



hite
CCPC ✓ JH

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

8 August 1984

Relations with Argentina

Thank you for your letter of 7 August about relations with Argentina. The Prime Minister has noted the round-up of reactions to the Foreign Secretary's message which your letter contained.

David Barclay

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

JH



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister ⁽²⁾
To note.

7 August 1984

Dear David,

DWB
7/8

M

Relations with Argentina

Charles Powell asked us for a round-up of reactions to the message from the Foreign Secretary to other Foreign Ministers following the breakdown of the talks with the Argentines in Berne on 18-19 July.

Sir Geoffrey Howe's message was sent on 23 July to 57 posts, principally to countries which voted with us or abstained on the resolution on the Falkland Islands at the UN General Assembly in November 1983, and to our Mission in New York for the UN Secretary General. Similar messages had already been sent to Mr Shultz and to EC Foreign Ministers almost immediately after the talks ended: Shultz was due to see the Argentine Foreign Minister on 23 July and Cheysson was preparing to visit Argentina from 26 July.

Sir Geoffrey Howe received a written reply from Mr Shultz on 1 August: a copy is enclosed. This is not entirely satisfactory: it fails to acknowledge Argentina's responsibility for the breakdown. Shultz also allows to pass unchallenged the Argentine Foreign Minister's professed desire for "any form of dialogue". This is disingenuous, to say the least.

Reactions from some of our European partners, particularly the French and Italians, also give some cause for concern. While in Buenos Aires M. Cheysson reiterated that France had never supported British sovereignty over the Islands - although he stopped short of saying that France recognised Argentina's claim. The Italians now claim that it will be impossible to maintain the EC position of 1983 (when all our partners finally abstained), not least because we are now dealing with an elected Argentine Government. This reaction was predictable, but no more welcome for that, and confirms that we must expect further difficulties with our EC partners at this year United Nations General Assembly debate on the Falklands.

We have had substantive reports from around half of the posts instructed to hand over the message. Reaction from most governments has ranged from neutral to favourable,

/although



although few have gone beyond gratitude for being kept informed, together with an acknowledgement of the efforts we made to set the process of normalisation in motion. Some Non-Aligned governments, such as the Trinidadians and Senegalese, accepted that the Argentine demands for linkage over sovereignty made it impossible for us to continue the talks, and voiced continued support for the principle of self-determination for the Falkland Islanders despite pressures to change course.

One of the clearest messages to come out of these exchanges is that we must expect further difficulties with our EC partners and others at this year's UN General Assembly Debate on the Falklands. We shall be considering how best to deal with this problem over the summer break and will then write to you again. But it would clearly be helpful for the Swiss to honour the commitments they made before the Berne talks, and to Sir Antony Acland last week, and leave other governments in no doubt that the responsibility for the breakdown of the talks rests squarely with the Argentines. I have written to you separately about this in the context of the Prime Minister's meeting with M. Aubert in Switzerland.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

David Barclay Esq
10 Downing Street

August 1, 1984

Dear Sir Geoffrey:

Thank you for your timely letter of July 20 on the British/Argentine discussions on the Falkland Islands. I was very disappointed at the outcome of those talks because I am convinced that direct contacts are the best way to reduce tensions and ultimately to normalize relations.

As always, your assessment of the discussions was valuable and served as useful background for my discussions with Foreign Minister Caputo on July 23. The tone of our conversation on this matter was straightforward and unemotional. He reiterated his government's firm commitment to peaceful negotiations to resolve differences. While acknowledging that the unfortunate outcome of the Bern meetings represented a setback in terms of better relations between the two governments, he stressed his objective of resuming an informal dialogue. He stated that the GOA is disposed to any form of dialogue that would advance the prospects of a permanent solution and improve relations. That presentation was made in a reassuringly non-polemical tone. I expressed to him my regret at the outcome of the discussions.

Given the talent and commitment on both sides, I am optimistic that between you, you will find a mutually acceptable way to reestablish direct contacts aimed at resolving outstanding differences.

Sincerely,

/S/

George