

75. Talking Points Prepared in the Department of State¹

Washington, undated

NSPG MEETING
8:30 a.m., April 7, 1982

U.K. POLITICAL SITUATION

- Brits in warlike mood—high strung, unpredictable.
- Thatcher could fall if no diplomatic solution or military rout.
- Could also fall if U.S. seen as turning our back.
- Labor opposition no friend of ours on security issues—challenging Thatcher on Falklands.
- Thatcher turning to MOD for advice. Nott safe for now. I have been in contact with Francis Pym—new Foreign Secretary.²

POLITICAL SITUATION IN ARGENTINA

- Galtieri under pressure because of economy and other reasons.
- Falklands recovery popular. Regime stakes its future on no return to status quo.
- Second thoughts now—but nationalism and war spirit will mount as Brits move closer.
- Galtieri a gambler—but probably will make major concessions.

MILITARY CAPABILITIES

- U.K. Navy could hurt Argentines and possibly retake some territory.
- But recovery of main island difficult.
- U.K. best option to block maritime commerce to Argentina.
- U.K. options in ascending order of difficulty:
 1. Initial submarine attack.
 2. Retake South Georgia.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Haig Papers, Department of State, Day File, April 7, 1982 Falklands. Secret; Nodis. Initialed by McManaway. A slightly different, undated version of the talking points, drafted by Enders, Service, and Pendleton is in the Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Alexander M. Haig, Jr., 1981–1982, Lot 82D370, No folder. Another set of talking points summarizing the diplomatic and political situation in Argentina and in the United Kingdom, which were prepared by the CIA for the meeting and distributed to the Department of Defense where they were seen by Weinberger on April 7, are in the Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330–84–0003, Argentina (Jan–15 May) 1982.

² See footnote 4, Document 74.

3. Air/Naval blockade Falklands.
 4. Retake Falklands.
 5. Attacks on Argentina mainland.
- U.K. probably wants big sea battle to give Thatcher a “victory.”
 - But Argentines can pull major ships to port.³
 - Other factors: U.K. civilians on Falklands, approach of winter.

YESTERDAY'S CONTACTS

- Argentines looking for way out.
- I told them I would not engage if they insist us recognizing their sovereignty.⁴
 - Costa Mendez invited me to Buenos Aires.⁵
 - Argentina may consider withdrawal of military from Islands—but wants to leave administrative personnel on Islands.⁶
 - Argentines need to show all not in vain—we need to leave them their pride or they will self-destruct.
 - British tougher. Pym and Henderson emphasize war fever and impossible to negotiate while Argentina occupies Islands.
 - Less insistent on need to restore status quo ante.⁷
 - British have momentum—not sure how far to go.
 - I put them on guard by suggesting I go to London first.
 - U.K. and Argentina see role for us in the Islands but not for others. We would rather spread the burden around.

PROPOSAL TO U.K. AND ARGENTINA

1. All military on islands withdrawn within short, agreed period.
2. No additional military force introduced within 200 miles of Islands.
3. Consortium (U.S., Canada, two Latin American countries) introduce small military and police force into Islands. This force in place by time withdrawal completed.
4. Consortium assumes responsibility for local administration on interim basis. British and Argentine administrators of the Islands attached to consortium.

³ At the end of this point, Haig wrote: “And they are doing so!”

⁴ Haig underlined “us recognizing their sovereignty” and wrote “!” in the right-hand margin next to this point. For Haig’s April 6 conversation with Costa Mendez, see Document 73.

⁵ See footnote 3, Document 73.

⁶ Haig underlined “administrative personnel.”

⁷ Haig underlined “less insistent.”

5. 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. Consortium to help with negotiations and application of settlement.

NEXT STEPS

- U.K. has initiative. Must stop their fleet. We should ask them to show first card.
- Question for Brits: If Argentines evacuate and there is an interim administration involving us, plus agreed negotiating scenario, will you hold up your fleet?
- Argentina more negotiable if there is a little running room in Britain.
- Need President's authority to say, when talk gets tough in London, that we can't support a military solution if a reasonable political solution is available.
- If this goes at all, may take two bites with each party.
- If we fail, our interests suffer. But no loss of prestige for having tried for peaceful solution.
- We must move quickly while there is uncertainty on both sides and each is having second thoughts. As the U.K. fleet proceeds, war fever on both sides mounts.