

## 175. Message From British Foreign Secretary Pym to Secretary of State Haig<sup>1</sup>

London, April 26, 1982

1. Our repossession of South Georgia<sup>2</sup> 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.

2. We may now be able to turn the OAS meeting this afternoon<sup>3</sup> to our advantage. But this requires a simpler approach. 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

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Executive Secretariat, S/S Special Handling Restrictions Memos 1979–1983, Lot 96D262, ES Sensitive April 24–26 1982. Secret. Henderson transmitted the message to Haig under an April 26 covering note. On the covering note, Bremer wrote: “received in S 10:15 a.m. 4/26/82.” Below this note, Bremer added: “The Secretary discussed the message by telephone with Mr. Pym 4/26/82.” That same day, Bremer forwarded both the message and Henderson’s covering note to Clark under a covering memorandum in which he noted that Haig had spoken to Clark about Pym’s message that morning, adding: “As he [Haig] noted, the proposal has severe disadvantages in our analysis, which the Secretary has already provided to Mr. Pym. Should the Prime Minister call the President about the proposal, it is our recommendation that the President give her no encouragement to pursue this proposal.” “In light of the above,” Bremer concluded, “the Secretary asks that even knowledge of this message be severely restricted.” (Ibid.) No other records of Haig’s telephone conversations with Pym or Clark have been found.

<sup>2</sup> See Document 174. The Argentine garrison on South Georgia surrendered to British forces on April 26.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 176.

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.

3. 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. But it might be advantageous to get someone else to take the initiative. We have had some indication that President Lopez Portillo would like to be helpful; thus perhaps the Mexicans can be invited to put the proposal with your and our agreement to the meeting of the OAS later today. The Mexicans might even be prepared to provide the venue for the conference.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Pym sent a follow-up message to Haig on April 26: "I have now discussed with the Prime Minister what you told me about the idea I put to you in my last message. We both accept that you are the best judge of whether such a proposal will run. We therefore accept that there is no chance of its acceptance at present. We are therefore content that you should put the latest set of proposals worked out in Washington to the Argentines on the basis suggested by the Prime Minister in her message to you of 24 April." (Message from Pym to Haig, April 26; Department of State, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Miscellaneous Files, March 1981–February 1983, Lot 83D210, Falklands [Folder 1])