution 502 and accept a transitional administration; “.. until the exercise of full Argentine sovereignty became possible.”

Responding to press inquiries in London, Francis Pym makes a statement.

*“In deciding not to cooperate in negotiations for a peaceful settlement, the Argentines have confirmed their commitment to aggression in defiance of the UN ..”*

Alan Copeland of the *Daily Express* asks whether Pym's planned trip to see the Secretary-General precludes any immediate use of force by Britain.

*“No, because we are facing force now. As I have described they have a fleet at sea, they've got thousands of soldiers on the islands, they're occupying territory which they have no right to occupy. No. We are going to maintain our total exclusion zone. That is the position. If they challenge it, then of course there will be military action and that's how it is ...”*

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277 Freedman 2005 vol.2. Argentina ratified the Treaty of Tlatelolco in 1994.

278 In response to this announcement, Foreign minister Costa Méndez delivered a formal letter of protest to Secretary Haig on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. *Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 05/03/1982 (1)*



Ecuador's Foreign Minister issues a statement.

*"I have just learnt with profound concern of the attitude of the United States in imposing sanctions against the Argentine Republic and in supporting Great Britain. I must point out that the Resolution of the .. (OAS).. is obligatory for all the States members of the Treaty of Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance. ...*

*The Resolution recalls the declaration of the Inter-American Legal Committee in the sense that, "the Argentine Republic has an unimpeachable right of sovereignty over the Islas Malvinas."*

*This is a legal and moral obligation which the members of the Treaty have assumed by virtue of the Resolution. In these circumstances the support which has been announced and declared by the United States for Great Britain and the imposition of sanctions against the Argentine Republic constitute disregard of the obligation which the United States assumed .. "*

Brazil writes to the Secretary-General requesting the use of his 'good offices' in finding a peaceful solution, adding; *"It is the responsibility of the United Nations to take prompt and effective measures, including those of a preventative nature, to ensure the implementation of Security Council Resolution 502 (1982).."*

Peru also objects to US sanctions; *"The Government of Peru deplores the fact that the Government of the United States has adopted measures that clearly place it in favor of one of the involved parties and that, in effect, virtually concludes Your Excellency's exercise of good offices. Furthermore, my government considers the offer made by the Government of the United States to offer material military aid to one of the parties as contravening the purposes of Resolution 502 of the Security Council of the United Nations by potentially contributing to the aggravation of the hostilities."*<sup>279</sup>

At the UN, Costa Méndez contacts the President of the Security Council.

*"... (a) he reaffirmed Argentina's wish for a negotiated settlement: (b) Argentina was ready for the implementation of SCR 502 "as a package": (c) Argentina hoped that there would be no confrontation. The UK was using disproportionate force and an armed encounter could have unforeseen consequences: (d) Argentina was ready to accept a transitional period in which all aspects of the dispute could be resolved: (e) the question of sovereignty was of the greatest importance to Argentina. Argentina was disposed to accept a mutually agreeable formula on sovereignty during the transitional period: (f) so far as Argentina was concerned, Haig was still in action but his latest proposals on sovereignty had not been acceptable to Argentina: (g) Argentina would accept the presence of a UN force in the Islands in order to enable Argentina to withdraw and to begin the transitional period."*<sup>280</sup>

From the British Embassy in Washington, Ambassador Henderson reports on Argentina's economic position.

*"Major US banks are seeking to limit use of Argentine short-term credit lines to the levels reached before the crisis. Smaller banks with a high exposure in Latin America are pulling out as soon as credits mature, and building their liquidity against the possibility of deposits being shifted away from them. One of these banks felt that even if there was an immediate political settlement, there was no way that Argentina could avoid going broke within 2 months or so, ..."*

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<sup>279</sup> Unconfirmed intelligence reports suggested that Peru was in the process of loaning military aircraft to Argentina.  
<sup>280</sup> PREM 19/623 Telegram No. 612 of 30 April 1982

At the UN, Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar summons Sir Anthony Parsons.

*“Costa Méndez had said that Argentina was ready to abide by SCR 502. There would of course have to be a phasing out period for the withdrawal of Argentine troops: and a transitional administration until the full exercise of Argentine sovereignty became possible. Recognition of Argentina's right to sovereignty was a basic condition. Apart from that, Argentina was ready to enter into negotiations on the widest possible basis. She was ready to take into consideration the “interests” of the Islanders but not their “wishes” which had been imposed by the Administering power. But she could accept a form of local administration which retained a British flavour .. Argentina was therefore open to all possibilities, except on sovereignty...*

*I said that it was impossible for the British Government to concede sovereignty in advance, or to accept conditions implying that they were prepared to concede sovereignty. I thought that when Costa Méndez said that Argentina was ready to implement SCR 502 in its entirety, he was implying that he would start at the bottom end of the Resolution. ... Britain could not accept a process of mediation or negotiation while the Argentines dug themselves in...*

*Finally, Pérez de Cuéllar said that, if Argentina stated officially that Haig's mission was dead, a void would exist which he and the Security Council would be expected to fill. ..”*

Parsons telegrams the FCO in London.

*“Costa Méndez's various statements here today amount to a smart PR move... My guess is that his purpose has been to present the Argentine position in the most favourable light particularly in UN eyes and try to distract attention from US and UK responses to the failure of Haig's mission. He has succeeded in creating the impression of a change in the Argentine position ... I do not think however that we need to take Costa Méndez's PR success too tragically. His statements have been small beer by comparison with those of Haig ... and they will soon be overtaken by a presumably less diplomatic response from the Generals in Buenos Aires ..”*

A UN spokesman announces that Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar has offered his “good offices.”

Intelligence suggests that Argentina's navy has been divided into three groups. The group supporting Argentina's aircraft carrier, *25 de Mayo*, is sailing towards the north of Britain's declared TEZ, while another, led by *Belgrano*, is patrolling to the south of the archipelago. Reports suggest that the third group is also headed south.

British submarine HMS *Conqueror* diverts to search for the *Belgrano*.

*“One curiosity lay in the activity of the southern Argentine Task Force, composed of the Belgrano and two destroyers. A few days earlier it had appeared to be guarding against Chile, and was even believed to have infringed Chilean territorial waters... possibly trying to provoke the Chilean Navy. ... By the evening of the 29 April the group was noted to be patrolling between the Isla de los Estados and the Burwood Bank, in order to draw out British forces and test reactions within TEZ. The cruiser took up a course that would take it into the southern edge of the TEZ early Sunday morning where it would remain for a limited time before withdrawing. There were also indications that both Argentine Navy 209 submarines, were operating in the TEZ. Information on Argentina's offensive intent was distributed in intelligence summaries on the evening of 30 April,..”<sup>281</sup>*

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281 Freedman 2005 vol.2

Argentina submits a letter addressed to the Security Council.

*“ ... the United Kingdom has no legal grounds whatsoever for invoking the right of self-defence provided for in Article 51 of the Charter in justification of the military aggression it is carrying out in the South Georgia Islands.*

*The fact that three weeks elapsed between Argentina's recovery of those islands for its national patrimony and the British attacks which began on 25 April, and the fact that the islands are 8,000 miles from the territory of the United Kingdom, clearly show how inappropriate it is to invoke Article 51 of the Charter as justification for this manifestly illegitimate use of force. ...*

*The Argentine forces ... certainly exercising the right of self-defence in order to repel a grave and imminent danger, have continued their resistance in the South Georgia Islands, thus giving the lie to the United Kingdom's statements that its authority has been restored in those territories. ... continuation of the British Government's punitive actions compels my country to exercise its right of self-defence ...”<sup>282</sup>*

Exercising his right of reply, Parsons also addresses the Security Council.

*“On 3 April 1982, notwithstanding current action in the Security Council and the adoption of SCR 502, Argentina carried out an armed invasion of the island of South Georgia. The small British garrison resisted but was eventually captured.*

*On 25 April, in exercise of the inherent right of self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, British forces re-established British authority on South Georgia.*

*...*

*There is no question of the United Kingdom Government having acted aggressively, having in any way breached the terms of SCR 502 (implementation of para.2 of which by Argentina is still awaited by the international community) or of having caused a breach of international peace and security. ...”*

US intelligence reports Argentina's Air Force Chief of Staff, Juan Garcia, as saying that Argentina will not be the first to open fire but that an attack on Port Stanley will trigger a full scale attack on the British fleet.

*“Garcia .. reiterated that the Argentine Government could not present a peace plan to its people that did not assure sovereignty over the Falklands. He also said that British commandos have landed on the islands and Argentine forces are attempting to locate them. If the commandos succeed in mingling with the local population, measures to control the civilians would be imposed.”*

*“... by the end of April Argentina had some 13,000 men in the Islands, the infantry component being eight regiments with between 5,000-6,000 men... They were equipped with 150mm and 155mm artillery, air defence weapons, APCs and perhaps some self-propelled antitank guns and so, in principle, should be able to inflict heavy casualties in any direct British assault against the capital.”<sup>283</sup>*

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<sup>282</sup> This, of course, was nonsense – pure propaganda.

<sup>283</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

## Day 30

**May 1<sup>st</sup>** – before dawn, after a long flight from Ascension Island, XM607, a Vulcan bomber, attacks the Falklands airfield.<sup>284</sup> At dawn Sea Harriers from HMS *Hermes* attack targets in and around Stanley and Goose Green.<sup>285</sup>

*“At 4.37 this morning we were literally thrown out of our beds by the most fearful explosions. The house seemed to lift off its foundations... By the time we had got to the bottom of the stairs, a tremendous barrage of anti-aircraft and machine-gun fire opened up from all over the town.”*<sup>286</sup>

HMS *Glamorgan*, HMS *Arrow* and HMS *Alacrity* bombard Stanley airfield, and are in turn attacked by 3 Mirages, one of which is shot down. The ships sustain only minor splinter damage. An Argentine Canberra bomber is also shot down whilst within the *exclusion zone*. British special forces reconnaissance teams land on the Falkland Islands.<sup>287</sup>

*“The firing stopped after a while, causing someone to suggest it was about time we had a cup of tea, so we all trooped back up to the kitchen. We tuned into the BBC... but all we could get from England was a most interesting but unhelpful programme on birth control for overseas listeners.”*<sup>288</sup>

Following the air attack on Goose Green, 114 settlers from the settlement are interned at the Recreation Club which has two toilets, a bar and running water but no food supplies. Argentine soldiers loot the civilian's houses and park helicopters between the buildings to deter attack.<sup>289</sup>

*“I had already decided that, if air attacks came, I would move my defences from around the school, which was separate from the settlement, to new positions around the houses, with the idea that the British would never bomb the settlement area.... also, some of the civilians had seemed hostile and uncooperative.... I thought it was better to concentrate them all in one place...”*<sup>290</sup>

In London, the Ministry of Defence issues a statement.

*“We have been enforcing the Total Exclusion Zone since noon London time on Friday, 30 April in exercise of the right of self-defence.”*

At 1500 London time, HMS *Conqueror* sights the *Belgrano* group south of the Falklands archipelago.

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284 *Operation Black Buck*. There were 5 bombing raids by these aircraft and although the actual damage caused was disputed, news of the attacks were well received by the public at home. The first attack was piloted by Flt. Lieut. Martin Withers, an Australian serving in the RAF. Middlebrook (2003) suggests that three Argentines died in this attack.

285 One Harrier suffered minor damage to its tail from a 20mm shell; there were no other casualties although Argentine records reported three Harriers shot down. At Goose Green at least one Pucará helicopter was destroyed and its pilot killed (Argentine press reports would laud his death in a gallant, lone attack on *HMS Hermes*). Two, possibly three, Pucará's were damaged. Among relatively few troop casualties, two died of their injuries. See Middlebrook 2003

286 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.112

287 D Squad of the SAS together with elements of the SBS and Royal Marine Commandos.

288 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.112

289 No food was made available for 48 hours. Such detention is illegal under the *Geneva Conventions*. Middlebrook (2003) claims that the decision was made by First Lt. Esteban.

290 First Lt. Esteban quoted by Middlebrook 2003

Britain's operations room at Northwood receive the information at 1629. HM Submarine *Splendid*, searching for the *25 de Mayo* to the north of the Islands, sights Argentina's frigates and destroyers but not the aircraft carrier.

Spain's Government protests the British air attack, alleging that it; *".. constitutes a serious escalation in the conflict. The possible outbreak of a more generalised and massive British action in the archipelago would mean a tragic loss of human lives and would signify great responsibility and a historic error. The Spanish Government ...deplores the fact that in spite of its efforts in the international fora and in bilateral contacts no account has been taken of the fundamental colonial problem which is the origin of the conflict and on which Spain has always supported Argentina's traditional position, ..."*<sup>291</sup>

President Galtieri addresses the Argentine people in a broadcast.

*"Fellow Argentines, today, the arms of the Argentine Nation have answered a new act of aggression perpetrated by the United Kingdom in the South Atlantic. They have and are still attacking us, but, we have and will continue to repel them, and this will always be our answer if the enemy intends to again establish a colony on Argentine land. Prior to this attack, during long days and entire weeks, inconceivable pressures have been exerted on our sovereign will, they have depicted us as bloody aggressors; but it is well-known that upon recovering the unredeemed territory that we chose to die instead of killing, and because of this during an unprecedented military operation neither the adversary nor the population of the Malvinas experienced a single casualty.*

*We have been wronged with sanctions that the great powers avoid enforcing against those they consider to be their worst enemies as if our condition as a young country would make us an easy prey. We have been slandered and insulted, moreover, we have been intimidated, threatened, intrigued against and we have been the victim of all sort of unimaginable manoeuvres to discredit us.*

*We have stated our reasons. We have said that for almost one and a half century we either obtained an intemperate negative or the most cynical silence to our persistent claim to our proven rights. We have proven that the United Kingdom decided to send warships in answer to the previously authorized presence of Argentine workers on the Georgia Islands. Since we were certain that there was no other path to recover our irrevocable sovereignty, we acted as we have, and thus we have shown the world. ... our cause is no longer an Argentine problem, it has now become a cause of the Americas and the world which does not recognise colonialism as a situation which can be endured ..*

*The British Empire, encouraged by the alleged results of its campaign of pressure, is resorting to the direct and naked use of force, therefore we have no other alternative than to respond ..."*

In London, the MoD issue a further statement.

*"... an air engagement took place this evening within the Total Exclusion Zone between British Sea Harriers and Argentine Mirages. One Mirage was shot down. There are no reports of damage to British aircraft."*

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<sup>291</sup> Spain made little comment throughout the 1982 conflict; possibly because its application to join the EEC was pending.

*"The Argentine take on the events of 1 May varied considerably from that of the British. Unlike the British they knew that the damage to Stanley airfield was limited. They also believed that their air defences had shot down two Harriers during the dawn raids, and that they had inflicted serious damage on at least one warship."* <sup>292</sup>

*"The news from the Argentines was grim, and, we hope, wishful thinking on their part. They reported HMS Hermes had been badly damaged, with five of her Harriers lost. The BBC reported that there was no damage and that all her aircraft had returned safely."* <sup>293</sup>

At the UN, Argentina representative submits a letter to the Security Council.

*"... two Harrier aircraft were shot down, a third was hit ... In perpetrating this bloody aggression against my country, the United Kingdom is persisting in violating Security Council Resolution 502 (1982). In the light of these facts, not even the most distorted interpretation of that Resolution (which was adopted in the interests of peace) can be used by the United Kingdom in an attempt to legitimise its irresponsible conduct.*

*The increasing aggression by the United Kingdom .. is today threatening to unleash an armed conflict of unknown dimensions and unforeseeable implications for international peace and security; the United Kingdom Government will be solely responsible for the breach of such peace and security. ...*

*The United Kingdom ... cynically invoking the right of self-defence in seeking to justify an open and brazen act of aggression."* <sup>294</sup>

With the President of the Security Council calling for information, Sir Anthony Parsons sends a reminder.

*"In my letter of 28 April concerning the Total Exclusion Zone, I set out the text of an announcement by the Government of the United Kingdom to the effect that from 1100 hrs on 30 April 1982, 'Port Stanley airport will be closed, and any aircraft on the ground in the Falkland Islands will be regarded as present in support of the illegal occupation and, accordingly, is liable to attack' .."*

Following a telephone conference with Secretary Haig, President Belaunde of Peru contacts Galtieri with proposals for a diplomatic solution.

*"1) An immediate cease fire. 2) Mutual withdrawal of forces. 3) Introduction of third parties to govern the Islands. 4) The two governments acknowledge the existence of conflicting views with respect to the Islands. 5) The two governments acknowledge the need to take into account the views and the interests of the Islanders in the final solution. 6) The third parties - or contact group - would be composed of Brazil, Peru, West Germany, and the United States. 7) A final solution will be reached not later than April 30th, 1983, under the guarantee of the contact group."* <sup>295</sup>

*"Galtieri objected to the United States because of its recent 'public attitude'. Belaunde said that Canada had been mentioned as an alternative, but it had been suggested that it was even less acceptable, and that anyway the United States was balanced by Peru ('a country that's frankly on Argentina's side'). Brazil was the*

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292 Freedman 2005 vol.2. Argentine commanders also believed that the British had attempted a landing but had had to abandon it in the face of Argentina's superior defences.

293 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.116

294 No Harrier losses were reported on May 1, 1982.

295 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 05/02/1982

alternative.... The Argentine Foreign Minister also raised inevitable concerns ... Belaunde then worked with (US Ambassador) Ortiz on a redraft which was passed on to Costa Méndez...”<sup>296</sup>

Believing that they have the advantage, Vice-Admiral Lombardo directs Admiral Allara in 25 de Mayo to move towards the British fleet and, at 2007 local time, orders an attack.<sup>297</sup>

*“I gave the order to attack on 1 May. When the British force set out to land would be the key moment of danger and their whole strategy would be to defend people who disembarked. Then they put all their elements, including submarines, to defend that position. That was the moment when we had to take the opportunity to do something.”*<sup>298</sup>

*“On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the Argentine High Command told us the British were disembarking on the northern part of the Falklands. That evidently meant most of their ships would be concentrated, for a prolonged period of time, in that area. This, therefore, was a favourable opportunity for the mission of Task Force 79.”*<sup>299</sup>

*“It had been a very bad day for the Argentines. The runway at Stanley airfield had been badly damaged, and a Pucará had been destroyed and two more damaged at Goose Green airfield. Positions had been bombarded. Two Argentine ships had been damaged, one by the fire of its own side's aircraft. Three Argentine aircraft had been shot down by sea harriers and a fourth destroyed by the fire of its own side after being damaged in air combat. Seventeen Argentines were dead – four air-crew in the air, one pilot and seven technicians at Goose Green and five men killed around Stanley by the Vulcan bombs or by naval shelling. One officer and twenty-seven men were injured. Several observation parties of British troops had been successfully landed. The British casualties consisted only in superficial damage to two ships, a cannon shell hole through the tail fin of a Sea harrier and one seaman slightly injured.”*<sup>300</sup>

## Day 31

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Haig telegrams President Belaunde; *“If the text is agreeable to President Galtieri and to the other members of the governing Junta, I will be pleased to present it to Foreign Secretary Pym with whom I will meet at 10 o'clock this morning.”*

In the UK, British intelligence, acting on intercepted Argentine communications, conclude that Argentina's navy groups are set to deploy a pincer movement, with the 25 de Mayo attacking the British fleet from the north, while the Belgrano group was to come from the south-west.

*“The Belgrano group, TG 79.3, ... was to deploy south to Burdwood Bank, and then close in on the British to deal with any surface units operating to the south of the Falklands, to the point where they could be attacked with Exocets... Lombardo urged an early reconnaissance followed by a massive attack on the British fleet before any units had a chance to withdraw. It was the receipt of the detailed offensive plan that caused the*

296 Freedman 2005 vol.2

297 Argentine Rules of Engagement (ROE) were less restricted than those the British commanders were operating under, and, following confirmation by Lombardo, who had overall command of the naval units in the South Atlantic, allowed for attacks on British ships wherever they could be found.

298 Vice-Admiral Juan Jose Lombardo in an interview with *La Nacion* published March 31, 2001

299 Admiral Gualter Allara interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.216

300 Middlebrook 2003

*most stir. Within a few hours of the order being issued by Allara, this was being relayed to the (British) Task Force...”*<sup>301</sup>

Reports also indicate that Argentina now has 13,000 troops on the Falklands, supported by 42 105mm guns, 4 155mm guns, 23 quick-firing anti-aircraft guns plus surface-to-air missiles, plus 23 armoured cars.

In an article published in the *Observer* newspaper, Professor Rosalyn Higgins considers international law.

*“Regardless of the turbulent history of the period 1765-1832, it is clear that Britain, having intervened in 1833 in protest against Argentina's attempts to assert authority in the islands, has established a good title. ...*

*No tribunal could tell her (Argentina) that she has to accept British title because she has acquiesced in it. But what the protests do not do is to defeat the British title, which was built up in other ways than through Argentina's acquiescence. ...*

*South Georgia and the other British dependencies in the South Atlantic have never been settled by Spain or Argentina. Only Britain has settled them to an extent regarded by international law as sufficient in that hostile environment.”*<sup>302</sup>

Spain's Prime Minister, Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo, speaking at a rally, asserts that Britain has negotiated, *“little and badly,”* and adds that Spain has a clearer claim to Gibraltar than Argentina has to the Falklands. Argentina attempts to jam the BBC's *'Spanish Service'* to South America.

Informed that Argentine naval forces are preparing to attack the British Task Force, PM Thatcher calls a meeting at Chequers at 1245 local time, where it is agreed; *“... that British forces should forthwith be authorised to attack any Argentine naval vessel...”*<sup>303</sup>

The British fleet are informed of the change to the rules of engagement at 1307 London time.

*“The decision was taken because this was a military threat. ... I should make it clear that we did not order the submarine to sink the Belgrano. We told all submarines down there that they were now free to attack Argentine warships when they had an opportunity to do so. We did not say, to Conqueror, ‘Sink the Belgrano’, although we knew that was going to be the effect. We hoped it would be the effect. By the time she got the signal, she might possibly have lost contact.”*<sup>304</sup>

*“Admiral Fieldhouse told us that one of our submarines, HMS Conqueror, had been shadowing the Argentine cruiser, General Belgrano. The Belgrano was escorted by two destroyers. The cruiser itself had substantial fire power provided by 6 inch guns with a range of 13 miles and anti-aircraft missiles. We were advised that she might have been fitted with Exocet anti-ship missiles, and her two destroyer escorts were known to be carrying them. The whole group was sailing on the edge of the Exclusion Zone. We had received intelligence about the aggressive intentions of the Argentine fleet. There had been extensive air attacks on our ships the previous day and Admiral Woodward, in command of the Task Force, had every reason to believe that a*

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301 Freedman 2005 vol.2

302 In 1982 Rosalyn Higgins was Professor of International Law at the University of London, becoming President of the International Court of Justice at the Hague in 2000.

303 PREM19/623 f14

304 Lord Lewin, Chief of the Defence Staff, interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.212



*full scale attack was developing. ... Admiral Woodward had to come to a judgement about what to do with the Belgrano in the light of these circumstances. From all the information available, he concluded that the carrier and the Belgrano group were engaged in a classic pincer movement against the Task Force...*" <sup>305</sup>

*"One of those present, William Whitelaw, later recalled it as 'one of the simplest decisions that I personally found myself involved in' once he understood the risk of losing contact with the Belgrano if Conqueror were not allowed to attack... All were asked for their views before the Prime Minister gave her own but the issue was not controversial."* <sup>306</sup>

At much the same time, in the South Atlantic, Admiral Allara, commanding Task Force 79, decides to call off the planned attack on British ships.

*"As the hours passed, two things made me decide to call (the attack) off. First was confirmation the British were not landing, so not preoccupied with that operation. Second, the weather conditions. There was absolutely no wind. It was, therefore, not possible for our planes to take off from the carrier with the weapons, and fuel, needed. These weather conditions were forecast for the whole day of May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Therefore we called it off, and pulled the carrier back to shallow waters,..."* <sup>307</sup>

Orders to withdraw are passed to the various elements of Task Force 79, including *Belgrano* to the south. <sup>308</sup>

*"It is quite untrue to say we knew the force had turned back before the Belgrano was sunk, or certainly before the signal changing the rules of engagement was sent. Even if we had known, it would not have changed our minds."* <sup>309</sup>

*"... the big issue here was the sinking of the Belgrano. By the time I was appointed Official Historian I had already sought to debunk the core accusation – that the motives behind the sinking were more political than military, designed not so much to torpedo a ship which posed little threat at the time, but instead to torpedo a new Peruvian-led peace initiative. ... I challenged the supposition that any Argentine signals would be intercepted and decoded almost immediately and done so in time to influence Cabinet decisions."* <sup>310</sup>

On his arrival in Washington, Francis Pym hosts a press conference at the British Embassy.

*"Last week I came here to see Mr. Haig in his role as a mediator, today I have come back to consult him as an ally. The British people are very grateful to the United States for coming down in their support."*

*We never had any doubt that they would come down in support of the victim and against the aggressor ... but that does not end the search for a diplomatic solution."*

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305 Thatcher 1993

306 Freedman 2005 vol.2

307 Admiral Gualter Allara interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.216

308 The exact time that *Belgrano* was informed of the change of plan is not known.

309 Lord Lewin, Chief of the Defence Staff, interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.212

310 Prof. Sir Lawrence Freedman interviewed on *Historical Research and Political Accountability: Trident, the Falklands and Iraq*. Strand Group 21, Kings College London. March, 2017

Pym and Haig meet to discuss, *inter alia*, the latest Peruvian initiative.

*"In telegram 4510 from Lima, May 2, Ortiz reported that Belaúnde had telephoned at 10 a.m. (11 a.m. Washington time) to inform him that Costa Méndez had asked Belaúnde to convey that the Government of Argentina "in general" found the seven points of the Peruvian plan acceptable with "two changes on which the Argentines were very insistent." The first was a textual change to paragraph 5. The revised formulation read: "The two Governments acknowledge the need to take into account the views concerning the interests of the Islanders in the final solution." The second revision proposed the replacement of the United States with Canada as a member of the contact group, "because the United States was firmly on the side of the UK." ..."*<sup>311</sup>

*"Pym replied cautiously. The proposals were not even at drafting stage, and while they might be useful at an appropriate time, he doubted that Buenos Aires was yet ready to meet Britain's basic requirements... Pym also observed that Parliament was unlikely to accept a change in status quo over South Georgia now that it had been recaptured successfully."*<sup>312</sup>

Pym also meets Secretary of Defence, Caspar Weinberger who tells him; *"... that our arms supply effort would intensify, and that we would work as effectively as we could to support the British counterattack."*<sup>313</sup>

As Francis Pym flies to New York for a meeting with the UN's Secretary-General, Haig and Henderson discuss the Peruvian proposals. Haig makes it plain that; *"... Argentine compliance required,.. no further British military action in the meantime. Henderson replied that Britain would not agree to anything that inhibited it from maintaining the military pressure. The conversation concluded with Haig promising to get in touch as soon as he had heard again from Argentina."*<sup>314</sup>

South of the Falklands archipelago, some 30 nautical miles outside the TEZ, Britain's nuclear submarine *Conqueror* closes in on *ARA General Belgrano*. Having turned towards the south-west, *Belgrano* is now heading away from the Falklands archipelago.

*"I spent more than two hours working my way into an attack position on the port beam of the cruiser. It was still daylight. The visibility was variable; it came down to 2,000 yards at one time... They were not using sonar – just gently zigzagging at about 13 knots."*<sup>315</sup>

At 1557 local time (1957 UK time), whilst approximately 35 miles south-west of the 'Total Exclusion Zone', *HMS Conqueror* fires three torpedoes at the Argentine light cruiser, *General Belgrano*.

*"... Conqueror fired three torpedoes at the Belgrano. They were the older Mark 8 torpedoes, relatively unsophisticated weapons but with huge warheads. Conqueror's captain chose those weapons because he knew that the Belgrano had a 6-inch-wide band of armour plating along most of the ship's side... the range was very close, only 1,400 yards, the recommended optimum for such an attack."*<sup>316</sup>

Two of the three torpedoes strike the ship. *Conqueror* immediately turn away to avoid retaliatory attacks by the accompanying destroyers and, while doing so, transmits an initial report (1630 local time). Less than 30 minutes after the torpedoes struck and, with 200 men killed by the explosions, the crew of the *General Belgrano* are ordered to abandon the stricken ship.

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311 *Foreign Relations of the United States: 1981-1988 vol.XIII: Conflict in the South Atlantic 1981 – 1984* footnote p.440

312 Freedman 2005 vol.2

313 *Fighting for Peace: Seven Critical Years in the Pentagon* Casper Weinberger 1990 p.208

314 Freedman 2005 vol.2

315 Captain Wreford-Brown quoted in Freedman 2005 vol.2

316 Middlebrook 2003

No distress signal is sent and the escorting vessels only become aware of the severity of the attack when they observe the *Belgrano's* crew taking to the boats.<sup>317</sup>

The vessel sinks with a total loss of 321 crew and 2 civilian lives.<sup>318</sup>

*“... although, in my country and abroad, many voices condemned the sinking of the Belgrano, I repeat that as a professional, and especially from a military point of view, I do not condemn it. That ship was in the area of operations.”*<sup>319</sup>

*“By no means do I have any feelings of anger. ... I realized from the outset that the 200-mile limit had nothing to do with the mission I had to accomplish. The limit did not exclude danger or risks; it was all the same in or out. I would like to be quite precise that, as far as I was concerned, the 200-mile limit was valid until 1 May, that is while diplomatic negotiations were taking place ...”*<sup>320</sup>

*“The Argentine leadership thought the British would not fight outside the maritime exclusion zone.”*<sup>321</sup>

In London, a statement is issued by the Ministry of Defence.

*“At approximately 8pm London time this evening the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano was hit by torpedoes fired from a British submarine. The cruiser is believed to be severely damaged. On Friday 23 April, HMG warned the Argentine Government that any approach on the part of Argentine warships, including submarines, naval auxiliaries or military aircraft which could amount to a threat to interfere with the mission of British forces in the South Atlantic would encounter the appropriate response. The cruiser posed a significant threat to the British Task Force maintaining the TEZ. ... The British submarine suffered no damage in the engagement and has resumed her patrol.”*

In New York, Pym and Parsons speak to Secretary-General de Cuéllar, and his assistant Rafee Ahmed, over dinner. Pérez de Cuéllar presents a paper suggesting; *“... that the two Governments agree to take simultaneously the steps set out below, which are conceived as provisional measures, without prejudice to the rights, claims or positions of the parties. (a) .. both Governments to complete their withdrawal by an agreed date, (b) both Governments commence negotiations to seek a diplomatic solution to their differences by an agreed date, (c) both Governments rescind their respective announcements of blockades and exclusion zones, and cease all hostile acts against each other, (d) both Governments terminate all economic sanctions, (e) transitional arrangements begin to come into effect to supervise implementation of the above steps and to meet interim administrative requirements. The Secretary-General wishes to reiterate his readiness to do all he can to be of assistance .. It would be appreciated if written communications in this regard were received in time for the Secretary-General to make a public announcement on 5 May...”*

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317 Bouchard's commanding officer reported the loss of communications with *Belgrano* but had, apparently, not witnessed the explosions. Bouchard may well have been hit by the third torpedo at the end of its run and without it exploding as damage was discovered some time later.

318 There seems to have been an inordinate delay before a rescue effort commenced. 770 men were saved between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of May. ARA *General Belgrano's* commander, Hector Bonzo, subsequently described his vessel as a 'legitimate target' and confirmed that he did have orders to attack the Task Force.

319 Admiral Gualter Allara interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.216

320 Capt. Bonzo quoted in Middlebrook 2003

321 US Admiral Harry Train in Charlton 1989 p.217

Sir Anthony Parsons minutes to Francis Pym.

*“Pérez de Cuéllar left it to Ahmed to introduce and defend his paper. He seemed to agree with many of your comments on it. Your firmness will, I think, have had a salutary effect on Ahmed who can no longer be under any illusions that his sketchy and ill-thought out ideas have much chance of acceptance.*

*Nevertheless, the fact that the Secretary-General has given you and the Argentines some ideas, which will certainly become known here (I shall be surprised if Pérez de Cuéllar fails to allude to them when he briefs members of the Council), should enable us to gain a little more time here. It would be off-side for anyone to introduce a Resolution into the Security Council when the parties were considering ideas put to them by the Secretary-General.”*

News of Conqueror's attack reaches Buenos Aires.

*“In Buenos Aires, the Military Committee's meeting began at 1900. It has been reported that at 1930 Admiral Anaya announced the news of the loss of the Belgrano, although this seems rather early given what is known about the Argentine response times to the tragedy. When the news was confirmed the Junta was now unwilling to explore any negotiation involving the United States, assumed to be complicit in the British action,..”* <sup>322</sup>

America's Ambassador in Buenos Aires reports to Washington.

*“... we have a report from a reliable source in the Presidential Palace that the mood in the top levels of the military has turned very ugly against the U.S. The story is that the cruiser 'Belgrano' was "pulverized" with heavy loss of life. Allegedly, the U.S. located the ship for the British and gave its permission for the use of a "special weapon" against the 'Belgrano' (the implication being a nuclear weapon).*

*The source advised one of our attaches "to get out of town." We are making appropriate representations to remind the GOA of its responsibility for the security of this mission and its personnel. However, in view of the 'Belgrano' incident and what seems to me the likelihood of new naval engagements in the South Atlantic, I request the Department's authorization to declare .. the relevant emergency levels. I ask for authorization for the departure of dependents of our military personnel, ... I also request authorization to prepare for the reduction in non-essential personnel and their dependents...*

*The dependents of our military will depart by road or ferry for Montevideo once the Department has given its approval. We shall be in touch with the Department on the method and timing for the larger evacuation.”* <sup>323</sup>

Galtieri calls President Belaunde to tell him that Argentina is rejecting the Peruvian plan.

*“We would rather die on our feet than live on our knees.”*

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322 Freedman 2005 vol.2.

323 Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330-84-0003, Argentina (Jan-15 May) 1982

Peru's Embassy in Washington pass on a message to the US Department of State for Secretary Haig.

*"President Belaunde ... had just finished speaking with President Galtieri. He reported that Galtieri stated that the Argentine Government was prepared to study the Peruvian peace proposal with serenity and thoroughness.*

*However, Galtieri said that owing to the quote unspeakable unquote British military actions of today's date, specifically the torpedoing and presumed destruction of the Argentine flagship 'Belgrano' there was nothing left for Argentina to discuss. All that remained was to fight.*

*President Belaunde said that with this message from President Galtieri he considered the Peruvian peace initiative to be terminated. The President said it was very lamentable that the British actions should have occurred when serious negotiations were underway with a high chance for success. He condemned the UK's attacks and said they would enflame the Hemisphere."*<sup>324</sup>

Secretary Haig speaks to Ambassador Henderson, who reports the conversation to London.

*"He told me that ... It was being put about that the cruiser had been hit as a result of intelligence passed by US satellites and with the help of a special weapon provided by the Americans .. (Haig said) President Belaunde believed that something real must be done to bring about a ceasefire. He believed that the Argentinians would accept the seven proposals ...*

*No less pressing, in his mind, was the need to do something immediately to stop the fighting. He thought it was desperately urgent for the Prime Minister to propose a ceasefire ...*

*I told him that after waiting three weeks while the Argentinians reinforced the Islands we were not in a mood to rush to an armistice just because the Argentinians were losing..."*<sup>325</sup>

*"This began a series of pained conversations with Haig. Henderson was told of the bitter complaints from the Peruvian President, of the high price that may have to be paid in terms of a Soviet advance in Latin America, the possibility of an American veto being needed to prevent anti-British sanctions being adopted by the OAS, of western opinion turning against Britain. Henderson reminded him of the Argentine naval manoeuvres which formed the immediate background to the sinking, and that the Americans had also concluded that Argentine forces were determined to attack..."*<sup>326</sup>

At the UN, Sir Anthony Parsons is informed.

*"We have just heard that the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano has been hit by two torpedoes from the submarine HMS Conqueror. ... Although the incident took place outside the TEZ it was in accordance with the rules of engagement agreed on 2 May. ..."*

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324 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 05/03/1982

325 PREM19/624 Telegram No.1575 3 May 1982

326 Freedman 2005 vol.2

## Day 32

**May 3<sup>rd</sup>** – in the early hours and acting on instructions from Pym, Parsons telegrams the British Embassy in Lima regarding Peru's peace proposals.

*“ .. please get in touch immediately with the Foreign Minister and/or President's office to ensure that no announcement is made that implies that we have agreed to these proposals or even had them formally presented to us ...*

*We will be prepared to consider carefully any ideas presented to us which seem likely to ensure what must be the first requirement: a withdrawal of Argentine troops which unlawfully invaded and occupied the Falklands. ... ”* <sup>327</sup>

Britain's Ambassador to Peru responds.

*“The Foreign Minister .. communicated to me a formal note .. about the sinking of the Belgrano. .. In the ensuing conversation Dr. Arias said he wished me to be in no doubt about the profound shock and consternation felt by the Peruvian Government on learning of the attack on the cruiser after President Belaunde had announced his peace initiative. Dr. Arias said that Costa Méndez had told him on the telephone that the 7 point plan was being considered by the military Junta in Buenos Aires when the news of the attack brought further consideration, and the meeting, to a conclusion ...”* <sup>328</sup>

*Alferez Sobral*, an Argentine ocean-going tug armed with 20mm cannon, attacks a Sea King helicopter inside the TEZ. *Lynx* helicopters from HMS *Coventry* counter-attack, killing 8 of the vessel's crew and damaging the vessel.

At 0520, Vulcan bombers again attack Stanley airfield.

In the UK, the liner *QE2* is requisitioned as a troop carrier together with; “ .. two roll-on-roll-off ferries, *Baltic Ferry* and *Nordic Ferry* and a container ship, *Atlantic Causeway* ...”

From Buenos Aires, the *Junta* issues a short statement.

*“.. as a result of the attack suffered at a point located at 55 degrees 24 minutes south and 61 degrees 32 minutes west by the cruiser General Belgrano, .., indications exist that it must be presumed to have sunk.”*

Argentina recalls its surface fleet to shallow waters.

In official statements, Brazil “disagrees” with the armed attacks which it describes as a violation of SCR 502; Cuba condemns the UK and calls for “solidarity” from all Latin American countries while Venezuela talks of “British aggression.” The USSR condemns attempts to “restore the Falklands colonial status by force” and China deplores military attacks against the “Malvinas Islands.” Rather more mildly, Mexico “regrets” the outbreak of hostilities.

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327 PREM19/624 Telegram 4 of 3 May 1982. These instruction appear to have preceded the news concerning ARA *General Belgrano* and reflected Pym's concerns that Haig and Belaunde were getting ahead of themselves with what, in British eyes, was little more than a draft; nowhere near being presentable.

328 Message from Britain's Ambassador to Peru in PREM19/624 f114

In New York, Foreign Secretary Francis Pym, due to leave for London, has a short meeting with the President of the Security Council, China's Ling Quing, before holding a press conference.

*"I ... had talks with the Secretary-General. We explored various ideas as to how the United Nations might be able to help in one way or another ... our strategy all along has been to maintain pressure on the Argentines, diplomatic, economic and military, and we declared several days ago the Total Exclusion Zone which we are now going to protect. Yesterday there was a very real threat to that zone posed by a cruiser. There was also an attack on a helicopter from two ships which were immediately counter-attacked by British forces. I want to make it clear that the British are not undertaking these military engagements by choice. We are there to defend British soil..."*

Haig sends Pym a message.

*"We are concerned that your military successes have not had the desired effect of making the Argentines more reasonable. Our assessment is that the fatalistic mentality characteristic of the Argentines is becoming stronger with each setback. Paradoxically — and tragically — the Argentines may well be waiting, and trying, for a military success of their own before making a serious move toward a settlement. Such a strategy would be consistent with everything we know about the Argentines. ...*

*We suggest that the United States and Peru make a further peace proposal to the parties, stipulating that they have forty-eight hours in which to accept or reject it, with it understood that no response constitutes rejection. This period could begin at noon Washington time Wednesday. To maximize the pressure on the Argentines to accept a fair proposal, and to deal with the political problems I outlined above, we suggest that Her Majesty's Government announce, at the time of presentation of the proposal by the United States and Peru, that British forces will take no offensive action during the forty-eight hour period, provided the Argentines show corresponding restraint. ...*

*Unless there is an arrangement for suspending military action for a brief, fixed period of intensive diplomatic effort, I am afraid that the Argentines and others will succeed in blaming failure to achieve a political settlement on your military actions.... " 329*

US Ambassador Kirkpatrick informs Haig that the UN's Secretary-General is intent on pursuing his own peace initiative; believing the Peruvian initiative to have failed. Haig still forwards Belaunde's plan to London.

In Argentina, news reports falsely claim that its air force has attacked HMS *Exeter*, which has been sunk; and that 11 Harriers and one helicopter have also been shot down. It is also claimed that Argentine forces have severely damaged 4 frigates, one aircraft carrier and one destroyer during raids on the British fleet; which have resulted in "serious casualties." Britain's MoD report that only one aircraft has suffered damage – described as "minimal" – and that one frigate has suffered some minor splinter damage. The spokesman denies that *Exeter* has been involved in any fighting and that contrary to claims of serious British casualties, only one seaman has been wounded; described as, "safe and comfortable."

In Chile, the newspaper *Tercera* comments on Argentine propaganda.; "Question: What news from Buenos Aires? Answer: The British sent three planes to the islands and the Argentines shot down seven of them."

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329 Department of State, Executive Secretariat, S/S Special Handling Restrictions Memos 1979–1983, Lot 96D262, ES Sensitive May 1–5 1982

## Day 33

**May 4<sup>th</sup>** – in Israel, press reports allege arms sales to Argentina.

*“There were numerous intelligence reports implicating Israelis, some with governmental connections, in attempts to sell arms to Argentina. Most reports involved the transmission of weapons, and parts for existing systems, through third parties, When confronted by these allegations by the British Government, Israeli diplomats denied them vehemently. ... British troops entering Stanley at the end of the war came across Israeli equipment.”* <sup>330</sup>

Britain's Prime Minister sends a message to President Reagan.

*“Francis Pym has told me about the very useful talks he had with Al Haig about the Falkland Islands during his visit to Washington on Sunday. ... We should continue to build up the diplomatic, military and economic pressure on Argentina to put an end to its unlawful military occupation and, thereafter, to negotiate with us in good faith about the long term future of the islands. On the diplomatic front, I can assure you that we remain committed to the search for a negotiated solution which accords with the principles which our two countries have defended for so long. We are looking urgently today at Al Haig's latest ideas.*

*In the military field, let me emphasise how much we appreciate your generous offer of material support for our forces. ... I am sure that, without effective military pressure, the Argentine leaders will not be brought to implement Security Council Resolution 502. But, with so many young lives at risk - British and Argentine – I feel that we must make a supreme effort to prevent a major military clash. That is why I attach so much importance also to the economic pressure which we and other friendly countries are bringing to bear. ..”* <sup>331</sup>

Francis Pym contacts Alexander Haig.

*“Subject to your very early comments I would like out of courtesy to give these ideas direct to the Peruvian President -*

*(1) An immediate cease-fire, concurrent with:*

*(2) Mutual withdrawal of forces: (a) Argentine and British forces to begin immediately to withdraw from an area of 200 nautical miles radius from the Falkland Islands and to refrain from introducing any forces into that area. (b) The UK will ensure safe passage for the Argentine garrison to the mainland. (c) All British and Argentine forces to be withdrawn within 7 days from the area of 200 nautical miles radius from the Falklands and to remain outside that area.*

*(3) The immediate introduction of a Contact Group composed of Brazil, Peru, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States into the Falkland Islands on a temporary basis pending agreement on a definitive settlement, the Group's tasks being: (a) to verify withdrawal; (b) to ensure that no actions are taken in the Islands, by the restored administration or otherwise, which would contravene this interim agreement.*

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330 Freedman 2005 vol.2

331 Department of State, Executive Secretariat, S/S Special Handling Restrictions Memos 1979–1983, Lot 96D262, ES Sensitive May 1–5 1982



*(4) Britain and Argentina acknowledge the existence of differing and conflicting views regarding the status of the Falkland Islands.*

*(5) The two governments acknowledge that the views and interest of the Islanders must be determined, and be taken into account in the definitive settlement of the problem.*

*(6) The two governments will make every possible effort in good faith to reach a definitive agreement prior to 30 April 1983. The countries represented in the contact group will give every assistance in this."*

*"If you and the Peruvian Government were to call upon Argentina and Britain to accept within 48 hours an agreement in the terms I am enclosing, the British government would immediately announce that our naval forces in the South Atlantic had been given orders not to fire within or outside the TEZ unless directly threatened by Argentine ships or aircraft..."* <sup>332</sup>

*"Pym also sought a US guarantee of the security of the Falkland Islands, lasting from the seventh day after signature to implementation of a definitive agreement."* <sup>333</sup>

At 1100 local time in the South Atlantic, HMS *Sheffield*, a British Type 42 guided missile destroyer, is hit by an *Exocet* missile fired from a *Super Etendard* of the Argentine Navy. The missile fails to explode but causes an uncontrollable fire.

*"... three Type 42 destroyers were occupying air defence stations some 18nm west in front of the main body of the force. Glasgow was in the middle with Sheffield on its left and Coventry on its right... two Super Etendards approached the Sheffield group. ... they came across the three ships. It may be that the Glasgow's release of chaff caused them to swerve towards Sheffield, but it was probably that this was simply the first ship they picked up. The two Exocets were released. One passed by into the sea; and the other hit the destroyer. After a quick look to confirm a hit they veered back to the mainland and returned safely... the single Exocet hit Sheffield at the starboard side, leaving a large hole and causing widespread minor shock damage and an immediate loss of fighting capability. Fortunately the warhead did not detonate. Nonetheless large fires still broke out..."* <sup>334</sup>

At 1200, Sheffield's Captain orders the ship to be abandoned.

US Secretary of State for the Navy, John Lehman, contacts Peter Blaker, Minister for the Armed Forces to say that the US Navy stood ready to supply intelligence, logistical support and the procurement of weapons. Lehman was also prepared to step in if channels operated too slowly.

*"In addition, he said he would not rule out the possibility of moving US forces, for example one of the two Carrier Battle Groups currently in the Caribbean, to the South Atlantic as an indication of support. It appears to be at this point that the possible transfer of a US aircraft carrier was discussed... Lehman also made it clear that after the war the Americans would be looking to more support from Britain for their Central American policies and also a review of the naval cuts proposed in the 1981 defence review."* <sup>335</sup>

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332 Quoted in Freedman 2005 vol.2

333 *Ibid.*

334 *Ibid.* Out of a compliment of 281 men, 20 died and 26 were injured.

335 *Ibid* In reality the chances of the UK taking an American carrier were nil. The vessel would have arrived without crew, and the British were in no position to train up their own men in time for the ship to have involved itself in the South Atlantic. One of those "what if" conversations that neither of the parties subsequently recalled initiating.

Ireland's Government issue a statement.

*“.. appalled by the outbreak of what amounts to open war between Argentina and Great Britain in the South Atlantic and at reports that hundreds of lives have already been lost. ... see the present situation as a serious threat to world peace ... (and) regard the application of economic sanctions as no longer appropriate and will, therefore, be seeking the withdrawal of these sanctions by the Community”* <sup>336</sup>

Ireland's UN representative, Noel Dorr, is instructed by his Government to call for an immediate meeting of the Security Council in order to prepare a new resolution calling for: 1. An immediate cessation of hostilities by both British and Argentinian forces, and 2. The negotiation of a diplomatic settlement under the auspices of the United Nations.

*“In reply to these escalating events the Irish Cabinet again hurriedly convened on the afternoon of May 4. Ministers agreed that the Republic would immediately take up a "neutral" stance on the Falklands issue and seek the withdrawal of EEC sanctions against Argentina. Haughey's decision to no longer support sanctions against Argentina stunned civil servants within the DFA. Dorr admitted subsequently that Haughey's new stance on the Falklands crisis took him by “complete surprise.”..”* <sup>337</sup>

Ambassador Henderson receives a message from the State Department.

*“Haig's main emphasis this morning is on the real urgency, in his view ... for London to take an initiative. .. he regards the Irish decision as "totally irresponsible" and as, "likely to prolong the war"... He was convinced that London must come up with something to try and head off the inevitable emergence of opposition.”*

*“Almost as soon as he got the British draft, Haig rushed round to see Henderson, having cancelled a meeting in New York. There was 'no doubt about his great anxiety'. ... Haig expressed his view that it was 'now or never' if the fighting was to be stopped. The British draft would not work. There was not the slightest chance of Peru forwarding to Argentina anything that contained references to the former administration, the need for the wishes of the islanders to be respected, and doubt that a definitive agreement could be reached.”* <sup>338</sup>

From New York, Parsons reports a conversation with the Irish Ambassador to the UN.

*“I disembowelled him. When I had drawn breath, I summed up as follows: he could tell his Government following his conversation with me that ... such a debate at this stage would kill the current confidential initiative taken by the Secretary-General. Dorr was obviously shaken. He kept on saying that it was too late. .. However he could ask for an immediate meeting without insisting that the meeting should take place during the next day or so, ie he could give us and the Argentines a chance to respond to the Secretary-General's ideas. I said that he knew as well as I did that this idea would not fly ... As soon as he asked for an immediate meeting the nasties would press things to a head as quickly as possible.”* <sup>339</sup>

UN Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar asks Dorr not to press the matter until there is an answer to the peace 'ideas' put forward by himself on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Dorr agrees. Chinese President of the Security Council, Ling Qing,

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336 *Irish Times* May 5, 1982

337 *How Charles Haughey launched an Exocet at Anglo-Irish relations during 1982 war* Stephen Kelly in *Belfast Telegraph* October 31, 2016

338 Freedman 2005 vol.2

339 PREM19/624 *Telegram* 645 of 4 May 1982

having received a similar request from the Soviet representative, schedules an 'informal' discussion for the evening of the 5<sup>th</sup>.

*"Parsons was content with this. ... a confidential venture by Pérez de Cuéllar was preferable to a formal council meeting at which Britain might find itself vetoing an apparently mild resolution calling for a cessation of hostilities. Given the alternatives, it was becoming in Britain's interest to boost the status of the Secretary-Generals efforts."*<sup>340</sup>

Parsons telegrams Pym; *"You should be aware that the fact that the Secretary-General put specific ideas to you and my Argentine colleague over the weekend is now widely known here. This .. is, I suspect, largely accountable to Rafee Ahmed. It also results from speculation arising out of his and Ling Qing's consultations with members of the Council yesterday. .. At today's briefing the spokesman said that "peace plan" was not the term the UN was using, but the Secretary-General had put forward "various ideas" to you and the Argentines .. and both had agreed to consider them."*

A British Sea Harrier is shot down over Goose Green. Argentine positions around Stanley are shelled.

*"Three Sea harriers from HMS Hermes were dispatched to carry out a bombing attack on the airfield at Goose Green, but an Argentine radar controller at Stanley detected the raid coming in and warned Goose Green. The anti-aircraft detachment at Goose Green was alerted, and its Skyguard radar picked up the Sea Harriers ten miles out at sea over the Choiseul Sound. Two of the Sea harriers came straight in from that south-east direction ... one of the first two was hit by cannon shells fired by a 35-mm Oerlikon."*<sup>341</sup>

President Reagan responds to Thatcher's letter.

*"Al Haig has sent to Francis Pym new formulations which might provide a basis for a peaceful settlement if recent military developments have instilled a greater sense of realism in Buenos Aires. I am sure that the ideas sent to Al by your Foreign Secretary would not provide such a basis. Equally important, you will see that our suggestions are faithful to the basic principles we must protect. I urge you to agree to have these ideas proposed by US and Peru as soon as possible, recognizing that it will be difficult to get Peruvian agreement to join us in this initiative and more difficult still to gain Argentine acceptance. This, I am convinced, is now our best hope."*<sup>342</sup>

Parsons telegrams the FCO.

*"I think there is a reasonable chance that I will be able to keep the Council in informal consultations,... My insistence on .. not cutting across the Secretary-General's efforts will of course be only a pretext. I do not believe that the Secretary-General's ideas provide the basis for a negotiated settlement, and given the involvement of Rafee Ahmed, it is probably desirable to keep the United Nations out of the game, at this stage at any rate. My real purpose in delaying a formal Council meeting will be to gain time for the Haig/Belaunde proposals to mature and, of course, to put off as long as possible a possible UK veto of a seemingly mild Resolution calling for a cessation of hostilities. Such a veto would seriously undermine our position here and transfer the diplomatic advantage to the Argentines."*

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340 Freedman 2005 vol.2

341 Middlebrook 2003. The pilot, Lieut. Nicolas Taylor was buried in a nearby paddock with full military honours; filmed and televised world-wide.

342 Reagan Library, Executive Sec., NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Falklands War (04/22/1982–05/17/1982)

## Day 34

**May 5<sup>th</sup>** – Haig sends a message to Pym.

*"I appreciate the efforts your government has made to react quickly to the suggestion we made. But I must tell you with a candour possible only between closest allies that the ideas you have conveyed can lead to only one outcome: Argentine rejection and therefore resumption of hostilities after the forty-eight-hour period, with the prospects for eventual settlement having been damaged in the process. Beyond that, we have no reason to believe that the Peruvian Government would associate itself with your proposal. Indeed, our assessment is that even presenting it to them would drive Peru to a more pro-Argentine posture.*

*Tragic as recent events have been, I believe we now have an opportunity to achieve an agreement which is consistent with our shared principles and impossible to construe as a success for the aggressor. ... We may not have another such chance before many more lives have been lost - if then. I am sending you a revised version of the seven points which attempts to take more of your concerns into account. ..., it includes our best effort to meet your concerns about a security guarantee. I will not deny that it is closer to the ideas we sent you than to those you sent us. ... Recognizing the burden it places on you, may I ask that you give me an indication as quickly as possible as to whether you would like us to proceed. "*<sup>343</sup>

Ambassador Henderson telegrams Pym.

*"Haig does not consider that there is the slightest chance of the Peruvians being prepared to agree to our points or of being ready to transmit them to the Argentines. ... I asked him what, in the circumstances, he thought could be done and this led to a prolonged analysis of texts, the outcome of which was a new set of points .. that he hoped met some of our requirements, without involving language that would be rejected out of hand... Haig implores you to have another look at this ..." <sup>344</sup>*

In London, the War Cabinet meet to consider the latest peace plan; followed by a full Cabinet meeting.

*"The position was difficult, with American pressure and wavering in the EC following the Belgrano and then the loss of the Sheffield denting national confidence in Britain's military position.... There was general unhappiness about Haig's ideas, which certainly included the Prime Minister, but it was judged that some response was needed."*<sup>345</sup>

After four hours of debate, Pym telegrams Haig that the British Government are prepared to accept his proposals as a basis for proceeding. Haig is told that the Dependencies are to be excluded and that all Argentine forces must leave the Falklands, and that during the extended negotiations the Islands must be administered according to the wishes of the elected representatives of the population.

*"I hope very much that Peru and Argentina will accept the proposals on the basis I have set out. Because of the danger that the Argentine response may be equivocal, like last time, the Cabinet feel strongly that (once you have got the Peruvians on board) Buenos Aires should be asked to*

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343 Reagan Library, Executive Sec., NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Falklands War (04/22/1982–05/17/1982)

344 PREM19/624 Telegram 1598 of 5 May 1982

345 Freedman 2005 vol.2

*signify acceptance by a precise and early deadline. If they fail to do so, or give any reply other than unqualified acceptance, they would be taken to have rejected the proposals and there would be no ceasefire.”*<sup>346</sup>

*“They would, however, also want a side letter confirming that the draft agreement incorporated a guarantee on the part of the US of the non-reintroduction of Argentine forces into the Falkland Islands pending a definitive settlement... Buenos Aires should be asked to give an answer by a precise deadline.”*<sup>347</sup>

PM Thatcher responds to President Reagan's message - explaining Britain's need to amend the Peruvian/American peace plan.

*“... Above all, the present proposals do not provide unambiguously for a right to self-determination, ... We asked earlier that it should be included explicitly. Al Haig's reply was that it could not, because the Argentines would not accept it and there would therefore be no hope of a settlement. This has given me and my colleagues very great difficulty. This is why I have tried to temper Al Haig's latest proposal a little by suggesting that the interim administration must at least consult with the locally elected representatives. It is not much to ask ... I too want a peaceful settlement and an end to the mounting loss of life in the South Atlantic. ... That is why, with the changes Francis Pym has suggested to Al Haig, we are ready, with whatever misgivings, to go along with your latest proposal. Assuming that they are accepted by the Argentines, then during the negotiation period that will follow we shall have to fight fiercely for the rights of the Falklanders...”*<sup>348</sup>

Pym telegrams Parsons in New York.

*“I am giving priority to the Peruvian/American initiative. We should not say anything to Pérez de Cuéllar that might encourage Argentine to look to his ideas rather than Haig's ... I should also wish you to make it clear that I am not in any way turning down his own ideas. .. we shall need his help in making it clear to Security Council members that diplomatic activity is continuing, that his own ideas are still under study and that the Council should do nothing that might cut across these efforts...”*<sup>349</sup>

The BBC continue to broadcast messages from family to the Islanders; *“Good reception, or at least better than usual, for ‘Calling the Falklands.’ ... If only they could see us listening, huddled around the wireless on the kitchen table, with the windows blacked out with blankets;.. When the need arises we can all get into the bunker with remarkable speed in the darkness...”*<sup>350</sup>

At the UN, the Security Council meet in informal session. Pérez de Cuéllar reports that Argentina's Foreign Minister has agreed to accept his 'good offices' while Spain demands that hostilities should be 'frozen' pending a response to the Secretary-General's initiative. Dorr (Ireland) asked the Council to consider how to achieve a ceasefire without giving either side any 'advantage.'

Parsons makes it clear that, *“ .. there was no question of our suspending military operations, ..”* The Council rejects his attempt to insert a reference to SCR 502 in the final statement.

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346 *Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Alexander M. Haig, Jr., 1981–1982, Lot 82D370, No folder.*

347 Freedman 2005 vol.2

348 PREM19/624 f47 (T97/82)

349 This was not passed onto the Secretary-General by Parsons, who saw that it would merely cause annoyance.

350 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.121

Adjourning, the Security Council issue a statement expressing their, “deep concern at the deterioration of the situation,” but also their strong support for the efforts of the Secretary-General.

*“We were almost entirely isolated, no-one expressed support or understanding for the military action we are taking. Apart from me, only Guyana mentioned withdrawal. I was alone in resisting pressure to include in the statement a call for 'cessation of hostilities' or 'restraint'. I received no support from Mrs. Kirkpatrick (US) and De Nanteuil (France) was actively unhelpful.*

*The Council is to meet again tomorrow (6 May) in informal consultations. ... So far, so good. With luck, and assuming there are no major military developments overnight, we should avoid a formal Council meeting until 7 May at the earliest. But it was a disturbing meeting, which revealed how completely support for our position has been eroded since SCR 502 was adopted.*

*The hostilities have caused most Members of the Council to lose their nerve and think of us and the Argentines as equally to blame for loss of life. ... no-one is prepared to speak out in support of our right to take action under Article 51. ... I think we were lucky to get away with tonight's harmless mouse (sic) without our isolation having the effect of turning the whole Council against us.”*<sup>351</sup>

*“Writing late from New York on 5 May, Parsons urged London to take note of the mood at the UN and find a more positive response to Pérez de Cuéllar, lest Britain was 'dangerously isolated here..' he wanted a substantive reply the next day that would affirm Britain's position but not cause embarrassment if published. It should give time for Peruvian ideas to succeed or fail, look positive and keep the ball in play 'but would contain conundrums which would give the Secretariat plenty to work on.' ..”*<sup>352</sup>

President Belaunde of Peru has a telephone conversation with President Galtieri.

*“(Belaunde) said he advised Galtieri of the constructive UK response to the peace proposals. He told Galtieri the UK in essence accepted them with some changes. However, before he could elaborate Galtieri told him that Argentina had just communicated its agreement to the UN Sec-Gen to a mediating role for the UN. Galtieri did not reveal to Belaunde the conditions under which the UN mediation would be carried out. Belaunde told Galtieri that the British position on the Peruvian peace proposals would give the Argentines some idea of what would be acceptable to the UK. Galtieri expressed his gratitude for Peru's efforts.”*<sup>353</sup>

*“Haig telephoned Henderson at 2300 saying that Argentina was no longer interested in the US/Peruvian plan but was now committed to the UN route.... The sinking of the Sheffield had greatly emboldened them, with the result that they were now convinced that they would triumph militarily and politically.”*<sup>354</sup>

Britain's Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Lewin, meets with General David Jones, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs to hand over a list of military supplies that the UK requires.

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351 UKMIS to FCO May 6, 1982 Telegram No. 658

352 Freedman 2005 vol.2

353 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 05/06/1982

354 Freedman 2005 vol.2

## Day 35

**May 6<sup>th</sup>** – acting on Parson's advice, Pym sends a replacement message to be passed on to Pérez de Cuéllar.

*“Britain is willing to accept and immediately implement an interim agreement which would prepare the way for a definitive settlement. Such an interim agreement could provide for a cease-fire ... But such a cease-fire cannot simply leave Argentina in illegal occupation of the Islands, in contravention of Resolution 502 and with the ability to continue to build up the occupation forces.*

*Implementation of the cease-fire must therefore be unambiguously linked to the commencement of Argentine withdrawal... Withdrawal would be completed within a fixed number of days. The British forces would stand off at a reasonable distance .. After mutual withdrawal, the two sides would lift the exclusions zones .. (and).. economic sanctions... the United Kingdom would be prepared to accept an interim administration .. to be undertaken by a Contact Group .. which would act in consultation with the elected representatives of the population of the Islands ... Britain would be ready with Argentina to acknowledge the existence of different and conflicting views regarding the status of the Islands.*

*We would be willing to engage in negotiations, without prejudice, for a definitive agreement and to accept a target date ... for conclusion of an agreement which would accord with the wishes of the Islanders. We should be willing to accept that the Contact Group .. should have a role in relation to these negotiations....”*<sup>355</sup>

The Argonaut Group, sails from Ascension.<sup>356</sup> Two British Sea Harriers crash in fog.

Haig informs Pym that the Peruvian proposals have been rejected by Galtieri and that Argentina is now moving to the UN, and; “.. *that was the end of that.*” Pym speaks to the press; “*I am deeply disappointed that Argentine intransigence has once again frustrated a constructive initiative. Had they genuinely wanted peace, .. we could have had a ceasefire by 5pm tomorrow.*”

Pérez de Cuéllar immediately issues a statement from the UN, that he has received positive comments regarding his own initiative from Buenos Aires and hopes to receive similar approval from London.

Sir Anthony Parsons telegrams the FCO.

*“I recommend that I should be authorised to deliver our reply to the Secretary-General immediately. This will upstage the Argentinians whose reply consisted only of an acceptance of the Secretary-General's demarche, a call for a ceasefire, and an expression of willingness to discuss details. I should also get our reply in before Costa Méndez arrives here .... we must protect ourselves against the mounting pressure on us to accept calls for unqualified cease-fires, cessation of hostilities, maximum restraint, etc.*

*These will undoubtedly be renewed at this afternoon's Security Council consultations and I intend to stand as firm as I did yesterday. Obviously we cannot accept calls for a cease-fire unless they are clearly linked to unequivocal Argentinian agreement to withdraw ..”*

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355 This was being processed by the UK Mission in New York at the time news of the demise of the Belaunde plan reached Ambassador Parsons.

356 HMS *Argonaut* and *Ardent* escorting *Canberra*, *Elk* and *Tidepool*

With FCO approval, Ambassador Parson has a meeting with the Secretary-General at 1230, New York time. Pérez de Cuéllar is said to be “pleased” with Francis Pym's message; agrees that there is no need for a formal session of the Security Council and tells Parsons that he will seek an official response from Buenos Aires.

*“Pérez de Cuéllar immediately issued a statement, describing the British response as substantive rather than procedural. Ahmed's attitude in the meeting had, however, been 'unremittingly critical and hostile,' as he demanded to know whether the new British proposals were, in effect, the Haig/Belaunde proposals already put to the Argentines and rejected by them. Ahmed, he described as a 'sinister and malevolent influence.’”*<sup>357</sup>

In Washington, Haig tells Henderson that he is not convinced that Argentina is “serious” about negotiating.

Parsons is interviewed for Britain's *World at One* television programme and asked to make a statement about the Secretary-General's claim of a “positive reaction” from the Junta.

*“I think there is a certain amount of exaggeration, at least there was last night, and I think it has been corrected in the American media this morning. ... I don't believe they've accepted all the propositions, all the range of ideas that he's put forward, in fact I am perfectly sure they have not. ... we are still ... at a very preliminary stage.”*

Mexico's President tells the press that General Galtieri has offered to hold a face-to-face meeting with Margaret Thatcher, and that in no circumstances is Argentina willing to agree to any proposals put forward by, or otherwise associated with, the USA; although the Peruvian proposals had been broadly acceptable.<sup>358</sup>

In the UK, a planning paper considers the remaining options, including an approach to the ICJ.

*“... the plan followed what was now a rather familiar model: cease-fire linked to mutual withdrawal; immediate negotiations at the UN about interim administration (rather than trusteeship); negotiations on the future of the Falklands or a reference to the ICJ, resulting in a negotiated agreement on a binding ICJ ruling; negotiations without prejudice to outcome. They were looking for some way to get the ICJ to consider self-determination as well as legal title, so that Argentina would probably reject referral and was more likely to lose the case if it did not.”*<sup>359</sup>

Argentina's Defence Minister, Amadeo Frugoli, tells reporters that Argentina is not an aggressor country, but that the aggression is being perpetrated by Great Britain and that his country will respond to that aggression with every means - at the right place and in due time.

NATO's “Eurogroup”<sup>360</sup> issue a *communiqué*.

*“Ministers condemned Argentina's armed invasion of the Falkland Island and the dependencies as well as the failure to comply with Security Council Resolution 502. Ministers noted the importance of maintaining the principle that aggression or occupation of territory by force should not be allowed to succeed and urged the need to seek a negotiated solution acceptable to all parties...”*

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357 Freedman 2005 vol.2. Rafeeuddin Ahmed was a member of the Secretariat from Pakistan. What is clear from this conversation is that the Secretary-General had very little idea of what the Belaunde plan had consisted of; probably as a result of Haig trying to keep the UN out of the loop.

358 PREM19/625 Telegram No. 366 of 6 May 1982

359 Freedman 2005 vol.2. Parsons was opposed and the plan was dropped.

360 Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and Turkey



## Day 36

**May 7<sup>th</sup>** – PM Thatcher sends a message to EU heads of Government.

*“The collapse of the US/Peruvian initiative means that the focus of diplomatic activity moves to New York. In approaching this new phase of the crisis there is one point which I should like to put to you urgently, personally and with all the emphasis at my command. I want you to know that Britain will not acquiesce in the retention of the Falkland Islands by Argentina.*

*The military means to terminate the military occupation are being assembled. They will be used, unless a diplomatic solution can be found. If events take this course there will be, I fear, the likelihood of destruction and casualties on a scale far exceeding what we have seen already. I am prepared for this and so is my government, and so is my country. You should be in no doubt about that...”*

Intelligence indicates that that Peru has supplied Argentina with 4 Exocet missiles. Britain protests.

In Paris President François Mitterrand, is speaking to his doctor.

*“What an impossible woman, that Thatcher! With her four nuclear submarines on mission in the southern Atlantic, she threatens to launch the atomic weapon against Argentina unless I supply her with the secret codes that render deaf and blind the missiles we have sold to the Argentinians. .... I have been forced to yield. She has them now, the codes. If our customers find out that the French wreck the weapons they sell, it's not going to reflect well on our exports.”* <sup>361</sup>

Argentina registers a complaint with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva.

*“(The UK).. in carrying out its acts of aggression against the civilian and military personnel in the region, has carried out continuous violations of the most elementary principle of humanitarian law. For example .. lack of information on the fate of the civilians captured in South Georgia; Lack of information on the situation of military personnel captured in South Georgia.*

*In addition the UK has carried out acts repugnant to the consciences of civilised peoples such as – the incorporation in the Royal Navy Task Force of British military personnel captured by Argentine forces in the Falklands and South Georgia and then repatriated to the United Kingdom; sinking by submarine attack of the cruiser General Belgrano, sailing outside the zone defined by the UK as the maritime exclusion zone and not engaged in hostilities at the moment of sinking; attacks on similar vessels going to pick up people shipwrecked in another incident, the attack on ARA Sobral, one such vessel, was even more blameworthy since it was unarmed.”*

The ICRC respond by noting that the British Government had provided information about captured Argentine troops within 5 days which - “contrasted favourably with Argentine behaviour” - and that the *General Belgrano*, though outside the TEZ, was within the security zone of British ships in the area and was fully armed and engaged in operations. <sup>362</sup>

At the UN, Parsons speaks to Pérez de Cuéllar.

<sup>361</sup> Quoted in *Rendez-vous: La psychanalyse de Francois Mitterand* Ali Magoudi 2005. The French company that manufactured the Exocet missiles, run by the President's brother, subsequently denied providing any assistance. There is little in this quote that rings true.

<sup>362</sup> PREM19/625 Telegram No.224 of 7 May 1982

*"I wanted to explain exactly why the previous negotiations had collapsed. Essentially this was because the Argentines had insisted that the transitional arrangements and the diplomatic negotiations for a final settlement must be pre-judged from the outset by acceptance of Argentine sovereignty. This had in turn become a precondition for withdrawal. .... Pérez de Cuéllar took notes and said that he fully understood the position. He was alive to the possibility that the Argentines might simply be using him in order to get either a cease-fire and endless negotiations without commitment to withdrawal, or a British veto of a call for a cease-fire combined with negotiations. This putting them in a better diplomatic position..."* <sup>363</sup>

In London, the MoD announce, with immediate effect, an extension of the 'Total Exclusion Zone'.

*"Her Majesty's Government has consistently made clear that the United Kingdom has the right to take whatever additional measures may be needed in exercise of its inherent right of self defence under article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Her Majesty's Government will take all necessary measures in the South Atlantic in the self defence of British ships and aircraft engaged in operations and in re-supplying and reinforcing British forces in the South Atlantic. Because of the proximity of Argentine bases and the distances that hostile forces can cover undetected, particularly at night and in bad weather, Her Majesty's Government warns that any Argentine warship or military aircraft which are found more than 12 nautical miles from the Argentine coast will be regarded as hostile and are liable to be dealt with accordingly."*

Argentina claims that the extension of the zone demonstrates; *"... the British insistence on a military solution and desire to obstruct the diplomatic option then under consideration with the Secretary-General."*

*Fearless, Stromness, Norland, Europic Ferry and Atlantic Conveyor* sail from Ascension.

Peru and Venezuela assure Argentina that they will provide military aid if so requested under the *Rio Treaty*.

Argentina's Deputy Foreign Minister, Ernesto Ros, arrives in New York. Ros immediately calls on Pérez de Cuéllar to give him *"amplifications"* of the Argentine reply to the Secretary-General's proposals, before complaining to the Security Council about Britain's extension to the TEZ.

*"This unlawful measure constitutes a further act of aggression ... which endangers the security of the Argentine Republic..."*

Parsons contacts the FCO.

*"The MOD statement .. has already caused a stir here. It has provoked a letter from Roca to the President of the Security Council, has worried Pérez de Cuéllar and is being presented dramatically in the New York media ... I have reassured Pérez de Cuéllar that the MOD statement should not be seen as a dramatic escalation of the conflict but rather as a clarification of earlier announcements..."*

*"Although the new warning was seen as extending the Exclusion Zone right up to the Latin American coastline, this was not quite what was intended as, unlike the TEZ it only referred to Argentine warships and military aircraft. Nonetheless, the announcement immediately prompted queries from Chile and Uruguay as to how it might apply to them."* <sup>364</sup>

At the UN, US representative Jeane Kirkpatrick, contacts the Secretary-General to complain that his peace initiative is likely to *"cut across"* others that Secretary Haig is involved with.

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363 PREM19/625 Telegram No.672 of 7 May 1982

364 Freedman 2005 vol.2

## Day 37

**May 8<sup>th</sup>** – Peru issue a statement concerning Britain's extension of the zone.

*“The Peruvian Government considers of the utmost gravity this extension of the area of conflict as far as the waters which, according to Argentine legislation, correspond to its sovereignty .. Faced with this new announcement of belligerent action on the part of the British forces, after the unjustified sinking of the cruiser 'General Belgrano', the Peruvian Government repeats its firmest protest ...”*

*Intrepid* sails from Ascension Island.

Argentina announces that they have converted a survey vessel, the *Bahia Paraiso*, into a hospital ship.

Sir Anthony Parsons reports two meetings with the Secretary-General to Francis Pym.

*“I saw the Secretary-General for an hour at 1530... Pérez de Cuéllar said that both sides agreed with the concept that his proposals were "provisional measures, without prejudice to the rights, claims or positions of the parties." I confirmed that we agreed with this, but said that we must have 100% precision from the Argentines on the point. Pérez de Cuéllar said that Ros had indicated that the Argentines envisaged a written agreement: their signature would give us the precision we needed. I said that it would depend whose signature was on the agreement. All previous negotiations had foundered at the last minute on Argentine insistence that their claim on sovereignty should be accepted. ...*

*On the terminal date for the negotiations for a diplomatic solution, Argentina had proposed 31 December 1982 and you had suggested "perhaps one year." Pérez de Cuéllar would value your reaction to the Argentine proposals. On transitional arrangements ... Pérez de Cuéllar went on to say that Argentina favoured "an exclusive UN role" whereas you had proposed a contact group of States acceptable to both parties. I repeated that we needed to define what we meant... what did an "exclusive UN role" mean? ..for us this would be a crucial question. ..*

*On the format and venue of the substantive negotiations, Pérez de Cuéllar said that the Argentines wanted them to be conducted either by the Secretary-General or a representative appointed by him and that they should be held in New York. ...”*<sup>365</sup>

*“I saw the Secretary-General and his team again at 2130 today. Pérez de Cuéllar said that he had asked Ros for an initial reaction to my request for clarification of what the Argentines meant by "an exclusive UN role" in the interim administration. Ros had replied that Argentina felt that since the interim period was likely to be fairly short it should be possible to adopt arrangements which, while not affecting individual rights, should necessarily come under the authority of the interim administrator, ie. the UN. ...*

*She (Argentina) felt strongly that, in order to avoid confusion and so as to ensure that the transitional period was truly transitional, it should be under a clear cut administration, with a presence from both the interested parties. Pérez de Cuéllar commented that this seemed to be a repetition of the position the Argentines had maintained all along on the transitional arrangements. I questioned this: ...*

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365 PREM19/625 Telegram No.679 of 8 May 1982

*Their reference to "individual rights" presumably meant existing law on property, family matters, etc. What in effect they were proposing was direct UN administration without any local political structures. This was a very different concept from ours and I did not believe that it would be acceptable....*

*Pérez de Cuéllar said that Ros had repeated very clearly this afternoon that it was not the purpose of Argentina to prejudge the question of sovereignty, although de Soto added that for the Argentines this depended on agreement on appropriate terms of reference for the negotiations .. we shall have to watch this..."<sup>366</sup>*

Parson sums up the day's meetings with the Secretary-General.

*"After today's rounds, it is clear that the Argentines have organised their negotiating position very thoroughly. Perez de Cuellat told me in the strictest confidence that Ros has a prepared statement on every topic from which he reads verbatim as appropriate. I think that there are three possibilities.*

*The first, and least likely, is that the Argentines have decided to negotiate in good faith and play it straight ... Pérez de Cuéllar is as sceptical about this as I am. I hope we are wrong.*

*The second possibility is that the Argentines have realised that if the search for a diplomatic solution fails because of their insistence on prejudging the sovereignty question, it will be diplomatic game set and match to us...*

*The third possibility is that they have decided that they cannot get what they want now, and that they should prepare the ground to get it the day after the interim period expires. This would mean that they would genuinely negotiate an agreement with us now ... But would refuse to accept anything in the agreement which envisaged prolongation of the interim period if agreement had not been reached. ...*

*My suggestion is that I take the following line tomorrow (9 May). We are prepared to look more closely at the possibility of UN administration, but we could not accept the total exclusion of the Islanders, as proposed in the latest Argentine formulation: this is a great deal more rigid than the ideas they discussed with Haig where the problem was the disproportionate number of which they required on the two Councils. ... I could take this line as an exploratory move without conceding our position on the Contact Group for the time being...*

*I realise that I have not tackled the answer to the third and perhaps most sinister (third) possibility.. It is extremely hard to see a way out of this dilemma. ..." <sup>367</sup>*

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366 PREM19/626 Telegram No.686 of 8 May 1982. Álvaro de Soto was a Peruvian member of the UN's Secretariat.  
367 PREM19/626 Telegram No.686 of 8 May 1982

## Day 38

**May 9<sup>th</sup>** – London relays instructions to Parsons.

*“We agree that Britain should demonstrate full willingness to cooperate in the Secretary-General's negotiations. ... You should convey the following British position to the Secretary-General:*

*(a) ... We can agree that time "T" should be set as soon after signature of an agreement as both parties can guarantee compliance by their forces to a cease-fire. For us, 24 hours after signature is acceptable ...*

*(b) .. We can accept a period of 14 days for withdrawal of all Argentine military personnel from the Islands; half of them should be withdrawn within 7 days.*

*(c) ... The arrangements for British withdrawal must be equal and parallel with those for Argentine withdrawal, thus involving no disadvantage to Britain. We can agree to withdraw all of or naval forces within 14 days, and half of them within 7 days, to outside a zone of 200 nautical miles from the Falkland Islands.*

*(d) ... It is unreal to set an absolute terminal date for negotiations when everyone knows that the parties, with the best will in the world, may not be able to conclude an agreement within a specified time. For this reason we hope that the Secretary-General will return to the expression "target date" which appeared in his original proposal of 3 May. On that basis we could accept that the named date be 31 December 1982. In order however to take account of reality, without stating directly that negotiations might go on beyond the target date, the agreement would have to say that the interim arrangements will continue until an agreement on the future of the Islands is implemented ...*

*(e) ... negotiations should take place under his (Secretary-General's) auspices ... perhaps Geneva or Ottawa... we must also insist most firmly that the new Argentine suggestions to the Secretary-General about the interim administration are unacceptable. ...*

*What Argentina is now suggesting is unprecedented and unreasonable. We can accept UN interim administration, but on the clear understanding that the Executive and Legislative Councils continue to function...”*

Pym adds; *“... any agreement must be about the Falkland Islands, thus keeping the dependencies out of it.”*

*“... to help Pérez de Cuéllar, the Ambassador was permitted to hand over previous draft agreements. As the original Haig proposals contained many elements that Britain would not wish now to revive, it was best to stick with the draft that emerged out of the Peruvian effort.”* <sup>368</sup>

Interviewed on US television, Costa Méndez says that Argentina is not asking the UK to recognise Argentine sovereignty at the beginning of negotiations; provided that those negotiations conclude with confirmation of Argentina's sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and Dependencies.

Sir Anthony Parsons sees the Secretary-General to set out the British position.

*“... this brought me on to the all important question of Argentine acceptance that the interim arrangements would be without prejudice to the question of sovereignty. I had been seriously disturbed by Costa Méndez's television interview today. He seemed to me to have been saying that Argentina was not insisting that the UK should actually cede sovereignty before the negotiations started but that she insisted that those negotiations must conclude with confirmation of Argentine sovereignty and that they would therefore be concerned not with sovereignty itself but with how the interests of the Islanders might be protected under Argentine sovereignty. If my reading of Costa Méndez's remarks was right, there had been a major change in the Argentine position as Pérez de Cuéllar had described it yesterday.... I next stated that I wished it to be quite clear that we were talking about the Falkland Islands alone, not about the Dependencies....”*<sup>369</sup>

*“... Ahmed referred several times to a joint communique issued in London and Buenos Aires on 27 April 1977 and conveyed to the Secretary-General in a letter dated 9 June 1977 for transmission to the special committee on decolonization. It dealt with negotiations about 'future political relations, including sovereignty, with regard to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands.' Similar letters and communiques were circulated thereafter... Parsons took the line that the Argentine invasion of the Islands 'created a new situation and that the precedent of earlier negotiations was no longer relevant.'...”*<sup>370</sup>

Pérez de Cuéllar agrees to seek clarification from Ros.

At the Falklands, an Argentine spy trawler, *Narwal*, is attacked by Sea Harriers before being boarded by special forces (SBS). Thirteen of the crew are injured; one dead. All surrender.<sup>371</sup>

*“It had an Argentine naval officer on board and had been in the Exclusion Zone for a week on surveillance. The Argentine reports of the trawler incident seem to differ considerably from the BBC ones.”*<sup>372</sup>

*“The presence of an Argentine naval officer and of certain documents confirmed the ship's intelligence gathering activity.”*<sup>373</sup>

HMS *Coventry* fires two Sea Dart missiles at an Argentine *Hercules* approaching Stanley airfield. The missiles miss, but in the attempt to get out of the way, the two escorting Skyhawk aircraft collide and crash. An Argentine Puma helicopter is shot down by HMS *Coventry* with a Sea Dart missile.

Parsons reports the reaction London.

*“Today's military engagements have predictably fluttered the doves here. Roca complained to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council ... the Argentines are putting it about that at the Security Council's informal consultations on 5 and 6 May tacit agreement was established that there should be no hostilities while the Secretary-General pursued his initiative. ... I telephoned Pérez de Cuéllar and Ling Qing to remind them that I had made it absolutely clear at the informal consultations that there was no question of our suspending military operations...”*

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369 PREM19/626 Telegram No.691 of 9 May 1982

370 Freedman 2005 vol.2

371 Some sources spell the vessel's name as *Narwhal*

372 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.134

373 Middlebrook 2003

Pérez de Cuéllar and Parsons meet again.

*“.. he had told Ros that we did not consider that the Dependencies were included in the present exercise. Ros had objected strongly, saying that it would be impossible for the Argentine authorities to explain to their public opinion that Argentina would withdraw from the Falklands but that there would be no British military withdrawal from South Georgia. ... Ros had refused to accept our position... they wanted the lifting of the exclusion zones and of economic sanctions "to be effective as of time T", otherwise the impression might be given that their withdrawal was taking place under pressure...*

*On the interim administration, Pérez de Cuéllar said that the Argentines continued to object strongly to any role for the Islanders, even of an advisory character, because this would prejudice the outcome of the negotiations.*

*I said that we could not accept this. ...*

*Pérez de Cuéllar said that he had had a very difficult discussion with Ros about the terms of reference of the negotiations and the linked question of Costa Méndez's television interview. The kind of language the Argentines had in mind for the terms of reference was: "the negotiations would have to solve the disputes between the parties, taking into account relevant General Assembly Resolutions."*

*I said that this would not do. Costa Méndez's remarks today had been very close to Argentine statements which had caused the collapse of previous negotiations. We must have proper clarification. ...*

*In order to remove any shadow of doubt, we would also have to insist that all three members of the Junta signed the agreement..."*

Parsons telegrams Lodnon.

*"This ball is now firmly in the Argentine Court and Buenos Aires will have to give Ros instructions on the sovereignty question before we come under further pressure. If they come up with the wrong answer, ie an answer unsatisfactory to us, the stage will be set either for a break down of the negotiations or for a final dramatic effort by Pérez de Cuéllar to persuade the Junta to think again."*

President Belaunde of Peru announces that he is sending his Prime Minister to Europe to argue for the lifting of sanctions against Argentina. Mexico's President, Lopez Portillo, asks the British Ambassador when he can expect a reply to his suggestion that General Galtieri and PM Thatcher have a face to face meeting.

From the UN, Pérez de Cuéllar's office issues a statement.

*"The Secretary-General's discussions with the parties continued today and he met twice on separate occasions with the representatives of Argentina and the United Kingdom. The Secretary-General has also informed the President of the Security Council of his talks. Substantial progress has been made on several points but clarifications are still needed on others. The talks will continue tomorrow."*

## Day 39

**May 10<sup>th</sup>** – Parsons hears from Britain's Foreign Secretary, Francis Pym.

*"I endorse in particular your insistence on smoking the Argentines out on the question of sovereignty and the terms of reference for negotiations about the future of the Islands. If the Secretary-General's efforts were to collapse because Argentina insisted on a transfer of sovereignty or would not agree to a sensible provision about what would happen if negotiations had not succeeded by a target date, Argentina would clearly have been unreasonable and we think we could defend our position satisfactorily in Parliament and internationally. ... The question of the dependencies and of the traditional administration may, as you say, be the ones where the crunch will come. ... Meanwhile, the following comments ... are provided as general guidance for your meetings with the Secretary-General today.*

*Dependencies: ... you should argue that the status quo in the Dependencies is as it was before the unlawful occupation and that our purpose in the present negotiations is to deal with the new situation created by the continued unlawful occupation by Argentina of the Falkland Islands themselves...*

*Sovereignty: You should continue to insist on two major points of substance; (a) that the text of the interim agreement must not prejudice the outcome of negotiations about the future and (b) that the Argentines must state clearly to the Secretary-General that they accept this and will desist from declaring the opposite in public. Interim Administration: ... you should contest the unsupported and erroneous Argentine assertion that the involvement of the islanders in the interim administration would prejudge the outcome of negotiations...*

*Target Date for Conclusion of Future Negotiations: We see no reason why an interim agreement should not say that: (a) negotiations will start immediately, to produce an agreement by the target date of 31 December 1982; (b) the interim agreements will remain in force until implementation of a definitive agreement about the future of the Islands..."*

In the South Atlantic, *Sheffield* sinks whilst being towed by HMS *Yarmouth*.

Argentina's news agency, *Telam*, reports.

*"British forces attacked and sunk the Argentine fishing boat Narwal which was in the area carrying out specific tasks that did not pose any threat to the British Fleet. The Narwal was sunk by a Sea Harrier which later did not hesitate to machine-gun the rafts that were hurled to the sea by the survivors, and even a raft that was filled with sick and wounded. This is an outrageous attack that violates the most elemental human feelings .. an inhuman deed, a hideous barbarian act that goes against all those values of the free world which the British Government has claimed to defend and uphold."*

Parsons notifies London; *"I asked my old Commonwealth colleagues, who have more time than I have recently to circulate amongst UN delegations, whether they felt that the overall attitude towards us was changing for the worse. They said it was not. There was still much sympathy for our position."*<sup>374</sup>

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374 PREM19/626 Telegram No. 700 of 10 May 1982



In Parliament, Francis Pym is asked by the Foreign Affairs Committee about the Government's long term objectives. Pym responds that while now British territory, the Government had never taken the view that the islands were under British sovereignty, *"for ever and a day."* Other forms of governance were available to ensure their future, including independence, associate status, condominium, UN trusteeship and others.

In *Communique No. 40*, Argentina declares the whole of the South Atlantic a 'war zone'.

Argentina submits its own amendments to the Secretary-General's proposals.

*"(1) This agreement is concluded within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations and taking into account Security Council Resolution 502 (1982) and the relevant Resolutions of the General Assembly. (2) The agreement to which the parties commit themselves shall be without prejudice to the rights, claims or positions of the parties. (3) The geographical scope of this agreement shall comprise the three archipelagos considered by the United Nations. (4) The Government and the Administration shall be the exclusive responsibility of the United Nations. The observers of the parties may fly their respective flags. (5) There shall be freedom of transit and residence for citizens of the parties, who shall enjoy the right to acquire and dispose of real estate. (6) The withdrawal of forces shall be effected under the supervision of the United Nations. (7) The parties commit themselves to undertake in good faith negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General with a view to the peaceful settlement of the dispute and, with a sense of urgency, to complete these negotiations by 31 December 1982."*

At the UN, Pérez de Cuéllar meets Anthony Parsons.

*"I had nearly two hours with the Secretary-General and his team this evening. It was a very discouraging meeting. Pérez de Cuéllar said that ... Ros had given him a paper... the paper had not originated in Buenos Aires but had been drafted in the course of the discussions here. It was therefore "negotiable." Ros had told him that the Argentines saw the paper as a "package" and thought it better to discuss all these points at the same time. Pérez de Cuéllar had said that the paper would be unacceptable to us but said he would convey it to me. I said that I was puzzled and disappointed ... it went back to general headlines (and, in its paragraph 5, added a major new point), without the detail on which I thought that Pérez de Cuéllar and I had been making progress... At the end of the meeting de Soto said that as the Dependencies had been included in our earlier negotiations with the Argentines they could not be excluded from the next round. Did he understand that I wanted to exclude them from the interim arrangements? Surely, withdrawal from South Georgia, where we had few troops, would be a "painless gesture." I denied this firmly .. as far as we were concerned, the agreement under discussion related to the Falkland Islands alone.... Withdrawal: A major new problem arose here. Ahmed said that the Argentines had said today that the proposals discussed with Haig had been based on the complete withdrawal of the British Task Force to its bases in the UK. I said ... since then, the situation had changed enormously and there was no question of us accepting such an arrangement. It was totally irrelevant to the real situation..."*<sup>375</sup>

Sir Anthony Parsons opines on the day to London.

*"Today's experience brings me very close to believing that they are still not interested in reaching a negotiated settlement on terms which would be acceptable to us, and that it is rapidly becoming a question of who wrong-foots whom when the negotiations break down..."*

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375 PREM19/626 Telegram No. 703 of 10 May 1982

Cuba's Fidel Castro, current Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement at the UN, calls upon the other members to take whatever steps they can to delay further British action against Argentina.

US Ambassador Walters travels to Buenos Aires to; *“.. probe the possibilities of an alternative government there; to emphasis to Galtieri the danger of Soviet penetration, and to indicate US economic help would be forthcoming in the event of a UK/Argentine agreement.”*<sup>376</sup>

HMS *Alacrity* is ordered to pass through Falklands Sound from the south. Half-way through a radar contact is detected and high-explosive charges fired before the British frigate moves on.

*“The whole engagement was carried out by radar on a dark night with heavy rain falling. At least three hits were seen through the rain. ... The ship attacked was the Argentine naval transport Isla de los Estados. ... The ship sank.”*<sup>377</sup>

Argentina's Air Force issues a *communique* listing the names of 10 dead and 4 missing in action over the Falkland islands. 18 more are shown as wounded. Panama's President, in a telegram to the Secretary-General, condemns; *“... the United Kingdom's escalating aggression against Argentina as a collective affront to Latin America ...”*

## Day 40

**May 11<sup>th</sup>** – in the UK, the BBC is criticised for its *“biased”* reporting of the war. Anthony Grant MP complains to the Director-General.

*“I do not expect the BBC to be biased in Britain's favour but, in the interests of 'balance' if nothing else, need they be so obviously on the side of the enemy?”*

France informs London that they had delivered 5 Exocet missiles to Argentina before the start of the conflict; part of an order for ten missiles. They also confirm that they have an order for 4 Exocets from Peru.

Margaret Thatcher writes to the other EC Heads of Government asking them to support a renewal of the embargo on Argentina due for review on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

*“.. anything less than this could only encourage the Argentines to believe that our resolve is weakening, and that if they maintain their intransigence their aggression will eventually attain its objectives.”*

She also responds to President Portillo's suggestion of a face to face meeting with Galtieri.

*“I do not believe that it would be right to cut across what is happening in New York.”*

Francis Pym responds to Parsons.

*“I agree that your talks yesterday with the Secretary-General were very discouraging... The Argentine paper ... having been drafted by Ros in New York, must incorporate negotiating fat. Moreover, it might be disowned by the Junta and, for this and other reasons, we should be careful not to get into the position of accepting it as the basis of further discussions. ...”*

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376 FCO Sitrep 0730 11 May 1982

377 Middlebrook 2003. Unaware of *Alacrity's* voyage, the Argentines were confused as to what had happened. Twenty-one men died as a result of the engagement.

*When you see the Secretary-General today, you may use the following ... (a) Dependencies: continue to insist on their exclusion. (b) Sovereignty: the formula is clear and easily explainable. You should continue to work for as much of it as possible. (c) .. the suggestion that we should retire 2000 nautical miles is completely unreal. (d) Withdrawal: ..the State which would be best placed geographically and in terms of equipment to verify naval withdrawal effectively would be the US. (e) Interim Administration: you should suggest that the UN administration should be described as functioning "in consultation with the Executive and Legislative Councils in the Islands".. (f) Point 5 in the Argentine text about freedom of transit and residence is obviously designed by Argentina to flood the Islands and thus change the demographic facts during the interim period .. wholly unacceptable .."* <sup>378</sup>

From Washington, Ambassador Henderson informs London.

*"State Department have now advised us, with some embarrassment, that Landsat photography of the Falklands area has taken place during the period 7 – 12 May and that the Argentines have obtained the pictures."*

Argentina's junta issues a statement.

*"In view of the United Kingdom's persistence in its aggressive attitude, which is reflected inter alia in the restrictions it has attempted to impose on Argentine marine traffic in the South Atlantic, and in exercise of the right of self-defence established by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, it is decided that any vessel flying the United Kingdom flag which is navigating in the aforementioned zone towards the area of operations and/or which may be presumed to constitute a threat to national security shall be considered hostile, and action will be taken accordingly."*

Pérez de Cuéllar meets again with Parsons.

*"... on reflection, he had decided not to give me the "rough draft" until he had had a reply from Ros on the question of non-prejudgement... There was one point he wished to raise following his conversation with Ros this morning. .. Pérez de Cuéllar wondered whether we could find other ways to meet our concern about a vacuum occurring if agreement had not been reached by 31 December. .. It was left that the Secretary-General's team would think further on this..."*

Later, Parsons is asked to return to the UN to see the Secretary General.

*"Pérez de Cuéllar said that at last he had good news for me. The Argentines had accepted that 31 December should be a target date and that the agreement should state that the outcome of the negotiations would not be prejudged. He then handed me the following text:*

*"The parties undertake to enter into negotiations in good faith under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the peaceful settlement of their dispute and to seek, with a sense of urgency, the completion of these negotiations by 31 December 1982, taking into account the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant Resolutions of the General Assembly. These negotiations shall be initiated without prejudice to the rights, claims or positions of the parties and without prejudgement of the outcome."*

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378 PREM19/627 Telegram No.383 of 11 May 1982

*Pérez de Cuéllar said that he had put this text (which is a variant on the language I gave him on 9 May) to Ros as his own proposal. Ros had told him this evening that, "after consultation with everybody" Costa Méndez had instructed him to accept it.*

*I said that this was an extremely encouraging development .. assuming that Ros was acting with full authority... There still remained a question about what would happen if no agreement had been reached by 31 December.*

*Pérez de Cuéllar said that the Argentines had made a "tremendous concession." They had also told him, on the interim administration, that they could accept that individual members of the Legislative Council, in their personal capacity, could be used by the administrator for advisory purposes, so long as the administration was also empowered to call on an equal number of other individuals from the Argentine population ... they hoped serious consideration could be given to the need to have as few restrictions as possible on communications, the transit of persons and the acquisition of property. ... Finally on zones of withdrawal, the Argentines had expressed the hope that agreement could be worked out on withdrawal distances for the Task Force which would dispel any impression that Argentines were withdrawing under pressure ...*

*I said that, welcome as tonight's news was, there were still major difficulties ahead. One was the Argentines' proposals on representation of the Islanders. I did not believe that you would be able to accept that 1,820 Islanders should have the same representation as 30 Argentines. ..."* <sup>379</sup>

*"In his memoir Pérez de Cuéllar records Ros describing this as 'an extremely difficult decision which had not easily been reached' and his own belief that a 'crucial breakthrough had been achieved.' .. Pérez de Cuéllar was now keen to consolidate the progress but Parsons urged him not to do more until he had heard from his Government. One explanation for the Argentine concession was that it reflected concern that another attempt at a British landing was imminent and this represented an attempt to create the most difficult context for the British... The increase in military activity noted from 9 May had led to an Argentine expectation of a major operation on 12 May... The British were therefore taken by surprise, and had to assume that there could be some substance to the concession... Argentina was either sincere or trying to put Britain in the position of breaking negotiations and being put on the wrong foot."* <sup>380</sup>

Ambassador Parsons seeks instructions.

*"I realise only too well that the pressure is now on us (This was inevitable if the Argentines gave way on the fundamental question) and that you face very difficult decisions."*

Meanwhile, Argentina's Ambassador in Washington, Estaban Takacs, approaches William Middendorf, the US representative to the OAS; "... he wanted to emphasize that there had been a definite Argentine change – Argentina has deliberately de-linked the sovereignty issue from the negotiating process and he asked that I pass this message on. He said this de-linkage was a major concession since the Argentine public feels strongly that "nobody should take us out of our islands." Takacs added that he feels with this display of Argentine flexibility the ball is now in the British court... He also said that continued British shelling could be a disaster, provoking an escalation, in hostilities. He said thus far ten Islanders had been killed; many more were in peril if the British did not stop. ... He said that if negotiations go on over the next week or longer and the British at the same time show no sign of halting, he would hope the US would weigh in and ask the UK to stop." <sup>381</sup>

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379 PREM19/627 Telegram No. 728 of 11 May 1982

380 Freedman 2005 vol.2. Argentine commanders were still convinced that they had successfully repulsed a British landing on May 1, 1982. As no landing was planned for the 12<sup>th</sup> the British negotiating team were confused as to why Argentina had taken the step of giving a concession.

381 PREM19/628 Telegram No. 1756 of 14 May 1982. There were no Islander casualties at this time.

## Day 41

**May 12<sup>th</sup>** – QE2 sails from Southampton with 5 Infantry Brigade of Scots Guards, Welsh Guards and Gurkhas.

At the Falklands, in a 'friendly-fire' incident, Argentine gunners near Darwin shoot down one of their own aircraft. Three Argentine Skyhawk aircraft are destroyed by HMS *Glasgow* and HMS *Brilliant* in a 42-22 deployment. HMS *Glasgow* is hit by a 1,000lb bomb which fails to explode, but causes extensive damage.<sup>382</sup>

*"There have been a number of reports recently of cruelty and brutality to the Argentine soldiers by their officers and NCOs. A couple of days ago one soldier came in from the mountains to get more rations for his men. For this action he was stripped to the waist and made to stand all day in the freezing rain at the back of the town hall. Several people saw a young soldier at Government House being beaten with a fence batten, then kicked along the ground until he was almost senseless. There are also often disturbing incidents such as a single shot followed by a scream. It is impossible to prove what has actually happened, but does not leave a great deal to the imagination."*<sup>383</sup>

Photographic reconnaissance of Stanley airfield suggests that while its width had been reduced as a result of British bombing, Argentina's *Hercules* aircraft can still operate there. Orders are prepared for *Operation SUTTON*; "To repossess the Falkland Islands as quickly as possible." San Carlos is identified as the preferred landing site.

Instructions from Foreign Secretary Pym arrive in New York for Parsons.

*"Ministers remain of the view the inclusion of South Georgia in the interim arrangements presents us with very serious difficulties. Quite apart from our title and the fact that we are in possession, there are practical considerations. ... we may need to use South Georgia during the period of withdrawal. Its anchorages will enable us to conduct this operation much more satisfactorily than if they were not available. ... Much the best course is to concentrate on the Falklands only... For your own information, if we were ever to come to contemplate withdrawal from South Georgia in the interim, we should have to insist upon total Argentine withdrawal from Southern Thule."*

In addition, Parsons is to maintain that the British Government have reservations about references to General Assembly resolutions without any mention of 'self-determination'; and remain concerned about the target date of 31 December. Further concerns focus on the arrangements for verifying withdrawal of the two forces, and the role of the UN administrator. Argentine demands about rights of residence and the acquisition of property are to be rejected although a vague reference to the *Communications Agreement* of 1971 is acceptable.

*"On Tuesday, the war cabinet had been content with Parson's general approach,.. Now on Wednesday, perhaps not appreciating just how much might be assumed in New York to have changed following the Argentine concession, they discussed whether there need be any movement in Britain's position....This was not the positive set of instructions for which parsons had been hoping..."*<sup>384</sup>

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382 42-22, so called because the Type 42's missiles could deal with enemy aircraft at medium range, whilst the Type 22's were better at close range.

383 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.140

384 Freedman 2005 vol.2

Parsons informs Pérez de Cuéllar of the instructions he has received.

*“It was a grim meeting. ... The Secretary-General and his staff were clearly stunned .. The Argentines were coming to see him ... I had given him nothing to pass on to them in return for what they saw as yesterday's major concessions. ... He could not exclude the possibility that they would break off the talks immediately. ... I urged him to look at the problem from the London end. It was not we who had committed the aggression, we had nevertheless already made a number of major concessions ... Any arrangement which appeared to reward Argentine aggression would simply not be accepted in Britain... Bringing the meeting to a close, Pérez de Cuéllar said that he felt obliged to ask me formally to tell you that in his view his whole effort might now collapse if we could not moderate our position.”*<sup>385</sup>

Following the meeting, Parsons telegrams Pym.

*“I explained .. that the basic British view was as follows. The only just outcome was that the aggressor should withdraw, the status quo ante be restored and the negotiations which had so rudely been broken off resumed. ... the plain if regrettable fact is that everyone here sees the situation quite differently. The majority of the Membership sympathise with our reaction to Argentine use of force, but they believe (this includes a number of western delegations) that the Falklands should belong to Argentina provided that the interests of the Islanders are safeguarded. The dominant view here is that the Argentine position is becoming more moderate and that we should respond... if we do not moderate our position ... we will be regarded as the culprits.”*<sup>386</sup>

In Buenos Aires, Argentina's Foreign Minister, Costa Méndez, is reported as saying that all negotiations must lead to a recognition of Argentine sovereignty.

*“Anya's friend came in for a chat after her 'O' level classes this afternoon. Philip Middleton takes a small class in the afternoon at his house, so that the continuity of their course will not be broken. Annie Chater also has children of a younger age group in – just those that live close by, as do Derek Evans, Hulda Stewart and Janice Blackburn in their respective parts of the town. These few remaining teachers are doing a remarkable job under what are now extremely difficult conditions.”*<sup>387</sup>

Pérez de Cuéllar asks Secretary Haig to persuade London to make a “comparable concession” to that made by Argentina. However, speaking afterwards to Ambassador Henderson, Haig says that he; “.. fully understands the absurdity of this line of argument when Argentina up to now has made no movement whatsoever, but on the contrary has stepped up its demands,” and that Britain should not give way on South Georgia. At the end of the conversation, Haig adds that; “... there was widespread support for us over resistance to aggression. Most Latin American countries understood how impossible the Argentinians were. Their machismo made them intolerable to deal with, but Britain would put itself in the wrong, and as a result inflame the whole American hemisphere, if it attacked the Argentine mainland...”

*“Pérez de Cuéllar decided on reflection that the best way to avoid a breakdown was not to describe Britain's position to Ros 'bluntly'.. He nonetheless asked Parsons to convey his view that unless Britain moderated its position the whole initiative could collapse the next day... Pérez de Cuéllar had only a fairly brief meeting with Ros... told Ros that Britain... already had fresh misgivings because of a recent statement by Costa Méndez.”*<sup>388</sup>

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385 PREM19/627 Telegram No. 731 of 12 May 1982

386 PREM19/627 Telegram No.733 of 12 May 1982

387 Diary entry in Smith 1984 pp. 142 - 143

388 Freedman 2005 vol.2

Parsons reports.

*"In the event Pérez de Cuéllar decided not to call me back for a further meeting .. He told me on the telephone that the following points had emerged from his fairly brief meeting with Ros:*

*(1) a private appeal to us ...for military restraint while serious negotiations were continuing,*

*(2) Pérez de Cuéllar told Ros that we were generally satisfied .. with the Argentine statement on non-prejudgement.*

*(3) Ros had nothing further to offer on the nature of the interim Administration,*

*(4) Ros re-opened the question of freedom for Argentines to acquire property in the Falklands and the point about their being able to buy shares in the Falklands Islands Company...*

*You and your colleagues are now faced with an immediate strategic decision. If tomorrow I stick to the positions set out to Pérez de Cuéllar today and he puts the to the Argentines, as he will feel compelled to do, I agree with his assessment that the negotiations will terminate there and then. We can only keep the talks going if we are prepared to make fairly substantial concessions on the nature of the interim administration and on our military withdrawal from South Georgia..."*<sup>389</sup>

## Day 42

**May 13<sup>th</sup>** – on Ascension Island, 187 of the 188 Argentine prisoners captured on South Georgia are handed over to the ICRC before being flown to Montevideo. Lieutenant-Colonel Astiz remains detained on Ascension while a decision is made regarding French and Swedish requests to interview him in connection with murder enquiries concerning their nationals.

Intelligence indicates that Argentina has only 3 AM39 Exocet missiles left.<sup>390</sup>

An Argentine Hercules aircraft successfully lands at Stanley airfield with supplies for the garrison.

*"This level of activity was still not enough to meet Argentine needs: many requests for supplies were left unmet. The estimate now was that by stretching rations and using local resources the Army could survive beyond 18 may to 26/27 may but if the force was to be fed even on reduced rations for ten days beyond that the some 75 tons of resupply would be necessary."*<sup>391</sup>

In London, Foreign Secretary Francis Pym addresses the House of Commons.

*"I shall not recall now the long and strenuous efforts that we made in co-operation with Mr. Haig, ending in failure because of Argentina's intransigence. ... But it is interesting that, in spite*

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<sup>389</sup> PREM19/627 Telegram No. 733 of 12 May 1982

<sup>390</sup> France had confirmed that only 5 had been delivered, with a further 5 held back. Four ordered by Peru had been due for delivery on the 12<sup>th</sup>, but with information that these would be passed on to Argentina, the French Government managed to find sufficient reasons to ensure that they were not delivered while the conflict continued. Argentine attempts to obtain these missiles on the open market appeared unsuccessful. A later assessment, on the 26<sup>th</sup>, cast doubt on this following a rumour that Iran had offered to sell 9 Exocets captured from Iraq. Defence Secretary Nott would later imply that there had been a world-wide effort to ensure that either the Argentines were outbid, or that the missiles that were to be sold were rendered inoperable. Few details are available, as may be expected.

<sup>391</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

*of Argentina's rejection then, the elements of an agreement about which I first spoke to the House as long ago as 21 April have remained as elements in subsequent negotiations. In that statement I told the House that they were the arrangements for the Argentine withdrawal, the nature of any interim administration of the islands and the framework for the negotiation for a long-term solution. That is still the case today. ...*

*The negotiations are now going on under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Senor Pérez de Cuéllar has shown great determination and diplomatic ability in his lengthy and frequent talks in recent days with the British representative, Sir Anthony Parsons. They have met at least once every day and sometimes more often. On Tuesday, those talks seemed to make a little progress. Yesterday, things went less well. Hopes have been raised before, only to be dashed, and many very serious difficulties remain. It would be quite wrong for me not to indicate that to the House. ...*

*It is not, of course, easy to negotiate with the Argentine authorities. While their representative in New York has appeared to be prepared to recognise many of the realities of the situation, there have been—even within the last two days—a number of unhelpful statements by other Argentine public figures, made in public.... On different occasions the Foreign Minister, one of his senior officials, a general and a junior Minister in another department have all referred to the process of negotiation as if this was designed solely to lead up to a handover of sovereignty to Argentina. That attitude is, I repeat, quite unacceptable to us and we must be absolutely sure that Argentina does not adhere to it, privately or publicly, if a negotiated settlement is to be possible.... the outcome of long-term negotiations about the future of the Islands must not be prejudged in advance in any way. ...*

*Present negotiations in New York are at an important point. Our resolve has not wavered. There have been some indications—actually the first since the crisis began—of genuine Argentine willingness to negotiate on some of the important points. There will have to be more if we are to succeed....”<sup>392</sup>*

Following concerns expressed by Brazil's President, that the UK was considering attacks against the Argentine mainland air bases, Ronald Reagan telephones the Prime Minister.

*“(Reagan) ... we've been on the phone with the Secretary General, and he now suggests that the two sides are quite close. Is this the way it looks to you?*

*(Thatcher) Wouldn't have said the two sides were quite close because there are two very big outstanding things, one, the interim administration. And of course they want an administration that is much, much more Argentinian than would suit us or our people. And also want to have movement of Argentinian people in constantly and possibly, and so on, and, and that just, just would not suit the Islanders at all. And, also, there's a question of South Georgia, which of course the title is totally different from that of the Falklands. .. there is the other thing as well, that you don't know quite who you're negotiating with and that what Ros says, we're ready to negotiate without any preconditions about sovereignty, we don't know whether it's true. But the other thing is, if they're saying that, what their ploy obviously is, is to try to arrange an interim administration and conditions to that administration, which would*

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392 HC Deb 13 May 1982 vol.23 cc952-1034



*lead inevitably to sovereignty at the end of the period. And the third thing is, there's absolutely no guarantee that at the end of the period, if they haven't got what they want, they won't just invade again. ... They attacked our ships yesterday, so they're not holding off on military action. But even if they were, it's easy for them to hold off knowing that I with a task force bobbing around on the sea have not got the length of endurance on the sea which they have on the mainland.*

*(Reagan) Yes, that's right.*

*(Thatcher) It makes sense for them to say, look, don't have any military action while you're negotiating. And all they've got to do then is to go on and on and on. And we'd be able to get nowhere and have our capacity to take military action steadily whittled away. .. So I've said, continuously said, and still say, that the negotiations have not stopped military action nor can they, because the fact is, Ron, we're only getting anywhere as the military pressure builds up. ... the title of the Falklands, you know, is not necessarily by a long chalk the Argentinians, they've always refused to take it to the International Court of Justice. And knowing the title, I can see why. But as they say, because an island four hundred miles, is four hundred miles off the coast, there are a lot of islands, including Trinidad and Tobago, who would shake in their shoes, because they're much, much nearer South American continent.*

*(Reagan) Yes. ... Well, Margaret, I agree with you that one thing that has been neglected, particularly on the part of the Argentinians, in this whole thing, is consideration for the people on the island who live there. And when I talked to him that first night, trying to get him to turn his task force, his invasion fleet around, when we knew it was on its way, oh, he swore to me up and down that the culture and the lifestyle and the rights of the people on the island would go on just the same as they had always been. Well, we know that isn't true and we know they've made great changes already under this occupation.*

*(Thatcher) There you are, anyone in the government of Argentina who says that! But, you see, some of our people have been in the Falkland Islands for far more generations than some of the people in Argentina. I had some one in my room just a few days ago - seventh generation in the Falklands.”<sup>393</sup>*

*“The Prime Minister was not in a receptive mood. While in public she had been cautious, in private she was becoming more anxious about the diplomatic trend... So this conversation with Reagan became for Thatcher yet another exercise in dispelling misapprehensions.”<sup>394</sup>*

Parsons and de Cuéllar meet again at the UN.

*“I judged that to make the points about South Georgia and the interim Administration .. would almost certainly precipitate an immediate breakdown. I therefore took the line that, because of the emergency debate in the House of Commons, you had not yet had time to send me substantive instructions on these two points .. (Pérez de Cuéllar said that he always preferred delays to bad news.)... I did, however, have an answer of substance on the risk of a vacuum after 31 December 1982 if no agreement had been reached... It was unrealistic to think that sufficient confidence could be generated between us and the Argentines for it to be safely left in the air. It seemed to me that it was an equally important point to the UN, the UK and Argentina.*

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393 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Subject File, Memorandums of Conversation - President Reagan (May 1982)

394 Freedman 2005 vol.2

*... Pérez de Cuéllar said that both sides were pressing him for ideas on it. The Argentines were prepared to let him ask for an extra month or two if no agreement was in sight at the end of the year. But they wanted to guard against the risk that the UN interim administration would last for ever. I said that we could trust the Secretary-General but not the Security Council. Might it be possible to devise some formula under which, if the Secretary-General decided that further time was needed ... the interim administration would remain in being unless the Security Council decided otherwise?*

*Ahmed and de Soto said that the Argentines also felt uncomfortable about involving the Security Council (because of our veto) and that the Secretariat were working on language which would contain no reference to the Security Council .. The trouble was that this formula would not meet Argentine concerns, unless it specified that only one extension would be possible.*

*I indicated that the latter condition would not be acceptable to us. I was then subjected to a burst of rhetoric from Ahmed to the effect that we could not expect the Argentines to make another concession. I dealt very firmly with this ... Pérez de Cuéllar was obviously afraid that Ros would break off because of my failure to make any move on either the Dependencies or on the interim Administration. He said that he now felt that by Sunday (16 May) at the latest he would have to present some UN ideas to both of us. He recognised that one or both of us might reject his ideas, but he felt obliged to try.”<sup>395</sup>*

Parsons telegrams London.

*“My theatrical performance this morning has helped us get through another day. The price of course was expectations that we will come up with something on the difficult subjects tomorrow. I am working on the assumption that we are on two tracks – genuine search for agreement and, if no agreement is possible, for the negotiations to collapse with us in the least disadvantageous position. I am also conscious of the need to buy as much time as we can.”*

Pym responds.

*“I realise that the negotiations have reached a very difficult position. ... our immediate purpose should be to keep the negotiations going, at least for some time yet. ... I see the scope for further discussion of certain of the problems with the Secretary-General before Ministers attempt to take a decision about a package covering all the outstanding questions. In particular, please pursue the following matters: (a) you should make full play with the continued statements ... that Argentina insists on having sovereignty... (b) you should say that the risk of a vacuum after an interim period is for us, one of the most important matters, and that more clarity must be achieved as soon as possible...*

*I realise that you also need to say something about South Georgia and about interim administration. ... on South Georgia you may say that we should be willing to refer title over South Georgia to the ICJ, does the Secretary-General think that would help?..”*

Ling Qing, President of the Security Council, calls for an informal discussion on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Pérez de Cuéllar warns Parsons that he considers Ling Qing, “biased and dangerous.”<sup>396</sup>

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395 PREM19/627 f125

396 PREM19/627 Telegram No.748 of 13 May 1982

## Day 43

**May 14<sup>th</sup>** – 3 Argentine Skyhawk aircraft are shot down by Sea Harriers. Stanley airfield is bombed.

The USA delivers two anti-missile gun systems for HMS *Illustrious* and 100 Sidewinder missiles.

*“During May Britain procured some \$120m of US material made available at very short notice (often 24 hours) and frequently from stocks normally earmarked for US operational requirements. This equipment had included the sidewinder missiles, Vulcan/Phalanx, 4,700 tons of airstrip matting for Stanley airport once it had been recaptured, conversion of the SS Stena Inspector for use as a repair ship... Shrike missiles for use by the Vulcans, helicopter engines, submarine detection devices for use by the Sea King helicopters, temporary accommodation on a large scale on ascension Island for British forces, Stinger ground-to-air missiles, as well as ammunition.”*<sup>397</sup>

In London, the War Cabinet meet; *“The FCO's assessment was that it was still not clear whether Argentina's objectives were to negotiate seriously or gain time while the weather worsened in the South Atlantic, but it was certainly getting itself into a good presentational position in order to blame Britain if the talks collapsed... The real sticking point was not the Dependencies, where future concessions might be offered... but the interim administration... The debate in parliament the previous day convinced ministers that the Government's supporters would not welcome more concessions.”*<sup>398</sup>

A decision is made to recall both Parsons and Henderson for consultations.

The War Cabinet receive intelligence reports that the *Bahia Paraíso*, newly converted into a hospital ship, is loading large quantities of food and weapons at the port of Ushuaia. A decision is taken to request that the Red Cross inspect the vessel, but that if it has already left and is found within the *TEZ*, it should be stopped and searched. Buenos Aires is to be informed via the Swiss Embassy. With regard to future operations, permission is given to a plan to attack Argentina's mainland air-bases, and in particular the Rio Grande airfield in Tierra del Fuego; after first achieving a successful reconnaissance of the target.<sup>399</sup>

The meeting is also presented with plans for Operation SUTTON.<sup>400</sup>

At the UN, Belgium's Ambassador informs Parsons that the Argentines have been visiting all the EU Ambassadors to say that; *“(a) Argentina was negotiating in good faith, (b) sanctions had not helped the British: their effect had simply been to consolidate Latin American and Third World support for Argentina; their renewal would extend the confrontation and heighten north/south conflict, (c) the sovereignty question had been resolved as a result of an Argentine concession, (d) there remained three main issues, (e) the most important of these was the nature of the interim administration, where Argentina wanted purely UN administration, but the British were insisting on retention of “the colonial structures,” (f) the other two were withdrawal, where the Argentines had accepted the Secretary-General's concept of simultaneous or parallel withdrawal, but the British had not: and the substantive negotiations where the British were refusing to accept a deadline ..”*<sup>401</sup>

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397 Freedman 2005 vol.2

398 *Ibid.*

399 See May 17, 1982.

400 The FCO were not informed; at the insistence of Admiral Lewin.

401 PREM19/627 Telegram No.755 of 14 May 1982

Information is received from Caracas to the effect that the Venezuelan Government is also sending out a mission to Europe at President Galtieri's request. Their itinerary includes Spain, the Vatican, West Germany, Belgium, Holland and France and the purpose is to show "solidarity" with Argentina by seeking the lifting of sanctions.

On his return from Buenos Aires, US General Walters telephones Ambassador Henderson.

*".. Walters went on to outline his visit to Buenos Aires, the main purpose of which he claimed was to limit the damage to American relations with Latin America which had been brought about by US support for the UK. He had found the Argentine Junta the most difficult people he had had to deal with since his encounters many years ago with MOSSAD. .. Galtieri told Walters that recent US statements, particularly by Weinberger, had raised strong anti-American feelings in Buenos Aires .. he felt that the Americans could have adopted a less partial course.... Galtieri was unyielding on access to the Islands for Argentine nationals. .. No mention was made of the Dependencies. .. Galtieri had also proposed that the dispute should be resolved by means of a summit meeting under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General and comprising himself, Mrs. Thatcher and President Reagan."*<sup>402</sup>

US Secretary Haig sends his "latest thoughts" to Ambassador Henderson.

*"(1) We should do everything possible to ensure that it was not we who were responsible, or held responsible, for any breakdown in the Secretary-General's efforts .. (2) withdrawal from the Islands should be based on parity of time in terms of the ability of both sides to reinsert their forces... (3) the focus of the discussions should be on the Falkland Islands and not the Dependencies. This had also been the view of President Figueiredo of Brazil."*

Parsons seeks the Secretary-General to inform him of the recall to London, and to request that Pérez de Cuéllar delays presenting any formal proposals until Parsons' return after the weekend. Aware the Parsons expected to return with the UK's last ditch proposal, the Secretary-General agrees.

*"He also told Parsons that he had given Ros a hard time on the question of islander participation in the interim administration, arguing that it was inconceivable for any democratic country to accept that people should be robbed of democratic rights let alone accept parity between 2000 and 30... This provided some confirmation that the Americans had been putting pressure on Buenos Aires for a concession on the interim administration."*<sup>403</sup>

At the informal meeting of the Security Council called by Ling Quing, the Secretary-General outlines the progress he has made with his peace proposals.

*"A broad framework of agreement was taking shape, covering ceasefire, mutual withdrawal, an interim Administration and negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General. There would be an important role for the UN, subject to the approval of the Security Council."*

Spain's Ambassador calls for a cease-fire while negotiations continue. Parsons does not respond and the Council ignore the call. Parsons reports.

*"Thanks to Pérez de Cuéllar's efforts, we have thus cleared another hurdle in the Council, but there was no mistaking the members' nervousness about hostilities if and when the Secretary-General's efforts should fail. The Council is all set to support a simple ceasefire plus a negotiations Resolution in that event."*

Ambassador Henderson and Sir Anthony Parsons fly to London.

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402 PREM19/628 Telegram No.1773 of 14 May 1982

403 Freedman 2005 vol.2

In the Falklands, British special forces attack an Argentine base on Pebble Island. <sup>404</sup>

*"A small Argentine naval air base had been established on the grass airfield here (Pebble Island). This was officially known as Base Aérea Naval Calderón,... there was only a small guard in a hut on the edge of the airfield on this wet and windy night when the SAS men and the shell fire both arrived without warning. ... There was an exchange of fire between the Argentine marines and the SAS; some men were wounded on both sides, but there were no deaths."* <sup>405</sup>

A large ammunition dump is destroyed together with the fuel stores. 11 aircraft are put permanently out of action. HMS *Glamorgan* shells the base as British forces withdraw.

*"The Argentine version is that only three aircraft were damaged and the attack was repelled. It seems that Chile has offered the research vessel Piloto Pardo to evacuate the Argentine dead and wounded from Stanley, which the (BBC) put as forty-one dead and thirty-eight wounded."* <sup>406</sup>

## Day 44

**May 15<sup>th</sup>** – Stanley airfield is bombed together with two other targets nearby. An Argentine cargo vessel, the *Río Carcarañá* is strafed by two Sea Harriers and set on fire. Argentina successfully airlifts two 155mm L33 artillery field guns into Stanley.

*"The big gun on Davis Street is a 155-mm field gun, now positioned between Rag's House and 94 Davis Street under thick camouflage. Very heavily guarded so unable to get too close. It's a formidable-looking affair and will be very difficult to hit without blowing up the nearby houses. There is another one along towards Ross Road West just past the monument between Sullivan House and the doctor's old house."* <sup>407</sup>

A decision to renew sanctions against Argentina is referred by the Political Committee of the European Community to the *Council of Ministers*.

The Soviet Union repositions its 1365 satellite over the South Atlantic.

## Day 45

**May 16<sup>th</sup>** – Sea Harriers again bomb Stanley airfield.

*"The Harriers have really had a field day, bombing mainly in the airport area, but occasionally dropping one somewhere else, so that the Argentine would not become too complacent about things. An unusually large number of folk turned out for Glory Hour in the pubs at lunch time, taking advantage of the sunshine plus the entertainment – not only the British bombing but the Argentine confusion."* <sup>408</sup>

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404 Pebble Island lies to the north of West Falkland.

405 Middlebrook 2003. Only one British casualty was noted as wounded.

406 Diary entry from Smith 1984 p.153

407 *Ibid* p.150. It is a clear breach of the Geneva Conventions to place military hardware within civilian areas.

408 *Ibid*. *Glory Hour* was so-called because of a local licensing law that only allowed the public houses to be open for one hour on a Sunday lunchtime.

In Falkland Sound, two Sea Harriers bomb an Argentine merchant ship, *Rio Carcarana*, which is abandoned by its crew.<sup>409</sup> The *Bahia Buen Suceso* is also identified at anchor in Fox Bay.

*"We were lucky. ... Only three of us were still aboard, getting our sleeping equipment together, when we heard the planes and the sound of the cannon shells. There were several hits, some near me – too many! ... by the grace of God no one was killed. The ship was badly damaged..."*<sup>410</sup>

HMS *Alacrity* passes through Falklands Sound; reporting no sign of mines.

In London, members of the Cabinet and the FCO, including Ambassadors Parsons and Henderson, meet to decide *"the absolute minimum acceptable"* in any potential agreement with Argentina.

*"We went over every point in detail, working as usual around the the oblong table in the Great Parlour upstairs, remodelling the draft clause by clause. At hand were voluminous reference sources on the UN..."*<sup>411</sup>

*"Other recollections suggest a less than harmonious day, with the Prime Minister in one of her more combative moods. Henderson reports that she 'veered the whole time to being uncompromising... As for the FCO, they were accused of being 'wet, ready to sell out, unsupportive of British interests, etc., etc.' ... Nott also recalls a 'pretty aggressive tone'... All agreed that the aim was not to draft a document that reached out to Argentina."*<sup>412</sup>

After 6 hours, the meeting draws up the minimum that the UK can accept -

- (1) no prejudice to the rights, claims or positions of either party in the ultimate peaceful settlement of their dispute,
- (2) no acts or activities taking place while the interim agreement is in force shall constitute a basis for asserting, supporting or denying a claim to territorial sovereignty, or create any rights of sovereignty,
- (3) 24 hours after signature (time "T") each party undertakes to cease and thereafter refrain from all hostile actions,
- (4) both countries undertake – (a) to commence withdrawal at time "T", (b) to withdraw half of her force 150 nautical miles within 7 days, (c) to complete withdrawal within 14 days,
- (5) exclusion zones to be lifted from time "T",
- (6) following completion of the withdrawal each party undertakes to refrain from reintroducing any armed forces within 150 nautical from the Islands,
- (7) economic measures to be lifted at time "T",
- (8) both parties to jointly sponsor a Security Council *Resolution* to recognise the agreement and the Secretary-General's role,
- (9) the Secretary-General to appoint an Administrator acceptable to both parties

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409 Reported as on fire, there is some question of whether it actually was or whether the pilots had seen smoke from flares set off by the crew. She was on fire a few days later and eventually sank.

410 Capt. Niella quoted in Middlebrook 2003

411 Thatcher 1993

412 Freedman 2005 vol.2

(10) the Administrator to ensure the continuing administration of the Islands in consultation with the representative institutions of the Islands in accordance with Article 73 of the UN Charter, with the exception that one representative from the Argentine population be appointed to each of the two institutions,

(11) the UN Administrator to verify withdrawal, (12) each party to have no more than 3 observers on the Islands,

(12) Negotiations in good faith under the auspices of the Secretary-General, for the peaceful settlement of their dispute and to seek, with a sense of urgency, the completion of negotiations by 31 December 1982 and without prejudgement

(13) this agreement shall remain in force until a definitive agreement about the future of the Islands has been reached and implemented by the parties.

This 'bottom line' only makes mention of the Falkland Islands; the Dependencies are not included.

Sir Anthony Parsons' instructions are that there can be no amendments.

*"... although the right course would have been for the Argentines to implement SC Resolution 502, we have been negotiating in good faith for more than five weeks through various intermediaries. We are very grateful for the Secretary-General's latest efforts but we cannot allow matters to drag on much longer. Midday New York time on Wednesday 19 May is therefore an absolute deadline for the Argentines' reply. If not received by then we shall have to assume rejection..."*<sup>413</sup>

Foreign Secretary Francis Pym leaves for EC and NATO meetings in Luxembourg.

Germany's Chancellor Schmidt, and French President Mitterand, meet in Hamburg.

*"There was clear agreement on the need for solidarity with Britain on the basis of SCR 502. Sanctions involved sacrifices for both France and Germany, but it was clear that they would be renewed.."*

Secretary Haig speaks to the Italian Foreign Minister, Emilio Colombo, of the need for European unity in support of the UK.

*"... he recognized the importance of what the Secretary was saying but that in present circumstances he was not permitted to join an EC consensus favoring renewal of economic sanctions. This fact was very disagreeable for him, but if he said yes, there would be a major political crisis in Italy. It is the military escalation in the South Atlantic which has caused great problems in his country from psychological point of view; the reactions of the Argentine population to the sinking of the Belgrano had had a major impact on Italian public opinion, given the fact that millions of Argentines were of Italian origin and that many of these even held dual citizenship. Colombo added that the issues were very clear in his mind and that the points which the Secretary had made about the need to support the UK were correct but that unfortunately irrational situations sometimes prevailed ..."*<sup>414</sup>

Haig and Pym meet in Luxembourg. Pym shows the US Secretary a draft of that morning's conclusions; *"Haig seemed more confident than in earlier meetings of our ability to do the job militarily, and assumed that we would not be able to wait much longer. He argued strongly against action against the mainland, but seemed otherwise undisturbed about the military prospects .."*

Haig informs Pym that the Argentines in New York are "bragging" that their concession on the pre-judging of sovereignty has thrown the British argument into disarray.

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413 Thatcher 1993

414 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 05/18/1982

## Day 46

**May 17<sup>th</sup>** – Haig telegrams President Reagan.

*“British Foreign Secretary Pym has just shown me the UK negotiating position approved today by Mrs. Thatcher's War Cabinet. It is to be delivered to the UN Secretary General tonight as a final UK position which the Argentines have forty-eight hours to accept or not. The British have made a serious effort. But the position is less forthcoming than the proposal we put to the two sides at the end of April. In that the Argentines rejected that earlier US proposal, the British must realize that their current position is unlikely to be accepted. The forty-eight hour deadline may well coincide with a British landing on the Falklands. ... Pym did assure me that London is not now contemplating strikes against the mainland. There is of course the possibility that the Argentines will respond with relatively modest changes to the British text, which could give Mrs. Thatcher pause before ordering a landing. ... However, I doubt that the Argentines will come far enough to avert a British assault. Odds are that the battle for the Falklands will begin as early as this Wednesday or Thursday.”*<sup>415</sup>

In Luxembourg, Margaret Thatcher raises British concerns with France regarding Peru's order for 4 Exocet missiles. The French President assures her that completion of the order will be delayed; “.. as long as is necessary.” Although opposed by Italy and Ireland, EC trade sanctions are renewed until the 24<sup>th</sup>.

The US Embassy in Luxembourg City reports to the White House on events.

*“Despite some opening-ceremony pep talk earlier this morning by the .. Luxembourg hosts, the mood here is sombre and dominated by the South Atlantic issue. Though NATO is the nominal headliner, most eyes are on the following EC meeting scheduled later today and the uncertain status of the sanctions renewal. Leaving Ireland aside, the key to continued support for the UK may hinge on Italy. .. Al's talks with Pym last night were one on one, ... but two nuggets did filter down: 1) the Brits are reportedly incensed at what they see as less than wholehearted U.S. support for their position; and 2) the negotiating process still has some time, but not much “*<sup>416</sup>

From Buenos Aires, US Ambassador Shlaudeman opines to Washington.

*“I scarcely need to say that a bloody battle on the Islands leading to Argentine defeat would produce grave consequences for US interests here and elsewhere in Latin America.”*<sup>417</sup>

HMS *Invincible* and *Broadsword* detach from the Task Force near the Falklands, carrying an SAS reconnaissance team and a *Sea King* helicopter. Both vessels sail towards the coast of Tierra del Fuego.<sup>418</sup>

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<sup>415</sup> Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Haig Papers, Department of State, Day File, May 17, 1982

<sup>416</sup> Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 05/17/1982

<sup>417</sup> Quoted in Freedman 2005 vol.2

<sup>418</sup> Operation *Plum Duff*. Sources suggest that B squad SAS were to assess the potential for another plan – *Mikado* – that called for a direct attack on the Argentine airfield at Rio Grande in an Entebbe style raid using C-130 Hercules aircraft (the proposal having been approved by the War Cabinet on the 14<sup>th</sup>). Considered impracticable, the squad were to be extracted by submarine. Freedman (2005 vol.2) notes that 8 SAS members, “*came out through Chile*” while a story published in the *Mail on Sunday*, March 30, 2014, claimed that the incursion had suffered from poor planning and that the SAS personnel were quietly flown out from Santiago. See below.



Parsons arrives back in New York and delivers two documents to Secretary-General de Cuéllar. The first, setting out the British position in full, is the draft of the proposed Interim Agreement. He emphasises that this is as far as Britain is prepared to go.

*“.. these were major concessions. We could make no more. All that Argentina had offered .. was a matching undertaking (if it could be believed) to put sovereignty on one side, and conditional agreement to withdraw, which could hardly be regarded as a concession when Argentina was the aggressor; withdrawal, for an aggressor, was an obligation not a concession. ..*

*This represented the bottom line for HM Government. We could not accept any amendments to it. .. Negotiations could not be allowed to drag on .. we required a reply from the Argentines by 12 noon on 19 May. Any appeals for further time, or any proposals for substantive amendment, would be interpreted as a rejection of our proposals. ...”*

*“Parsons suggested that he should present it as a British draft, but one that was based on the negotiations that he had led and thus quite different to what would have appeared if he had not been involved. There were real concessions. He could say that he had imposed the deadline to stop the negotiations going on indefinitely.”*<sup>419</sup>

Pérez de Cuéllar speaks to Parsons privately. When they are alone, Sir Anthony hands over the second document: a letter making it clear that the Dependencies are not a part of the Interim Agreement.

After the meeting, Parson reports to London.

*“Pérez de Cuéllar then went on to say that, between ourselves, he thought that our paper was perfectly reasonable and he appreciated the effort we had made... He also had some indications that the Argentines were beginning to get a bit desperate, and might genuinely want to get an agreement with us. His feeling was that they thought that we could recapture the Islands without much difficulty and that the only way to save themselves from this ultimate humiliation would be to get an agreement before it happened...”*<sup>420</sup>

Ros is then summoned to be given the British proposal.<sup>421</sup>

Pérez de Cuéllar issues a press statement.

*“As you know, Sir Anthony Parsons returned from London this morning and immediately informed me of the British position as defined during the intense consultations he had with his Government over the weekend. This afternoon I conveyed to Vice Minister Ros the information I had received. You will understand that until I hear from the parties I have nothing to add except that I am more than ever convinced that time is not on the side of peace. Therefore efforts to find a peaceful solution will be pursued with vigour. The next few days will be decisive.”*

At a “super-restricted” session of NATO in Luxembourg, all speakers including the Foreign Ministers of the USA, Portugal, Germany, France, Italy and Norway express their solidarity with the UK.<sup>422</sup>

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419 Freedman 2005 vol.2

420 PREM19/629 Telegram No.765 of 17 May 1982

421 Pérez de Cuéllar later told Parsons that Ros had looked, “disappointed.”

422 FCO Sitrep 0700 18 May 1982

A Sea King helicopter lands near Punta Arenas in Chile and is destroyed by its British crew.<sup>423</sup>

*"The only snag we ever had was when a British helicopter carrying commandos force-landed on Chilean territory a few miles west of Punta Arenas. We had no knowledge of this operation, and as this violated one of the principles we had laid out, we had a very strong argument with Wing Commander Edwards, who promised it would never happen again. As the wreck of the helicopter burned, everybody in Punta Arenas, and later in Argentina, got wind of the mysterious helicopter. I informed General Pinochet immediately. He then gave the pertinent instructions to deny all Chilean knowledge of this to our own Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and I was given a free hand to help the crew out of Chile."*<sup>424</sup>

*"There were two Argentine destroyers – Piedra Buena and Hipólito Bouchard – on radar watch off the coast and both reported the passage of the helicopter, but a considerable land search discovered nothing. ... a considerable effort by all three Argentine services would continue to be devoted to airfield and coastal protection on the mainland."*<sup>425</sup>

## Day 47

**May 18<sup>th</sup>** – in London, the meeting of the War Cabinet considers Operation SUTTON.

*"It was for the Chiefs of Staff to advise on the military feasibility of the operation. Their advice, presented first by CDS (Lewin), was that this was about the only option left that was feasible. There was no satisfactory settlement available to be negotiated nor was a long blockade viable. The recommendation was therefore that the landing should go ahead as soon as practicable... Individually the Chiefs made their own submissions, all pointing to the same conclusion... The War Cabinet accepted the advice: the landing and repossession operations would go ahead unless it was clear that an acceptable diplomatic settlement was available by the afternoon of 20 May... The decision was made..."*<sup>426</sup>

In Parliament, PM Thatcher makes a statement.

*"Our representative at the United Nations has had a further meeting with Senor Perez de Cuellar. The negotiations are continuing and we are doing all that we can to reach a peaceful settlement, although there are principles on which we cannot compromise. There remain substantial difficulties. I believe that we shall know within the next day or two whether an agreement is attainable.*

*We cannot have endless Argentine prevarication. We have been negotiating in good faith for six weeks and there has still been no sign of Argentine willingness to implement the Security Council's mandatory resolution.*

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423 Undoubtedly the *Sea King* used to transport the Operation *Plum Duff* SAS reconnaissance team from the *Invincible/Broadsword* detachment.

424 *Matthei Memorandum to Margaret Thatcher March 25, 1999*. See Day 2. The 3 man helicopter crew gave themselves up to Chilean authorities on the 25<sup>th</sup>, and were repatriated to the UK. All crew members subsequently received gallantry medals for their part in what was always going to be a one way flight. The official story handed to the press was that the helicopter had got into difficulties and had to make an emergency landing; the craft being destroyed as its crew were unsure whether they had landed in Argentina or Chile.

425 Middlebrook 2003

426 Freedman 2005 vol.2. The weather would be the determining factor of timing; lack of air superiority the biggest challenge once the operation had begun.

*Our determination to ensure that all Argentine forces are withdrawn from the islands remains absolute. We have throughout made it clear that we shall take whatever steps are necessary to bring this about. We are meanwhile increasing the military pressures on the Argentine Government.... I believe that any military action or option cannot and must not be delayed by people who are extending negotiations.”*<sup>427</sup>

In Washington, Stoessel reports to President Reagan.

*“I had a long talk with UK Ambassador Henderson today. He expects the Argentinians will not accept the latest UK proposals, but will come back tomorrow with suggested changes. Henderson anticipates that these in turn will be unacceptable to the British and that the UN Secretary General will thereupon declare his mediation mission at an end.*

*Henderson intimated that a major UK assault on the main island would ensue on the heels of the SG's declaration; he predicted with confidence that the operation would be successful and that the battle—while possibly involving high casualties on both sides - would be over "sooner rather than later." Henderson thought that when the assault takes place there will be pressure in the UN Security Council for a simple ceasefire without withdrawal (which would be unacceptable to the UK) and that—in his "personal view"—the time would then be appropriate for the US again to come forward as the only power capable of bringing about a settlement.”*

Still awaiting an Argentine response, Parsons speaks privately to the Secretary-General.

*“Pérez de Cuéllar was already regretting that British tactics had made it difficult for him to produce a paper of his own, as he had expected to do by this stage of the process... The end game was still going to be tricky, Parsons warned London. He could now see that Pérez de Cuéllar would probably want to put some proposals to both sides, just to say that he had done so, but without any expectation of success.”*<sup>428</sup>

Late in the evening in New York, Deputy Foreign Minister Ros submits a document to the Secretary-General's office.

*“... a mixture of requests for clarification, re-statement of known Argentine positions and introduction of new points. ... (a) The Argentines said that they were not clear what we meant by "in consultation with".. Did it mean that the opinion of the Councils would be binding on the Administrator or not? .. (b) they did not like the references to Article 73 of the Charter, (c) they were prepared to change the date to 30 June 1983, but required a provision that if no agreement had been reached by then the General Assembly would intervene ... They needed a mechanism to ensure that the negotiations did not continue for ever, (d) they wanted the Dependencies included, (e) they wanted a reference to the relevant GA Resolutions in the preamble if possible, and in any case in the terms of reference, (f) they suggested that in the negotiations the Secretary-General should "resort to" a four State Contact Group, two States being nominated by each party, with each party having the right to veto one of the two States proposed by the other, (g) on withdrawal, they proposed a very general clause which would provide for complete withdrawal and return to normal areas of operations within 30 days, (h) there was also a point about communications and access to the Islands for the nationals of both parties during the interim period.”*

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427 HC Deb 18 May 1982 vol.24 cc189-90

428 Freedman 2005 vol.2

After Ros has left, Pérez de Cuéllar summons Parsons.

*"He said that Ros had given him a document containing Argentine "ideas and views" to bridge the differences between us. De Soto then described these. ... I said that I would transmit all this to you ... but I could say right away that you would consider this Argentine response as completely unsatisfactory. It did not constitute a clear reply ... You would only be able to draw the conclusion that the Argentines were playing for time. .. I had made clear yesterday that such a response would be interpreted by HMG as rejection.."*

Kirkpatrick, US Ambassador to the UN, speaks to Ros and her Argentine opposite number, Eduardo Roca.

*"I attempted without success to persuade them that the British proposal is not so bad; that Argentina could, if she chose, accept it and declare she had won by the establishment of a UN authority responsible for the government..."*<sup>429</sup>

Near the Falklands' TEZ, two elements of Britain's naval force, the carrier group (TG317.8) and the amphibious group (TG317.0) rendezvous to facilitate a redistribution of men and supplies via ship-to-ship transfers. Over 4,000 troops are present.<sup>430</sup> Reconnaissance teams are landed using Sea King helicopters.

## Day 48

**May 19<sup>th</sup>** – from the UN, US Ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick, reports to Reagan.

*"This morning I spoke with SG Perez de Cuellar. He described the Argentine response as "terrible" for this stage of the negotiations, and the British proposal as rigid but fundamentally "not so bad," saying the Argentines must accept the fact that however justified their position may be, juridically they were wrong. ... He said he would present some proposals to the Argentines this morning and if they "can live with them" he will ask the British for 24 hours more."*<sup>431</sup>

In New York, Parsons notes; *"The Secretariat gave us their translation of last night's Argentine paper. This is even worse that Pérez de Cuéllar and de Soto led me to believe ... in particular, (a) the previously agreed language on pre-judgement has been omitted, (b) there is no reference to Councils as such, but only to "persons who are members of the population of British origin" who are to be appointed as advisors in equal numbers with Argentine residents in the Islands, (c) the provisions on freedom of movement are much worse... in short, the Argentines have reverted to the negotiating position they occupied at the very beginning of Pérez de Cuéllar's initiative."*

Argentina proposes:- (1) withdrawal from the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, (2) withdrawal to *"normal bases of operation"* within 30 days, (3) economic measures to be lifted from the date

<sup>429</sup> Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 05/19/1982

<sup>430</sup> By the time everyone had arrived, the vessels in a relatively small area of the South Atlantic included *Fearless, Intrepid, Antrim, Argonaut, Ardent, Plymouth, Canberra, Elk, Norland, Europic Ferry, Atlantic Conveyor, Stromness, Tidepool, Pearleaf* and *Fort Toronto*; joined by *Hermes* and *Brilliant*. Redistribution of men and supplies was necessary for the proposed landing, but also because of fears of having too many men on *Canberra*.

<sup>431</sup> Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 05/19/1982

the agreement is signed, (4) supervision of withdrawal to be carried out by the UN, (5) the interim administration – (a) to be the responsibility of the UN, (b) the administration to perform all functions (executive, legislative, judicial and security), (c) local judicial functions may be exercised in accordance with the legislation in effect on 1 April 1982, (d) the administration to appoint advisers, persons who are members of the population of British origin and Argentine residents in equal numbers, (d) the flags of the parties shall fly together with that of the UN, (e) during the interim administration communications to be kept open, including freedom of movement and equality of access with respect to residence, work and property, (f) freedom of access for Argentina's airline (LADE) and Argentine television, (g) the way of life of the locals to be respected. (6) negotiations to be completed by 31 December 1982 with a single option to extend to 30 June 1983 – and if the period expires without agreement, the General Assembly of the UN to determine the final agreement.

Britain's Ambassador Henderson sends a copy to Secretary Haig.

*“... the Argentines have reverted to the negotiating position they adopted at the beginning of the UN Secretary General's initiative.”*

Parsons sends a report to London.

*“All this activity prompted me to accelerate my programme for giving Pérez de Cuéllar our formal response to last night's Argentine paper. Pérez de Cuéllar proposed a working lunch.. At my private meeting with Pérez de Cuéllar before the lunch I asked him to formally convey to Ros that HM Government found the Argentine response totally unacceptable. The Argentine position had not changed in substance since the beginning of the negotiations. It was clear that there was no hope of reaching an agreement .. We therefore had to draw a line...*

*I told Pérez de Cuéllar that we recognised that this would enable Ros to wrong-foot us by blaming us for the breakdown of negotiations but this was something that we would have to accept... ”*<sup>432</sup>

Parsons notes.

*“I do not feel uncomfortable about our own position. First, ..., Pérez de Cuéllar will not consider that we have acted in bad faith in announcing to the House of Commons tomorrow that we regard the present round as having ended with the Argentine rejection of our proposals. Secondly, he will not accuse me of bad faith if HM forces land on the Falklands in the next few days. I made the deadline clear to him ... We are going to need all the support we can get from our friends and allies in the days to come – I even took the exceptional step of brain-washing Mrs. Kirkpatrick this evening on the flexibility we had shown in the negotiations, as opposed to Argentine obduracy. Some of my Community partners are so untrustworthy that I will not brief them until Friday ...”*

Ling Qing, President of the Security Council, calls for an informal meeting in the afternoon.

At a working lunch, Parsons asks the Secretary-General to formally tell Ros that the UK has rejected Argentina's response to Britain's draft agreement. Parsons also reaffirms to Pérez de Cuéllar that London was not prepared to pursue an endless round of negotiations. Responding, Pérez de Cuéllar tells the British Ambassador that Costa Méndez had suggested that the Secretary-General talk directly to Galtieri who was prepared to be flexible. Costa Méndez had also suggested that the UN Secretariat send envoys to both London and Buenos Aires.

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432 PREM19/629 Telegram No.786 of 19 May 1982 Sir Anthony Parsons to FCO

Parsons dismisses this last suggestion as merely a tactic to prolong talks. Pérez de Cuéllar indicates that he is unable to refuse a direct call to Argentina's President but that after he would make a similar call to Margaret Thatcher.

*"When Pérez de Cuéllar rang Galtieri he did not make much progress. The Argentine President 'seemed somewhat confused, as if he had been drinking, and was being prompted by others on what to say.'... Galtieri complained about British deadlines, unreasonableness, and an imminent military offensive."*<sup>433</sup>

Pérez de Cuéllar then rings Thatcher; telling the PM that he has urged Galtieri to make further concessions, and will inform Parsons any further ideas coming out of Buenos Aires. Margaret Thatcher tells the Secretary-General that while Britain would always look at new proposals, the country had gone as far as it could.

After the SC is informed of events, Parsons reports on the discussion to London.

*"There was no disposition to move into a formal meeting nor any proposals for Presidential statements which would have caused us difficulty. The Secretary-General and I reported briefly on the stage reached. ...*

*In order to avoid provoking a wider debate, with the possible risk of a formal session tonight, I thought it better not to say explicitly that as far as we were concerned, the present round of negotiations had ended ... I gave no-one any grounds to claim that we had accepted the various calls for restraint and moderation."*

During a period of unusually calm weather in the South Atlantic, ship-to-ship redistribution of men and supplies continues apace. In a transfer from *Canberra*, a Sea King helicopter crashes as it attempts to land on HMS *Intrepid*. 22 men are lost, 18 of them special forces.<sup>434</sup>

## Day 49

**May 20<sup>th</sup>** – just after midnight New York time, Parsons sends an urgent telegram to London.

*".. the Secretary-General has dropped an embarrassing bombshell .. he has now launched his own paper... When we remonstrated with his staff that this move was inconsistent with the British position as I had described it as recently as lunchtime today... they said he had been encouraged to make it by the Prime Minister's concluding remarks ...*

*It looks therefore as though Pérez de Cuéllar, in his desperate desire not to sign off, has chosen to ignore the clarification of the Prime Minister's remarks which I gave him this evening. The paper is very cleverly drafted and is undoubtedly more favourable to us than to Argentina, but I fully realise that it has come too late ..."*<sup>435</sup>

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433 Freedman 2005 vol.2

434 Ten, including the 2 pilots, were rescued.

435 The Secretary-General appeared to have taken Thatcher's comment about being prepared to look at fresh proposals to heart, despite Parsons having clarified that this phase of negotiation was over.

Pérez de Cuéllar's paper identifies four areas where he believes that agreement can be reached –

(a) certain aspects of the interim-Administration, (b) provision for the extension of the time for completion of negotiations and related duration of the interim-Administration, (c) certain aspects of mutual withdrawal of forces, and (d) the geographic area to be covered by the terms of the Interim Agreement.

His proposal also includes: (1) inclusion of the Dependencies within the Interim Agreement, (2) references to UN General Assembly resolutions, (3) the flags of the parties and the UN to fly over the Islands, (4) inconclusive arrangements to extend the UN administration if the target date is not met, (5) consideration of a relaxation of restrictions on residence and the acquisition of property.

Britain's War Cabinet meet to discuss the latest proposal.

*"This idea did not get very far, although there was reluctance to reject it out of hand.... it was apparent that there could be no question of holding up the landing because of these ideas... Parsons was instructed to make it clear that the search for a negotiated settlement would not interfere with military preparations..."*<sup>436</sup>

Pym telegrams Parsons to tell him that the Secretary-General's ideas represent *"significant downwards from what was our absolute bottom line."* With regard to military plans, Parsons should; *".. emphasize, as has been constantly stated in Parliament, that our search for a negotiated settlement has not affected and cannot affect the pressures, including military, which we have been bringing to bear on the Argentines."*

Parsons speaks to de Cuéllar.

*"I said that we appreciated the positive aspects of the aide memoire, but it differed in important respects from our bottom line. .. Even if acceptable to both sides as a basis for negotiations it would take days if not weeks to know whether success could be achieved. I had emphasised the importance of our deadline. ..."*

Margaret Thatcher presents Britain's rejected draft-agreement to the House of Commons.

*"On Monday of this week our ambassador to the United Nations handed to the Secretary-General our proposals for a peaceful settlement of the dispute. These proposals represented the limit to which the Government believe it was right to go. We made it clear to Senor Pérez de Cuéllar that we expected the Argentine Government to give us a very rapid response to them. By yesterday morning we had had a first indication of the Argentine reaction. It was not encouraging. By the evening we received their full response in writing. It was in effect a total rejection of the British proposals. It was in effect a total rejection of the British proposals. Indeed, in many respects the Argentine reply went back to their position when they rejected Mr. Haig's second set of proposals on 29 April. It retracted virtually all the movement that their representative had shown during the Secretary-General's efforts to find a negotiated settlement.*

*... We have reached this very serious situation because the Argentines clearly decided at the outset of the negotiations that they would cling to the spoils of invasion and occupation by thwarting at every turn all the attempts that have been made to solve the conflict by peaceful means. Ever since 2 April they have responded to the efforts to find a negotiated solution with obduracy and delay, deception and bad faith. ...*

*Argentina began the crisis. Argentina has rejected proposal after proposal. One is bound to ask whether the junta has ever intended to seek a peaceful settlement or whether it has sought*

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436 Freedman 2005 vol.2

*merely to confuse and prolong the negotiations while remaining in illegal possession of the Islands. I believe that if we had a dozen more negotiations the tactics and results would be the same. From the course of these negotiations and Argentina's persistent refusal to accept resolution 502 we are bound to conclude that its objective is procrastination and continuing occupation, leading eventually to sovereignty. ...*

*The Secretary-General, to whose efforts I pay tribute, has a duty to continue to seek agreement. But, as our representative is telling him in New York, his paper differs in certain important respects from our position as presented to him on 17 May and which we then described as the furthest that we could go. Moreover, it differs fundamentally from the present Argentine position as communicated to us yesterday. ...*

*This is the seventh set of proposals that we have considered. We have considered them carefully. Each time we have met with tactics the object of which is procrastination leading to continued occupation of the islands. Because of the record on this matter we thought it best to put up our own specific draft interim agreement in writing so that our position was clear for the world to see and so that it was clear that we were not compromising fundamental principles, but that we were prepared to make some reasonable, practical suggestions if we could secure the prize of no further loss of life. The proposals have been rejected. They are no longer on the table..."*<sup>437</sup>

Foreign Secretary Francis Pym, speaks towards the end of the Commons' debate.

*"... I remind the House of the basic requirements that we have set ourselves throughout these long weeks. Our first requirement has been to secure the withdrawal of Argentina forces, which was demanded as a matter of mandatory obligation by Security Council resolution 502. The second has been to establish a ceasefire to avoid further loss of life as soon as withdrawal could be agreed. The third has been to make satisfactory provision for the democratic administration of the islands in any interim arrangements that prove necessary. The fourth has been to ensure that the negotiations with Argentina over the future of the islands should be such as to conform with the principles so strongly supported in this House.*

*We have made it clear in this connection that we remain prepared to negotiate with Argentina about the long-term future of the islands, as we and previous Governments were so prepared before the invasion, that we shall be ready to discuss anything which either side might wish to put forward, and that we insist only that the terms of reference of these negotiations should not be such as to predetermine or prejudice the outcome, whether on sovereignty or on other matters.*

*The Leader of the Opposition said that he understood that there had been some movement by Argentina towards the position of non-prejudgement. That was right, but the position changed yesterday and on Monday, as it has before, and the Argentines withdrew that position and the reply that we received yesterday did not contain it...."*<sup>438</sup>

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437 HC Deb 20 May 1982 vol.24 cc477-561. Thatcher's use of the term, "*off the table*" caused a good deal of inquiry as to why, particularly from those dissident MP on the opposite benches. What could not be explained was that Operation Sutton had commenced.

438 HC Deb 20 May 1982 vol.24 cc477-561



*“MoD were desperate that not only should there be no hint of what was to come but that, even if it succeeded, news should not be released until well after the event. It was conceivable that British forces could establish a beachhead without the Argentines being aware of British intent.”*<sup>439</sup>

Peru's President Belaunde announces a new peace initiative. Belaunde asserts that he has been encouraged by a telephone call from Costa Méndez to the effect that the Argentine Government are urgently examining the Peruvian ideas.

*“(1) Each Nation subscribes unilaterally to the latest proposal for an agreement presented to the Secretary-General of the United Nations; (2) The Secretary-General fulfils the clauses in which there are points of agreement, such as – (a) ceasefire; (b) mutual withdrawal of forces; (c) Administration of the Government of the Islands by the UN or by a contact group, formed of various countries, within a period which is agreed in the two proposals; (3) The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Pérez de Cuéllar, or the contact group acceptable to both parties, which he will propose, will be responsible for organising and presiding over negotiations in pursuit of a permanent solution and for supervising the immediate withdrawal from the zone of conflict of the forces of both countries.”*<sup>440</sup>

Parsons reports; *“The Secretary-General has spent the whole day waiting for an Argentine reaction to his aide mémoire of 19 May. At 2345z this evening he had still not had one.”*

Pérez de Cuéllar tells Ros that, as he has not received a reply from Argentina, he has no choice but to inform the President of the Security Council that he cannot continue his efforts. Ros replies that he has been unable to get any response from Buenos Aires.<sup>441</sup>

*“It appeared that with the military pressure reaching a climax the Argentine Government simply could not organise a sensible response.”*<sup>442</sup>

Pérez de Cuéllar writes to the Security Council.

*“I felt the time for reaching agreement through negotiations .. was extremely short. It remains my view that substantial progress was achieved in the past two weeks towards a diplomatic solution, but I must now state that the necessary accommodations which were still needed to end the conflict have not been forthcoming. ...*

*I feel it my duty to inform you that, in my judgement, the efforts in which I have been engaged, with the support of the Council, do not offer the present prospect of bringing about an end to the crisis nor, indeed, of preventing the intensification of the conflict.”*<sup>443</sup>

HMS *Glamorgan* bombards targets on the south coast to give the impression that a 'softening-up' is taking place ahead of a landing south of Stanley.<sup>444</sup>

To the north of West Falkland, *Fearless*, *Intrepid* and *Yarmouth* head towards San Carlos with *Plymouth* and *Brilliant* following.

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439 Freedman 2005 vol.2

440 PREM19/629 Telegram No.187 of 20 May. Peru's initiative was based on an idea that, as there was no one document that both sides were prepared to sign; then each would sign their own document. The word “unacceptable” is written across the Prime Minister's copy.

441 PREM19/629 Telegram No.809 of 20 May.

442 Freedman 2005 vol.2

443 *Survey of Article 98: The Secretariat, United Nations Sup.6 Vol.6 (1979 - 1984)*

444 Operation Tornado

Britain's Embassies and Missions throughout the world receive orders.

*“... carry out the instructions .. If asked about the UN Secretary-General's last-minute proposals, you should say that we have throughout warmly appreciated Sr. Pérez de Cuéllar's efforts. However, given the hardening of the Argentine position in their latest text, it was clear that further negotiations would be fruitless.”* <sup>445</sup>

At midnight in the Falklands; Britain's forces are in position.

## Day 50

**May 21<sup>st</sup>** – 25 men from 3 Special Boat Service (SBS) attack Argentine positions on high ground to the north of San Carlos Water, supported by covering fire from HMS *Antrim*. Units of the Special Air Service attack positions to the south of the landing site, supported by HMS *Ardent*. An air attack from *Hermes* destroys a Chinook helicopter and a Puma helicopter on Mount Kent.

British forces start landing on West Falkland at San Carlos.

On Ascension Island, Lieut.-Colonel Alfredo Astiz is asked whether he is prepared to see Swedish and French officials with regard to their investigations about missing nationals in Argentina. The ICRC refuse to be involved.

*“Unsurprisingly, neither the Argentine Government nor Astiz was prepared to agree to any sort of interrogation. Stockholm and Paris were both unhappy with this failure to move the issue forward and still demanded an opportunity to question him. The Swedish Foreign Minister appealed directly to Pym and offered his own interpretation of the Geneva Conventions. British legal advice still pointed to early repatriation... In the event he was repatriated.”* <sup>446</sup>

In London, the effectiveness of economic sanctions is considered.

*“.. Externally, the most immediate impact has been the concern of international banking circles about Argentina's credit-worthiness. Argentina's total debt is US\$34 billion, of which US\$10 billion is short-term. Short-term credits are being rolled over, but longer term loans are not being replaced as they mature, and Argentina has not been able to raise any new loans since the invasion. The authorities have been obliged to introduce severe restrictions to prevent foreign currency outflows. There are now limits on imports and extensive controls on all foreign payments. ...*

*Foreign currency reserves, which had fallen by US\$400 million in March, fell a further US\$500 million in April. Within Argentina, there has been a steady run on the banking system, as large number of people withdrew their deposits. At least 7 financial institutions have collapsed. Interest rates have risen sharply ... The economy was already in recession before the invasion: this has got worse...”*

Unaware of events in the South Atlantic, the UN Security Council decides that a formal meeting of the council will take place at 2.30pm New York time.

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445 PREM19/629 Telegram No.90 of 20 May.

446 Freedman 2005 vol.2

Britain's Ministry of Defence make an announcement.

*"The Task Force has landed a number of raiding parties on the Falkland Islands during the night. These raids are still in progress. Early indications are that they are achieving their objectives. Bombardment from ships in the Task Force continued in the vicinity of Port Stanley and other areas in East Falklands. Harriers from the Task Force have mounted attacks in the Fox Bay area. All these activities have been directed against Argentine military targets including fuel and ammunition dumps and military stores. .."*

On East Falkland, 2 Para move five miles inland to secure the bridgehead. A bombardment from HMS *Ardent* takes out aircraft at Goose Green. One Pucara manages to get airborne and reports the activity at San Carlos before being hit by an SAS Stinger. Argentina's command at Stanley send out reconnaissance aircraft to check San Carlos.

An Argentine Blowpipe hits a Sea Harrier over Port Howard. Flt. Lieut. Jeffrey Glover ejects, injured, and is taken prisoner. Two British helicopters are also lost.

Pym sends a message to the British Ambassador in Lima.

*"Belaunde's new formula is very simplistic and offers no apparent means of bridging the very wide gap between our and the Argentine position. ... The essential first step is, as it has always been, an unequivocal Argentine commitment to withdraw its forces ... If President Belaunde were able to exert his considerable influence with President Galtieri in order to bring this about, the prospect for a peaceful and negotiated settlement would be immediately transformed."*

Argentine aircraft arrive over San Carlos and attack the fleet.

*"The British realised a strike was coming and the ships were on full alert. The first wave of nine Daggers was detected visually coming in low as they entered the Sound near Swan Island... They went for the two most accessible targets, Antrim and Broadsword. Antrim was damaged and temporarily out of action, with eight wounded and an unexploded 1000-lb bomb lodged in the after heads, Broadsword received cannon fire, wounding eight men and damaging its .. Lynx helicopter. Another raid came in, with aircraft going straight for Antrim ... while another went for Fort Austin.. There was then relief for two hours..."*<sup>447</sup>

At 1400 local time, a second Argentine air attack fails to hit any British ships.

President Galtieri responds to an initiative sent by President Turbay of Colombia.

*"I value and appreciate every effort directed towards a peaceful solution of the conflict ... Our Government has employed its maximum effort to help the steps being taken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. We have shown that we are flexible and reasonable. We have abstained from using force and we have only done so in reply to Great Britain's military aggression. We are witnessing today a new and serious phase of this armed aggression. The intransigent attitude of the Government of Great Britain which, to restore a colonial, anachronistic and illegal situation, resorts to violent means, shows itself once again as an immovable obstacle to all diplomatic solutions, .. to negotiate and attack at the same time thus creating a serious risk for world peace. .."*

At around 1530, a third wave of Argentine aircraft arrive over Falklands Sound. *Argonaut* is hit by two bombs which fail to explode, but immobilise her. Two of the crew are killed.

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<sup>447</sup> *Ibid.* The unexploded bomb was removed, allowing *Antrim* to move away from San Carlos Water.

*“Two bombs had hit Argonaut, but neither exploded because the Skyhawks were flying too low and this did not give the bomb fuses time to arm themselves after leaving the aircraft. But one of the bombs set off an explosion in the Sea Cat magazine,.. Two seamen were killed in the ship.”*<sup>448</sup>

Argentine cannon fire hits *Broadsword* and *Brilliant*. 4 Argentine Daggers are shot down by Sea Harriers.

1600 *Ardent* is hit by three bombs launched by 3 *Naval A4Q*'s. Two of the bombs explode. All three Argentine aircraft are shot down by Sea Harriers. Following a second attack on *Ardent*, with 22 men dead and a further 37 wounded, the ship is abandoned.<sup>449</sup>

In New York, at a formal (public) session of the Security Council, Pérez de Cuéllar gives an account of his activities since the adoption of SC resolution 502.

*“He concluded that, towards the end of the previous week, essential agreement had been reached on many points, leaving four crucial differences: namely, certain aspects of the interim administration of the territory; provisions for the extension of the time frame for completion of the diplomatic negotiations and the related duration of the interim administration; certain aspects of the mutual withdrawal of forces; and the geographic area to be covered by the terms of the interim agreement. The Secretary-General described how he had spoken by telephone to President Galtieri and Mrs Thatcher and drew attention to the subsequent aide-memoire which he had presented to both parties. He finished his summary by stating that, by the previous evening, the necessary accommodations had not been made: he had therefore concluded that he must inform the President of the Council of his appraisal....”*<sup>450</sup>

Argentina accuses the British of “rigidity,” while Japan calls for a resumption of negotiations. Australia says that Argentina began the crisis and is responsible for the consequences of its own recklessness. Before adjournment, Brazil calls for implementation of SC resolution 502.<sup>451</sup>

In Washington, Henderson speaks to Senator Biden.

*“.. support for our position reflects the closeness of Anglo/US relations rather than a feeling that important principles were at stake. .. We should not therefore assume that the Senate would support greater US involvement – or even maintain its present level of support for us indefinitely. ...*

*Against this background, Biden said we should not be surprised that so many Senators had taken the view that the US could not afford to impair its interests for the rights of self-determination of 1800 sheep farmers. If, in any renewed negotiations, self-determination for the Islanders were to become the one issue on our side standing in the way of a settlement, US support for us would evaporate.*

*I said that I was astonished that self-determination could count for so little in the country that had invented it ... Biden said he agreed and would continue to be our strongest supporter but we should not delude ourselves that Congressional opinion was altogether solid. ..”*<sup>452</sup>

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448 Middlebrook 2003

449 *Ardent* eventually sank after burning for over 12 hours. *Argonaut* had to live with the unexploded bombs for a further six days before they could be removed.

450 Parsons 1983

451 This session would go on for 5 days. cf. Parsons 1983

452 *PREM19/630 Telegram No.1856 of 22 May*. In 1982, Biden was a leading Democrat and member of the US Senate's Foreign Relations Committee.

By the end of the day 2,400 British troops have landed on East Falkland and are dug in.<sup>453</sup>

*"The day had been testing for both sides.... By no means all the (Argentine) sorties even got to the Falklands, but some 45 did. Of these ten were lost (five Daggers, three A4Q's and two A4Cs), and a number of others were caught by small arms fire and out of action until they could be repaired. Two Pucarás had also been lost. While conserving itself for this battle, the Argentine Air Force did not appear to have planned for it. In particular they had come without their own escorts and had not identified the most important targets, that is the amphibious ships, but instead attacked escorts as they came across them. In addition, although they were well aware of the problem they had not addressed the more technical issue of bomb fusing."*<sup>454</sup>

## Day 51

**May 22<sup>nd</sup>** – from the Vatican, Pope John Paul II, expresses his anguish and appeals for; *"... an immediate ceasefire that will open the way to a peaceful settlement of the dispute."*

In London, an MoD spokesman amends the previous day's statement.

*"Further reports on yesterday's operations in the Falklands up-date Argentine aircraft losses as follows: 9 Mirages, 5 Skyhawks, 2 Pucarás and 4 helicopters. We have not received final casualty reports for yesterday's operations. Initial reports indicate British casualties of 27 wounded, 2 missing and 3 dead. The two ships reported yesterday as being seriously damaged were hit by bombs in the series of air attack launched against our forces. The other three ships remain operational."*

John Nott makes a statement.

*"This morning the Union Jack is once again flying on the Falkland Islands... A major bridgehead has been established in the area of San Carlos on East Falkland. The major amphibious landing yesterday was a complete success. Tactical surprise was achieved and our troops landed safely with almost no interference from Argentine forces. We are now ashore on British sovereign territory in considerable force and have three Royal Marine Commandos and two Battalions of the Parachute Regiment firmly in place with their supporting arms including artillery and rapier and other air defence weapons. ... To compliment the landings there were raids yesterday in other parts of East and West Falklands. In one of these, Royal Marines captured an Argentine position on Fanning Head overlooking Falkland Sound. In another the airfield at Goose Green, and Argentine positions close by, were raided by our forces. Carrier based RAF Harriers launched attacks in the course of the morning against Argentine installations at Port Stanley airfield and the helicopters on the ground nearby, as well as military installations at Fox Bay. During these operations we lost two Gazelle helicopters, and one RAF Harrier is missing. The Argentine navy has so far made no attempt to intervene.. The Argentine force has, as expected, launched heavy raids on our ships... We are back on the Falkland Islands, and back in strength. We intend to ensure that aggression does not pay."*<sup>455</sup>

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453 1,000 tons of stores had also been offloaded.

454 Freedman 2005 vol.2

455 United Press International Archives

Two British aircraft attack an Argentine patrol boat, *Rio Iguazú*, in Choiseul Sound.

*"... the Rio Iguazú was at sea when daylight came, still 13 miles from its destination. In an example of sheer bad luck for the Argentines, the first two Sea Harriers of the day to take off from Hermes passed right over the ship, and one of them came down and seriously damaged it with cannon fire."* <sup>456</sup>

The vessel is beached and abandoned.

Two Argentine Puma helicopters and their escorting Agusta A109 are fired on by Sea Harriers. One helicopter is shot down while the other two land. The Agusta A109 is set alight by gunfire. Near the San Carlos beachhead, a field hospital is established at Ajax Bay. Uruguay agrees that casualties may be repatriated via Montevideo.

Peruvian President Belaunde announces that the Argentines have accepted "in principle" his latest ideas - albeit with certain reservations; *".. which President Belaunde thought might not be insuperable. In particular, President Belaunde said that Galtieri had shown himself to be receptive to the idea of an "equidistant" withdrawal of forces. The Argentines feel that 150 miles is too near because their own bases are further away. ... The president also said that the Argentines are not opposed to a UN Group governing the Islands for six months or even one year during which negotiations could take place. If at the end of this period there was no agreement, the Argentines would propose to return the problem to the United Nations. ..."* <sup>457</sup>

At 1600 Falklands time, two Dagger aircraft and three A4Bs attack British ships at San Carlos. No vessels are hit or damaged. One Sea Harrier explodes shortly after take-off. Bad weather prevents further Argentine air attacks.

In New York, Parsons reviews his strategy.

*"We have already got Canada and New Zealand on board, they will probably speak today, thus to some extent offsetting the torrent of Latin American rhetoric which is in store for us ( .. it will bore the Council to death). We are working on the Caribbeans, Americans and members of the Community... Abdulah (Trinidad) is on our side but gutless. ...*

*The new Barbadian Ambassador is a man of sterner stuff and I have some hopes of him. Our African friends – Zambia, Botswana, Kenya etc. are cheering us vigorously from the pavilion but are reluctant to go to the wicket. ...*

*The US and France are bound to make substantive comments at some stage but, given the personal qualities of Mrs Kirkpatrick and de Nanteuil, I suspect that the Guyanese statement will be more helpful. From the point of view of getting out Third World Commonwealth speakers, it might be worth your seeing if Ramphal would help .."*

When the Security Council reconvenes; Spain, Uruguay, Venezuela, the Soviet Union, Mexico, Cuba, Bolivia, Panama, Canada, Guatemala and the United States contribute views before the meeting is again adjourned.

*"Of the Latins the Venezuelan and Panamanian Foreign ministers were abusive; the others made reasonably moderate statements, notably Guatemala. The Soviet Union was hostile but not abusive. Canada was excellent. The US statement was a little too even-handed. Mrs Kirkpatrick made small but important changes to the advance text."* <sup>458</sup>

Secretary Haig sees Ambassador Henderson privately to say that the US Government is increasingly concerned at the consequences for US interests.

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456 Middlebrook 2003. Two of the crew were injured; one later dying of his wounds.

457 PREM19/630 Telegram No. 192 of 22 May

458 FCO Sitrep 0700 23 May 1982

## Day 52

**May 23<sup>rd</sup>** – in the South Atlantic, clearing weather allows Argentina's Air Force to return. At around midday, local time, HMS *Antelope* is attacked by A4Bs coming from the south. Hit by two bombs, neither of which explode, the vessel is nevertheless set on fire when an attempt is made to defuse them. One of the attacking Argentine planes strikes *Antelope*'s mainmast and crashes. A Falklands' coaster, *Monssen*, requisitioned by Argentine forces, is attacked by two British Lynx helicopters and put out of action. A second wave of A4Bs fails to hit any of the British ships. *Antelope* is abandoned. Work continues to remove the bomb on *Argonaut*. Argentine losses are reported by the Ministry in London.

*“Five Mirage and one Skyhawk are known to have been shot down; a further one Mirage and two Skyhawks were probably shot down. During these attacks one of our frigates sustained some damage. No reports on the extent of the damage have been received, nor have we any indication of casualties.*

*We have had no reports of other damage to British ships or aircraft.*

*In a separate incident earlier, Sea Harriers from the Task Force on routine patrol saw two Argentine Puma helicopters and one Bell helicopter in Falkland Sound ... The Harriers attacked and one Puma exploded; the Bell helicopter landed but was seen to be on fire and the second Puma may have been damaged.”*

*“... the British thought that they were doing better than was in fact the case. Two Argentine aircraft had been shot down that day, but British assessments were between four and seven.”* <sup>459</sup>

From Buenos Aires, President Galtieri responds to the Pope's 'anguish' of the previous day by asserting that Argentina is prepared to accept a cease-fire and negotiate. <sup>460</sup>

*“The Argentine radio says that the British are ready to surrender, having now been surrounded by Argentine soldiers, but then says their planes find them difficult to locate. All very confusing and conflicting.”* <sup>461</sup>

In New York, the Security Council reconvenes; hearing thirteen speakers before adjourning again until the 24<sup>th</sup>. Parsons reports that support for the UK is “stretching very thin” and that a view is developing of the crisis bringing about a, “.. kind of cultural confrontation between Latin America and Western Europe/North America.” <sup>462</sup>

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459 Freedman 2005 vol.2

460 With a visit to the UK already planned, the Vatican announced that the Pope would also visit Argentina from 10 - 13 June, 1982

461 Diary entry in Smith 1984 pp.172-173

462 FCO Sitrep 24 May 1982

## Day 53

**May 24<sup>th</sup>** – in London, Defence Secretary Nott makes a statement in Parliament.

*“On the night of Thursday 20 May, Her Majesty's forces re-established a secure base on the Falkland Islands and the Union Flag is today flying over the settlement of San Carlos in East Falkland—where it will remain. The whole House will have been delighted to see the expressions of delight on the faces of the islanders and their children—published widely yesterday. The amphibious landing was the culmination of a long period of planning by the force commander and of preparation by the Royal Marine commandos, members of the Parachute Regiment and supporting arms during their six weeks voyage into the South Atlantic. Whilst they sailed south, the Government worked unrelentingly to persuade Argentina to withdraw peacefully and honourably from the Falkland Islands. But the Government met only with Argentine intransigence.*

*Last week it became clear that the only possible course left open to us was the repossession of the Falkland Islands by military means. In this the Government have been encouraged—as I think has the country as a whole—that Her Majesty's Opposition and the other main political parties in the House have supported us. Certainly I believe that our Service men have been greatly encouraged by the support that they have received from right hon. and hon. Members of this House... We all feel deeply too for the constant concern and worry of the families and friends of our Service men. They are showing great patience and understanding in very difficult circumstances. Names of casualties will not be released until the next of kin have been informed, although to counter the false propaganda coming out of Argentina we have had to give some general information on the progress of military action as soon as it is confirmed.*

*Our forces are now established on the Falkland Islands with all the necessary supplies, together with their heavy equipment and air defence missiles. They have mobility with a large number of helicopters at their disposal—and their spirits are high. But I must emphasise that our men still face formidable problems in difficult terrain with a hostile climate. We must expect fresh attacks upon them, and there can be no question of pressing the force commander to move forward prematurely—the judgement about the next tactical moves must be his—and his alone. But, one thing is certain: the days of the occupying Argentine garrison are numbered and it will not be long before the Falkland Islanders once again have their democratic rights restored.”*<sup>463</sup>

At a press conference, Britain's Ministry of Defence announce that HMS *Antelope* has sunk.

In Europe, the EEC extend economic sanctions against Argentina for an unspecified period.

British aircraft attack Stanley airfield shortly after dawn, damaging a helicopter and a Pucara. Some damage is caused to the runway.

Late morning in the Falklands, five Argentine Skyhawks fly in over San Carlos Water. HMS *Sir Galahad*, *Sir Lancelot* and *Sir Bedivere* are hit in the attack. Fires break out on *Sir Galahad* and *Sir Lancelot* although the bombs fail to explode. The bomb striking *Sir Bedivere* passes through the ship. In a second attack by four Daggers *Sir Lancelot* is hit for a second time but this bomb bounces off.

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463 HC Deb 24 May 1982 vol.24 cc647-55



Argentine cannon fire hits *Fearless* and *Sir Galahad*. British Sea Harriers shoot down three Daggers with Sidewinder missiles. Throughout the attacks British ships continue landing stores, equipment and men.

In Argentina, *Conviccion*, tells its readers; *"The marines, immobilized at San Carlos, await their Dunkirk. As Argentine troops concentrate to throw them into the sea, the British continue in the little beachhead without resupply."* Panama's press report their Foreign Minister describing Margaret Thatcher as; *"Hitler with skirts."*

*The Washington Post* provides another perspective.

*"Secretary of State Alexander Haig suggests that Britain's successful landings on the Falklands – plus the sacrifices sustained by both sides – may make enough of a difference to permit negotiations to resume. Surely he is right. In its bridgehead and in its evident capacity to sustain operations ashore, Britain has something real to convert into political coin. Argentina may hope to raise the cost to the British and limit their military gains, but it cannot expect to boot them off the Islands again. The 40 isolated marines it swept up on April 2 are one thing, the 5,000 troops ashore, with their fleet protection, are quite another."*

From Buenos Aires, Argentina calls for a meeting of the OAS.

In New York, the Security Council debate continues.

*"Maina (Kenya) made an admirably robust statement which was an effective antidote to all the Latins have been saying about a cultural confrontation between the West and Latin America. He said that the Breach of the Peace had started with Argentina's aggression on 2 April. That was a separate question from the rights and wrongs of Argentina's claims to sovereignty. Some of those who "felt obliged" to support Argentina's case on sovereignty had tried to treat the two problems as one. ... The Decolonisation argument was irrelevant. All of North and South America had been colonised in the 18th and 19th centuries. .. That was a fact of the world's unfortunate past.*

*This was not a colonial issue: Argentina was engaged in the purely territorial claim, in total disregard of the inhabitants of the Islands. The Argentine claim could not be settled at their expense: their interests were paramount. If the principle of decolonisation was distorted to redistribute peoples, the United Nations would be in real trouble. ...*

*Ling Qing (China) speaking in his national capacity, said that the failure of the Secretary-General's efforts and the arrival of British forces had brought about an escalation which China deeply deplored. ... There should be an immediate ceasefire and resumption of negotiations. The substantive problem was a legacy of colonialism."*<sup>464</sup>

In Washington, Haig expresses his fears to Britain's Ambassador; *"... Haig said that the US Government, by coming down on the British side, had already greatly jeopardised US interests in Latin America. What was at stake in the future was enormous. It was not simply a question of the economic sacrifices involved but of the enormous increase in Soviet and communist influence. Haig's problem therefore was somehow to avoid a resolution under the Rio Treaty later this week that would isolate the USA still further from the rest of the American hemisphere. ... Haig then suggested the sort of plan which I have already hinted to you might be on his mind: ceasefire and withdrawal, US/Brazilian interim administration and discussions without prejudice regarding the future – ideas that I told Haig have gone down in London like a lead balloon. ..."*

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464 PREM19/631 Telegram No.836 of 24 May

On receiving Henderson's telegram, Pym comments; *"It is disconcerting that Haig should be so volatile. Haig was urging us only a few days ago to take military action..."*

In the Security Council, Brazil puts forward a draft-resolution - *".. the Security Council of the United Nations can no longer delay taking firm and decisive action to restore international peace and security. .. there is no alternative but that the Security Council must take a decision to put an immediate end to the military confrontation and to establish the bases for a permanent settlement of the problem. The Brazilian Government wish to submit .. the following points which .. can be the basis for a Council Resolution that will ensure a just and honourable peace without winners or losers."*

Brazil proposes - (1) an immediate cessation of hostilities, (2) simultaneous withdrawal to equal distances, (3) withdrawal to be complete within 21 days, (4) a UN administration which will consult the *"representatives of the inhabitants,"* (5) a Committee made up of both Britain and Argentina plus four other States with a mandate to conduct negotiations.

Parsons comments to the FCO; *"We have told the Brazilians here that the time for such arrangements is now past and that there could be no question of our allowing a Resolution on these lines to be adopted."* <sup>465</sup>

Ireland's Ambassador Dorr, also tables a further draft-resolution which, *inter alia*, calls for a suspension of hostilities for 72 hours.

*".. the Non-Aligned members (excluding Panama) were annoyed with Dorr for going ahead and tabling a draft which he and everyone else knew that we would veto. The three Africans, Jordan and Guyana were desperately anxious to avoid a deadlock in the Security Council which could be followed by a major row generated by the Latin Americans in an emergency session of the General Assembly. This would only polarise relations between the regions, benefit the radicals and damage any prospect there might be of a peaceful outcome to the present crisis..."* <sup>466</sup>

Representatives from Panama and Japan also prepare draft texts. The *Non-Aligned Movement* submits a proposal for an amended version of the Irish draft before the *Council* meeting is adjourned until the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Parsons seeks instructions from London.

Interviewed by the BBC's *'Panorama'* current affairs team in New York, Costa Mendez asserts that Argentina would defend the Falklands as long as there is *"one Argentine alive in either the continent or in the Islands."* He tells his interviewers that Argentina had been seeking a peaceful solution for 17 years and that he considers the invasion to be part of that search for a settlement.

In Santiago, Argentina seeks Chilean support for an OAS condemnation of British aggression; calls for a cessation of hostilities with a return to *'natural'* bases; a resumption of UN negotiations and the adoption by OAS States of measures to discourage the UK and assist Argentina. Chile's Foreign Ministry assures the British Embassy that they will vote against each point except that calling for a resumption of negotiations. <sup>467</sup>

Intelligence is received from Caracas to the effect that the Venezuelan Government is attempting to persuade all Latin American countries to withdraw their Ambassadors from the UK, and break off diplomatic relations.

During the night, an SAS reconnaissance team arrive on Mount Kent to find it deserted. <sup>468</sup>

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465 PREM19/631 Telegram No.839 of 24 May

466 PREM19/631 Telegram No.844 of 24 May

467 PREM19/631 Telegram No.259 of 25 May

468 140 Argentine troops, plus artillery, had been ordered to Goose Green to reinforce the garrison there.

## Day 54

**May 25<sup>th</sup>** – Portugal grants permission for *Nimrod* refuelling at its Lajes air base in the Azores while New Zealand's offer of a frigate, HMNZS *Canterbury*, is gratefully accepted by PM Thatcher. An additional Blowpipe battery is deployed to the South Atlantic from British forces in Germany.

Margaret Thatcher responds to President Turbay's initiative of the 21<sup>st</sup>.

*"If you, Mr. President, can bring home to the Argentine Government not only the extent of our determination to achieve a just solution to this crisis, but also the imperative need to withdraw their forces from the Falkland Islands in accordance with Security Council Resolution 502, you would be making a contribution to the peace of South America and of the World which it would be hard to exaggerate."* <sup>469</sup>

An Argentine A4B is shot down by a Sea Dart missile fired from HMS *Coventry* which is sailing outside Falklands Sound with HMS *Broadsword* as a 42/22 defensive combination. A little later two A4Cs are brought down by fire from HMS *Yarmouth* and *Coventry*.

Around 1400 Falklands time, *Coventry* and *Broadsword* are attacked by Argentine Skyhawks. *Broadsword* is hit first but the bomb fails to explode. A second wave attacks *Coventry* which is hit by 3 bombs, two of which explode. *Coventry* sinks with the loss of 19 lives.

Further away, two Argentine Super Etendards armed with Exocet missiles attack the carrier group. Two missiles are fired and the aircraft immediately break off while the escorting ships fire chaff to distract the missiles.

*"The two missiles veered towards the chaff pattern laid by Ambuscade. Having flown through or under chaff and not been triggered, the homing head on Exocet tends to look to its left for another target and that is where both missiles found Atlantic Conveyor. The ship had no defences and was caught in the starboard quarter."* <sup>470</sup>

With *Atlantic Conveyor* full of hazardous cargo, and with an uncontrollable fire, the decision is made to abandon her with the loss of 12 lives. 3 Chinook and 6 Wessex helicopters, with tents for 4,500 men, burn.

*"... the successes of 25 May would prove to be the high watermark of the Argentine air effort. ... Unfortunately the Argentine propaganda service sullied the efforts of the air units by publishing outrageous claims on their behalf."* <sup>471</sup>

*"While the loss of the Atlantic Conveyor complicated British plans, it was not quite the result Argentina had intended. They had been after the carriers and had now used up two Exocets in failing to do so. Moreover only one AM39 Exocet remained and efforts to obtain more from abroad had so far been unavailing... That evening the Argentine commanders accepted that their battle must now move on to the next phase."* <sup>472</sup>

At the reconvened Security Council meeting in New York, Foreign Ministers representing Argentina, Nicaragua, Panama and Venezuela circulate a 'Declaration.'

*"We confirm the rejection by Latin America of the United Kingdom's military offensive against the South American continent ...*

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469 PREM19/631 Telegram No.108 of 25 May

470 Freedman 2005 vol.2

471 Middlebrook 2003

472 Freedman 2005 vol.2

*We strongly protest against the British decision, officially communicated to the Government of Uruguay, to the effect that the United Kingdom has decided to extend its naval and air military action to the River Plate. This deplorable decision, in addition to violating general international law and the River Plate Treaty, carries the British aggression into the very heart of the continent.. This directly affects the integrity and security of Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay, while at the same time aggravating and spreading the conflict which has resulted from the United Kingdom's military adventure ...*

*We reject with righteous indignation the decision taken by the European Economic Community, with the honorable exception of Ireland and Italy, extending indefinitely the economic aggression which, under the pretext of 'sanctions,' has been imposed on Argentina. This act, which is offensive to the whole of Latin America, constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security and presages the generalization of a conflict which, day by day, is assuming the character of an intercontinental confrontation. We note with alarm that, although a number of weeks have elapsed since the beginning of the British fleet's armed attack on the Argentine Republic, the Security Council has taken no action ... This concern is seriously increased by the fact that, after four days of debate in the Council, during which both the fighting and the loss of life have intensified, it has not proved possible to respond to the outcry of mankind, which demands an unconditional ceasefire ...”<sup>473</sup>*

Argentina's Foreign Minister Costa Méndez attacks the UK for, “unleashing war” in the South Atlantic and rejects the accusation that it had been Argentina which had been the first to use force.

*“... It was the UK which had used force to occupy the Islands in 1833. Colonialism was an act of force, permanent aggression and a crime: that was the true explanation of current events. It was not for the United Kingdom, the colonial power par-excellence, to give lectures on self-determination. The UK had abstained when the General Assembly adopted Resolution 1514, the Magna Carta of decolonisation. ... Self-determination for the Malvinas was a joke...”<sup>474</sup>*

Sir Anthony Parsons responds to the verbal assault.

*“The Foreign Minister referred at length to self-determination.. It is true that we took the position in the 1960's that self-determination was a principle and not a right. However, in 1966 the two international Covenants on economic, social and cultural rights and on civil and political rights were adopted.... The United Kingdom has ratified both these Covenants, which have entered into force. Furthermore, in 1970, the General Assembly adopted by consensus – that is, with the United Kingdom joining in the consensus – the Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-Operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. ...”<sup>475</sup>*

*Not only has my country endorsed the right to self-determination in the sense of the Charter, the Covenants and the Friendly Relations Declaration, but we have gone a great deal further to*

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473 PREM19/631 Telegram No. 852 of 25 May. The reference to River Plate appears to have been based on rumours concerning a British blockade of the Rio de la Plata. Seeking clarification, Uruguay had asked the UK and Britain had denied that it had any such plans. The declaration's sponsors chose to believe the rumour for the political capital that it offered.

474 PREM19/631 Telegram No.854 of 25 May

475 For UN resolution 2625, see 1970

*disprove the allegation that we are the colonial power par-excellence. Since General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV) was adopted .. we have brought to sovereign independence and membership of this organisation no less than 28 States. We are proud of our record...”*<sup>476</sup>

In Montevideo, Uruguay's President Alvarez denies that the British are blockading the Rio de la Plata.

Francis Pym telegrams Parsons,

*“... our position now is that while we remain willing to agree to a ceasefire if Argentina clearly and irrevocably commits herself to very early and total withdrawal of her forces, we are not prepared to accept any other conditions. ... You should vote against the Irish draft Resolution if it is put to the vote as it stands ...”*<sup>477</sup>

From Washington, Ambassador Henderson informs London.

*“I went over the ground with Eagleburger this morning. He assured me that instructions had been sent to Mrs Kirkpatrick that if the Irish Resolution came to a vote in its present form the United States should veto it..”*

Parsons responds to Pym.

*“Through the morning and at the Security Council lunch, I have negotiated firmly on the Irish draft as revised by the Non-Aligned Movement, .. we have carried almost all our points... We have a clear reaffirmation of 502.. I am under very strong pressure to agree this evening so that we can get out of the Council before this fragile near-agreement breaks down. .. I therefore recommend that I should be instructed to accept this with a suitable explanation of vote, after the vote...Guyana was first class, as was Chile given its circumstances. The other Non-Aligned were not at all bad. Netherlands was as unhelpful as the other Europeans (except Belgium) have been, but Italy was a bit more robust. ... The Argentines had the better of the first two days, with a flood of Latin rhetoric, but by the end the general feeling, I think, was that we had won quite handsomely on points. For this we should be especially grateful to Kenya, Guyana and Belgium – the old Commonwealth support for us was taken for granted.”*

Parsons informs the Council that Britain is ready to vote in favour of the draft initially proposed by Ireland, as amended by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). He emphasises that; *“.. an Argentine withdrawal must now be totally unconditional and not linked to any parallel British withdrawal.”*

Costa Méndez asks for time to consider the measure and a vote is deferred until the 26<sup>th</sup>.

Alexander Haig expresses his thoughts to Francis Pym; *“... I see major advantages in an effort by you to put forward terms of a just and reasonable settlement as soon as you are sure that you can and will succeed militarily. ...”*

NBC television, Reuters and Associated Press all carry news reports that Secretary Haig has called on the British Government not to “crush” the Argentines in the Falklands, but to “think carefully.” The reports suggest that Argentina would seek a scapegoat, and that scapegoat would be the United States. Haig is said to be “upset” by the leak and to consider it, “damaging.”

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476 For UN resolution 1514 see 1960.

477 PREM19/631 Telegram No.480 of 25 May

From London, the FCO instruct all Ambassadors and Missions in NAM countries to speak to their counterparts and ensure that in the meeting scheduled for the 31<sup>st</sup> emphasis is laid upon the original aggression by Argentina and their failure to comply with SCR 502.

A meeting of EEC Foreign Ministers agrees an indefinite extension of European sanctions against Argentina in exchange for a reduced budget rebate of \$875 million for the UK.

*“Ireland and Italy remained 'neutral' on the sanctions decision and agreed not to circumvent the embargo. By conceding on the budget and CAP issues, Britain achieved a firm commitment to continued sanctions from the other EEC members.”*<sup>478</sup>

HMS Glamorgan bombards targets around Stanley.

## Day 55

**May 26<sup>th</sup>** – US Ambassador, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, messages the State Department from the UN regarding a meeting with Argentine Air Force General Jose Miret.

*“According to Gen. Miret the military situation was developing favorably for Argentina. Just that morning 21 Argentinian warplanes had attacked British ships and had inflicted severe damage to the Canberra troop carrier. Yesterday they had sunk a frigate. British were not accurately portraying their losses and he was sceptical that their San Carlos beachhead was as well established as they claimed. Although presently the military situation favored Argentina, Argentina was aware that ultimately Britain would prevail because Argentina could not expect to defeat a world power. Argentina naturally did not want to lose but neither did it find comfort in the thought of winning in a manner that would humiliate Britain. ... Britain's expansion of the war zone to include the River Plate estuary necessarily dragged Uruguay and probably Brazil into the conflict. Uruguayan Foreign Minister was coming to New York to raise the issue. As the conflict expands and its intensity increases, it will become increasingly difficult to foresee its consequences or to find an acceptable solution. Without an American restraining influence, Britain will insist on pursuing its military objectives until the bitter end. ..”*<sup>479</sup>

In Bonn, Rheinische Post asserts that Germany's support for the UK is, “grudging and full of reservations stemming from incomprehension at many aspects of Mrs. Thatcher's Falklands strategy,” and that Germany will not go, “through thick and thin,” with Britain.

In London, John Nott makes a statement to Parliament.

*“During the past seven weeks the Royal Navy has assembled, organised and despatched over 100 ships, involving over 25,000 men and women, 8,000 miles away to the other end of the world. The Task Force has recaptured South Georgia and successfully accomplished a hazardous amphibious landing of around 5,000 men without a single fatal land casualty. The morale of our forces is high. ... Our forces on the ground are now poised to begin their thrust upon Port Stanley; behind them are another 3,000 men of 5 Brigade, whilst reinforcements and resupply are virtually denied to the Argentine garrison on the island. Generally the military objective to repossess the Falkland Islands has gone forward exactly as we planned it. ...”*<sup>480</sup>

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478 Martin 1992

479 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 05/26/1982

480 HC Deb 26 May 1982 vol.24 cc921-31

Francis Pym receives information and a question.

*“President Turbay had spoken to the Presidents of Brazil and Peru, who had agreed to put forward ideas on an informal basis .. In the absence of any diplomatic activity to resolve the crisis, there would be strong pressures at the Rio Treaty meeting on 27 May to take radical positions against the UK. What was needed was time to allow pressures to be brought to bear on Argentina to reach an agreement which the UK could accept. .. The three Governments therefore wished to know whether we could consider agreement to a suspension of military operations for 5 days ..”*

Pym politely says “No.”

Off South Georgia, 3,000 men are transferred from QE2 to Canberra, Stromness and Norland.

On the Falklands, C Company, 2 Para, set up a forward base at Camilla Creek House.

In Mexico, Britain's Ambassador Tickell updates President Portillo before reporting to London.

*“(Portillo) asked me to convey his warm thanks to the Prime Minister. He deplored the loss of life and waste of resources involved in the conflict. He did not doubt our capacity to recover the Islands and indicated that he hoped we would not be too long about it...”<sup>481</sup>*

In Washington, Haig updates President Reagan.

*“Our latest exchanges with the British confirm that they are currently not of a mind to work toward a negotiated settlement which gives anything at all to the Argentines before they retake the Islands. ... The two sides could not be further apart. The Secretary General has asked us to put pressure on the British to accept mutual withdrawal, warning that he will announce Thursday evening that a ceasefire is not possible if the British have not moderated their position... Given the mood in London, American pressure would be in vain; ... There is virtually no hope of productive negotiations before the British complete their re-occupation of the Islands. Even then, the British will be reluctant to offer anything to the Argentines. ... they will not be flexible, at least in the short term, in the flush of victory.”<sup>482</sup>*

At much the same time in New York, the Security Council's debate continues.

*“Spain and Togo listed the cessation of hostilities, negotiation and peace as the priorities of the Council's action, as did several other speakers who urged the Council to call for an immediate ceasefire. Jordan asserted that the Council should not resign itself to the role of onlooker while blood was being shed, and Brazil said the Council was duty bound to prevent a worsening of the situation. Greece said the Council's prestige would be enhanced if it unequivocally condemned all invasions and breaches of the Charter provisions. Colombia asserted that the United Nations would emerge greatly weakened if it failed to enforce international law and maintenance of international peace and security, while the United States considered that the Organization had functioned in the crisis in the manner foreseen by its founders and its Charter. ...*

*Several countries, among them Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela, held the United Kingdom responsible for blocking the negotiating efforts. China said the negotiations had broken down due to a tough stand taken by the party with superior military strength. Bolivia asserted that any peace effort would be doomed to failure as long as*

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481 PREM19/631 Telegram No.441 of 26 May

482 Reagan Library, Dennis C. Blair Files, Country Files, Falklands Crisis 1982

*the United Kingdom persisted in its equivocal stand. Panama and the USSR said the United Kingdom had resorted to the language of ultimatums and virtually broken off negotiations by resorting to the use of force. Antigua and Barbuda believed the United Kingdom had made genuine attempts to reach a negotiated settlement.*

*The United States said the United Kingdom had indicated its willingness to consider, but Argentina had rejected or chosen not to consider, first the United States proposal and subsequently the Peruvian peace plan, both based on the Council's 3 April resolution. New Zealand said it was Argentina's obduracy and rigidity that had frustrated and blocked the Secretary-General's efforts just when it looked as if an agreement was within reach. ...*

*Germany, Guyana, Jordan, Uganda and Zaire believed the mandate should be based on the Council's 3 April resolution. ... Australia said Argentina's invocation of paragraph 1 of the 3 April resolution in accusing the United Kingdom of hostile action was a perverted reading of that text, as that paragraph, it said, was directed to the state of armed conflict caused by the Argentine seizure of the Falklands.... the majority of Latin American countries, along with China, Equatorial Guinea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Poland, the USSR, Yugoslavia and Zaire, supported Argentina's territorial claim, while endorsing efforts to find a peaceful solution to the dispute. El Salvador asserted that Argentina's occupation of the Islands was in accordance with its lawful title to them, which led Panama to state that there had been no breach of peace on 3 April, when Argentina recovered the Islands.*

*Belgium and Kenya said territorial claims should not be allowed to override the interests of peoples in choosing democratically their own destinies. Australia considered that Argentina had been insistent on loaded arrangements in the Falklands which, if accepted, would lead to conceding its demand of sovereignty and ignoring the rights of the Falklanders; if Argentina's aggression was allowed to persist, it would itself amount to colonialism. In a similar vein, Kenya said Argentina could not claim any right to impose its own form of colonialism on the Islands' inhabitants. New Zealand added that the two aggrieved parties in the crisis were the United Kingdom and the people of the Falklands. In contrast, Panama called it illogical to talk of the right to self-determination- the right of the oppressed-in the Malvinas case, when the inhabitants of the Islands were dependents of a British colonial company; ...*

*Colombia, noting that the United Kingdom's policy of decolonization had allowed the independence of many countries by means of negotiations, believed it reasonable to expect that the Malvinas case could also be solved in that manner. Zaire also noted the United Kingdom's past record of decolonization, ....*

*The Netherlands felt that Argentina's resort to force could not be justified in terms of international law. Antigua and Barbuda said that, as a small island State dependent for its security on the United Nations, it had to deplore Argentina's illegal use of force in seizing the Falklands in defiance of the Council. In a similar vein, Guyana rejected the attitude of those which held aloft the action of 2 April as an example to be emulated, and said aggression should not be rewarded.”<sup>483</sup>*

Argentina's Costa Méndez indicates that Buenos Aires can accept the draft-resolution as amended. Put to a vote, the Security Council adopt the amended resolution.



## *Security Council Resolution 505 -*

*Reaffirming its resolution 502 (1982),*

*Noting with the deepest concern that the situation in the region of the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas) has seriously deteriorated,*

*Having heard the statement made by the Secretary-General at its 2360th meeting, on 21 May 1982, as well as the statements made in the debate by the representatives of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,*

*Concerned to achieve, as a matter of the greatest urgency, a cessation of hostilities and an end to the present conflict between the armed forces of Argentina and the United Kingdom,*

*1. Expresses appreciation to the Secretary-General for the efforts that he has already made to bring about an agreement between the parties, to ensure the implementation of resolution 502 (1982), and thereby to restore peace to the region;*

*2. Requests the Secretary-General, on the basis of the present resolution, to undertake a renewed mission of good offices, bearing in mind resolution 502 (1982) and the approach outlined in his statement of 21 May 1982;*

*3. Urges the parties to the conflict to co-operate fully with the Secretary-General in his mission with a view to ending the present hostilities in and around the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas);*

*4. Requests the Secretary-General to enter into contact immediately with the parties with a view to negotiating mutually acceptable terms for a cease-fire, including, if necessary, arrangements for the dispatch of United Nations observers to monitor compliance with the terms of the cease-fire;*

*5. Requests the Secretary-General to submit an interim report to the Security Council as soon as possible and, in any case, not later than seven days after the adoption of the present resolution."*

In exercise of a right of reply, Sir Anthony Parsons speaks to the Council.

*"My delegation voted in favour of the Resolution just adopted ... We did so because it contains a clear reaffirmation of SCR 502. It registers beyond doubt that the Secretary-General's efforts have been, and will be, concentrated on ensuring the implementation of SCR 502. This is the key to the return of peace to the region... In particular, this key lies in the second operative paragraph of SCR 502, namely the unconditional demand for the immediate withdrawal of all Argentine forces from the Falkland Islands. I must make clear, so that there is no misunderstanding, that for our part the only acceptable condition for a ceasefire is that it should be unequivocally linked to an immediate commencement of Argentine withdrawal. The history of the last two months has done nothing to create British confidence in the Government of Argentina ... Hence a simple verbal agreement by Argentina to withdraw its forces would not be sufficient for a ceasefire. Mr. President the Council should also be quite clear on another point. The situation has changed ... we are talking about Argentine withdrawal. We cannot now accept that Argentine withdrawal be linked in any way to parallel British withdrawal."*<sup>484</sup>

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484 PREM19/631 Telegram No.858 of 26 May

*“... the new mission was undertaken without enthusiasm by the Secretary-General. He told the Council: You've asked me to do this. I will try, but you should understand that what you are asking is practically impossible. A war is now underway, and it is simply not realistic to think in terms of achieving a cease fire.”*<sup>485</sup>

In a telegram to London, Parsons sums up the day's proceedings.

*“We owe a lot to the old Commonwealth, Kenya, Guyana and Belgium for their robust support, slightly less to the FRG (Germany), little or nothing to the rest of our partners who spoke, including France: the US statement was too even handed for our liking. However, to a greater or lesser extent, all these statements offset the Latin American barrage ...*

*The fact that we emerged without having to veto, which seemed most unlikely at the outset, was due to a number of factors – the firmness with which we stated our own positions both privately and publicly: the reluctance of the Non-Aligned members of the Council to allow a veto situation to develop both because of basic sympathy for us and because they realised that a deadlock would effectively deal the UN out of any further useful role in the crisis: the Irish tactics which the Non-Aligned found both irritating and unacceptable: and the Latin American desire to get out of the Council in order to leave their hands free for the OAS meeting in Washington on the 27<sup>th</sup>...*

*It is ironic .. that our best support should have come from Africans, Asians and Caribbeans, with our partners and allies either useless or actively unhelpful.”*

With only seven days available before he has to report back to the Security Council, Pérez de Cuéllar requests that Argentina and Britain provide, within 24 hours, the terms each consider acceptable for a cease-fire.

*“Pérez de Cuéllar asked to see me privately ... Was it really the case that we could no longer contemplate any parallel British withdrawal? I confirmed that it was. ... He did not think that he would have any alternative but to report to the Security Council that mutually acceptable terms for a cease-fire were unobtainable. .. I urged him nevertheless to try to find some change in the Argentine position.”*

Argentina's Central Bank announces that payments for imported goods can only be made 180 days after shipment; *“.. aimed at saving foreign currency to meet needs arising from the Falklands conflict. .. ”*

## **Day 56**

**May 27<sup>th</sup>** – in the Falklands, a little before dawn, 45 Commando move towards Douglas.<sup>486</sup>

PM Thatcher addresses the House of Commons.

*“Yesterday the United Nations Security Council adopted unanimously a resolution on the Falkland Islands. It reaffirms resolution 502 and requests the Secretary-General to undertake a renewed mission of good offices, to enter into contact with Britain and Argentina with a view to negotiating mutually acceptable conditions for a ceasefire and to report again to the Security Council within seven days. We shall, of course, co-operate fully with the Secretary-General in*

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485 Quoted in Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990 p.348

486 Moving over difficult terrain, it took some 36 hours for 45 Commando to reach its objective.

*that. In voting for the resolution our representative at the United Nations made it clear that, in view of Argentina's continued refusal to implement resolution 502, the only acceptable condition for a ceasefire is that it should be unequivocally linked with a firm and unconditional Argentine commitment immediately to commence withdrawal of its forces from the islands. ...*

*In the published proposals that we debated last Thursday there was a linked withdrawal of British forces and Argentine forces. Those proposals have been withdrawn and as our ambassador to the United Nations made clear when he voted for the resolution, there can now be no question of a British withdrawal. He said: We are talking about Argentine withdrawal. We cannot now accept that Argentine withdrawal be linked in any way to parallel British withdrawal. ...*

*The talks with the Secretary-General will be about unequivocal withdrawal of Argentine forces in accordance with resolution 502 as a condition for a ceasefire. After that, we shall be in repossession of the islands. We then wish to restore British administration. Administration has to continue under existing British law and under existing democratic institutions. There will be a great deal of reconstruction work to do, and also talk about development of further resources. It will take some time for the islanders to crystallise their views, but then we must have discussions with them about the longer-term interests. It will be most unwise for us to give away any of that in advance.”<sup>487</sup>*

Francis Pym replies to de Cuéllar's urgent question.

*“You have asked about the British Government's definition of acceptable terms for a ceasefire. In our view a ceasefire that was not linked inseparably to Argentine withdrawal would give Argentina another opportunity for procrastination through intransigence.*

*The British answer to your question is therefore that a ceasefire is highly desirable and would be acceptable if it was inseparably linked to the commencement of Argentine withdrawal and the completion of that withdrawal within a fixed period. ...*

*A change of position by Argentina involving willingness to implement Resolution 502 could transform the situation. It would be most encouraging if in your resumed efforts for peace under the mandate of Security Council Resolution 505 you could obtain from Argentina convincing evidence of such a change. Argentina's immediate response to your question yesterday may not do this, in which case I hope you would go back to them on the point....”<sup>488</sup>*

Britain's Ambassador to Ireland informs Taoiseach Charles Haughey that, as Ireland tabled a draft-resolution unacceptable to the UK, relations had taken a, “*considerable turn for the worse.*”

On the Falklands, Argentina's air force attack the bridgehead at San Carlos during the afternoon. Six men are killed and 30 injured. An Argentine Skyhawk is shot down over West Falkland.

A BBC World Service broadcast reports that 2Para have moved towards the Darwin area. Picked up by Argentina's command at Stanley, the report is dismissed as propaganda.<sup>489</sup>

<sup>487</sup> *HC Deb 27 May 1982 vol.24 cc1049-52*

<sup>488</sup> *PREM19/631 Telegram No.475 of 27 May*

<sup>489</sup> The source of this entirely accurate report caused a great deal of tension with the BBC. Robert Fox, the BBC reporter present in the Falklands, was not the source. Defence Secretary John Nott was also exonerated. The BBC do not appear to have commented; officially at least.

*"The broadcast was heard by the men of 2 Para - who were furious at what they saw was a stupid and dangerous disclosure – and also by the Argentines both at Stanley and at Goose Green. Contrary to British beliefs, however, no reinforcements of any kind were sent to Goose Green as a result of that radio broadcast. Most Argentine believed it was a bluff. Lieutenant-Colonel Piaggi's reaction was: 'I did not take it too seriously; I thought it was more a psychological action... I made no changes because of that broadcast.' ..."*<sup>490</sup>

An observation team near Camilla Creek House is spotted by Argentine forces and fired upon. A Harrier is shot down covering the unit's withdrawal. A reconnaissance team consisting of Lt. Carlos Morales and three men is sent by Lieut. Col. Piaggi at Goose Green to investigate.<sup>491</sup> It becomes apparent that the Argentine force at Goose Green is well entrenched.

*"... (Jones) had brought only two 81mm mortars and a limited amount of ammunition for a quick action. The improving intelligence and the World Service report led 2 Para to signal back that: 'the task is a lot harder and amount of goods given are not sufficient, could 8Bty bring some more.' ..."*<sup>492</sup>

In Washington, at the OAS meeting. Secretary Haig makes a "detailed and determined" speech focusing on the fact that, since it was Argentina which had committed the original act of aggression, it would be wrong to invoke the *Rio Treaty*. His speech is greeted in silence while those delegates that attack the USA are given ovations.

*"Costa Méndez set the tone with an intemperate onslaught against the US which had failed in its duty to join with its hemispheric neighbours against an external threat. He urged Argentina's true friends to unite in solidarity against the UK, which throughout the negotiations had acted with total intransigence. British actions were an insult to the Latin American continent.*

*The Venezuelan Foreign Minister accused the British of having a punitive obsession which was shared by the EC, ... He asserted that the locus standi of the UN in this dispute was subordinate to that of the OAS and the Rio Treaty. ... The Nicaraguan Deputy Foreign Minister maintained that in future the Rio Treaty signatories should meet in Latin America and not in Washington, which was "foreign territory."... The US was an accomplice in British aggression...*

*The Peruvian Foreign Minister maintained that Argentina had throughout been flexible... Colombia introduced a mild hand-wringing Resolution. Trinidad and Tobago repeated its support for self-determination and condemned Argentina for using force to resolve a dispute. Illueca (Panama) made his usual long-winded and abusive speech. Costa Rica, Uruguay, Bolivia and Guatemala spoke without adding anything, although the last three joined the mob in condemning the US."*<sup>493</sup>

Henderson reports that Washington is still concerned that their relations with Latin America are suffering due to their support of the UK.

*"As they see it, we are now insisting on surrender of the Argentinian garrison and a return to British rule without any definite commitment to an attempt to achieve a long-term solution. In effect, we are basing ourselves on a return to the status quo ante. ..."*

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490 Middlebrook 2003

491 Captured by British forces.

492 Freedman 2005 vol.2

493 PREM19/632 Telegram No.1941 of 27 May

He goes on to suggest that the Islanders' interests could be safeguarded by; “.. some international group comprising say, two regional powers, plus the US and the UK, with the presence perhaps of the US and Brazilian forces and that, without prejudice to the future, in a given number of years this group will, in keeping with the wishes and interests of the Islanders, make proposals about the status of the Falkland Islands.”<sup>494</sup>

In London, after reading Henderson's suggestions, Thatcher scrawls the word “NO” across the last paragraph.

*Atlantic Conveyor* sinks. *Argonaut's* unexploded bomb is finally removed by the crew and lowered into the sea; allowing repairs to begin.

“... by that night (27) *Europic Ferry* and *Sir Geraint* could leave and *Sir Galahad* was almost finished unloading. Unlike previous nights, no new ships were taken in for unloading. All the guns, vehicles and the bulk of the immediate stores and ammunition were ashore, as were eleven *Sea Kings*, Four *Wessex* and one *Chinook*... Only warships and the damaged *Sir Lancelot* and *Sir Galahad* remained in *San Carlos Water*... The battle of *San Carlos* was now definitely over.”<sup>495</sup>

At 2200 Falklands time, *HMS Arrow* moves into position and commences to bombard Argentine positions at Goose Green. 2 Para move forward under cover of the naval fire.

“From midday onwards I knew from various sources – particularly the disappearance of the *Land Rover* – that an attack was imminent. I did not think we could hold out for long...”<sup>496</sup>

The *Bristol* group of ships arrive off the Falklands, comprising *Avenger*, *Active*, *Andromeda*, *Cardiff*, *Penelope* and *Minerva*.

## Day 57

**May 28<sup>th</sup>** – at 0355 British forces move on Goose Green. 0430 local time, a report is sent back from 2 Para that the assault is going as planned but, as dawn approaches, the momentum slows.

“... concerned about further delays, (Jones) concentrated on what he could control and focused on the obstacle ahead of him, the enemy position on Darwin Ridge leading towards the Hill... Jones decided to lead from the front... Armed with a sub-machine gun, he charged off towards the nearest enemy trench but was exposed to enemy fire from other trenches. Having been shot once he picked himself up and carried on firing but close to his target, he was hit again... He died before he could be evacuated.”<sup>497</sup>

A few moments later, a British 66mm anti-tank rocket scores a direct hit on the trench from where Jones had been killed. White flags are seen arising from Argentine trenches on Darwin Ridge. 2 Para have six dead and eleven wounded.<sup>498</sup>

An Argentine *Pucara* shoots down a British Scout helicopter, but then crashes on its way back to Stanley.<sup>499</sup>

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494 PREM19/631 Telegram No.1921 of 27 May.

495 Freedman 2005 vol.2

496 Lt.-Colonel Piaggi quoted in Middlebrook 2003

497 *Ibid.* Colonel Jones was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross for his actions.

498 There are a number of Argentine soldiers who claim to have fired the shots that killed Colonel Jones, but there were no Argentine survivors from the trench concerned. Argentina lost eighteen dead with thirty-nine wounded.

499 There is some evidence that the *Pucara* had been attempting to drop napalm on British troops.

At 0710 Falklands time, Argentine positions at Boca House surrender after taking a heavy bombardment leaving twelve dead. 2 Para continue to move towards Goose Green. Shortly after 1400, Argentine white flags are seen, but not honoured, leaving three British dead.<sup>500</sup> Re-motivated, the British platoon overrun the Argentine position.

In London, Brazil's Ambassador, Roberto Campos, calls on Francis Pym.

*"Matters were now at a critical point. British insistence on an unconditional Argentine withdrawal would have a destabilising effect both on Argentina and the Region. If Argentina were faced with military humiliation, it might have no choice but to turn to the Soviet Union. .. (he) wished to know whether the British position on Argentine withdrawal and on full restoration of British sovereignty was irreversible. He hoped not .. He hoped that we might indicate a continued willingness to negotiate a solution which might involve a phased and mutual withdrawal and interim administration arrangements. I said .. following our landing on the Islands, the circumstances were inevitably different. .. We intended to repossess the Islands and to restore our administration. .. Campos, who was in a waspish mood, went on to make some sharp criticism of our position on sovereignty ... It was not a productive exchange. .."*<sup>501</sup>

On East Falkland, Darwin is occupied by British troops at 1700 local time. Local FIC agent, Robert Hardcastle, reports to the company.

*"Very thankful to be liberated. .. Some houses destroyed. All employees and visitors safe. ... Regret to advise goons occupied and looted all houses, stores, farm materials, Rovers, tractors and equipment. Settlement area a shambles. Much indiscriminate sheep killing for food by goons in helicopters ..."*

Argentine forces at Goose Green receive an order to counter-attack.

*"I was in a raving fury at that order. Counter-attack! With what?... that order was impossible to carry out."*<sup>502</sup>

*"... directing fire onto the settlement ceased to be an option when the inhabitants of Darwin, who had been liberated, told the paratroopers that 112 civilians were locked up in the Community Centre in Goose Green, where they had been since 1 May."*<sup>503</sup>

Pope John Paul arrives in Britain for a 6 day visit.

PM Thatcher asks Lord Shackleton to update his report.

Argentina answers Pérez de Cuéllar's urgent question of the 26<sup>th</sup>, providing their minimum terms for a ceasefire. These include a suspension of all operations by troops; monitoring by the UN; separate zones to be established on the Islands if necessary; no military reinforcement; the UN to provide food etc., to the troops and civilians; negotiations to take place on the withdrawal of both parties and an interim administration.<sup>504</sup>

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<sup>500</sup> The circumstances are disputed by Argentine sources who state that the white flags were shown from the British side. Lieut. James Barry and two NCOs went forward to accept an Argentine surrender while 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Gomez Centurion went forward to take a British surrender. Realising the error, both sides turned to go back to their positions but the British group were fired upon before they had completed their return. All three British soldiers died. Some time later, on hearing that Lieut-Colonel Jones had been killed, Argentine commanders assumed that he had been the officer involved in the white-flag incident. This was not the case. See Middlebrook 2003

<sup>501</sup> PREM19/632 Telegram No.141 of 28 May

<sup>502</sup> Lt.-Colonel Piaggi quoted in Middlebrook 2003

<sup>503</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

<sup>504</sup> PREM19/632 Telegram No.884 of 28 May

45 Commando take up their positions at Douglas. Islanders using tractors and trailers assist in moving equipment over boggy ground. At Goose Green, Argentine forces are reinforced by 140 men from Mount Kent. British commanders make contact with their Argentine counterparts and a British ultimatum is delivered by two captured Argentine officers.

*“... the senior British officer in 2 Para, Major Chris Keeble, tried that evening to persuade the Argentine garrison to surrender, or at least allow a safe withdrawal of the civilians if the Argentine decided to continue fighting the next day.... They were surrounded and without hope of further support. A bombardment by ships and artillery would take place the next morning if they did not surrender.”*<sup>505</sup>

## Day 58

**May 29<sup>th</sup>** – President Mitterand informs Mrs. Thatcher that he is under pressure to complete the order of Exocet missiles to Peru; *“Peru has made it known to other Latin American countries that France is declining to execute the contract. Consequently, France’s contracts with other Latin American countries are in danger.”*

At Goose Green, shortly after dawn, the two Argentine officers who had delivered the British ultimatum return with a message that a meeting of the two sides should be arranged. At 1050 local time Lieut. Colonel Italo Piaggi and 1,400 Argentine troops surrender.

*“The Argentine authorities were severely shaken by the complete loss of the strong garrison and the air base at Goose Green in less than twenty-four hours of actual fighting. The news was not released on the mainland for some time,...”*<sup>506</sup>

None of the 112 civilians are harmed.

*“At one end of Goose Green settlement a Union Jack now flies high above the school. At the other end, the flag of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, the Parachute Regiment. After a whole day's bitter fighting and a morning's delicate surrender negotiations, the cheers of liberation came in the early afternoon. Women handed round cups of tea in Royal wedding mugs. Children carried round tins of sweets and biscuits to young Paras .. For nearly a month, 114 people had been shut up by the Argentinians in community hall. Their houses had been raided with furniture smashed and excrement on the floor.... Now the 1200 or so prisoners are being made to clean up the mess...”*<sup>507</sup>

To the north-east of the Falklands a British fuel tanker, *British Wye*, is attacked by an Argentine C-130 Hercules. Of eight bombs dropped, only one hits the vessel but fails to explode.

Late morning, elements of 3 Para arrive at Teal Inlet; reported clear of enemy troops by an SBS patrol.

*“The Argentine troops are very apprehensive, in some cases very frightened, here in Stanley. One broke down and had to be carried away by his mates. Another wandered up the road in*

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505 Middlebrook 2003

506 *Ibid.*

507 From Robert Fox, BBC, imbedded with 2 Para. Fifty-five Argentines died in the battle for Goose Green; many more were wounded although the exact figure is unknown. Some 1500 Argentines were taken as POWs. British forces suffered 17 deaths plus 33 wounded. See Middlebrook 2003

*tears, dragging his rifle. There are hundreds of them about the streets, clustered in pathetic, depressed groups, their clothes and boots sodden with rain and trench water. Very little spirit seems left in them. They are now realising that the push is about to hit them – and hit them hard... The food situation among troops in Stanley is becoming increasingly desperate. Jeremy says that yesterday when he was tipping out the rubbish at the dump the soldiers were waiting for his arrival with sticks for bits of food.”*<sup>508</sup>

With both sides now aware of the other's 'minimum' for a ceasefire, Argentina representative contacts the Secretary-General to claim that the British base line are terms, “*for surrender.*” Pérez de Cuéllar speaks to Parsons to tell him that the Argentines, however, are displaying some interest in the reference to “*international security arrangements*” and wish to know what the British mean. Pérez de Cuéllar assures Parsons that he will not expect clarification before the 31<sup>st</sup>.

During the vote on a new OAS resolution which openly sides with Argentina; attacks the USA for its economic sanctions and accuses the UK of being the aggressor, William Middendorf, the USA representative to the OAS, abstains.

*“We believe the Resolution before us to be one-sided. It charges some; it ignores the actions of others. It ignores what the legal effects of first use of force should be. Further, there is no recognition that there must be compliance by both parties with all elements of UN Security Council Resolution 502 ...”*<sup>509</sup>

In Washington, Haig speaks to Henderson with his thoughts on a ceasefire.

*“Haig ... gave me a piece of paper containing four points .. in connection with the American ideas – (1) restoration of local administration does not include return of a Governor; (2) avoidance of publicly espousing independence or semi-independence, as the British goal; (3) agreement on withdrawal would have to say something about non-reintroduction of forces; (4) contact group to stay on indefinitely.”*<sup>510</sup>

Henderson tells Haig that the British Government are considering some form of independence for the Islanders. Haig responds that the British should refrain from mentioning it as it would be unacceptable to the Argentines. PM Thatcher, on receiving Haig's suggestions, writes “NO” against (2), (3) and (4).

## Day 59

**May 30<sup>th</sup>** – HMS *Ambuscade* and HMS *Glamorgan* bombard targets near Stanley.

In London, Thatcher responds to the French President's message of the previous day; “*If it became known, as it certainly would, that France was now releasing weapons to Peru that would be passed on to Argentina for use against us, France's ally, this would have a devastating effect on the relationship between our two countries. Indeed it would have a devastating effect on the alliance (NATO) as a whole.*”

In the Falklands, 45 Commando arrive at Teal Inlet, while 3 Para move forward towards Estancia House.

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508 Diary entry in Smith 1984. p.189

509 Quoted in *Peace and Change* Denis R. Gordon 1987

510 PREM19/632 Telegram No.1963 of 29 May



A forward party of 2 Para arrive at Swan Inlet House to be informed by the local manager that there are no Argentine troops at either Fitzroy or Bluff Cove.

Pym diplomatically advises Henderson.

*“Haig's ideas are being examined very carefully, but they require a good deal of further consideration by Ministers. We foresee that it will probably not, repeat not, be possible to transmit a full response to him through you before Tuesday 1 June..”*

Parsons is informed that the British Government consider Argentine terms for a ceasefire as unacceptable and that the position is as previously stated on May 27<sup>th</sup>.

*“You should hold out no hope of our altering it in the face of the continued Argentine intransigence ... We naturally recognise that, in the circumstances, the Secretary-General may feel obliged to report failure to the Security Council...”*

On the Falklands, Argentine special forces discover that Mount Kent, with its commanding view of Port Stanley, has been seized by the SAS. During a fire-fight, two Argentines are killed with five wounded and one captured. Three SAS members are injured. Elements of 42 Commando land on Mount Kent in support of the SAS defenders. The Argentines withdraw. Harriers attack Argentine positions to the east of Mount Kent. One Harrier, having received damage from small arms fire, crashes into the sea. The pilot is rescued. 3 Para discover Estancia House devoid of enemy troops and secure the position. An Argentine Puma helicopter crashes to the north of Mount Kent killing its seven passengers. The crew survive.

During the early afternoon two Super Éntendards, escorted by 4 A4Cs, attack HMS *Avenger* believing frigate to be one of the British aircraft-carriers, *Invincible*.<sup>511</sup>

*“The Super Éntendard approach, made without the benefit of up-to-date reconnaissance, was not far enough to the east and, instead of striking at the less protected rear of the task force where the aircraft-carriers were, came in amongst the outer Type 42 destroyer screen which was approximately thirty miles to the west of the carriers. The presence of the Super Éntendard and the launch of the Exocet were detected... the Exocet did not hit a ship and eventually ran out of fuel and fell into the sea.”*<sup>512</sup>

*“They detected several echoes ahead of them in the target area, and, ..., the missile was fired at what was believed to be Invincible 15 miles ahead. They then turned away to find their tanker. The target identified was not Invincible but Avenger.... The Avenger's chaff distracted the missile, which passed close to the ship but did no harm. Then came in the four A4s. One was caught by a Sea Dart... while another was hit by small arms fire from Avenger or debris from the explosion that had taken out the first A4. The other two dropped their bombs but missed and turned away to safety.”*<sup>513</sup>

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511 HMS *Invincible* was some 30 miles away to the east when the attack took place. Argentina's claims that it was damaged are based solely upon the evidence given by two pilots placed under pressure on their return. The witness evidence of the 170 crew members of HMS *Avenger* and/or the aircraft-carrier's 1,100 crew have proven insufficient in Argentina to counter that of the two pilots. This myth persists.

512 Middlebrook 2003

513 Freedman 2005 vol.2. Argentina's pilots reported that HMS *Invincible* had been hit by the *Exocet* and bombs from the A4Cs. This has led to an enduring myth, alive today, that somehow the UK managed to cover up the loss of a carrier and replace it with another.

At Port Stanley, the Argentine administration extend the curfew from 4pm until 8.30am and order the evacuation of houses to the south of Davis Street.

*“Last night’s bombardment must have really made the Argentine’s eyes water, especially up in the trenches and dug-outs at the back of the town. It was rather scary at times down here; it must have been bloody terrifying up there... There is the possibility of a total house curfew as the British troops continue their advance towards Stanley, so spent much of today storing water in the house.... The supply was cut off again at 4 this afternoon... On the Argentine news they admit to having lost contact with their troops at Goose Green. They also claim to have bombed HMS Invincible – Britain says this is untrue.”*<sup>514</sup>

## Day 60

**May 31<sup>st</sup>** – Mountain and Arctic Warfare Cadre troops attack Argentine special forces at Top Malo House, some 9km south of Teal Inlet, taking the position after a short but fierce firefight in which two Argentines are killed and seven are wounded; five more are taken prisoner. Three British Paratroopers are injured.<sup>515</sup>

Some reinforcements move forward to join 2 Para at Fitzroy/Bluffs Cove.<sup>516</sup>

Sea Harriers attack Stanley airfield.

*“Great excitement at lunchtime. Four Harriers bombed the airport. Saw the whole thing. They made a fantastic sight coming in at about 30ft or 40ft up, very fast. Rather like being at the Farnborough air show, with action thrown in. Great explosions, smoke and flames. Think they must have got the Pucaras which were flying about yesterday. Lots of return fire.”*<sup>517</sup>

Mitterand informs Peru that its Exocet order cannot be met for; *“political reasons.”*

£500,000, much of it raised by public collections, is sent to the UK by the people of the Caymen Islands; *“at a time when their Mother Country is in need of help.”*

Argentina circulates the 29<sup>th</sup> OAS resolution claiming it to be a *“document of the Security Council.”*

Sir Anthony Parsons recommends to the FCO that he should respond by pointing out that the OAS resolution fails to refer to SCR resolutions 502 and 505. Also that the Security Council has; *“the Primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.”*

Parson's provides Britain's response to Pérez de Cuéllar's question with regard to security arrangements.

*“You asked what terms for a ceasefire would be acceptable to us. ... Our answer to your question is that a cease-fire must be inseparably linked to the commencement of the withdrawal of Argentine troops and to the completion of the withdrawal within a fixed period. ...*

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<sup>514</sup> Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.192. Many Argentines remain convinced to this day, that *Invincible* was sunk.

<sup>515</sup> Contrary to Argentine reports, there were no British deaths resulting from this action. See Middlebrook 2003

<sup>516</sup> Having moved forward with unexpected speed, there was now the logistical problem of moving up enough reinforcements and equipment to hold the position. A decision was made to reinforce by sea, but this would take some days. cf. 5/6 June.

<sup>517</sup> Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.196

*While we should be willing to consider in the longer term the possibility of alternative international security arrangements for the protection of the Islanders, there is no question of our agreeing to the withdrawal of British forces in parallel to Argentine withdrawal. ..”* <sup>518</sup>

The Secretary-General summons Argentina's Deputy Foreign Minister.

Parsons reports.

*“Pérez de Cuéllar telephoned me after seeing Ros to ask if I would receive De Soto in my mission: Pérez de Cuéllar had some questions .. De Soto turned up about two hours later. It emerged that a 5 point plan for the implementation of SCR 502 and 505 had been put to the Argentines who, after long deliberation amongst themselves, had agreed to forward it to Buenos Aires. However, Ros had not brought any fresh instructions to deliver to the Secretary-General: he had called only to hear our final response...*

*Pérez de Cuéllar's 5 point plan is - (1) at time 'T' a ceasefire would come into force and be monitored by UN observers; (2) at time 'T' plus 24 hours, Argentine withdrawal would begin in implementation of SCR 502 (ie total Argentine withdrawal), (3) at time 'T' plus 24 hours, token British withdrawal would begin, (4) the withdrawals would be completed within 'X' days, (5) negotiations would begin under the auspices of the Secretary-General within the framework of SCR 505. De Soto summed up Pérez de Cuéllar's views as follows. Points (2) and (4) would give us total Argentine withdrawal, whereas point (3) would amount to the restoration of British Administration. ...*

*He hoped this would enable us to consider "the longer term" more as "the near future"..”*

In a separate telegram, Sir Anthony Parsons opines.

*“I believe that this is a genuine effort by Pérez de Cuéllar to try to find a last-minute solution .. I do not believe that he is playing some kind of double game. However, as I see it, his proposals are unacceptable.*

*First, if UN observers were in situ under a mandatory Resolution, and the Argentines found pretexts not to withdraw, it would be very difficult for us to resume military action. Secondly, his plan involves some British withdrawal. Thirdly, it could resuscitate the whole idea of UN interim administration, target dates and UN supervision of the negotiations for a final solution. Nevertheless, it enables us to buy a little more time ...*

*I recommend therefore that I should be instructed to give him a reasoned response.. His proposals pose greater difficulties for the Argentines, since they involve total Argentine withdrawal ... This is another reason why it will be in our interests to talk to him about his plan ...”*

Reagan telephones Thatcher to suggest that she call a halt to hostilities.

*“President Reagan said that the USA considered it imperative that the UK should show that it was prepared to talk before the Argentineans were forced to withdraw. Willingness to talk now could prevent a Peronist take-over in Argentina in the future. ...”*

Thatcher interrupts:

*"I didn't lose some of my best ships and some of my finest lives, to leave quietly under a ceasefire without the Argentines withdrawing... I'm not handing over the island now ... I can't lose the lives and blood of our soldiers to hand the islands over to a contact group. It's not possible... This is democracy and our island, and the very worst thing for democracy would be if we failed now ..."*<sup>519</sup>

*"After the call she immediately rang Henderson on an open line to complain. She had been 'dismayed' by Reagan's attitude and wished the President to know how 'upset' she was at being presented with 'another peace initiative', one that was 'pure Haigism.' 'We were prepared to negotiate before but not now. We have lost a lot of blood and it's the best blood. Do they not realise that it is an issue of principle? We cannot surrender principles for expediency.' ... Almost immediately after this conversation the Ambassador was contacted by Haig. He was full of admiration for the Prime Minister but concerned that relations were entering a difficult phase – 'we can't accept intransigence.' ..."*<sup>520</sup>

During the night, British troops establish themselves on Mount Challenger, overlooking the Stanley/Bluff Cove road. A naval observation post is set up on Mount Kent. Argentina's Air Force commences night bombing raids.

*"Their first attack in this new phase, by two Canberras against British troop positions in the San Carlos area, took place on the night of 31 May. This night raid took the British by surprise, but only minor damage was caused, with one man slightly injured."*<sup>521</sup>

## Day 61

**June 1<sup>st</sup>** – during a television interview with the BBC, the Prime Minister is asked whether she sees a future role for Argentina on the Falkland islands.

*"I cannot, myself, see a role in anything relating to sovereignty, for the Argentines on the Falkland Islands. You saw what happened in Goose Green and Darwin, how our people have been treated. They'd never wanted to go to Argentine before, they'll be even less likely now."*

*"There was now no intention to use the promise of wider political negotiations with Argentina to get a ceasefire. The Government returned to its original objective of restoring British administration to the Islands, and this would continue until such time as their security and economic future could be guaranteed."*<sup>522</sup>

Intelligence indicates that Libya is supplying missiles to Argentina in military and civilian Boeing 707's transiting via Cape Verde/Las Palmas and Brazil.

*"Libya had emerged as a major supplier of arms to Argentina, with an air bridge between Tripoli and Recife, Brazil, using B707-320C aircraft of the Argentine Air Force and Aerolinas Argentinas, which allowed direct*

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<sup>519</sup> It is said that Reagan held the phone up so that his aides could hear the tirade. The President of the United States; Leader of the Free World, could not get a word in edgewise.

<sup>520</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

<sup>521</sup> Middlebrook 2003

<sup>522</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

*flights carrying substantial loads. Up to ten flights were made... Clearance was given to transit Moroccan airspace, much to British irritation.”*<sup>523</sup>

In the Falklands, an Argentine C-130 reconnaissance aircraft is shot down by two Sea Harriers with the loss of all seven crew. 5 Brigade commences its disembarkation at San Carlos. Norland disembarks its troops first (1/7 Gurkha Rifles).

*“During Mass this afternoon firing broke out, accompanied by lots of cheering from the troops. Anya, who had been to Mass this morning, met us immediately afterwards to say that a Harrier had been shot down; she had watched the pilot eject and come down by parachute towards Eliza Cove. Shortly afterwards a Chinook took off to bring in the pilot, so we rushed down to the football field to watch it return.*

*Quite a crowd had gathered, including an Argentine TV team, who were very excited at the prospect of filming the British aviator, as they put it. Their disappointment and embarrassment was extreme when an Argentine fighter pilot appeared at the back hatch of the Chinook in a not too happy frame of mind. It seems that once again they had shot down one of their own aircraft.*

*Some little time beforehand the Harriers had brought down a C-130 Hercules just off Mangeary Point as it was coming to land at the airport; possibly the fighter shot down had been an escort.”*<sup>524</sup>

In Washington, Ambassador Henderson speaks to Judge Clark at the White House.

*“Clark said that he believed the President did understand the firmness of our position. Neither he nor Haig were wishing to undermine this. ... “We are in it with you,” Judge Clark said. This was very much the President's conviction. But this did not prevent him from believing that considerable damage had already been done to the USA's relations with its Latin American neighbours, that the US should not neglect any chance of preventing further bloodshed and the humiliation of Argentina that could give a hostage to the future, and that in the long-term there had to be a settlement ...”*

Henderson adds; *“Haig has spoken to me in the light of the Prime Minister's talk with the President and my talk with Judge Clark. He says that there is no good in pursuing his ideas. It is a pity, but he understands.”*

Ambassador Hutchinson in Montevideo is invited to speak to the Uruguayan Minister of Foreign Affairs, in company with the Argentine Ambassador, to see; *“what could be done to achieve a cease-fire.”*

Haig sends a further message to Henderson.

*“He did not expect a Resolution to come forward for another day or two. The Argentinians were still putting forward wholly unrealistic requirements for a cease-fire, asking for mutual withdrawal. But he hoped that we could again manoeuvre, as we had so successfully last week, to avoid a situation in which we and the Americans were isolated in the UN. ... Haig thought we should be in a position to win militarily in the near future. ...”*

Francis Pym advises Parsons; *“Pérez de Cuéllar's five-point plan is certainly unacceptable as it stands. But I agree that without raising false hopes or misrepresenting our position you should give him a reasoned*

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<sup>523</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>524</sup> Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.201

*response... You should tell the Secretary-General that while other aspects of his plan give us difficulty we approve the emphasis on total Argentine withdrawal with a fixed period of time. We look forward to learning of the Argentine response.”*<sup>525</sup>

HMS *Alacrity* bombards targets at Two Sisters, Moody Brook and Mount Longdon, with fire directed from the naval observation post on Mount Kent. 45 Commando, with no helicopters available due to the landing of 5 Brigade, continue its walk towards Mount Kent. A Sea Harrier is hit by a Roland missile fired by Argentine anti-aircraft defences near Stanley. The pilot ejects and is rescued.

At Stanley, Governor Menéndez issues an order to the Argentine force of occupation.<sup>526</sup>

*“The hour of the final battle has arrived.,*

*All our efforts, the hours of waiting, the cold, the tiredness, the vigilance, have come to an end.*

*The adversary is getting ready to attack Stanley with the audacious and odious intention of conquering the capital of the ISLAS MALVINAS.*

*Every man must fully understand what his duty is. The enemy will be destroyed by the decisive action of each one at his combat post. If each man with his rifle, his mortar, his machine-gun, or artillery piece fights with the valour and heroism which has already characterised us, Victory is certain.*

*The gaze of all Argentina is on us; our parents, wives, fiancées and children, all our families have total confidence in us. In the supreme hour we have the duty not to defraud them.*

*We have contracted a sacred responsibility before our comrades taken in action to convert their personal sacrifice into a page of glory for ARGENTINA, and we cannot allow their heroism to be in vain.*

*Not only must we beat them, we must do it in such a way that their defeat is so crushing that they will never again have the impertinent idea of invading our land ...*

*TO ARMS! TO BATTLE!”*

Peru offers the use of its Air Force for the evacuation of Argentine wounded from Stanley.

HMS *Avenger* bombards Argentine positions on Pebble Island, while *Active* and *Ambuscade* pound targets around Stanley.

In New York, Parsons transmits Pym's points to the Secretary-General who is; “.. *disheartened by them.*”

Ros then tells Pérez de Cuéllar that Argentina is willing to accept his proposals provided; “... (1) .. *the completion of the total British withdrawal, whatever its rhythm, would be within Y days* (2) *It is clearly understood that in no case would British forces remain alone on the Islands. The Blue Helmets should be on the Islands before the completion of withdrawal of Argentine forces. The withdrawal of Argentine forces from the areas occupied by them should correspond with a gradual takeover of control of those areas by Blue Helmets* (3) *The British forces shall abstain from widening their areas of occupation at the date of ceasefire. ....*”<sup>527</sup>

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525 PREM19/633 Telegram 488 of 1 June 1982

526 Argentine Gazette quoted in Smith 1984 p.252

527 Blue Helmets are UN sponsored troops

Parsons informs London; “... what this amounted to was that a date would have to be agreed for the completion of total British withdrawal and that British forces would not be able to establish control over the whole of the Islands.. Pérez de Cuéllarr recognises that his current efforts have come to an end.”

The new French President of the Security Council calls a meeting for the 2<sup>nd</sup> for the Secretary-General's report.

Ambassador Henderson in Washington assesses the assistance provided by the United States.

*“I do not need to go into the details about the value of the intelligence cooperation which has been given, ...*

*So far as communications facilities are concerned, the Americans have made especially available satellite communication channels at considerable cost to their own operations, communications sets for our special forces on the Islands, secure speech facilities with the fleet and satellite weather information.*

*So far as equipment is concerned, we have over the last month procured at least \$120 million of US material made available at very short notice and frequently from stocks normally earmarked for US operational requirements. This equipment has included the latest air-to-air Side-winder missiles urgently required for use by the Harriers, the Vulcan phalanx anti-missile gun system for HMS Illustrious, 4700 tons of airstrip matting for the Port Stanley airport once it has been recaptured, conversion of the SS Stena Inspector for use as a repair ship in the South Atlantic, Shrike missiles for use by the Vulcans, helicopter engines, submarine detection devices for use by the Sea King Helicopters, Temporary accommodation on a large scale for Ascension Island for our forces, Stinger ground-to-air missiles (already used successfully against Argentine aircraft), as well as the usual array of weapons and ammunition...”*<sup>528</sup>

## Day 62

**June 2<sup>nd</sup>** – HMS Arrow bombards Fox Bay while 2 Para reach Bluff Cove. Harrier reinforcements arrive from Ascension Island and surrender leaflets are dropped on Port Stanley. At San Carlos Water, Canberra disembarks the Welsh and Scots Guards. In a *blue-on-blue* incident in the early hours of the Falklands' day, an SBS Sergeant is killed by an SAS patrol.

*“Slept fairly well despite a naval bombardment and an artillery barrage somewhere to the south-west.... There was a great deal of activity during the night around the hospital ship; seemed to be unloading, which started late evening and continued till about 4.30 this morning. Lots of boat movements between ship and the jetty. Lorries on streets. Unable to see much because of black-outs and curfew. ... Lots of new troops digging in at the east end of town. It looks very much as if they arrived yesterday on the hospital ship.”*<sup>529</sup>

Britain's Hospital ship, *Hecla*, arrives in Montevideo; disembarking 24 Argentine prisoners and 18 British casualties.

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528 PREM19/633 Telegram No.1977 of 1 June 1982

529 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.203

Two MM38 Exocet missiles, designed for ships, are launched from a land-based trailer they have been Jerry-rigged onto. No British vessels are hit. <sup>530</sup>

Colombia's President Turbay writes to Thatcher appealing for her to; “.. consider the possibility of reaching an honourable peace agreement with Argentina, thus avoiding the unnecessary holocaust of many innocent lives.”

*“Mrs Thatcher is talking of another Shackleton Report, looking to the future and a longer airfield. After the Goose Green episode she says that sovereignty will no longer be on the future agendas of any discussions with the Argentines, or words to that effect.” <sup>531</sup>*

In New York, Sir Anthony Parsons informs Pérez de Cuéllar that the British Government are disappointed, though not surprised, by the terms of the Argentine response to the 5-point plan that he had put to the two sides.

At the informal Security Council meeting called by its new President, the Secretary-General reports that he has been unable to negotiate mutually acceptable terms for a ceasefire but; “.. affirms his readiness to remain in close contact with the parties and to continue to exercise his good offices. The mandate he was given in SCR 505 thus remains in being...”

Panama calls for a formal meeting and the Security Council reconvenes. Spain and Panama immediately co-sponsor a draft-resolution for the Council's consideration; calling for an unconditional ceasefire.

*“Ros spoke at length. The negotiations with the Secretary-General had shown that the UK did not intend at any time to heed the Council's appeals. Its only objective was to continue its aggression, with the intention of installing in the islands a military system as part of its plan to dominate the South Atlantic. The wishes of the Islanders were simply a mask. .. Argentina, on the other hand, had replied promptly and positively to the Secretary-General's efforts under SCR 505. .. The intransigence of the United Kingdom was evident. ...”*

After Brazil calls for an immediate cease-fire, Sir Anthony Parsons speaks.

*“I pay tribute once again to the Secretary-General for the efforts he has made during the past few days to implement Resolution 502 and 505. ...*

*I have said before, but it cannot be repeated too often, that the current breach of the peace was caused by Argentina. It was Argentina which closed the diplomatic channels on 1 April. It was Argentina which remained silent in the face of the Security Council's appeal not to use force .. It was Argentina .. which invaded the Falkland Islands... It was, and is, Argentina which has failed to comply with Resolution 502 which demanded the immediate withdrawal of all Argentine troops. ..*

*It is the United Kingdom which was the victim of the Argentine act of aggression.... Everything we have done since has been in exercise of our inherent right to self-defence. ..*

*The plain fact is, Mr. President, that until the Government of Argentina changes its position it is clear that the conditions for a cease-fire do not exist. Against this background the call by the distinguished representatives of Spain and Panama for an unconditional cease-fire is not*

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530 Target unknown, possibly *HMS Exeter*.

531 Diary entry in Smith 1984 pp.204-205. In all the decades since this BBC report was noted by John Smith in the Falklands; sovereignty has not appeared on any agenda involving discussions between Britain and Argentina.



*acceptable to my delegation. A cease-fire which is not inseparably linked to an immediate Argentine withdrawal would not be consistent with Resolution 502.. When we talk about security arrangements for the future, we are talking about security arrangements to shield the Islanders against any threat of renewed aggression – that is all.”*<sup>532</sup>

Spain presses the Council for an immediate vote but the meeting is adjourned until the 3<sup>rd</sup> so that delegates can obtain instructions from their Governments.

Parsons advises London.

*“Spain and Panama will press hard tomorrow morning for an immediate vote on their draft Resolution. They can count on six affirmative votes (China, USSR, Poland, Spain, Ireland, Panama). I think we can count on five negative votes or abstentions (France, UK, US, Guyana, Japan). Spain/Panama therefore have to get three out of the following four in order to get the necessary nine votes to turn our negative vote into a veto: Jordan, Togo, Uganda, Zaire... I recommend that the most urgent lobbying should now be carried out ..”*

### Day 63

**June 3<sup>rd</sup>** – HMS *Plymouth* bombards Argentine positions at Port Howard. Two Harriers are lost following attacks on other Argentine military installations, although the pilots are recovered safely. Short of fuel, a Vulcan bomber is diverted to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil where the aircraft is held at a military airport, and its missile removed by the Brazilian authorities.

3 Para establish a patrol base 2km west of Mount Longdon and commence “aggressive” patrolling.

*“There were quite a number of Argentine burials at the cemetery today; Jeremy saw them as he passed by on his dumper. They must have been victims of yesterday’s action...*

*Now only the officer’s graves get marked with a cross. Other ranks are put two or three to a grave. There may be some sort of mass grave as well for rapid burials. All graves are very shallow; just a couple of scoops with a digger and that’s all....*

*Lorries were coming down the road with the dead and wounded... It seems to be mainly conscripts left in town now. As we watched, half a dozen of them came from the dockyard carrying armfuls of crosses, heading towards the cemetery. This is hardly the way to inspire an army;.. Gen Menéndez has told his troops to fight to the last man.”*<sup>533</sup>

Canada's Ambassador to Buenos Aires is asked to leave the country following alleged pro-British remarks, while Argentina recalls its own Ambassador to France.

In New Zealand, a business man and his wife contribute \$NZ 1,000 for a supply of *Dunbar Whisky* to be sent to the troops in the Falklands, for; “immediate consumption.”<sup>534</sup>

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532 PREM19/633 Telegram No.916 of 2 June 1982

533 Diary entry in Smith 1984 pp.207 & 208

534 PREM19/633 Telegram 185 of 3 June 1982

Secretary Haig sends an instruction to Jeanne Kirkpatrick in New York directing the Ambassador to work closely with Sir Anthony Parsons to see if the proposed resolution can be made to work. If this is not possible, Kirkpatrick is instructed to join the UK in a veto. The French Ambassador is also instructed by his Government to stay in close contact with Sir Anthony Parsons. Japan confirms that its Ambassador will abstain.

Costa Méndez, at a meeting of the NAM, makes a speech in which he associates Argentina with Algeria, India, Cuba and Vietnam who had also needed to fight for their freedom. In a similar vein, he also talks of the South African peoples fight against apartheid. His speech is greeted with laughter by some African representatives who recall that Argentina has never previously supported their efforts against the Government of South Africa.

*“Costa Méndez 's reference to Britain having expelled original inhabitants of Falklands does not seem to have misled most delegates.”*<sup>535</sup>

At the UN, deliberations continue over the Spanish/Panamanian draft-resolution.

*“Spain and Panama failed to line up nine votes for the draft Resolution .. The Americans, and to a lesser extent the French, made frenzied efforts to avoid a vote today, lest they had to veto with us. (Spain) finally agreed .. to postpone a vote until 2000z tomorrow (4 June). .. It was clear at the start of play today that we had six negative votes or abstentions (France, Guyana, Japan, Jordan, UK, US). .. Guyana pressed hard, with some support from Jordan, for major changes to the draft in order to make the cease-fire conditional upon the commencement of Argentine withdrawal. Panama was not prepared to accept these amendments. .. This led Panama to propose a new operative paragraph which would have asked the parties to implement immediately SCR's 502 and 505 in all their parts. This was acceptable to the Africans and Panama undertook to sell it to Spain.”*

Panama's suggested amendment is debated. Parsons asks for time to seek instructions but says that he would expect further, and substantial, amendments to be suggested by London.

*“De Pinies (Spain) said that there was no question of the Argentines and the Panamanians accepting the kind of amendments I was talking about. He saw no alternative to voting straight away. This led to frenzied efforts by the Americans to persuade the Argentines to discourage de Pinies from pressing for a vote (I dread to think what promises were made..). At the same time it became clear that both Zaire and Togo, in spite of their positions in the morning, were inclined to abstain on the revised draft. So de Pinies still had not got his nine votes and American and French efforts to postpone the vote met with success...”*<sup>536</sup>

A revised draft reads.

*“The Security Council: Reaffirming its Resolutions 502 (1982) and 505 (1982) and the need for implementation of all the parts thereof, (1) Requests the parties to the dispute to cease-fire immediately in the region of the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas), (2) Requests the parties to initiate, simultaneously with the cease-fire, the implementation of Resolutions 502 (1982) and 505 (1982) in their entirety, (3) Authorizes the Secretary-General to use such means as he may deem necessary to verify the cease-fire, (4) Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on compliance with this Resolution within 72 hours.”*

Voting is deferred until the 4<sup>th</sup>.

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535 PREM19/633 Telegram 170 of 4 June 1982

536 PREM19/633 Telegram 924 of 3 June 1982

Parsons reports.

*"I believe that our best tactic is firmly to put forward all the amendments we need to make the latest draft acceptable to us, .. Spain, Panama and the Argentine friends will explode, and may insist on an immediate vote on a text designed to leave us in maximum isolation. If they succeed, we will have to face it, something we always anticipated, in the not unsatisfactory knowledge that we have now held out for over 60 days."* <sup>537</sup>

## Day 64

**June 4<sup>th</sup>** – prior to a G8 summit meeting at Versailles, Margaret Thatcher meets Ronald Reagan at the US Embassy in Paris to tell him that the only proposal that Britain is willing to accept is a ceasefire, irrevocably linked to Argentine withdrawal within 14 days.

In the Islands, 45 Commando finally arrive at their designated positions to the west of Mount Kent. Argentina's Air Force mount raids against British patrols nearing Mount Kent; failing to inflict damage or casualties.

*"Many troops use the church during the day; some come to pray for a few minutes, some just sit and shake. One sat in front of us shaking and trembling in a combination of exhaustion, fear and cold. Another cried uncontrollably. Most are very young. Their damp clothing smells of wet earth and camp fires."* <sup>538</sup>

In New York, Ros speaks to Thomas Enders at the US State Department, telling him that if the USA joins with the UK in a veto of the resolution, then Argentina will break off diplomatic relations. Enders agrees to inform Haig in Paris. <sup>539</sup>

In the reconvened Security Council meeting, Parsons tells Spain and Panama that he will not be proposing any amendments to their draft-resolution.

*".. in that case, there was no alternative to voting... There followed a delay of about two hours while both sides counted heads, and Mrs. Kirkpatrick made several efforts to persuade Haig in Versailles to switch .. to abstention. With abstentions assured from Guyana, Japan, Jordan and Togo, and probably from Zaire, it looked as though De Pinies would not be able to get his nine votes. But, at the last minute, my Japanese colleague, to his obvious chagrin, received instructions from Versailles to switch from an abstention to a vote in favour. He took with him Zaire, and nearly Jordan as well. .."*

Put to a vote, the Panamanian/Spanish draft-resolution fails; being vetoed by both the UK and the USA.

Unhappy with her remit, Ambassador Kirkpatrick notes.

*"I spoke with Walt Stoessel and Tom Enders at 3:00 p.m. To inform them that Japan and Ireland would vote "yes" and that France was abstaining. I said that I wanted written instructions, and then spoke with Stoessel again to inquire if they were very sure that I was instructed to vote no."*

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<sup>537</sup> PREM19/633 Telegram 927 of 3 June 1982

<sup>538</sup> Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.209

<sup>539</sup> Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990

*I reiterated what a disaster I thought a "no" vote would be, how unnecessary it was, how the U.K. frequently did not vote with US in the SC. Again, I said that to avoid any possible confusion, I wanted written instructions. I asked if they had spoken with Sec. Haig about the draft. They said yes. Again I repeated that I thought it would be an extremely controversial vote. I said that I thought they should discuss this again with Sec. Haig.*

*At 4:00 I once again called Stoessel and Enders to say that I had received no written instructions. They said that my instructions were clear - I was to follow the British - but they could understand that I wanted written instructions. ...*

*At 5:00 I called to report everything we knew about the line up: Japan, Ireland, Spain, USSR, Poland, Panama, Zaire would vote yes, and the U.K. would veto. I then said that the SC meeting was about to begin. They said that Sec. Haig was still out at the dinner and they had not yet heard from him.*

*Later at 6:00 they said that they had spoken to Sec. Haig, explained the situation to him, but that he (Haig) wanted to reflect. I explained that the vote was rapidly approaching. ... At 6:30 I heard that the Secretary wanted to reflect further. I replied that time had run out, the SC meeting had been called for 4:00 and we had been delaying for 2 and a half hours by that point. At 6:35 the vote occurred, and we voted no..."<sup>540</sup>*

Members speak in explanation of their votes.

*".. France, which abstained, considered it understandable that one of the parties to the conflict felt it essential to obtain certain safeguards against continued non-compliance with the 3 April resolution; consensus should have been reached regarding its effective implementation. Similarly, Guyana abstained, saying that, while Argentine non-compliance with the 3 April resolution was both the cause and consequence of the current level of armed hostilities in the South Atlantic, the text failed to make an explicit link between a ceasefire and withdrawal of Argentine forces within a clearly defined time-frame.*

*Japan supported the resolution with the understanding that Argentina would withdraw its forces within a reasonable period of time. Panama said the British veto had deprived the Security Council of a new chance to demonstrate its effectiveness, and had put that body back into a state of absolute impotence. Spain said the non-adoption of what it considered to be a highly balanced text represented a failure for peace. Ireland and Uganda felt the text clearly linked full implementation of the previous resolutions with the call for a cease-fire. Zaire supported the text as it called for the implementation of the previous Council resolutions. China also voted in favour, saying the Council should call for an unconditional cease-fire, resumption of negotiations and, at the same time, extend the Secretary-General's mandate..."*

Sir Anthony Parsons also addresses the Security Council.

*"The situation facing the Council this afternoon is straight forward. If Argentina had not invaded the Falkland Islands at the beginning of April there would be no crisis and we would not be meeting today. If Argentina had obeyed the mandatory demand in SCR 502 immediately to withdraw all its forces from the Falkland Islands, the crisis would have passed and we would not be meeting today. But Argentina did invade the Islands, and defied the mandatory demand of the Council to withdraw.... there is no direct and inseparable link between the ceasefire and*

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540 Kirkpatrick to Clark, Reagan Library, William P. Clark Files, Falklands War (UN/Kirkpatrick/Haig) 06/05/1982

*immediate Argentine withdrawal with a fixed time limit. The wording of the draft, without any shadow of a doubt, enables Argentina to reopen the endless process of negotiation, thus leaving Argentine armed forces in illegal occupation of parts of the Islands. This is totally unacceptable to my Government.”*<sup>541</sup>

Parsons reports from the meeting.

*“The Resolution secured nine votes only because of a last minute switch by Japan. After the vote, Mrs. Kirkpatrick astonishingly stated that she had been asked by her Government to say that if it were possible to change a vote once cast, the United States would like to change its vote from a veto to an abstention.”*<sup>542</sup>

*“The message to abstain came minutes after the SC vote. Since SC votes cannot be changed, Amb. Kirkpatrick was instructed to announce that we wished to record the change in any case. Amb. Kirkpatrick followed these instructions and added change of intention to the explanation of vote. Since then Kirkpatrick has explained the confusion was a result of short time and long distance. At 9:10 p.m. USUN received written instructions to abstain. At 9.35, on request from Enders to take all reasonable steps to mend relations with Argentines, Amb. Kirkpatrick, accompanied by Amb. Sorzano, had dinner with Generals Miret and Gil. End.”*<sup>543</sup>

Parsons concludes in a message to London.

*“It was a very close run thing. Had it not been for the last minute Japanese switch (for which my Japanese colleague was bitterly ashamed) the Resolution would have failed for lack of votes.*

*I confess that, with the amendments, I expected it to do better. If anyone had told me on 9 April, when we notified to the Security Council the establishment of the EZ (exclusion zone), that we would last out until 4 June without having to veto a cease-fire Resolution and that the eventual Resolution would only scrape 9 votes, I would not have believed it. I think we owe this not unsatisfactory result to a number of factors. First, basic sympathy for our position amongst NAM members ... Argentine unpopularity, de Pinies' bullying methods: and powerful lobbying both here and in capitals. Another unexpected bonus was Mrs Kirkpatrick's truly grotesque intervention when she last received instructions from Haig to abstain having cast a negative vote. ... Her performance has already excited much more media attention than our veto.*

*The important thing now is that we firmly kill any suggestion that we are isolated in the UN. ... The fact is that we are not. The Latins got a poor result for what looked like a reasonable Resolution to many people, and I have already received numerous expressions of sympathy and support from third world delegations from Africa and Asia.*

*It is difficult to see what the UN will now do. There has been very little talk about an emergency special session of the General Assembly and there would definitely not have been nine votes for such a proposition had it been tabled tonight... We owe a great deal to David Karran, the charge d'affairs of Guyana, who has been a tower of strength and helpfulness throughout..”*<sup>544</sup>

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541 PREM19/633 Telegram 935 of 4 June 1982

542 Kirkpatrick had not received Haig's change of instruction in time for the vote.

543 Reagan Library, William P. Clark Files, Falklands War (UN/Kirkpatrick/Haig) 06/05/1982

544 PREM19/633 Telegram 935 of 4 June 1982

*“Most embarrassed was President Reagan, who when questioned by reporters the next day while standing beside an evidently unimpressed Prime Minister clearly had no idea what had been going on.”* <sup>545</sup>

During the night in the Falklands, British patrols push towards Two Sisters.

A military situation report is prepared for the Prime Minister's information. <sup>546</sup>

*“Sea: Sir Galahad is unloading at Teal Inlet. Andromeda, Penelope, Blue Rover and Sir Geraint to San Carlos early 5 June. The carrier battle group remains to the east of the TEZ. Naval gunfire support operations to be carried out tonight by Cardiff and Active on the Port Stanley area. Glasgow and Argonaut have been released from Op. Corporate due to extensive damage from earlier actions. ..*

*Land: 3 Para remain in area of NW Mount Longdon. 45 CDO are moving from Teal Inlet to the area of Smoko Mountain. 2 Para are at Bluff Cove with 1/7 Gurkha Rifles moving forward from Goose Green to join. 2 Scots Guards and 1 Welsh Guards are moving to Bluff Cove area by the night of 5/6 June. It is intended that two CDO attacks will be made on Two Sisters Mountain within next 48 hours. Air: Weather conditions continue to be poor. Fog has severely limited all air operations. There are no reports of Argentine air activity. The deployment ashore of GR3/Sea Harrier aircraft is not yet confirmed but the forward operating base is ready for them.*

*Incidents: A 42 CDO patrol struck a minefield during the night of 2/3 June; one own forces wounded. .. an Argentine patrol of 5 was engaged and 3 enemy killed.”*

## Day 65

**June 5<sup>th</sup>** – HMS *Hydra* takes 51 British casualties to Montevideo while ARA *Bahia Paraiso* embarks Argentine wounded from HMS *Uganda*. Argentina demands that Uruguay intern Britain's casualties under the Geneva Conventions. Uruguay refuses. Argentina also asks Brazil to intern the Vulcan bomber under the terms of the *Rio Treaty*.

In Brasilia, Britain presents a *bout de papier* condemning the Brazilian decision to retain the Vulcan bomber; threatening “serious consequences” for friendly relations between the two countries. <sup>547</sup>

A meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement deplores the military operations being carried out by the UK with US support and reaffirms; “solidarity with Argentina in its efforts to end an outdated colonial presence.”

*“The Latin Americans had taken the whole place over in a big way on the Falklands, with Castro acting as impresario for Costa Méndez. He frankly admitted that Britain's friends had been swept away by the torrent of Latin American rhetoric, pressure and theatricality. All under the TV cameras. He had attended many NAM meetings over the years but had never heard anything like the violence of Costa Méndez's rhetoric. Pretty well every Latin American under the sun had spoken on similar lines. Almost all the vitriol had been directed against Britain, with the United States as a footnote ... Costa Méndez had received a long standing ovation with Castro capering in the public gallery ..”* <sup>548</sup>

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545 Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990

546 This was given to Thatcher the following morning at the G8 meeting in Versailles.

547 PREM19/634 Telegram 250 of 5 June 1982

548 PREM19/634 Telegram 958 of 7 June 1982. Conversation between Anthony Parsons and Amin Doha, (Bangladesh).

From New York, pleas from Pérez de Cuéllar are sent to Margaret Thatcher and General Galtieri.<sup>549</sup>

*“The armed conflict in the region of the Falkland islands threatens to enter into a new and extremely dangerous phase that is likely to result in heavy loss of life on both sides. This would gravely prejudice, for the foreseeable future, any prospect for a settlement of the underlying dispute...”*

*I feel it is my duty in this situation, in pursuance of the mandate entrusted to me by the Security Council, to appeal directly to Your Excellency and to President Galtieri, in the hope that a way can still be found to bring the fighting to a halt and to initiate negotiations towards a settlement of the crisis.”*

The Secretary-General includes a 7 point plan.

US Ambassador Kirkpatrick notes.

*“Basically this proposal spells out the modes for implementing Resolution 502 which was the British resolution and one which they have repeatedly described as the only basis for peace. The proposal addresses the U.K. objection that the 'Spanish' resolution provided no specific time frame for withdrawal of Argentine troops. It provides for removing all Argentine troops in 15 days and only makes a reference to British plans for "reducing" its forces. That is, it leaves the U.K. in control of the Islands, but it also provides for future negotiations.*

*This gives the British everything they have said they wanted, but provides a fig leaf for Argentine pride (the fig leaf being, basically, the right to surrender and withdraw under U.N. auspices instead of British). ...*

*If the President can help Mrs. Thatcher decide to accept this, lives and the U.S. interests would be saved.”<sup>550</sup>*

Parsons comments; *“I believe that this is another genuine last minute attempt by Pérez de Cuéllar to try to bring about Argentine withdrawal without further bloodshed. Obviously it has come too late ..”*

Overnight in the Falklands, British and Argentine patrols clash near Two Sisters, leaving three Argentine dead. Further firefights result in nine Argentine deaths and one British Marine injured.

Royal Marines Capt. Rob Bell, a Spanish speaker, establishes contact via the civilian medical network with Captain Melbourne Hussey of the Argentine Navy. There is an agreement that the network will be monitored at specific times in order that information can be passed if it should prove necessary.

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<sup>549</sup> PREM19/634 Telegram 945 of 6 June 1982

<sup>550</sup> Kirkpatrick to Reagan June 6 1982 Reagan Library, William P. Clark Files, Falklands War (UN/Kirkpatrick/Haig) 06/06/1982–11/04/1982

## Day 66

**June 6<sup>th</sup>** – as HMS *Cardiff* bombards Argentine positions a British Gazelle is brought down by friendly fire. An Argentine patrol is ambushed near the Murrell River by a 3 Para patrol. Five Argentines are killed. The British patrol take fire from Mount Tumbledown and withdraw without casualties.

Unloading/loading at San Carlos are *Blue Rover*, *Elk*, *Nordic Ferry*, *Sir Geraint*, *Sir Tristram*, and *Sir Galahad*. *Sir Lancelot* is moored and acting as a temporary home for the SAS while repairs continue. After some days of confusion, *Scots Guards* finally land at Fitzroy/Bluff Cove to reinforce 2 Para.

*“It was on 6 June that the Argentines first became aware of the reinforcement operation in the Fitzroy/Bluff Cove area.”* <sup>551</sup>

MV *Norland* sails towards Montevideo with 1400 Argentine prisoners as HMS *Hydra* arrives in Montevideo with 50 British walking wounded.

In New York, Parsons receives instructions to inform the Secretary-General that his proposals are unacceptable.

*“I saw the Secretary-General at 2300z this evening, ie one hour before his deadline. He had not by then heard from the Argentines...*

*I said that you (Pym) and the Prime Minister had studied the Secretary-General's message very carefully... But for the immediate future you had a single objective, namely to bring about Argentine withdrawal by one way or another and as quickly as possible. The military situation on the ground was now too complex to make it practicable for a third party to intervene.*

*You could not at this stage accept an integrated package involving many other aspects of the crisis. Nor at this stage could you commit yourselves to any proposition about the reduction of UK forces or about long term security arrangements under the UN's or anyone else's auspices. These were matters that would have to be worked out after we had repossessed the Islands.*

*I went on to say that we had become disillusioned by the course of negotiations during the last two months. ... Most recently our complete lack of confidence in the Argentines had been compounded by the Non-Aligned communique which had just been drafted in Havana. This had been an Argentine text. It showed absolutely no disposition on Argentina's part to compromise. ...*

*Against this background you were not prepared to take another chance which would involve the risk of re-involving ourselves in interminable negotiations. ... It was clear that none of this came as any surprise to the Secretary-General. ... De Soto has since told me that the Argentine response was negative, he would not reveal the details ..”* <sup>552</sup>

The mood among American officials, particularly Jeanne Kirkpatrick, is described as “glum.”

Two patrols of SAS set up observation posts on Beagle Ridge, overlooking Stanley airfield and Argentine positions on Wireless Ridge. <sup>553</sup>

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551 Freedman 2005 vol.2

552 PREM19/634 Telegram 949 of 6 June 1982

553 There they remained, undetected, until hostilities ceased.



## Day 67

**June 7<sup>th</sup>** – Argentine positions near Stanley are bombarded while Gurkha patrols mop up pockets of resistance behind British lines. A night-time bombardment by *Active* and *Ambuscade* targets Argentine positions near Fitzroy. An Argentine Learjet is hit by a Sea dart missile fired from HMS *Exeter* and crashes onto Pebble Island with the loss of all five crewmen.<sup>554</sup>

In a letter to Taoiseach Charles Haughey, the Irish Exporters Association inform their Government that the policy of opposition to EU trade sanctions against Argentina had caused a severe trade backlash in the UK.

Following Zaire's support for the vetoed SC resolution, London decides not to finance military equipment for the Zairean contingent in Chad, among other punitive actions.

After a meeting with the Italian Prime Minister in Rome, President Reagan and Secretary Haig fly to the UK.

## Day 68

**June 8<sup>th</sup>** – on the Falklands, just before dawn, *Sir Galahad* arrives at Fitzroy with two companies of Welsh Guards; mooring near *Sir Tristram* which is still being unloaded of stores and ammunition.

*“Embarked in Sir Galahad were two companies, each of 120 men (Prince of Wales and No.3), plus 1 Mortar Platoon, 'A' Echelon and Engineers Troop, of 35, 45 and 40 men respectively. ... the Welsh Guards commenced loading into an LCU at 1630Z... with accurate intelligence about the landing craft at Fitzroy, four Mirage 3s and eight A4Bs were sent from Rio Gallegos, and six Daggers from Rio Grande... Argentine tactics were to use the Mirage 3s as a diversion, hoping to draw off any Harriers, while the Daggers and the A4Bs would fly low, hoping to stay undetected... At around 1650Z they reached the southern entrance to Falkland Sound.”*<sup>555</sup>

Argentine Dagger aircraft engage HMS *Plymouth* off Chanco Point. The vessel is hit by 4 bombs, none of which explode. There are five casualties but no dead.

Just after 1300 local time, Argentine A4 Skyhawks fly towards Port Pleasant, dropping 3 x 500lb bombs on *Sir Galahad*. None explode, but fires break out. With the call to abandon ship, three Sea Kings and a Wessex helicopter winch men to safety. Thirty-nine Welsh Guards lose their lives, together with five of *Galahad's* crew. One hundred and fifteen are injured; seventy-five of them walking wounded.<sup>556</sup>

*Sir Tristram* is hit by 2 bombs, one of which passes right through the ship. Neither of the bombs explode, but the strike kills two of the crew. *Sir Tristram* is also abandoned.<sup>557</sup>

Elsewhere two Royal Engineers and a member of the Field Ambulance lose their lives.

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<sup>554</sup> See Middlebrook 2003

<sup>555</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2. 1630Z was 1230 local time.

<sup>556</sup> All survivors were conveyed back to San Carlos Water.

<sup>557</sup> *Galahad* was later towed out to sea and sunk; now listed as a war grave. A Hong Kong Chinese crewman, Chiu Yiu Nam, not identified until 1983, was awarded a George Medal for his bravery in saving those trapped inside. *Sir Tristram* was repairable raising questions about whether she should have been abandoned at such an early stage.

*“When the Skyhawks returned to their base and reported the success, it was decided to send out two more formations of four Skyhawks to continue the attacks in an attempt to add to the damage already caused to the British.”*<sup>558</sup>

Life in Stanley deteriorates; “... in excess of twenty-five homes have been broken into by Argentine troops, mainly during the hours of darkness. The sight for the owners next day must be sickening – excreta plastered about, remains of a fire often in the middle of the sitting-room carpet, and general dishevelled mess.”<sup>559</sup>

In London, US President Ronald Reagan addresses Parliament.

*“On distant islands in the South Atlantic young men are fighting for Britain. And, yes, voices have been raised protesting their sacrifice for lumps of rock and earth so far away. But those young men aren't fighting for mere real estate.*

*They fight for a cause -- for the belief that armed aggression must not be allowed to succeed, and the people must participate in the decisions of government -- the decisions of government under the rule of law. If there had been firmer support for that principle some 45 years ago, perhaps our generation wouldn't have suffered the bloodletting of World War II.”*

In Paris, *Le Monde* declares that President Mitterrand does not endorse the British claim to sovereignty over the Falklands and that while France agrees that international law must be upheld, Britain should negotiate with Argentina for a new status for the archipelago which would be fair for both sides.

A crude oil tanker, *Hercules*, owned by a Liberian corporation and unconnected with the conflict, is attacked and bombed by Argentine aircraft 600 nautical miles from Argentina and more than 500 from the Falklands. After failing to defuse an unexploded bomb, the vessel is scuttled by its crew. The hospital ship, *HMS Hydra*, sails from Montevideo to assist.<sup>560</sup>

Argentine Skyhawks return to Fitzroy in the evening; attacking a landing craft from *HMS Fearless* killing three Marines and two naval ratings.

*“Four aircraft of the 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group made the first attack, roaring in over the British units deployed around Fitzroy. But this area was well defended, and the units there greeted the Skyhawks with a hail of fire from every type of infantry weapon and from Rapier missile launchers. This attack caused no casualties to the British troops. The four Argentine aircraft were all damaged... Four Skyhawks of the 5<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group found a lone British landing craft in the Choiseul Sound. The first two Skyhawks attacked, and a bomb and some cannon fire all but destroyed the small craft killing six (sic) of the men on board. But a pair of Sea Harriers saw the attack and swiftly disposed of three of the four Skyhawks...”*<sup>561</sup>

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558 Middlebrook 2003

559 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.215

560 *Amerada Hess Shipping Corp v. Argentine Republic*, 830 F. 2d 421. 423 (2d Cir.1987). Decided on appeal 1989. The petitioners took their case to the US after failing to find an Argentine law firm that would represent them.

561 Middlebrook 2003

## Day 69

**June 9<sup>th</sup>** – the Madrid daily, *Ya*, quotes a statement by President Galtieri.

*“Argentina will not accept a return to the status of 1 April in the Malvinas.. but is willing to withdraw her forces at the same pace as the British, leaving a UN Administrator to govern the Islands.”*

During an interview for NBC, Margaret Thatcher is asked about the chances of a political settlement

*“We've been trying for a political negotiated settlement for 8 weeks. For 8 weeks the Argentines could have withdrawn at any time. They haven't withdrawn. It is now beyond a negotiated settlement.”*

Newspapers in Buenos Aires headline a, *“serious British setback at Fitzroy Settlement,”* and talk of, *“British losses in landing attempt.”* *La Nacion* claims that a frigate has been sunk and three other Royal Navy vessels, *“destroyed,”* and that President Galtieri is saying that Argentina; *“is prepared to continue the war for as many months and years as necessary.”*

*“... the (British) Government agreed to a request from the Task Force commanders to hold back the full details of the casualties to encourage the mistaken belief in Buenos Aires that the blow had set back the British far more than was in fact the case. The Argentines believed that future British operations had been hampered because of the loss of some heavy vehicles, supporting arms and provisions as well as many men.”* <sup>562</sup>

In Paris, President Mitterand says that although he felt solidarity with Britain; *“This war must not turn into a war of revenge. There are limits to this conflict which I fully intend to make known at the right time, ...”*

Foreign Secretary Pym instructs Ambassadors and missions around the world.

*“Please deliver as soon as possible the following message from me - Quote - I am very concerned to ensure that, once Argentine forces have been obliged to leave the Falklands, all military action by Argentina against us in the South Atlantic must stop. We want the next period to be one of rehabilitation and reconstruction and not one of continuing bitterness and hostility. I hope that this would also be the Argentine mood, and presumably they will be concerned for the return of their prisoners of war.... We do not want a situation where we have regained the Falkland Islands but Argentina refuses to give up the fighting against us. There may be a need to maintain economic measures until Argentina agrees to cease all hostilities in the South Atlantic.”*

HMS *Yarmouth* bombards the Moody Brooks area. Michael Rose, commanding 22 SAS Regiment, establishes a radio link with Argentine officers in Stanley in an attempt to persuade Menéndez to surrender. <sup>563</sup>

*“Shopped briefly at the West Store. The Bahia Paraíso is due in again shortly, to evacuate more wounded and with members of the International Red Cross on board. Argentine medical staff are buying huge quantities of new sheets, brooms and disinfectant. A great cover-up exercise is about to take place.”* <sup>564</sup>

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<sup>562</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

<sup>563</sup> *The Telegraph* June 13, 2012. Capt. Barry Hussey of the Argentine Navy agreed to speak to Rose on a daily basis.

<sup>564</sup> Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.216

## Day 70

**June 10<sup>th</sup>** – a Special Air Services (SAS) observation team near Port Howard on West Falkland are seen and fired on. They escape with the loss of one life, their commanding officer, Captain G.J. Hamilton. 4 Argentine Pucarás from Stanley airfield bomb 3 Para positions on Mount Kent.

In London, Defence Secretary John Nott makes a statement in Parliament.

*“Since I reported to the House on 26 May British forces have moved forward to positions surrounding Port Stanley and are in firm control of high ground on an arc surrounding the town. ... We are in constant contact with the International Committee of the Red Cross to see whether we can find some means whereby islanders who may be in a difficult situation in the town can, with Red Cross assistance, be brought out. The Red Cross is working with us on this. So far we had not had a satisfactory response from the Argentines. Our concern for the islanders is very great...”*<sup>565</sup>

Pope John Paul flies to Argentina,

*“The Pope is coming to Argentina in a hastily arranged trip to balance his tour of Britain, which ended eight days ago. Vatican officials have insisted that the Pope's visit will be pastoral and that he will not be playing an intermediary role between the two countries, which are fighting in the Falkland Islands. “The Holy Father will come with words of peace, faith, hope,” Msgr. Ubaldo Calabresi, the Papal Nuncio here, said in an interview. ... Vatican officials, however, say they fear that Argentina's ruling military junta might seek to portray the Pope's 32-hour visit as support for their side in the conflict over the Falklands. Underlining those fears, Foreign Minister Nicanor Costa Mendez said today that while no negotiations were in the offing, the Pope's trip “could mean a great encouragement toward an end to the aggression and the establishment of a peace that recognizes our rights.”*<sup>566</sup>

Peru supplies 10 Mirage jets to Argentina. The Vulcan bomber detained by Brazil is allowed to leave on an undertaking that it will take no further part in “warlike operations” but the missile removed from the aircraft remains in Brazil.

At the UN, de Cuéllar makes it known that he is thinking of asking the Pope to intervene with President Galtieri in an attempt to persuade the Argentines to accept his proposals. Sir Anthony Parsons dissuades him.

Representatives of the Red Cross (ICRC) finally arrive in the Falkland Islands.

*“... we came very late (to the war)... We had been impeded in our efforts to come to the Islands. At the end we could come on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June thanks to the British Army.”*<sup>567</sup>

During the night, HMS Active bombards Argentine positions on Mount Harriet, Mount William and near Moody Brook. MSA's Cordella and Pict reconnoiter Berkeley Sound; reporting that no mines have been found.

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<sup>565</sup> HC Deb 10 June 1982 vol.25 cc399-405

<sup>566</sup> The New York Times June 11, 1982

<sup>567</sup> Falklands: Red Cross clear on Argentine families' wishes of identifying remains at Darwin cemetery in Mercopress July 1, 2016. ICRC representatives had arrived off the islands a few days before, having been brought out from Uruguay on the British hospital ship Uganda, and had been allowed to visit the hospital ships from both sides.

## Day 71

**June 11<sup>th</sup>** – RAF Harriers bomb Argentine positions at Stanley airfield, Two Sisters, Mount Harriet, Mount Longdon, Mount Tumbledown and Moody Brook Barracks. Argentine positions to the west of Stanley are attacked as is the military command post inside Stanley police station.

*“A very noisy night with bombardments from all quarters...from the front porch saw huge bits of the police station roof flying about through the air with flashes, flames and lots of smoke. There was intense small-arms fire outside, the three spectacular eruptions as the Harriers bombed the Pucaras at the airport, which burned furiously and exploded... Uncle James was seen walking to work through the middle of it all.”*<sup>568</sup>

*“the most unusual action of the day was a British attempt to kill Brigadier-General Menéndez. The British believed that Menéndez held a regular morning conference in the Town Hall/Post Office building on Stanley's waterfront, and a Wessex helicopter, hovering over the high ground three miles to the north, fired two AS-12 wire-guided missiles at the building. One missile failed; the second flew on, just missing the intended target and striking the Police Station on the other side of the road.”*<sup>569</sup>

France's Foreign Ministry propose that Britain should come to an arrangement with Argentina before driving them off the Islands; arguing that relations between Europe and Latin America could be poisoned for years if Britain does not seize the right moment to begin working towards a solution.

PM Thatcher speaks to the House of Commons with regard to the British dead.

*“It is a traditional and well understood practice, and one which provides equal treatment for all, that Service men who are killed in action on land abroad are buried in the first instance quickly and with all possible reverence close to where they fall.*

*Once hostilities are over they are transferred to a permanent cemetery near to the scene of action. It has been the custom to offer the next of kin the opportunity to visit the site at public expense. Those who die at sea are buried at sea.*

*The Government believe this practice should apply to those who die in the Falklands, but we recognise that this is an extremely sensitive question and we would not wish to make a final decision until all relevant factors, including the views of next of kin, have been taken into account...”*<sup>570</sup>

In Washington, Argentine Ambassador Takacs tells US Admiral Hayward; “... that the British were misrepresenting the military situation in the Malvinas and were predicting a quick military victory. This misrepresentation had removed the pressure for continued negotiations. He wanted Admiral Hayward to have an appreciation for the true military situation in the Malvinas and hoped that the United States would do all in its power to help force a diplomatic resolution. ...”<sup>571</sup>

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<sup>568</sup> Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.223

<sup>569</sup> Middlebrook 2003. Based upon faulty intelligence, Menéndez was actually some 600 yards away in the main Argentine Command Post. A warning sent to local postal workers had not gotten through but, in the event, there were no casualties.

<sup>570</sup> HC Deb 11 June 1982 vol.25 cc168-9W

<sup>571</sup> Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330-84-0003, Argentina (June-Sept) 1982

A member of Pérez de Cuéllar's staff flies to Buenos Aires with a mission to contact the Pope in order to give him a full briefing of the Secretary-General's proposals of June 5<sup>th</sup>.

Parsons reports.

*"This is tiresome. It is naive to suggest that De Soto will not be in contact with Ros in Buenos Aires and if his mission becomes public it will arouse expectations..."*

In Lima, Peru's Foreign Minister, Dr. Arias, tells the British Ambassador that Costa Méndez had telephoned him to say that the Argentines would withdraw if, *"some suitable formula could be found."*

The Pope arrives in Buenos Aires where he is met by crowds shouting; *"Holy Father bless our just war."*

At dusk in the Falklands, British troops move towards Mount Longdon.

*"The strength of the Argentine units was between 8,500 and 9,000 men, of whom maybe 5,000 could be classed as fighting troops... There were six infantry units – five army regiments and a marine infantry battallion – to face the seven infantry units which the British would be able to bring up for the battle."* <sup>572</sup>

By 2130 local time all units are engaging Argentine troops and positions.

*"... (4 & 5) platoon were in an area vulnerable to a well-sighted (sic) Argentine position, from which they faced machine gun and sniper fire. A burst of fire killed one man of 4 Platoon and wounded six more, including the Platoon Commander. At this point Sergeant Ian McKay, taking control of 4 Platoon, determined to take out the Argentine position. He led four men, all of whom were killed or wounded, but he succeeded in knocking out the trenches supporting the machine-gun 'sangan'. Before he could attack this last position he was killed. For this brave action he was later awarded a posthumous VC."* <sup>573</sup>

Avenger, Glamorgan and Yarmouth take up positions to the south of Stanley, while HMS Arrow moves into Berkeley Sound ready for the planned midnight attack on Argentine positions around Stanley. Mount Harriet is secured with two British dead and thirteen wounded.

Argentine losses are ten killed and 53 wounded.

*"A curious atmosphere in the town, the troops are very withdrawn and quiet. Lots of military things have disappeared off the scene. John Street, which yesterday was like something out of the Western Front, was almost back to its former self. All the defences around the schools had gone. Very few of the troops have any weapons visible. The International Red Cross people are walking around the town with some senior Argentine officers. I do hope that they are not being taken in by this flagrant charade, put on for their benefit by the Argentines. They do not appear to have been allowed to make contact with many locals."* <sup>574</sup>

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572 Middlebrook 2003

573 Freedman 2005 vol.2.

574 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.225

## Day 72

**June 12<sup>th</sup>** – shortly after midnight in the Falklands, the Royal Navy pound Argentine positions while British troops move to attack Two Sisters.

*“A most awful day. James came in early this morning to tell us the terrible news that Sue Whitley and Doreen Bonner were killed during the night when shrapnel from a shell went through John and Veronica Fowler’s house, in which they were staying. Old Mrs Mary Goodwin, well into her eighties, has also been very badly injured. So has Steve Whitley (Sue’s husband)... it is impossible to think straight and form a proper picture.”<sup>575</sup>*

*“The results were impressive, marred by a stray round landing in Stanley, killing two civilians and wounding some others. A third died three nights later. ... By 0530Z (0130 local) Arrow had completed its task, and Glamorgan and Yarmouth stopped just over half an hour later. Avenger remained on the gunline.”<sup>576</sup>*

At 0237 Falklands time as HMS Glamorgan moves away a shore-based Exocet missile targets her.

*“Several difficulties were encountered in placing the launcher on a suitable flat surface. The launching ramp was fixed, therefore it couldn't aim, so it was only through the radar that they could detect an imprudent frigate passing in front of it. ... That early morning, a group of men, .. were watching the radar display. 'Come on, just two degrees more. Move. Just a little more, please!' And it happened. The ship crossed the line, and the radar operator shouted – 'Now!'. ”<sup>577</sup>*

Damaged and on fire, Glamorgan is still seaworthy and continues to move out of range.<sup>578</sup>

Two Sisters ridge is secured by 0430 and around 0630 local time, reports confirm that Mount Longdon has been taken and that elements of 3 Para are moving on towards Wireless Ridge.<sup>579</sup> Vulcan bombers attack Stanley airfield at 0450, albeit without great success.

In London, *The Times* publishes an interview with Argentina's General Galtieri:<sup>580</sup>

Fallaci: “... the islands are practically back in the hands of the British...”

Galtieri: “No, madam journalist. The Malvinas are not back in the hands of the British. The British have still to capture them, and the result of the battle which is going to take place at Puerto Argentino is not so sure as you expect. I am much more optimistic than you. However, even if Puerto Argentino should fall as you say, I should not ask myself “was it worth while,” even less would I think I had made a mistake. ... Listen to me, madam journalist, not even the fall of Puerto Argentino would be the end of this conflict and our defeat... In fact I am not alone in believing that what we did on the second of April was right. The whole Argentine people believe it. Madam journalist, for 149 years the Argentines have denounced the aggression by the

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<sup>575</sup> *Ibid.* p.228

<sup>576</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2.

<sup>577</sup> Argentine account quoted in Middlebrook 2003

<sup>578</sup> Aware that she had been targeted, the ship's crew had managed to steer her so as to present the stern to the approaching missile; reducing the damage. The first warship to survive an Exocet strike at a cost of 13 dead and 15 injured.

<sup>579</sup> Two Sisters had cost 4 British dead and 10 wounded. Argentina had 10 dead, 50 wounded and 54 captured. The toll at Mount Longdon was 18 British dead with 40 wounded. Here, more than 50 Argentine dead were recorded with another 50 taken prisoner.

<sup>580</sup> Interview by Oriana Fallaci, an Italian journalist

*British .. and for 17 years they have tried to settle the problem through diplomatic channels, through the United Nations.... The British colonisation could not last any longer."*

Fallaci: *"But why do you say colonisation? ..Whom did the British colonise in this case – the penguins?"*

Galtieri: *"They are all British because the British never permitted the Argentines to buy a piece of land there, to start a business, some kind of commerce or presence. .. The British .. kept these islands as a personal farm, and did not let any Argentine settle down."*

Fallaci: *".. you are a coloniser too, Mr. President.."*

Galtieri: *".. let's not go back that far in the past. Let's look at things as they are since the British stole the Malvinas from us. Let's observe where these islands are situated, how the under-water terrain extends itself in that area and connects with the islands. One can easily see the natural correlation existing between them and the terra firma. Not only historically, but geographically, the Malvinas belong to us..."*

Fallaci: *" But apart from that underwater terrain, what is it that appeals to you so much in those ugly islands? .."*

Galtieri: *"You should ask Mrs. Thatcher, who is dealing death to us and to her people because of these islands, and because of these islands has lost half her fleet. Go ask her."*

Fallaci: *" Now I am asking you."*

Galtieri: *"Madam journalist, its the sentiment... the sentiment of the Argentine nation since 1833."*

Fallaci: *".. should I say illusions? To begin with the illusion that Great Britain would not react.."*

Galtieri: *"No, I'll tell you that though an English reaction was considered a possibility, we did not see it as a probability. Personally I judged it scarcely possible and totally improbable. In any case, I never expected such a disproportionate answer. Nobody did. ... It seems senseless to me."*

Fallaci: *"Haig claims that the fault is yours because he did not know with whom to deal .. Even on the 502 Resolution, the one that asked the Argentines to withdraw, he claims you and your generals had different views.."*

Galtieri: *".. the 502 Resolution contained a series of consequences that we could not accept because Argentina had not shed on drop of English blood to take back the Malvinas and the British were attacking us .."*

Fallaci: *".. you said that the complete fall of the islands would not mean the end of the war..."*

Galtieri: *"... Argentina does not give up her rights on the Malvinas, on South Georgia, and on the South Sandwich Islands. It means that Argentine will never accept a return to where she was on the first of April. It means that we shall not have peace until we have obtained what we want."*

Fallaci: *" What is wrong with accepting, for example, the United Nations flag on those islands?"*

Galtieri: *".. the United Nations flag is alright until the negotiations take place. But not after. Not in the future. The future must see the Argentine flag on the Malvinas. And it will."* <sup>581</sup>

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581 Galtieri: *No regrets, No Going Back* by Oriana Fallaci June, 1982



On the Falklands, around 0800, British troops dig in on Mount Longdon, while artillery pounds Argentine positions on Mount Tumbledown.

Apparently oblivious, Argentina's postal services in Stanley issue a stamp celebrating the 153<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of Luis Vernet's *Civil and Military Command*.

In Buenos Aires, the junta announces that British forces have attacked the hospital ship *Bahia Paraiso* - a claim denied by representatives of the Red Cross who are aboard the vessel.

*"Went to Mass at 2.30. The church is a pathetic mess, with pools of mud and water on the floor; smelling dank with the sweat and fear of the troops...Harriers have been bombing continuously throughout the day, mainly on the Argentine artillery positions at the back of Davis Street and Callaghan Road. Kathy and Robert Watson's windows were all blown in just after 10 this morning... The icy roads today have caused some spectacular disasters... One lorry towing a mobile soup kitchen went through Terry Binnie's back fence, ending up in his garden, resulting in a fearful mess of fence battens, fresh vegetables and hot soup..."* <sup>582</sup>

### Day 73

**June 13<sup>th</sup>** – after midnight, *Arrow* and *Active* bombard targets at Moody Brook and Sapper Hill.

*"It is impossible to adequately to describe the noise, which is now almost constant. The air is filled with the stinging smell of cordite.... Our house, and I suppose everyone else's, shakes and shudders continuously."* <sup>583</sup>

*"The British were working furiously, bringing up ammunition and supplies for the attack they hoped to resume in the coming night. They received a nasty shock when eleven Skyhawks swept in from the mainland and nearly caught them by surprise. Some bombs narrowly missed a British headquarters near Mount Kent where a briefing of senior officers was taking place; several helicopters here were damaged, but there were no casualties."* <sup>584</sup>

At 0800 local time, Scots Guards move to positions near Mount Harriet. Gurkha Rifles move forward at midday. One of 3 Argentine aircraft attacking British ships near Port Stanley is shot down.

*"About 11.30 this morning poor old Wilfred Newman's house up on Davis Street received a direct hit and burned to the ground very quickly in a great mass of smoke and flames. The British are obviously trying to hit the Argentine 155mm that is between the houses up there."* <sup>585</sup>

In the late afternoon, British forces move towards the entrenched enemy.

*"The marines at Tumbledown were among the more effective Argentine troops and were well prepared for an assault. The defenders were on full alert. At 1600 hours, as the sun began to set and snow began to fall, the attack began."* <sup>586</sup>

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582 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.231

583 *Ibid.* p.232

584 Middlebrook 2003

585 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.234

586 Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990

*“Phase 1 of the attack on Stanley began .. It involved a night move and silent attack supported by naval gunfire engaging targets further east. Initial surprise was achieved but there was stiff fighting as final objectives were taken. All units .. are firm on high features Mt. Longdon, Two Sisters and Mt. Harriet. First, unconfirmed, casualty figures are thought to be 19 killed and 80 wounded. 300 prisoners taken, ...”*<sup>587</sup>

2 Para move towards Wireless Ridge following a bombardment by HMS *Ambuscade*, the light tanks of the Blues & Royals together with mortar fire.

*“D Company reached its first objective by 0140Z (2140 local), finding a few enemy dead. Most had withdrawn. A and B Companies began their advance, with the Argentine troops seen to be running away in front of them... The assault, when it started, still faced considerable resistance (including heavy machine gun, recoilless rifle, artillery and mortar fire) causing casualties. The enemy was withdrawing but fighting at the same time...”*<sup>588</sup>

## Day 74

**June 14<sup>th</sup>** – Scots Guards work their way up Tumbledown.

*“As each position was cleared and prisoners held the numbers of advancing troops was reduced. By the time the summit of the mountain was reached there were only seven men, and of these three, including the Platoon Commander, were immediately cut down by a burst of machine gun fire. At 0800Z (0400 local) Kiszely found himself holding Tumbledown Mountain with three other men.”*<sup>589</sup>

At 0430 local time, the 1/7 Gurkha Rifles move through the Scots Guards pushing on to Mount William, to the north of Tumbledown Mountain.

*“Sleep was impossible: shells screaming and tearing overhead, the bursts rocking the house every few seconds; deafening noise from the Argentine guns – loud twanging cracks only yards away; crashes and crumps from the British shells landing. ... By looking through the black-outs we could see the sky alight with explosions, flares and tracer. The final stage in the battle for Stanley seemed imminent.”*<sup>590</sup>

Around first light, 2 Para reach the top of Wireless Ridge.<sup>591</sup>

*“... we saw from the study window the amazing sight of hundreds of Argentine troops streaming like ants along Wireless Ridge, down through Fairy Grove towards the Camber. They were running before the British shells which were landing just behind them – almost keeping pace with them, throwing up great mounds of earth and rock... several houses seem to be on fire at the west end of town... from the BBC we heard that the International Red Cross had got a response from the Argentine Government that there was to be a designated ‘Safe Area’ for the civilian population...”*

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587 PREM19/635 Situation Report for Prime Minister as at 1200A Sun 13 Jun 82

588 Freedman 2005 vol.2.

589 *Ibid.* The cost to the Scots Guards was 8 men dead and 35 wounded. 16 Argentine dead were recorded with 45 wounded and many taken prisoner.

590 Diary entry in Smith 1984 p.237

591 British casualties amounted to 3 dead and 11 wounded. Argentine casualties were estimated at about 100 as most had fled. Only 17 prisoners were taken for the same reason.

*The Argentines could have least have let us know... the designated safe building was the cathedral, but we saw the back door of the West Store open, so stopped the Mini (van) and heaved ourselves inside... There were 126 of us in there...*”<sup>592</sup>

Two Argentine Canberras carry out a high-level bombing raid over Mount Kent but fail to hit anything.

*“The British destroyers Cardiff and Exeter, on station to the south, plotted the flights by radar and launched several Sea Dart missiles. One of the Canberras was hit by Exeter at a near extreme altitude of about 40,000 feet... The pilot of the Canberra, captain Roberto Pastrán, managed to eject and was eventually retrieved by British forces... but his navigator ... was trapped in the aircraft and presumably died when it crashed into the sea.”*<sup>593</sup>

Governor Menéndez manages to get a telephone call through to Galtieri who reminds him that the Argentine military code calls for a commander to fight until he had lost 50% of his men, and 75% of his ammunition.

*“I cannot ask more of my troops, after what they have been through ... We have not been able to hold on to the heights ... We have no room, we have no support. I had to repeat to him what our situation was, but he didn't want to understand. Tactically, it was an unsustainable war. I ended the call. I thought, "This is the end." I knew my troops couldn't give any more.”*<sup>594</sup>

Mount William is reported secure at 1300 by the Gurkha Rifles.

*“Believed to be held strongly by a Battalion of enemy which, by all accounts, faced with the panache and reputation of the Gurkhas appeared to have turned tail and fled ... So no heads were cut off with kukris or anything messy like that... The mere presence of the Gurkhas actually helped to quicken the final stages and save casualties....”*

With Argentine troops withdrawing in obvious disarray, the British bombardments and air strikes are stopped. Elements of 2 Para enter Moody Brook and the outskirts of Stanley before stopping at the racecourse. Argentine troops are seen to throw down their weapons and surrender. After a final skirmish with an Argentine position to the west of Sapper Hill around midday before a message is circulated.<sup>595</sup>

*“Check firing. Check firing. There are white flags in Stanley.”*<sup>596</sup>

Following contact with Argentine Captain Hussey, made via the medical network established on June 5<sup>th</sup>, SAS Commander Michael Rose, Royal Marines Capt. Rob Bell and a signaller fly to Stanley's sports pitch for a meeting with Governor Menéndez at 1500.

*“I told Menéndez we did not want a bloodbath in Stanley, fighting building to building, and he would not want to be known as the 'Butcher of Stanley.’”*<sup>597</sup>

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592 Diary entry in Smith 1984 pp.238-240

593 Middlebrook 2003

594 Unpublished interview with Mario Menéndez quoted in *The Telegraph* June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012

595 There is some question whether this final skirmish took place before or after a cease-fire had been called; but if so the news had not reached either the British or Argentine soldiers involved.

596 Unnamed British artillery officer quoted in Middlebrook 2003 who gives that time as between 1pm and 1.30pm. White flags were reported but these may have been raised by small groups of Argentine troops outside the town, and some of the civilians within it. No white flag could be seen flying over Stanley that could be considered as proclaiming the surrender of the military authorities there.

597 Michael Rose quoted in *The Telegraph* June 13, 2012

At 2212 in London, PM Thatcher addresses the House of Commons; *“Mr. Speaker. May I give the House the latest information about the battle of the Falklands? After successful attacks last night, General Moore decided to press forward. The Argentines retreated. Our forces reached the outskirts of Port Stanley. Large numbers of Argentine soldiers threw down their weapons. They are reported to be flying white flags over Port Stanley. Our troops have been ordered not to fire except in self-defence. Talks are now in progress between General Menendez and our Deputy Commander, Brigadier Waters, about the surrender of the Argentine forces on East and West Falkland. I shall report further to the House tomorrow.”*<sup>598</sup>

At 2100 local time, after 6 hours of negotiations, Menéndez agrees to surrender all his forces on both East and West Falkland.

*“It then became apparent that the disconnected Argentine chains of command meant that Menéndez would be unable to surrender the Navy and Air Force. Menéndez then contacted Galtieri to obtain assurances on the control of these other forces... The administrative details were then finalised. It was agreed that the formal surrender would be 'low key' with no press present.”*<sup>599</sup>

Formal surrender is made in a private, and un-photographed ceremony; attended by Argentine Governor Menéndez, Capt. Hussey and Vice-Comodoro Carlos Bloomer-Reeve for Argentina; Major General Jeremy Moore, Capt. Bell, Lieut. Col. Geoff Field, Col. Brian Pennicott, Col. Reid and Col. Tom Seccombe for the UK.

#### *Instrument of Surrender*

*I, the undersigned, Commander of all the Argentine land, sea and air forces in the Falkland Islands surrender to Major General J.J. MOORE CB OBE MC as representative of Her Britannic Majesty's Government.*

*Under the terms of this surrender all Argentine personnel in the Falkland Islands are to muster at assembly points which will be nominated by General Moore and hand over their arms, ammunition, and all other weapons and warlike equipment as directed by General Moore or appropriate British officers acting on his behalf.*

*Following the surrender all personnel of the Argentinian Forces will be treated with honour in accordance with the conditions set out in the Geneva Convention of 1949. They will obey any directions concerning movement and in connection with accommodation.*

*This surrender is to be effective from 2359 hours ZULU on 14 June (2059 hours local) and includes those Argentine Forces presently deployed in and around Port Stanley, those others on East Falkland, [Menéndez's signature] West Falkland and all outlying islands.*

*[Menéndez's signature] Commander Argentine Forces*

*[Moore's signature] J. J. MOORE Major General*

*[Pennicott's signature] Witness*

*2359 hours 14 June 1982*

At the moment of signing Menéndez strikes out the word “*unconditionally*” in the first paragraph between “*Islands*” and “*surrender.*”<sup>600</sup>

<sup>598</sup> *HC Deb 14 June 1982 vol.25 cc700-2*

<sup>599</sup> Freedman 2005 vol.2

<sup>600</sup> Freedman (2005 vol.2) implies that it was actually General Moore who struck out these words as they may have been sufficient to prevent Menéndez from signing; resulting in a battle for the town that would have endangered civilians.

In a telex message to the Commander-in-Chief Fleet, General Moore reports: *"In Port Stanley at 9pm Falkland Island time tonight, 14<sup>th</sup> June 1982, Major General Menéndez surrendered to me all the Argentine Armed Forces in East and West Falkland, together with their impedimenta. Arrangements are in hand to assemble the men for return to Argentina, to gather in their arms and equipment, and to mark and make safe their ammunition.*

*"The Falkland Islands are once more under the Government desired by their inhabitants.  
God Save the Queen."*

In New York, Sir Anthony Parsons informs Pérez de Cuéllar.

*"I saw the Secretary-General .. we have told the press that the meeting took place at my initiative: and I wished to inform the Secretary-General of the statement which the Prime Minister had made shortly beforehand in the House of Commons.... We have said nothing to encourage the speculation about a future role for the United Nations..."*

Argentina tells the UN that; *"... the United Kingdom had broken its defences in a pre-dawn attack with the aid of high-technology weapons, including infra-red equipment for night viewing, portable missile-launchers and laser aiming systems; that consequently the Malvinas had been transformed into a test site for these weapons, many of which were unknown even on the international arms market;.."*

Messages of congratulation pour in from foreign nations. Television footage shows Margaret Thatcher shaking hands with members of the public among a cheering crowd in Whitehall. <sup>601</sup>

Official casualty figures show that 649 Argentine<sup>602</sup>, 255 British military personnel and 3 civilians died during the 74 days. 1,188 Argentines and 777 British are recorded as non-fatal casualties.

Argentine troops on the Falkland islands had surrendered, but not Argentina. The surrender did not include Argentine naval forces or its air-force stationed on the mainland. Two questions immediately arose, firstly would Argentina continue the battle from South America and secondly, what was Britain going to do with a large number of prisoners of war?

**Paper 13** deals with the immediate aftermath both on the ground and diplomatically. Also reconstruction and the UK's new-found responsibility for its distant colony.



**Bibliography** <https://falklandstimeline.files.wordpress.com/2019/04/bibliography-1.pdf>

<sup>601</sup> *Falklands anniversary: Baroness Thatcher's sympathy for Argentine mothers. The Telegraph* June 14, 2012

<sup>602</sup> This is disputed. According to Argentina's Ministry of Defence records, the number is 651. See *Malvinas, los muertos que (no) tenemos* Alejandra Diaz Biglia 2015.