

191. Letter From Secretary of State Haig to British Foreign Secretary Pym¹

Washington, April 29, 1982

Dear Francis:

I refer to your letter of April 29² which Nicko delivered to me.

I now also have a letter from Nicanor Costa Mendez.³ He states the US proposal does not meet Argentina's minimum requirements on the issues of ultimate recognition of Argentine sovereignty and provisional administration of the Islands.

I am writing Costa Mendez that it is clear that Argentina has rejected the US proposal.⁴

We have taken note of your statement that the British Cabinet has fundamental reservations about the US proposal. At the same time we believe your decision not to reject it reflects the good faith which you and the Prime Minister have shown since we began our efforts.

Nicko has already informed you that because of the President's address to the nation this evening,⁵ it will not be possible for us to make a public announcement of the US position before Friday.⁶ Meanwhile, there are certain actions we must take within our own government before that time. Because of this requirement, it would gravely jeopardize our efforts in support of the United Kingdom if there should be any premature disclosures of this intention. Therefore, I know we can count on you to order an absolute lid in London on any comments.

The thrust of our statement will be that Argentina declined a fair American peace proposal and continues to make demands that cannot be accepted. We do not intend to release the text of our proposal because of the difficulty that might cause you. But, we will describe it in general terms and state that your government has acted in good faith throughout our effort.

¹ Source: Department of State, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Miscellaneous Files, March 1981–February 1983, Lot 83D210, Falklands [Folder 1]. Secret; Nodis. A typewritten notation at the top of the letter indicates that the original was given to the British Embassy by Eagleburger at 9 p.m., April 29.

² See footnote 2, Document 188.

³ See Document 189.

⁴ See Document 192.

⁵ On April 29, Reagan addressed the nation on the Federal Budget for Fiscal Year 1983. For the text of the address, which was broadcast on radio and television, see *Public Papers: Reagan, 1982*, Book I, pp. 532–535.

⁶ April 30.

We will, of course, continue to support you in the OAS and in the UN and will be prepared to veto in the Security Council or vote against in the General Assembly any resolutions which in our judgment depart from Security Council Resolution 502.

We also plan to announce the following steps in support of the United Kingdom:

- suspension of all military exports to Argentina;
- withholding of certification of Argentine eligibility for military sales;
- suspension of new Export-Import Bank credits and guarantees;
- suspension of Commodity Credit Corporation loans.

Finally, we will announce that the President has directed that the United States will respond positively to requests for materiel support for British forces.

We have shared all along the profound hope that we could find a basis for peace, consistent with the principles of international law and order for which our two nations stand. I know you are as disappointed as we, and that we will continue to work together toward a peaceful solution. We stand ready to assist in whatever way we can.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Haig, Jr.⁷

⁷ Haig signed the letter "Al" above his typed signature.