



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

14 May 1982

Prime Minister

Agree to message at

Ray F ?

A.J.C. 17.  
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Dear John,

Yes ✓

Thank you for your letter of 7 May enclosing a copy of a telegram to the Prime Minister from the Chairman of the British Community Council in Argentina.

//  
/ This follows an earlier telegram from Mr Murchison to the Prime Minister, to which the Prime Minister replied on 13 April. I enclose copies of this exchange.

I enclose a further draft reply from the Prime Minister. This, like the earlier reply to Mr Murchison, should be telegraphed to the British Interests Section in Buenos Aires for them to pass on.

Yours ever

J E Holmes

(J E Holmes)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing Street

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FM FCO 131500Z APR 1982

TO IMMEDIATE BRITISH INTERESTS SECTION, BUENOS AIRES  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 9 OF 13 APRIL

1. MR G T MURCHISON, CHAIRMAN, BRITISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
IN THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC, HAS SENT THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM  
TO THE PRIME MINISTER:-

BEGINS

DEAR PRIME MINISTER: ON BEHALF OF THE BRITISH COMMUNITY  
COUNCIL, WHICH CENTRALISES THE CULTURAL, PHILANTHROPIC AND  
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES OF NATIVE BORN BRITONS AND PEOPLES OF  
BRITISH DESCENT LIVING IN ARGENTINA, WHO NUMBER IN EXCESS OF  
100,000 PEOPLE, WE RESPECTFULLY WISH TO POINT OUT THAT WE DO  
NOT FEEL THAT OUR SITUATION HAS BEEN FULLY CONSIDERED OR TAKEN  
INTO ACCOUNT IN THE DIFFICULT PROBLEM WHICH HAS ARISEN BETWEEN  
ARGENTINA AND GREAT BRITAIN. ARGENTINA HAS ALWAYS SHOWN EVERY  
CONSIDERATION TOWARDS THE BRITISH COMMUNITY ALLOWING IT TO RUN  
ITS OWN SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, HOSPITALS, OLD PEOPLE'S HOMES ETC.  
IN ADDITION MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH COMMUNITY HAVE INTERGRATED  
THEMSELVES INTO ALL ASPECTS OF ARGENTINE LIFE, PLAYING A  
PROMINENT ROLE ESPECIALLY IN BUSINESS AND AGRICULTURAL CIRCLES.  
IN SPITE OF THE DIFFICULT MOMENTS WE ARE LIVING THROUGH, THE  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC HAS CONTINUED TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE  
COMMUNITY AND ITS INSTITUTIONS WILL BE SAFEGUARDED AND NO  
ANIMOSITY HAS BEEN SHOWN TOWARDS THE COMMUNITY BY THE POPULATION  
AS A WHOLE. WE THEREFORE STRONGLY URGE YOU TO SEEK A PEACEFUL  
SOLUTION TO THIS SITUATION AND GIVE DUE CONSIDERATION TO THE  
STRONG BRITISH PRESENCE IN ARGENTINA AND THE SIZE OF THE COM-  
MUNITY LIVING HERE. WE PRAY THAT THE LORD WILL GUIDE YOU IN  
THESE DIFFICULT TIMES AND BLESS YOU AS A PEACEMAKER.

G T MURCHISON CHAIRMAN BRITISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL IN THE  
ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

ENDS

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FCO

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CABINET OFFICE

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FAIRLAND ISLANDS

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TREASURY

MR FULLER SAPU CABINET OFFICE

MISS DICKSON (EIP DIVN) D/ENERGY

Dear Mr Murchison,

Thank you for your telegram about the British Community in Argentina.

I recognise the consideration which Argentine governments have shown to the British community in Argentina, who have - I know - contributed much to the prosperity and development of that country. We have long valued our relations with Argentina.

You will understand, however, that there can be no question of our failing to respond to the unprovoked aggression by the Argentine Government in its invasion of the Falkland Islands and their dependencies, and its attempt to settle by force the long-standing dispute between us.

The Argentine action has been condemned by the UN Security Council, which has passed by an overwhelming majority a mandatory resolution calling on Argentina to withdraw, as well as by very many other governments around the world. It is our earnest hope that the Argentine Government will heed this call and withdraw its forces.

The British Government seeks a peaceful solution and will pursue all possible means of securing one. But there must be no doubt of our determination to re-assert British administration over the Falkland Islands.

I realise with deep regret that this situation may cause anxieties for British people living in Argentina. That is why we have been advising people to consider leaving the country by normal commercial means. It is, of course, for individuals to decide how to respond to this advice.

I earnestly believe that only firmness and resolution will contribute to the maintenance of the rule of law and the preservation of peace both in the South Atlantic and in the wider world.

With best wishes.

Margaret Thatcher."

DRAFT: ~~minute~~/letter/tele~~letter~~/despatch/~~note~~  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:  
Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT: TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Mr G T Murchison  
Chairman  
British Community Council  
ARGENTINA

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

Thank you for your telegram of 6 May about the  
Falkland Islands.

CAVEAT.....

We have worked tirelessly for a satisfactory  
peaceful settlement. It remains our objective.

I recognise your concern at the escalation of  
events in the South Atlantic in recent days. However,  
the basic cause remains Argentina's refusal to withdraw  
her forces from the Falkland Islands as she was required  
to do by Security Council Resolution No 502. Nor must  
we forget who first took to arms.

I am glad that the Argentine authorities and  
public are to date behaving correctly towards the  
British Community in Argentina. Indeed I should have  
been dismayed if that were not the case. ~~Similarly you~~  
~~can rest assured that~~ Every respect is being shown to the  
people of Argentine nationality resident in this country.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

/You say

You say that there is a growing feeling of indignation in Argentina. You should however recognise that there is also considerable indignation in Britain that Argentina should persist in defying the resolution of the Security Council, and in attempting to enforce Argentine rule on the Falkland Islanders. This action is in total disregard of the principles of international law and democracy which, as you know, we in Britain regard as vital.

It is in the wider interests of order and justice in the world, and to the benefit of all nations, that Argentina's aggression against the Falkland Islands should not be allowed to succeed.

MAY 1982

MINISTRY OF  
DEFENCE