

Prime Minister

Duty Clerk

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

ppp  
McColes  
18/4

London S.W.1



18 April 1982

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

Dear John,

FALKLAND ISLANDS

As you know, the latest message from Mr Haig to Mr Pym concludes by saying: 'If I suspend my mission tomorrow morning I will leave no doubt where lies responsibility for the impasse'. Mr Pym was concerned that such a statement would be seen as a final breakdown of Mr Haig's efforts and provide the starting signal for other less desirable initiatives. Given the sense of the meeting last night that Mr Haig's mission was the most favourable negotiating mechanism from our point of view, and that we would want to stay very close to the Americans in deciding how to play the hand if these efforts were to fail, Mr Pym sent off the enclosed reply which will we hope persuade Mr Haig that, however unsuccessful his current round of talks in Buenos Aires may turn out to be, he should not immediately declare that the process has broken down.

The form of words we have suggested that Mr Haig might use will, however, provide us at best with a short breathing space; and the prospect of the Security Council being called into play, either by Panama acting on behalf of Argentina or by the do-gooders, remains a very real one. It also remains very probable that the result of such an initiative would be to confront us with a resolution which we would have to veto in order to preserve our freedom to use force in self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter if necessary. Mr Pym continues to feel that such an outcome would not only lose us much of our present strong position in the United Nations, but also would have more tangible harmful effects in the world outside. In particular, it would make it much harder for us to maintain the support of countries which are providing assistance to the Royal Navy and those which have taken economic measures against Argentina.

Mr Pym continues to see potential attractions in an alternative approach. This would be to see whether we could devise a draft resolution to put forward ourselves, once there had been an announcement of the failure of Mr Haig's mission. The idea would /be





be to table a resolution which would either produce an outcome to the present crisis which would be acceptable to the UK or would leave us in a better position politically, and with our Allies and friends, for subsequent military action.

Following discussion last night, we have therefore been giving more thought, on a contingency basis, to the terms of a draft resolution for use if we were faced with the need to pre-empt more damaging action in the Security Council. I enclose a revised text. There might be just a chance that Argentina, in the greater atmosphere of crisis following Mr Haig's failure and faced by American economic measures, could be brought to accept a resolution on these lines. If so, the UK would have secured withdrawal and (if this happened before further hostilities) would have done so without any British or Falkland casualties. We would also have ensured that the wishes of the islanders would be taken into account in the future, since we would of course be guided by those wishes in the negotiations foreseen in paragraph 6 of the resolution. We would also have secured the administration of the Islands in the interim period by the islanders themselves, with very limited UN supervision. Since the islanders are British, this could fairly be presented as the restoration of essentially British administration. Argentina, by contrast, would have secured virtually nothing by means of her aggression and the British policy of military, diplomatic and economic pressure would be seen to have produced results.

If, on the other hand, the British resolution did not pass, for instance because of a Soviet veto, we would be in a much better position to retain the practical support of our friends. We would also be seen by the world at large to have tried everything possible to get a peaceful solution and thus would be able even more easily to justify military action as a last resort.

The main amendments for the text discussed yesterday are:

- (a) Operative paragraph 1 brings out the need for Argentina to start withdrawing immediately as well as completing withdrawal by a given date. (Islas Malvinas is the Argentine description for the Falklands, thus not including the dependencies).
- (b) Operative paragraph 2 has been extended and divided into two paragraphs. The present paragraph 2 makes clear that the UK would only suspend the enforcement of the Maritime Exclusion Zone to the extent (which we would determine) that this was necessary to enable  
/Argentina





Argentina to withdraw from the Falklands. The new paragraph 3 makes clear that we would halt our Task Force outside the MEZ only if Argentina were withdrawing; and that the Zone would actually be rescinded only if Argentina withdrew completely.

- (c) In operative paragraph 5 the UN official is now described as an 'Interim Commissioner'. His functions have also been changed. He would not now administer the Islands or even supervise administration in any general way. His supervisory function would be confined to ensuring demilitarisation.
- (d) Since the success of an operation in the United Nations would depend partly on our ability to resist amendments, there would be advantage in seeking, in our draft resolution, to pre-empt those amendments which others are most likely to propose. We think that an amendment concerning the Falkland Islands dependencies would be extremely likely. We have therefore introduced a mention of the dependencies into operative paragraph 6. It concerns only the scope of future negotiations and not the measures taken to deal with the present crisis. As the Prime Minister is aware, another obvious amendment to expect is a call for future negotiations to be based on past United Nations resolutions, notably those most unacceptable to us. We therefore continue to believe that the best tactic would be to include a reference to 'bearing in mind relevant General Assembly resolutions' at the end of operative paragraph 6.

We have left in the figure of three years for the duration of the interim period. We think, however, that a shorter period would be more likely to attract support in the United Nations. It could open the possibility of restoration of complete British administration sooner than would be possible under the present draft resolution.

I also undertook to confirm the position on amendments to resolutions. It would indeed be open to other members of the Security Council to put forward amendments to any British draft resolution. But we could resist them and would hope to be able to persuade enough members of the Council to vote against or abstain on such amendments to ensure that they failed to get the necessary numbers of positive votes. Even if we were unsuccessful in this, we would use our veto to defeat amendments and thus ensure that the Security Council ended up by voting on

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a draft resolution satisfactory to us.

The Prime Minister yesterday evening was concerned that arrangements on these lines would not secure the Falklands from a further Argentine invasion in future. The demilitarisation of the Islands by the United Nations and the presence of a UN Interim Commissioner would make future invasion politically more difficult for Argentina. But we would need much more effective guarantees than that. The arrangement discussed above would be compatible with an American undertaking to ensure that the demilitarisation of the Islands was respected. A separate American declaration to this effect would be a powerful deterrent to Argentine ambitions and would enable British Ministers in Parliament to answer effectively the question of how we could be confident that further invasions would not occur.

I am copying this letter and its enclosures to David Omand (MOD), John Halliday (Home Office), David Wright (Cabinet Office) and the Private Secretary to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Perhaps this matter could be looked at in OD(SA) on 19 April unless circumstances this evening suggest that an earlier meeting is necessary.

We are meanwhile sending the text of the draft resolution to Sir A Parsons in New York on a personal basis, making clear that this is only a tentative draft which Ministers may not wish to take further, but on which his comments would be welcome.

*Yours ever*

*John Holmes*

*for*

B J P Fall  
Private Secretary



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Pym', located in the upper right corner of the page.

MESSAGE FROM MR PYM TO SECRETARY HAIG : 18 APRIL 1982

Thank you very much for your message this morning about your talks in Buenos Aires. You are clearly making super-human efforts to achieve a reasonable result. We in London are most grateful. Success would be a tremendous achievement and we very much hope that you can bring the Argentines to see reason.

If, most regrettably, you were to conclude that you could not continue your mission for the time being, we should need a little time to consider what to do next. If you announced a decision to suspend your efforts before we had decided with you on next steps, the diplomatic initiative might pass to others. We should therefore be most grateful to know your intentions in good time before any announcement. One way of holding the position might be for you to say on leaving Buenos Aires that the Argentines had not tried seriously to negotiate a reasonable outcome and that you would be reporting on the situation to the President and discussing further steps with him.



## POSSIBLE DRAFT SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION

The Security Council

Reaffirming its Resolution 502(1982),

Deeply disturbed about the failure so far to implement this Resolution,

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter,

1. Calls on Argentina to begin forthwith the withdrawal of all Argentine forces and administration from the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas) and to complete it by (0400) Greenwich Mean Time on (26 April 1982).
2. Takes note of the readiness of the United Kingdom, on the acceptance of this Resolution by Argentina, temporarily to suspend the enforcement of the Maritime Exclusion Zone it has declared around the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas), to the extent necessary to permit the implementation by Argentina of operative paragraph 1 of this Resolution.
3. Further takes note of the readiness of the United Kingdom, once it has been confirmed that the implementation of operative paragraph 1 of this Resolution has begun and for as long as the process of implementation continues, not to permit the task force it has despatched to the area of the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas) to enter the Maritime Exclusion Zone; and to rescind its declaration of the Maritime Exclusion Zone as soon as the implementation of operative paragraph 1 has been completed.
4. Decides that, upon the implementation of the foregoing paragraphs, the Falkland Islands shall be demilitarised pending the outcome of the negotiations referred to in operative paragraph 6 below.



5. Decides further that for an interim period not exceeding three years from (26 April 1982) the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands shall administer their own affairs and that a United Nations Interim Commissioner shall be appointed immediately whose functions shall be:

- a. confirming the implementation of operative paragraphs 1-3 above;
- b. ensuring the implementation of operative paragraph 4 above;
- c. supervising the administration of the Falkland Islands to the extent that is required in order to discharge the function in the previous sub-paragraph.

No

6. Urges the governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom, with the assistance of a Special Representative to be appointed by the Secretary General, to seek a diplomatic solution to their differences regarding the Falkland Islands and Dependencies during the interim period referred to above, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations [and bearing in mind relevant General Assembly Resolutions.]

7. Requests the Secretary General to submit to the Council proposals for the implementation of paragraphs 4 and 5 within 24 hours.

8. Decides to remain seized of the question.