

182. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Argentina¹

Washington, April 27, 1982, 2032Z

113054. For the Ambassador from the Secretary. Subject: Exclusion Zone Warning.

1. Please pass the following personal message from me to President Galtieri:

Begin text: During the present critical period as we make a final search for a peaceful solution to the current British-Argentine dispute, it is important that both sides avoid any incidents in the maritime exclusion zone. I am therefore asking both parties to exercise restraint with regard to the exclusion zone for the time being. I do not ask for nor expect a response from either side to this suggestion. End text.

2. In delivering this message, please pass on orally that I do not know if the British will accede to this request and would not want the President to assume that Argentine forces can operate safely in the exclusion zone.²

Haig

¹ Source: Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 04/27/1982. Secret; Flash; Nodis. Gompert sent a draft of the telegram to Haig for his approval under an April 27 covering note, stating: "The British DCM just called to say that they understood how you wanted to proceed with regard to warning Galtieri about the exclusion zone. He asked again why it was important to say that both sides had been requested to exercise restraint, to which I responded that it was your judgment that this was the best way to produce the desired result. The DCM said that they understood how we would handle this but wanted to be sure that we understood that British forces would continue to operate under their current guidelines. In light of this, I believe we can go ahead with the attached message from you to Galtieri." Haig's stamped initials appear on the covering note, indicating that he saw it. Gompert added a handwritten note: "Sec approved going ahead." (Department of State, Executive Secretariat, Files of Alexander M. Haig, Jr., 1981-1982, Lot 82D370, (2) Falklands Crisis-1982)

² On April 28, the British Government announced that from 11:00 GMT (1100Z) on April 30, a "Total Exclusion Zone will be established round the Falkland Islands," the outer limit of which corresponded to the Maritime Exclusion Zone established on April 12. "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 operation. Any ship and any aircraft whether military or civil which is found in this Zone without due authority from the Ministry of Defence in London will therefore be regarded as hostile and 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." (Freedman, *Official History*, vol. II, pp. 257-258)