1972 – January 8th, Argentina's state-owned airline, LADE, initiates twice-monthly amphibious flights between Comodoro Rivadavia and the Falkland Islands.³

In London, a briefing note is prepared by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

“At present the Islands are something of a liability to Britain; they no longer have a strategic value and they are difficult and expensive to defend, while remaining a constant source of friction in relations with Argentina and with Latin America as a whole.”⁴

January 26th, Viscount Eccles speaks during a House of Lords debate on Latin America.

“Your Lordships will be glad to know that our political relations with the countries of Latin America are generally most cordial and there are remarkably few points of difference. ... in full consultation with the Islanders, and without prejudice to the question of sovereignty, the Argentine Government and ourselves have made arrangements for modern communications between the Islands, Argentina and the world
beyond, both by air and sea. These arrangements when completed will make a material contribution to
the welfare of the Island community. ... Now we are looking forward to a third round to be held in
Stanley and we very much hope that holding the talks there will contribute to the process of greater
mutual understanding between the inhabitants of the Islands and their Argentine neighbours.”

In early May, Argentina offers to construct a temporary air strip near Stanley; to replace the sea-plane service.
The steel mesh strip is to be provided by Britain at a cost of $1 million, while Buenos Aires provides the
workforce and construction equipment. After initial opposition from the Islanders an agreement is reached.

May 14th, an Argentine transport ship, Cabo San Gonzalo, sails from Buenos Aires with 40 workmen and
technicians. A local correspondent for the Financial Times watches them sail.

“The Argentines have finally established a beach-head on the Falklands.”

From Stanley, Governor Lewis proposes a permanent airport to eventually replace the temporary one to be built
by Argentina. He applies to London for a grant of £1615 million.

“Whitehall now experienced a severe bout of interdepartmental warfare. ... Approval was finally given for the
project to go out to tender, but only for a short runway.”

The European Space Research tracking station on East Falkland Island ceases operations.

In July, the Falkland Islands Company (FIC) is acquired by Dundee, Perth and London Securities Ltd. The new
owners grant the Falkland Islanders' Sheep Owners Association a right of first refusal should they decide to sell.
The Falklands Islands' Emergency Committee founded in 1968 is re-designated the United Kingdom Falkland
Islands Committee at the Islanders' request; “To assist the people of the Falkland Islands to decide their own
future for themselves without being subject to pressure direct or indirect from any quarter.”

September 27th, Argentina speaks to the General Assembly.

“.. In order to encourage ties between the Islands and the mainland and as a result of instruments
approved by both countries, efforts have been made to allow communications, to increase mutual
knowledge and to benefit the population of the Malvinas. Despite these practical steps of undisputed
importance, there still are differences outstanding between the two Governments regarding the
circumstances that should exist for a final solution to be arrived at over the question of sovereignty.
Further talks on the matter are to be held and we trust that they will be fruitful. The result can, in any
case, be none other than the return of the Malvinas Islands to the Argentine territorial heritage”

October 23rd, the UK, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General, responds that; “... the efforts of our two
Governments to solve our differences should be pursued in a climate of mutual understanding ...”

November 9th, tenders for the construction of a permanent airfield are received by the Government.

November 16th, the temporary Falklands air strip comes into operation with a weekly air service.

“As the temporary airstrip was down, the Overseas Development Agency, with far more pressing claims on its
tight budget, began to wonder what possible reason there was for a permanent airport...”

“Despite the good impression created by the Argentine workforce employed on the construction of the strips,
(Governor) Lewis was confronted with the prospect of a demonstration on sovereignty by hardliners at the

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5 HL Deb 26 January 1972 vol.327 cc333-407
6 The Battle for the Falklands 1997 M. Hastings & S. Jenkins 1997 p.32
7 Hastings & Jenkins 1997 p.32
inaugural ceremony which was to be attended by numerous Argentine visitors, including press. This was only prevented by Lewis' persuasiveness, by a broadcast by a member of LegCo and by tight security measures.”

November 21st, further negotiations take place in Port Stanley.

“When the negotiators met..., the practical measures on communications and movement of persons were almost entirely in full implementation.”

November 24th, Governor Lewis tells London of local concerns regarding any Argentine monopoly over fuel.

December 18th, at the United Nations in New York, the General Assembly defer consideration of the question of the Falkland Islands till 1973.

1973 – January 1st, the UK joins the European Economic Community (EEC); signing the Treaty of Rome 1957. Argentina protests the inclusion of the Falkland Islands under Annex IV of the Treaty of Rome.

“The special arrangements for association set out in Part Four of this Treaty shall apply to the overseas countries and territories listed in Annex IV to this Treaty.”

March 14th, elections in Argentina bring a Peronist Government into power.

“... (there was) an immediate hardening of the Argentine line. ...”

In April, during preparatory discussions regarding further talks, the Argentines indicate that they wish to reintroduce the 1968 Memorandum proposals but are now opposed to any Islander representation at the talks. British negotiators respond that they are only prepared to discuss practical matters and not sovereignty. Britain also requires Islanders must be present. Negotiations stall.

May 14th, at the UN, a petition is addressed to the Special Committee on Decolonization.

“Mr. Jose Ramon Cornejo maintained that the Argentine claim to the Islands had been based on their proximity to Argentina and the inheritance of title from Spain. He added that the Argentinians did not believe that talks like those recently held between the two Governments could make any progress towards resolving the question of the transfer of the sovereignty of the Territory to Argentina.”

May 25th, following his official swearing-in, the new President of Argentina, Hector J. Campora, says that the one preoccupation of his Government will be the, “recovery of the Malvinas.”

June 20th, Juan Domingo Perón returns to Argentina from exile in Spain.

“Buenos Aires, now overtaken completely by a Peronist revival, effectively abandoned the Scott-Beltramino 'hearts and minds' policy.”

August 15th, Argentina’s representative addresses a letter to the UN’s Special Committee on Decolonization.

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8 David Taylor in *The Dictionary of Falklands Biography (including South Georgia): From Discovery up to 1981* D. Tatham (ed.) 2008 p.338. LegCo was an abbreviation of Legislative Council – the unicameral legislature of the Falkland Islands from November, 1845 until January 2009 when it was replaced by a Legislative Assembly.

9 Las “Conversaciones Especiales” Argentina-Gran Bretaña sobre comunicaciones entre el Territorio Continental Argentino y las Islas Malvinas de 1970-72. Una negociacion Diplomatica Tipica J. C. M. Beltramino 1997

10 Treaty of Rome Article 227:3. This treaty was the foundation agreement for the European Union.

11 Tatham (ed.) 2008 p.338


13 Hastings & Jenkins 1997 p.33
“... his Government regretted to report that the negotiations had been virtually paralysed as a result of the attitude adopted by the United Kingdom, whose position, he said, had changed substantially from that which it had taken since contacts were first established in 1966. When, ... efforts were made to reactivate the negotiations, postponed since 1968, the United Kingdom took the position that the round of meetings could not be called negotiations on sovereignty since in its opinion they involved only talks or discussions, and it was willing to discuss only the collateral question of communications rather than the basic issue of sovereignty over the territory... This position, Argentina considered, was not in conformity with the provisions of the Assembly's resolution of 16 December 1965. Argentina called on the United Kingdom Government to take measures to continue the negotiations without further procrastination, within the framework of that resolution and subsequent decisions, so as to bring about the speedy elimination of the territory's colonial situation.”

Exercising a right of reply, the UK's representative denies; “... that there had been any change in its consistently upheld position on the scope of the discussions. It reiterated its readiness to renew discussions, bearing in mind that in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the principles of the Declaration on the granting of independence, it was essential that any solution should recognize the right of the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands to self-determination and should provide for them to express their wishes in this connection.”

August 17th, at the UN, the Special Committee on Decolonization meets to consider the question of the Falkland Islands. Argentina's Ambassador tells the Committee that; “...failure to settle this dispute within a short and reasonable time will necessitate a thorough reappraisal of the policy it has pursued until now...”

August 21st, the Special Committee adopts a Venezuelan resolution calling for the acceleration of negotiations.

Britain writes to the Secretary-General.

“It has been the common purpose of the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 2065 (XX) to explore in accordance with that resolution all possible means of finding a peaceful solution to the problem defined in that resolution. The letters addressed to you and your predecessors in successive years, ... constitute a record of progress endorsed by both Governments ... there have been no grounds for supposing that there has been any change in the consistently upheld position of the United Kingdom Government. At the meeting in London in April 1973, ... after a restatement of the views of the United Kingdom Government, the Argentine delegation declined to continue the meeting ... For their part the United Kingdom Government reiterate their readiness to renew discussions bearing in mind that in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of resolution 1514 (XV) of the General Assembly it is essential that any solution should recognize the right of the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands to self-determination and should provide for them to express their wishes in this connection.”

October 3rd, in a speech, Argentina's Foreign Minister tells the General Assembly; “My country ... is forced to state that the procedure cannot be indefinitely prolonged,...”

14 UN Yearbook 1973
15 UN Doc A/9023/Rev.1
16 UN Yearbook 1973
17 Ibid.
October 5th, US Secretary Kissinger and Argentina’s Foreign Minister, Alberto Vignes, meet in New York. Vignes complains that; “... Argentina is concerned with the indifference of the US regarding the issue of the Falkland Islands, which is a colonial problem within the hemisphere. He could not understand how the US, which was once a colony, could take such an attitude.”

October 12th, following his success in the elections brought about by Hector Campora’s July resignation, 78-year old Juan Perón begins his third term as Argentine President with his wife as Vice-President.

“The return of a Peronist Government brought an end to the Anglo-Argentine rapprochement.”

October 19th, the UK’s representative informs the UN Secretary-General that; “... his Government was reluctant to believe that Argentina would wish for any solution of the differences between the two Governments which was contrary to the expressed wishes of the inhabitants of the territory.”

October 25th, in the Falklands, a Petroleum Products Bill is debated at a meeting of the Falklands’ Legislative Council raising concerns over Argentina’s monopoly of fuel supply to the archipelago.

“... the Chief Secretary argued that Y.P.F. required a monopoly to guarantee a demand for its products. He also claimed that the price of petrol, which had more than doubled in the past two years, would fall by nearly a third. Adrian Monk, elected member for East Falkland, offered the only opposition and abstained in the vote. He stressed that, "What I do not like about it all is that the monopoly has been granted to the country which wants us." The British Government clearly hoped that the Islanders would accept closer ties with Argentina if they were shown the benefits of co-operation.”

November 5th, Argentina responds to Britain’s August letter to the UN Secretary-General. The response quotes the first paragraph of resolution 2065, pointing out that it makes “no reference” to the wishes of the population or a right of self-determination. Their representative goes further.

“... this tardy and misplaced concern for respect for the right to self-determination would be praiseworthy and legitimate if the United Kingdom had consulted the original population of the Malvinas Islands about their wishes before displacing them by force and replacing them by British settlers in 1833...”

“Towards the end of 1973 the Joint Intelligence Committee assessed that Argentine attitudes were hardening and for the first time there were indications that Argentina might be preparing contingency plans for an occupation of the islands.”

November 30th, Argentine law 20.561 re-establishes June 10th as the - ”Day of Affirmation of Argentine Rights over the Malvinas Islands and the Antarctic Sector.”

In December, the Falklands’ Sheep owners’ Association negotiates to sell carcases to Corporacion Argentina de Productores de Carnes.

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18 Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Documents on South America, 1973-1976 Memorandum of Conversation New York, October 5, 1973, 12.45pm. Kissinger’s response was so general in nature that it is not clear whether he had heard the Argentine Minister at all.


21 Quoted in UN Doc A/9623/Rev.1 vol.6 Chapter XXVI p.112

22 Baroness Young in HL Deb 25 January 1983 vol.438 cc136-247

23 No holiday was announced. In 1983, the date was changed to April 2 and that was made a public holiday. In 1984 the public holiday was moved back to June 10 and in 1992, April 2 became Veterans Day but not a holiday. In 2000 June 10 lost its holiday status and April 2 gained it. Both days are currently celebrated, but only the April day is a public holiday.
December 5th, at the UN, the Fourth Committee, sitting to consider the work of the Special Committee on Decolonization, approves that committee’s annual report.

“During discussion of the question .., Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador and Spain were among those supporting the contention of Argentina that the negotiations should be resumed with a view to finding a solution based on recognition of Argentine sovereignty over the islands. Argentina considered that the conflict of sovereignty, which dated from 1833, was the basic point to be resolved if an end was to be put to the colonial situation prevailing in the territory. The United Kingdom did not accept that interpretation; the essential problem was one of self-determination, complicated by a claim to the territory by another Government. The United Kingdom considered that any settlement of the differences between the two Governments must recognize the right of the inhabitants to self-determination and must be in accordance with their expressed wishes.” 24

December 14th, taking up recommendations from the Fourth Committee, the UN General Assembly adopts resolution 3160 - Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

“Gravely concerned at the fact that eight years have elapsed since the adoption of Resolution 2065 (XX) without any substantial progress having been made in the negotiations...

2. Declares the need to accelerate the negotiations between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland called for in General Assembly resolution 2065 (XX) in order to arrive at a peaceful solution of the conflict of sovereignty between them concerning the Falkland Islands (Malvinas);

3. Urges the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom, therefore, to proceed without delay with the negotiations, in accordance with the provisions of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, in order to put an end to the colonial situation;..” 25

“... Argentina had been back to the United Nations and emerged armed with yet another resolution, calling this time for ‘accelerated progress’ in resolving the Falklands dispute. To meet this pressure Julian Amery had approved exploring the chances of joint sovereignty, or condominium. It was a measure of growing desperation that this was put forward at all. … For one thing it was regarded as a legal nightmare.” 26


“Douglas-Home concluded that doing nothing would endanger the interests and security of the islands. He believed condominium was the best was the best way of continuing a dialogue with both parties, reasoning that it would have a greater chance of acceptance from islanders than talks on an outright transfer of sovereignty.” 27

January 4th, in Stanley, a meeting of the Falklands’ Legislative Council adopts a motion.

“That this House objects strongly to any negotiations or talks being held with the Argentine Government without the prior full knowledge of the Falkland Islands people, ...”

“... despite ‘maximum arm-twisting’, Falklands Governor Ernest Lewis was unable to wring concessions from councillors about talks on a possible sovereignty transfer.” 28

24 UN Yearbook 1973
26 Little Platoon M. Charlton 1989 p.37
27 The British Government and the Falkland Islands, 1974-79 A. Donaghy 2014
28 Ibid
The Falkland Islands Legislative Council form a select committee to ascertain the views of the electorate on possible changes to the Islands' Constitution and to make recommendations.  

January 25th, in the House of Commons, the British Government announce that they expect the contract for a permanent airfield in the islands to be awarded “shortly.” The project to be completed within two years.

Professor Griffiths of Birmingham University leads a team to explore the possible oil resources in the Falklands. Plaques confirming British sovereignty are cemented onto the Shag Rocks by a British naval expedition.

March 5th, following the election of a (minority) Labour Government, James Callaghan is Foreign Secretary.

April 8th, Britain’s Ambassador to Argentina, Donald Charles Hopson, reports a conversation with Manuel de Anchorena in which the latter insisted that negotiations must resume soon.

“One of the problems about the Falkland Islands was that from Her Majesty’s government’s point of view it was a marginal problem… always dogged by lack of ministerial time. In addition it was viewed by some senior people in the Foreign Office as an intractable problem about which nothing could be done.”

May 3rd, Foreign Secretary Callaghan submits an assessment of the Falklands issue to Cabinet.

“Callaghan’s conclusion was forbidding: ‘A policy of inaction would surely result in the Argentines progressively withdrawing their cooperation (e.g. the air service) and in a weakening of our position at the UN.’ The ultimate political, financial and commercial penalties could be severe.”

Callaghan’s proposals call for the inclusion of island councillors as delegates at any talks. Also full consultation throughout any negotiation.

May 10th, after some debate, the Cabinet approve the proposals.

“Callaghan therefore recommended that (Ambassador Hopson) call on Vignes and explain that Britain would shortly resume a dialogue. There would be no mention of condominium until the islanders had been consulted by the governor. Care was also taken to avoid use of the term ‘negotiations’. Callaghan believed its inclusion would only alarm islanders and give rise to hostile questions in Parliament...”

May 22nd, Britain’s Government approve the spending of £4.2 million on airport facilities for the Falklands.

June 4th, in Buenos Aires, Ambassador Hopson informs Minister Vignes of the British proposals.

June 7th, Falkland Island councillors are informed by the Governor.

“Lewis described the councillors’ reaction as predictable, in that they saw acceptance of it, as infringing on their sovereignty. ... Adrian Monk, an outspoken opponent of Argentina’s territorial claims, referred to the proposals as a ‘dilution of sovereignty’. ... Councillors were reluctant to go far without consulting their constituents... The councillors did not object to the Foreign Office approaching Argentina, but acceptance of the proposal would ultimately depend on the attitudes of the 1,900 islanders.”

“In other words, the councillors would not go in to bat at any stage without a prior mandate.”

29 HC Deb 18 December 1974 vol.883 cc1565-6  
31 Hugh Carless quoted in Donaghy 2014  
32 Donaghy 2014  
33 Ibid  
34 Ibid  
35 FO 7/3198 March 8, 1976
June 11th, further details are passed to Argentina's Foreign Ministry by the British Ambassador.

“I have now received instructions from Her Majesty's Government to propose that the discussions between Britain and the Falkland Islands should be resumed on the basis of the safeguards and guarantees to be extended to the Islanders in the hypothesised event of a condominium. 36

These discussions would be without prejudice to the respective positions of the United Kingdom and the Argentine Governments with regard to territorial sovereignty over the Falkland Islanders.

I am to explain that the main aim of Her Majesty's Government in entering into negotiations on the basis of a condominium would be to settle the dispute about sovereignty by accepting Argentine co-sovereignty over the Islands, ...... the two parties would accept shared sovereignty over the Islands.

The co-domini would be Her Majesty The Queen and His Excellency the President of the Argentina Nation. There are several forms which a condominium might take but the basic elements might include the following:

1) The British and Argentine flags would fly side by side and the official language would be English and Spanish;

2) All 'belongers' of the Islands would possess dual nationality;

3) Existing colony passports would be replaced by travel documents issued in the co-domini;

4) The present constitution, administration and legal system would have to be adapted to the needs of a condominium. The Governor might be appointed alternatively by the Queen and the President of Argentina;

5) Further constitutional change would require the agreement of the co-domini.

I also have to inform you that a Joint Session of the Executive and Legislative Councils of the Islands have informed the Governor that they had no objection to talks being held with the Argentine Government on the safeguards and guarantees required in a condominium. However, I am to state that Her Majesty's Government would feel free to invite representatives of the Islands to form part of the British delegation, and that before final agreement the Islanders would have to be formally consulted and their acceptance sought by some form of popular representation. ... if the Argentine Government agree, official or preliminary official talks should take place in Buenos Aires as soon as possible.” 37

“Vignes responded cautiously. He promised to put the proposal to Perón, but believed that in view of Argentina’s repeated declarations in the UN and elsewhere, it would be ‘extremely difficult’ to agree to share sovereignty with Britain.” 38

Argentina's President, Juan Perón, is informed.

“Let's accept. Once we have one foot in the Malvinas nobody will get us out and before long Argentina will have full sovereignty.” 39

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36 My emphasis
37 My emphasis. On June 14th, 2012, Argentina's President Cristina Kirchner, read this “secret document” to the UN's Special Committee on Decolonization. Kirchner erroneously suggested that it was only Peron's death that had caused the proposal to fail.
38 Donaghy 2014
39 Quoted by ex- Ambassador Ortiz de Rozas in an article for La Nacion, March 2012.
June 12th, news of the British Governments’ proposals leak out from the islands.

“Despite the fact that I stressed the secrecy of the discussions... some of our members are incapable of keeping quiet. On this occasion the leak may have been deliberate with a view to sabotaging our initiative.” 40

June 16th, in Britain, both The Times and The Sunday Express newspapers report on news of negotiations.

June 20th, Argentina responds to the information provided by the British Ambassador.

“It proposed that recognition of Argentine sovereignty should be followed by a period of ‘joint administration’ for a term to be fixed in the negotiations... The fundamental objectives of the joint administration would be to facilitate the gradual integration of the population of the Islands into the political, social and institutional life of the Argentine Republic.” 41

Vignes assures the Ambassador that the response is only a starting position and that Argentina would not insist upon a prior recognition of sovereignty. That could be delayed to the end of the joint sovereignty period - 4 or 5 years. 42

“This prior recognition of sovereignty, prior to any discussion, was unacceptable, obviously...” 43

“... in his meeting with Vignes, Hopson found there was more room for manoeuvre. His optimism was not shared in Stanley, however, where Lewis was far less upbeat. The governor ... was pessimistic about the islander response. ‘I am certain that this would not be acceptable locally’, he declared.” 44

June 24th, Foreign Secretary Callaghan writes to Hopson regarding the meeting with Vignes.

“The Argentine counterproposal certainly has constructive features... and we note his evident flexibility and readiness to compromise... (However) If the Foreign Minister and President Peron insist on including recognition of Argentine sovereignty in the basis for initiating talks, the islanders will refuse to take part: and we cannot move without them.” 45

June 26th, the British Government make an announcement in Parliament.

“With the agreement of the Falkland Islands Executive Council, we have been in touch with the Argentine Government about the possible resumption of discussions between our two Governments in connection with United Nations resolution 3160. If discussions are resumed, representatives of the Islanders will be invited to join the United Kingdom delegation.”

Dundee, Perth and London Securities Ltd is taken over by Charington, Gardner and Locket.

Johnston Construction win the contract for a new Falklands Airport.

July 1st, unforeseen, President Perón dies of a heart attack. His wife, Isabel Martinez de Peron, takes over as Argentina’s President.

40 Gove Lewis to Callaghan & Hopson June 12, 1974 in FO 7/2699
41 Donaghy 2014
42 FO 7/2699
43 James Callaghan quoted in Charlton 1989 p.37
44 Donaghy 2014
45 FO 7/2700. My emphasis.
“The Foreign Office was eager to act quickly. ‘Unless we seize this opportunity, there may be a coup or change of government in Buenos Aires within a matter of weeks’, Carless warned. ‘If so, we shall lose all the momentum we have gained’...” 46

**July 5th**, from Stanley, Governor Lewis reports that attitudes are hardening against the proposals.

“... it is most unlikely any councillor will be willing to join a British delegation to discuss condominium.” 47

**July 10th**, in London, the Falkland Islands Committee host a reception at Lincoln's Inn attended by Earl Mountbatten of Burma. A message from Queen Elizabeth II is read to those present.

“... attended by 50 MPs of all parties, 10 Members of the House of Lords, 20 representatives of the press and media, 10 Commonwealth representatives, 10 civil servants (including former Governors of the Falklands), and about 30 Islanders and Committee members. The presence of the Earl Mountbatten of Burma as special guest reflected the British Government's approval of the campaign. It was stated that the purpose of the gathering was, "... the rallying of support for the Islanders and of providing visiting Islanders with the opportunity of meeting people friendly to their cause." The reunion became an annual event.” 48

“It was an astonishing example of the committee's organisation and influence.” 49

**July 15th**, Foreign Secretary Callaghan concludes that talks on condominium cannot proceed. 50

**August 14th**, reacting to Governor Lewis's letter of July 5th, Britain's Foreign Secretary writes to Ambassador Hopson in Buenos Aires asking that he pass on a message to the Argentine Foreign Minister. 51

“Given the sensitivity of Parliamentary opinion in the UK to the issue of self-determination, HMG cannot possibly proceed without the concurrence of the islanders.” 52

**August 22nd**, in New York, Argentina informs the UN Secretary-General that contacts with the UK have been re-established with regard to future negotiations.

Having left in 1971, Britain resumes limited cooperation with the Special Committee on Decolonization. To the extent of providing the information required under the terms of Art. 73 of the UN Charter. However, the UK does not take a seat on the committee; reserving only a right to speak on matters concerning the Falkland Islands. 53

**September 5th**, at the UN, the Special Committee decides to defer the Falklands question until 1975.

**September 13th**, an agreement is quietly signed between Argentina and Great Britain, allowing for the supply of fuels and gas to the Falklands by Argentina. 54

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46 Donaghy 2014
47 Lewis to Callaghan July 5, 1974 in FO 7/2700
48 Ellerby 1990 p.181. These annual receptions still take place at Lincoln's Inn.
49 Donaghy 2014
50 Falkland Islands Review Committee Report Franks Committee 1983 para. 29
51 Hopson did not deliver the message; dying from a heart attack on August 26, 1974, aged only 59. Vignes was informed as to the collapse of the condominium proposal on August 27, 1974 by Britain’s charge d’affairs, Frank Maynard. Surprisingly, Vignes appears to have kept this too himself; not informing anyone else at Argentina's Foreign Ministry. His reasoning isn’t clear, but some confusion arose as a result.
52 Callaghan quoted in FO 7/2700
53 Every year a place is set out for the UK's representative, but not taken up. If someone from the British mission does attend, they sit at the back among the public. cf. 1971
“... the Foreign Office reacts feebly to Argentinian encroachment, ... for instance, in the September 1974 Agreement, signed by our Secretary of State, giving the Argentine YPF government department the right to erect a fuel storage tank in Port Stanley with a monopoly of petrol and diesel oil throughout the islands.” 55

“... agreed by the British and Argentine Governments in 1974 with regrettable little explanation or reference to the people of the Falkland Islands. The YPF (Yacimientos Petroliferos Fiscales) company was allowed to install a Plant at Port Stanley, which required a number of Argentine technical staff to be here permanently to look after it. This seemed to us to be the thin end of the wedge.” 56

“It’s purpose was to reduce high costs, by allowing the Argentine state oil company (YPF) to supply oil fuels to the islands at Argentine mainland prices. Yet there were more than fiscal concerns at hand. It was designed to demonstrate the government’s willingness to cooperate with Argentina, as well as buttress its position at the United Nations.” 57

September 23rd, at the opening of a new UN session in New York, Callaghan and Vignes meet in the sidelines; “Vignes was downcast, ominously remarking that the situation ‘could not be held indefinitely’.” 58

September 24th, in his annual speech to the UN General Assembly, Argentina’s Foreign Minister; “... made a moderate speech, which included the obligatory Argentine claim to sovereignty.” 59

In October, a local committee is formed in Stanley to liaise with the Falkland Islands Committee in London. “... a ten member Falkland Islands Committee (Local Branch) was formed at a public meeting in Stanley with Jack Abbott (an expatriate of independent means who had married an Islander) as Chairman and Sydney Miller (a former Executive Councillor and farmer) as Secretary. The purpose of the Committee was to liaise with the UK (Committee).” 60

October 18th, Governor Lewis writes to the FCO from Stanley.

“I see no likelihood of islanders agreeing to participate in talks before the end of the year. In fact, unless we are prepared to tell the committee in London the facts of life, I see no hope of any dialogue being renewed with the Argentines in the foreseeable future.” 61

October 24th, the UK writes to the UN confirming that contact continues with Argentina.

October 30th, Argentina also informs the UN Secretary-General that talks are on-going, “... the Government of the United Kingdom insists that the solution must be consonant with the ‘wishes’ of the inhabitants of the Malvinas... the Argentine Government wishes to reiterate that, .. the negotiations must take place exclusively between the Governments of the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom. ...” 62

In November, the FCO holds meetings with members of London’s Falkland Islands Committee.

December 4th, a Legislative Council meeting in Stanley considers the issue of oil exploration licences. “... the Colonial Government should take immediate steps to invite interested parties to apply for licences to examine the possibilities of drilling for oil, both on-shore and within territorial waters.”

56 74 Days: An Islander’s Diary of the Falklands Occupation John Smith 1984
57 Donaghy 2014
58 Ibid.
59 Donaghy 2014
60 Ellerby 1990 p.182
61 Lewis to Callaghan October 18, 1974 in FO 7/2701
62 UN Doc A10023/Rev.1 vol.4
“Within two weeks a bill had been presented to the Argentine Congress which would, if passed, 'authorise the government to use force to recover the Islands'. Maynard warned that supplying licences in Falkland waters 'would be an act of the utmost provocation...’” 63

**December 7th**, in Lima, Minister Vignes has a conversation with Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, David Ennals, repeating that there are only two options - negotiation or invasion.

“Vignes was in a truculent mood, perhaps conditioned by an incident in Stanley earlier that morning, when the FIC had blocked an Argentine cargo of goods from docking. He complained that islanders opinion was monopolised by the FIC who were determined to prevent progress.” 64

**December 16th**, after the comments of Vignes’ are reported from Lima, Buenos Airean newspaper *Cronica* mounts a campaign advocating an invasion of the Falklands. The newspaper also reports that the Argentine Air Force has been requested to take a party to the Islands on January 3rd, to pay homage to Louis Vernet. 65

“For its efforts the newspaper was provisionally closed by the administration of Mrs Peron for 'endangering peaceful relations with foreign countries', and legal proceedings were initiated according to the Penal Code and Law 20,840. A week later, a federal judge on hearing the case agreed that there had been an infringement of Article 219 of the Penal Code. Sr Hector Ricardo Garcia, the editor, was only released after paying a high sum and the case continued its normal procedural course.” 66

**December 13th**, at the UN, the General Assembly decides, without a vote, to ask the Special Committee on Decolonization to keep the question of the Falkland Islands under review.


“Argentina has decided in this case, even though there is usurpation, to continue to negotiate according to the Argentine pacifist tradition in the solution of international controversies.” 67

Argentina unilaterally imposes immigration controls on all air travel between it and the Falkland Islands.

“In January 1975 the Argentine Government imposed immigration controls on air travel to the Falklands in breach of the Communications Agreement. A declaration that the holder was an Argentine citizen of the Malvinas was added to the 'white card.' ..” 68

“The 'white card' was now replaced by one declaring the holder to be an Argentine citizen of the Malvinas.” 69

**January 28th**, Neville Arthur Irwin French is appointed Governor. 70

**January 31st**, Ennals writes to Secretary Callaghan.

“I am now moving towards the view that the best long-term aim might be a long-term leasing arrangement by which, under a treaty, we would cede sovereignty but would otherwise retain virtually all the arrangements on the Islands which exist now.” 71

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63 Donaghy 2014. Maynard was the British charge d'affaires in Buenos Aires.
64 Ibid
65 Ibid
66 Makin 1983 p.396
67 *La Nacion* January 3, 1975
68 Ellerby 1990 p.178
69 Hastings & Jenkins 1997 p.34
70 *The London Gazette* No. 46481
71 Quoted in *FO 7/2964*
“The foreign secretary reacted to the leaseback suggestion with disdain. ... Callaghan felt that Ennals overestimated Britain's hurdle at the UN, and underestimated its capability to counter an Argentine attack and the parliamentary difficulties which would arise.” 72

In **February**, a representative for six oil companies visits Port Stanley to discuss the issue of exploration licences for an off-shore area known as Burdwood Bank.

In London, the Falkland Islands Committee is renamed the United Kingdom Falkland Islands Committee.

In Argentina, the government of Isabel Martinez de Peron indicates its frustration with the lack of progress.

“... the Ministry of Social Welfare instructed Argentine cruise ships not to show a courtesy Red Ensign when they entered Stanley harbour.” 73

**March 2**nd, Regina Prima, an Italian liner chartered by an Argentine company, refuses to fly the Falklands flag when attempting to enter the port at Stanley. When the port authority complains, the ship leaves. 74

**March 13**th, intelligence reports indicate that, without negotiations, Argentina is likely to resort to force. 75

**March 18**th, in Parliament, the Government confirms that it has received Professor Griffith's report into the potential for oil exploration around the Falklands; but provides no other details.

**March 19**th, in response, Argentina's Foreign Ministry issues a **communique**.

“According to cabled information published in the press, the United Kingdom Foreign Office has received a scientific report, ... concerning the possible existence of petroleum deposits under the Argentine continental shelf near the Malvinas Islands. Since the Malvinas Islands and the above-mentioned areas constitute an integral part of the national territory, the Government of Argentina wishes to state that it does not and will not recognize the right of any foreign Government to explore for or extract minerals or hydrocarbons. ... Furthermore, the Argentine Government will regard the carrying out of activities of the kind referred to above to be contrary to United Nations resolutions and consensuses on the Malvinas Islands, ...”

“... at a press conference... Vignes suggested that if Britain was unwilling to negotiate, "the only other option open to the Argentine government is a resort to force."... Vignes said his remarks were made unwillingly, forced upon him by public pressure. "People are burning my feet", he claimed, warning that unless there was progress, grave consequences would ensue: "It would be the big thing, the breaking off of diplomatic relations and an armed conflict"...” 76

Britain’s new Ambassador to Buenos Aires, David Ashe, receives instructions to issue a warning that any military action will be met by force.

“The foreign secretary felt that an aggressive approach was required...” 77

**April 3**nd, a Financial Times article claims that progress towards greater contact between the Falklands and Argentina has been delayed due to the possible existence of oil deposits.

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72 Donaghy 2014
73 Ellerby 2009 p.178 citing The Daily Telegraph March 5, 1975
74 The Malvinas, the South Georgias and the South Sandwich Islands: the conflict with Britain L. Destefani 1982.
75 FO 7/2949
76 Donaghy 2014
77 Ibid
April 7th, the Falklands Government submits a report concerning proposed changes to the Islands’ Constitution.

April 10th, in Parliament, Goronwy-Roberts confirms that if talks take place, Islanders will be present. 78

April 14th, Ambassador Ashe delivers Britain’s warning to the Foreign Ministry in Buenos Aires.

“The Argentine Government must clearly understand that an attack on the Islands would be met with a military response. At the same time Her Majesty’s Government wished to avoid any confrontation with Argentina. The only alternative to confrontation was negotiation and they stood ready to examine any proposal which the Argentine Government might wish to put forward.” 79

April 16th, in London, a meeting between Prime Minister Wilson, Foreign Secretary Callaghan and David Ennals considers the policy to adopt with regard to oil deposits on the Islands’ continental shelf. Callaghan notes that the current Argentine regime is; “… so unstable that it was questionable whether a negotiated settlement would stand the test of time.”

“If we receive no warning of an invasion and we are obliged to liberate the Islands from an Argentine occupation, our political task at the United Nations, and in Washington, would be formidable. The Secretary of State for Defence should therefore advise on the practical aspects of defending the Islands.” 80

Between them, they decide; “… that economic cooperation and joint oil exploration would provide the basis for a new Anglo-Argentine dialogue, with the sovereignty issue being withheld for a later date.” 81

April 25th, in Buenos Aires, a car bomb explodes outside the British Embassy, killing a guard.

May 5th, Britain informs the UN that it has no doubts about its exclusive sovereign rights to explore for natural resources of the continental shelf around the Falklands’ archipelago. 82

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# Researcher’s Comment: Before complaints arrive to say that the Falklands archipelago does not sit upon its own continental shelf - it does. Not geologically but in the theoretical world of international law. In December, 1850 a British Order in Council had extended the borders of the colony to include the adjacent continental shelf areas. This was followed in 1958 by the UN’s Convention on the Continental Shelf which recognised that, for the purposes of international law, islands had their own shelf areas. Unsurprisingly, Argentina declined to sign the convention.

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May 8th, at the Foreign Office, Minister David Ennals hosts an informal seminar attended by the United Kingdom Falkland Islands Committee.

“The agenda covered oil exploration, alginates, fisheries, welfare, the constitution and restrictions on foreigners owning land. There was no attempt to reach conclusions or recommendations, although ideas discussed were passed on to Governor French.” 83

“The U.K.F.I.C’s representatives included Bill Hunter Christie, Frank Mitchell, Sir John Barlow and Jack Abbott (from the Local Branch in Stanley). Professor Donald Griffiths, a geologist from Birmingham University, and Dr. Peter Calvert, a Politics Lecturer at Southampton University, contributed their specialist

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78 HL Deb 10 April 1975 vol.359 cc180-1
79 Quoted in Charlton 1989 pp.42-43
80 Callaghan interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.44
81 Donaghy 2014
82 UN Yearbook 1975
knowledge of the region. Commercial interests were represented by the Chairman of the F.I.C., the Chief Manager of Lloyds Bank International's Latin American Section, the Managing Director of the Baring Bank, and a consultant for the Argentine National Bank. Twelve Members of Parliament attended including John Biggs-Davison, James Johnson, Nigel Fisher and Tam Dalyell. Finally, there were officials from the Foreign Office, Ministry of Defence and Department of Energy.”  

May 14th, Foreign Secretary Callaghan proposes to the Prime Minister that dialogue with Argentina proceed through the offices of Britain’s Ambassador, but in strict secrecy to avoid further leaks.  

May 24th, in an interview with Minister Vignes in Buenos Aires, Britain’s Ambassador Ashe proposes in camera discussions with regard to a joint development of the resources of the south-west Atlantic. Vignes promptly counter proposes that any negotiations on economic cooperation should be linked to the immediate transfer of sovereignty followed by simultaneous leaseback for a period of 15 years.

“Leaseback was a fusion of two basic principles: British administration, as desired by the islanders, and the concession of sovereignty to Argentina.”

May 27th, in Stanley, Island councillors propose that an ‘economic study’ be pursued to advise on the long term prospects of the Falklands and the Dependencies.

“On the length of the airstrip at Stanley, lies the Falkland Islands’ future. An entirely unpublicised, unofficial delegation from the islands is, I understand, currently engaged in discussion of the matter with the Foreign Office. There is no other British territory which can only be reached by courtesy of a foreign country. The present airstrip being inadequate for the landing of long international-flight aircraft, islanders can only leave and return home by way of Argentina. Furthermore, these British, either leaving or entering their Islands, are obliged to get a White Card permit either from the Argentine Office in the Islands or in Buenos Aires, before the Argentine airline (LADE) will confirm a booking. Adding insult to injury, Argentine personnel enter the Islands without it. No such right is granted to Argentina by the Communications Agreement of 1971 with Britain. In present circumstances, Argentinians can enter the Islands and could well form a nucleus for takeover, before counter-action could be taken...

The key to development and control lies in communications. Conditions for these were laid down by the 1971 Agreement, by which the British government undertook to replace the temporary airstrip by a permanent airfield. Work on it is expected to start this year, but Argentina has refused any aid which will make an international airport and allow the Islanders direct flights to Ascension or the Cape (though this would be cheaper).

The current field under construction has a runway of only 1,250 metres; 2,000 metres are needed for international jets. The Seychelles were provided with an international port by British aid; why not the Falklands? In the meantime, it has cost about £1 million to get Johnston Construction and their machinery to the Islands, and the decision whether to do the job properly or not must be made in the next few months.”

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84 Ibid.
85 FO 7/2950
86 Donaghy 2014
87 Ibid. See October
June 19th, Ambassador Ashe again meets with the Foreign Minister. Vignes indicates that Argentina is prepared to start a discussion on economic cooperation. The condition is that Argentina is allowed to occupy the Islands of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands without condemnation by the UK; they being uninhabited.

“That proposal was unacceptable to Britain and the absence of talks on sovereignty unacceptable to the Argentines. For some time following that there were no negotiations.”

“We have undertaken a careful examination of the resolutions in question. They refer only to the Falkland Islands and do not explicitly mention the Dependencies. Moreover, the list of non-self-governing territories compiled by General Assembly Committees in 1946 and subsequently in 1964 referred exclusively to the "Falkland Islands." ...

July 14th, in London, an announcement is made to Parliament

“The association of the Falkland Islands, as a dependent territory for whose external affairs the United Kingdom remains responsible, will, in accordance with Article 117 of the Act of Accession to the Community Treaties, take effect upon a decision of the Council of the European Communities. The Falklands Executive Council has approved.”

July 16th, in Buenos Aires, Minister Vignes repeats to Ambassador Ashe that talks on economic cooperation alone hold no interest for Argentina.

July 31st, Ashe informs London that Peron’s administration is unlikely to last much longer. However, its Foreign Ministry is demanding that sovereignty talks resume before September, when a meeting between Callaghan and Argentina’s Foreign Minister is expected to take place at the UN.

August 11th, Vignes is replaced as Foreign Minister by Angel Frederico Robledo.

“We have been some way across a diplomatic minefield with an Argentine foreign minister who has been thrown out of office just at the moment when there was a chance of launching a new dialogue. We must be extremely cautious before attempting to relaunch it.”

August 18th, an article in The Times newspaper reports on the activities of the United Kingdom Falkland Islands Committee; “... in the autumn they will lead a political campaign to challenge the Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s view of the immediate and future needs of the Falkland Islands...”

August 20th, at the UN, the Special Committee refers the Falklands question to the General Assembly.

September 9th, at a meeting of the International Parliamentary Union in London, Argentina accuses Britain of an act of ‘international piracy’ in establishing a colony on the Falklands. The meeting is picketed by Islanders.

September 16th, in an interview with the press, Argentina's new Foreign Minister Robledo describes the wishes of the Falkland Islanders as “irrelevant.”

September 18th, Britain’s Ambassador protests Robledo’s comments. Robledo questions Britain’s insistence on Islander consent for talks to proceed.

September 23rd, in a speech at the opening session of the UN General Assembly, Argentina’s Foreign Minister raises the issue of the Falklands.

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89 Baroness Young in HL Deb 25 January 1983 vol.438 cc136-247
90 PREM 19-0625 6 May 1982
91 HC Deb 14 July 1975 vol.895 cc324-5W
92 Callaghan to Ashe August 15, 1975 in FO 7/2952
93 Founded in 1889, this is the international organisation for Parliaments.
“We are a people convinced of the merits of negotiation. We apply this to what concerns us most directly. As is well known, my country suffers from the usurpation by a foreign Power of a part of its territory, namely the Malvinas Islands. For that question to be settled, there is no solution other than the return of those islands to the territorial patrimony of the Republic, since their occupation by force was carried out against every law...”

He adds that the application of self-determination to the Falklands; “.. was excluded, in view of the fact that the British occupation constitutes a violation of the principle of territorial integrity specifically laid down in resolution 1514.”

Robledo claims that Argentina has the support of the Non-Aligned Movement.

# Researcher’s Comment: Argentina has long claimed the support of a majority of the UN’s member States although the evidence only supports the contention that a majority are in favour of talks taking place rather than favouring of any particular outcome from negotiations.

September 25th, Britain’s Callaghan meets with Robledo at the Waldorf Towers in New York.

“Robledo conveyed an invitation to Callaghan and the Queen to visit Argentina. He gave no commitment to Callaghan’s proposals for economic cooperation, agreeing only to "consider them urgently." Consequently, Callaghan’s suggestion that a senior official might go to Buenos Aires to discuss an agenda also went unanswered. Robledo accepted that economic cooperation would be mutually beneficial to promote stability and progress. He did not adopt the hard-line approach expected, nor emphasise the need for early progress on sovereignty. Far from being a source of distraction it appeared that the Falklands might even take a back-seat, as Argentina confronted its domestic woes. Like his predecessor, Robledo saw condominium as providing Argentina’s best hope, suggesting that negotiations might be renewed in the near future...”

Robledo assures the British Foreign Secretary that there is; “..(no) question of an Argentine invasion of the Islands, nor of an attempt to solve the problem by force.”

Callaghan informs the Foreign Minister of plans for an economic survey, at the request of the Islanders; “... Its purpose is to quantify the options for future economic development...”

“There is no record of a response from Robledo to this, indicating that he had not grasped the magnitude of the enterprise to be undertaken.”

October 2nd, after less than two months, Robledo is replaced by Arauz Castex as Argentina’s Foreign Minister.

October 16th, following the May proposals from the Islanders, the British Government announces a comprehensive economic survey. To be led by Lord Shackleton. Its purpose to inquire into the development possibilities of the Falkland Islands.

“It appears that the economic survey was sanctioned by the British Government in response to the increase in Argentine hostility. In April 1975 the British Embassy in Buenos Aires reported the need for a diplomatic

94 UN Doc A/3125/Rev.1 vol.4. See 1960 for comments on the non-retroactive nature of resolution 1514.
95 A forum for the UN members which are not formally aligned with any major power bloc. Currently some 120 of the UN’s 193 members.
96 Donaghy 2014
97 Freedman 2005 vol.1 p.38
98 HC Deb 14 January 1976 vol.903 cc391
99 Donaghy 2014
100 Franks 1983, para.34. Son of the explorer, and a respected Labour peer, Shackleton was under little illusion that his report was to emphasise the importance of Argentine/Island relations and to included the possibility of a take-over..
initiative after the Argentine Government warned that the only option open was a resort to force. ... The Government wanted to persuade Parliament and the Islanders through an "informed approach" that collaboration with Argentina was the answer.” 101

“Concerned about the continuing decline of the local economy, councillors had requested 'a comprehensive economic study' of the Falklands region, which would advise on long-term prospects and include the Dependencies. But for the British Government there were different motives at hand. The foreign secretary saw this as an ideal way to show the islanders that future development rested on cooperation with Argentina rather than dependence on Britain, and thereby encourage closer links... by the Autumn of 1975, certain factors had convinced the Foreign Office that the councillor's proposals justified investigation.” 102

From Edinburgh, the firm of Christian Salvesen informs the FCO that they own two old whaling harbours on South Georgia and are trying to acquire two more.

"It is a long shot, but I think that sometime in the future there may be use for these bases, either for fishing or for oil. I hope that HMG will not absent-mindedly hand it over to Argentina."

On the same day, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) presents an Advisory Opinion (AO) on the situation regarding Western Sahara. 103

“54. The Charter of the United Nations, in Article 1, paragraph 2, indicates, as one of the purposes of the United Nations: "To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples..." This purpose is further developed in Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter. Those provisions have direct and particular relevance for non-self-governing territories, which are dealt with in Chapter XI of the Charter. As the Court stated in its Advisory Opinion of 21 June 1971 on The Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 276 (1970):

"... the subsequent development of international law in regard to non-self-governing territories, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, made the principle of self-determination applicable to all of them. (ICJ reports 1971. p.31)"

55. The principle of self-determination as a right of peoples, and its application for the purpose of bringing all colonial situations to a speedy end, were enunciated in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). In this resolution the General Assembly proclaims "the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations". To this end the resolution provides inter alia:

"2. All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development

The above provisions, in particular paragraph 2, thus confirm and emphasize that the application of the right of self-determination requires a free and genuine expression of the will of the peoples concerned.

... 59. The validity of the principle of self-determination, defined as the need to pay regard to the freely expressed will of peoples, is not affected by the fact that in certain cases the General Assembly has

102 Donaghy 2014
dispensed with the requirement of consulting the inhabitants of a given territory. Those instances were based either on the consideration that a certain population did not constitute a ‘people’ entitled to self-determination or on the conviction that a consultation was totally unnecessary, in view of special circumstances” 104

“... the first type of exception exist, for example, in the case of Gibraltar or Malvinas (Falkland Islands) where the General Assembly has requested the States concerned to negotiate the issue of sovereignty and the transfer of territory, and they have refused to accept the effects of a referendum or consultation to the present inhabitants of these territories.” 105

“The self-proclamation of a "people" and a subsequent claim of entitlement to the right to self-determination are .. insufficient.” 106

“Although the ICJ approved of its earlier opinion in the Namibia proceedings that the principle of self-determination applied to ‘all’ Chapter XI Non-Self-Governing Territories, it cast doubt on the generality of this proposition in what is arguably the most ambiguous passage in the Western Sahara Opinion:... (para. 59) ... The fact that the passage is not supported by factual examples makes it particularly prone to a wide range of interpretations and to speculation regarding the specific anomalous cases the ICJ had in mind. ... it is important to recall that in the ICJ’s view, the fact that the General Assembly dispensed with a consultation of the inhabitants does not affect '[t]he validity of the principle of self-determination, defined as the need to pay regard to the freely expressed will of peoples.' ...” 107

# Researcher’s Comment: Dealt with in a previous paper in this series, the United Nations determined in 1952 that a non-self-governing territory (NSGT) listed for decolonization required a people. A people that could be led to a full measure of self-government and independence. No people therefore equals no NSGT. It cannot be argued that the Falklands' are on the UN list of NSGTs Therefore it cannot be argued that the islanders are not a people. If the Falklanders are not a people, then the islands must be de-listed. Two chairs of the Special Committee on Decolonization have raised this possibility, but it has never been debated.

As is usual, some of the Judges publish separate opinions.

“... it is for the people to determine the destiny of the territory and not the territory the destiny of the people.” 108

“... it follows ... that the principle of self-determination could be dispensed with only if the free expression of the will of the people was found to be axiomatic in the sense that the result was known to be a foregone conclusion or that consultations had already taken place in some form or that special features of the case rendered it unnecessary.” 109

“..., it cannot be denied that self-determination has, at the very least, attained a position of high normative regard, being seen as a peremptory norm with regard to the issue of decolonisation.” 110

104 Sadly, the court did not explain this comment, or give any examples. Despite there being no evidence to support the contention, some Argentine commentators now argue that this refers to the Falkland Islanders. cf. 2019
105 Los Derechos Argentinas Sobre Las Islas Malvinas Alfredo Bruno Bologna 1982
107 Self-determination in Disputed Colonial Territories Jamie Trinidad 2018 p.56 & 58
108 Judge Dillard ICJ ref: 061-19751016-ADV-01-07
109 Judge Nagendra Singh quoted in Trinidad 2018 p.57
October 22nd, Argentina issues a press statement with regard to the Shackleton mission.

“In response to the proposal made by the British Government to send a mission to the Islas Malvinas with the object of carrying out an economic and financial survey of the archipelago and the surrounding areas, the Ministry of External Relations and Worship states that: -

1) It reiterates in full the communique issued by the Foreign Ministry on 19 March 1975;

2) Contrary to a report appearing in a London newspaper, the Argentine Government has on no occasion given its consent to the mission in question;

3) Since the question of the Malvinas Islands is subject to the procedure recommended by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 2065 (XX) and 3160 (XXVIII), the parties to the dispute must abstain from any new unilateral action affecting the basic aspects of the question. Any such action will undermine the clear objective of the resolutions in question and will be contrary to the spirit which has prevailed in all the dealings so far between the two countries concerning the archipelago, and also is unacceptable to the Argentine Government;

4) The mission which Great Britain proposes to send would not be welcome because investigations to assess the possibility of the economic exploration of the natural resources of the Malvinas Islands – resources which therefore belong to the Argentine Republic - would violate the principle of not undertaking new action. Consequently, the sending of this mission constitutes an inconsiderate act which the Argentine Foreign Ministry would not wish to interpret as an attitude of provocation because this would imply that Great Britain does not accept the normal continuation of bilateral negotiations, a fact which could have unforeseeable and certainly serious consequences for which Great Britain alone would be responsible;

5) The essential factor in the process of reaching a final settlement of the dispute is negotiation between the two Governments and hence the initiation of acts which may prejudice this process will upset relations between the Argentine Republic and Great Britain and will impede the achievement of a peaceful settlement of the Malvinas question;

6) Once more, Argentina urges Great Britain to take the view that negotiations to settle the dispute concerning sovereignty over the archipelago is the best procedure and is in conformity with the decisions of the United Nations and the recognized standards of the civilized world.”

In Buenos Aires, Ambassador Ashe is summoned to the Foreign Ministry to be presented with a communique complaining that the Shackleton mission; “…represents a step not previously concerted with the Argentine Government.” Ashe responds that Robledo had been informed in September, but had raised no objection.

October 23rd, Ashe informs London, warning that Shackleton’s plans need to ensure that he does not pass through Argentina, as he would make a “sensational hostage.”

Argentina's Ambassador to London, Manuel de Anchorena, is called back to Buenos Aires for ‘consultations.’

November 5th, Anchorena and Ambassador Ashe meet in Buenos Aires. Anchorena complains about Britain’s insistence that Islander consent is required before any progress can be made; and the emphasis being placed upon their ‘wishes’ rather than their interests.  

111 FO 7/2961
112 FO 7/2954
November 10th, Argentina’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs announces that Lord Shackleton will not be permitted to transit through Argentina.

November 13th, Ashe meets with Robledo and his successor as Foreign Minister, Arauz Castex, to seek an explanation as to why Argentina suddenly objects to the economic survey. Why Robledo had not argued against the idea in September. Initially Robledo denies that Callaghan had mentioned the survey but then, on seeing the notes from the meeting, excuses himself by saying that there had been too much to take in at that time, and there had been no talk of appointing Lord Shackleton. 113

November 14th, Britain’s Embassy in Buenos Aires is informed that the research ship, RSS Shackleton, will require Argentine permission to carry out any activity within 200 miles of the Argentine coast. Also that ‘Argentine waters’ is being interpreted to include the area around the archipelago in accordance with “Argentine law.” Foreign Secretary Callaghan is informed.

“So, what had seemed to be a very fruitful means of keeping the Argentines engaged, and recognising some of their legitimate interests in the waters around the Falklands, disappeared. The Argentine government raised a lot of difficulty about the Shackleton expedition...” 114

November 21st, Britain’s naval attaché in Buenos Aires receives a warning that RSS Shackleton will be ‘arrested’ if found in the seas that Argentina claims as its own.

December 5th, at the UN, the Fourth Committee recommend that the Falklands issue be deferred till 1976. 115

December 8th, Britain informs the UN General Assembly that; “... exchanges between the United Kingdom Government and the Argentine Government have continued over the past year with a view to finding a settlement of the differences between us. In seeking a solution, my Government has said repeatedly that we wish to observe the terms of resolution 1514 (XV). It is therefore the wishes of the people of the island which must be paramount, not an arbitrary idea of what their interests might be... ” Britain’s representative also informs the Assembly that all information regarding possible oil deposits around the Falklands have been shared with Argentina and that the UK has no intention of acting unilaterally.

“My Government has similarly informed the Argentine Government, as a courtesy about its proposal for a survey of the economy of the island, and we regret that this survey is apparently regarded by the Argentine Government as an unacceptable innovation.”

Exercising a right of reply, Argentina’s mission writes to the Secretary-General.

“The Argentine Government reserves its position regarding the responsibility which rests with the British Government for the breaking-off of negotiations and will not fail to assert its rights in the form which it deems most appropriate.”

Ortiz de Rozas comments; “... The limits of our patience and tolerance must not be underestimated should we be confronted with an obstinate and unjustified refusal to negotiate.” 116

December 17th, James Callaghan meets Foreign Minister Arauz Castex in Paris during an International Economic Cooperation conference. Callaghan indicates his belief that progress can be made concerning economic co-operation. Castex suggests that if Argentine scientists are added to Shackleton’s team, it would change the survey’s image in Argentina.

113 Donaghy 2014. Neither side had taken an interpreter for the September meeting.
114 James Callaghan quoted in Charlton 1989 p.47
115 UN Yearbook 1975
116 La Nacion December 12th, 1975
Callaghan expressed his doubts as the suggestion had come at such a late stage of the planning, but agrees to put the proposal to Lord Shackleton.

**December 18th**, Shackleton accepts the inclusion of a small Argentine contingent. Informed, Castex, demands that a retired Argentine Admiral, Jose Alvarez, be added to the party, and given the position of *deputy leader*. Castex also adds that Shackleton’s conclusions, to be sent to both Governments, must be followed by sovereignty negotiations. Secretary Callaghan offers to take Alvarez on as ‘chief Argentine scientist’, but declines to reopen talks. Castex protests. 117

**December 29th**, Shackleton’s team arrive in Brazil; from where he and his team join HMS *Endurance*. 118

“... the mission was composed of five experts entrusted with assessing and making recommendations concerning the prospects for development in oil, minerals, fisheries, wool and alginites. The mission was further requested to advise on the need for capital expenditure over the next five years, and to assess the financial and social implications of any recommendations.” 119

1976 – January 2nd, Argentina’s Government issues a statement asserting; “… that the United Kingdom representatives had finally stated that they were not in a position to accept the reopening of negotiations aimed at solving the dispute on sovereignty;…”

“(Shackleton) was portrayed as a 'pirate and buccaneer' to his evident delight.” 120

January 3rd, Shackleton and HMS *Endurance* arrive off Port Stanley, 143 years after Capt. Onslow in HMS Clio. Castex describes the timing as “unfriendly and unthoughtful.” 121 The Minister adds that, if the British Government refuses to resume negotiations, then the two countries are; “.. rapidly moving towards a head-on collision ... his Government could accept no responsibility for such a disastrous outcome.”

January 8th, in London, intelligence reports suggest that an invasion remains unlikely.

“... the JIC assessed that a sudden invasion was unlikely, but that there was an increased likelihood of Argentine political and economic action against British interests and that, as the sequence of Argentine measures proceeded, the possibility of military operations must be regarded as that much nearer.” 122

January 12th, Callaghan writes to Castex, referring to the dispute as “sterile.” 123

“Great Britain, ... contrary to the letter and the spirit of Resolution 2065, at the beginning of 1976, insisted upon the right of self-determination of the Malvinas, refused to discuss the problem in-depth and attempted to replace the subject of sovereignty with Argentine-British economic cooperation in the region of the south-western Atlantic.” 124

As military aircraft overfly the Islands, Argentina suggests that Britain’s Ambassador be recalled.

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117 *Pink Ice: Britain and the South Atlantic Empire* K. Dodds 2002 p.151. Also Donaghy 2014
118 The original plan was that the team join Endurance at Montevideo. However, Uruguay was unwilling to offend Argentina, at least publicly. It was later claimed in South America's Press that *Endurance* waited at Montevideo for the arrival of Shackleton in Brazil, before sailing to meet an airlift. Other sources suggest that the team boarded the British ship at Montevideo as planned, but under some secrecy.
119 UN Doc A3125/Rev.1 vol.4
120 Hastings & Jenkins 1997
121 Onslow actually arrived on January 2nd, 1833 but did not cause Argentina's flag to be lowered until the 3rd. *cf. 1833*
122 Baroness Young in *HL Deb 25 January 1983 vol.438 cc136-247*
124 General Juan E. Gugliamelli in *Estarategia* No. 43-44 1977
“...the Argentine Government have evidently reached the conclusion that they must make a gesture.” 125

**January 14**th, James Callaghan makes a statement to Parliament.

“Our traditional friendship with Argentina is marred only by issues arising from the Argentine claim to sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, whose inhabitants wish to remain British. Successive British Governments have undertaken to respect their wishes. ... As the House is aware, the Argentine Government have stated that the Argentine ambassador, who returned to Argentina in October, will remain in Buenos Aires until further notice and that, in view of the present state of affairs over the Falklands question, it would be advisable for the British Government to withdraw our Ambassador: ... I shall shortly be recalling Her Majesty's ambassador for consultations.” 126

“Mr. Callaghan noted that the HMS Endurance of the Royal Navy was in the vicinity of the archipelago and that two other vessels were ready to proceed there,...” 127

“In a press interview the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina said that the decision to request the recall of the United Kingdom Ambassador did not mean a break in diplomatic relations with that country.” 128

“Staff who remained ..., monitored these reports but they concluded that the tenor of press comment was predictable and that the Argentine Government seemed willing to control displays of anti-British sentiment. There had been no threats or demonstrations against the Embassy itself, for example, and no repetition of Cronica’s invasion campaign of December 1974.” 129

**January 15**th, Arauz Castex, is dismissed and replaced as Foreign Minister by Raul Quijano.

**February 4**th, an Argentine destroyer, Almirante Storni, attempts to stop and 'arrest' the unarmed RRS Shackleton when she is 78 miles south of Port Stanley and some 450 miles east of the Argentine coast. The Argentine commander instructs the British vessel to steer for Ushuaia. Capt. Philip Warne radios the Governor in Stanley before responding.

“... an instruction was given for the vessel Shackleton to be intercepted for the purpose of inspecting the vessel. On 4 February the Argentine naval destroyer Almirante Storni approached the Shackleton and told it to stop its engines and to permit boarding for inspection, as is customary in these cases. The captain of the United Kingdom ship continued his course, disregarding the instruction and thus endangering the lives of the crew and the safety of the ship. In accordance with existing rules, warning shots were fired from small arms, but, in the knowledge that the United Kingdom vessel was carrying explosives and in order to exercise maximum prudence, the commander of the Argentine vessel was instructed not to use force,, as would have been appropriate in the circumstances. The reckless and provocative attitude of the British captain is clearly indicative of the intention to conceal the activities in which the Shackleton had been engaged.” 130

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125 FO 7/3208
126 HC Deb 14 January 1976 vol.903 cc391
127 Permanent Representative of Argentina to the Chairman of the Special Committee on Decolonization May 6th 1976
128 UN Doc A3125/Rev.1 vol.4.
129 Dillon 1989
130 Permanent Representative of Argentina to the Secretary-General of the United Nations February 23rd 1976
Throughout the time it takes to get to Stanley, RSS Shackleton is continually harassed by the Almirante Storni and by Argentine aircraft. One of these, a Neptune, flies at mast height above the British vessel. Almirante Storni only breaks away some 6 miles from the archipelago. 131

“London’s intelligence sources later confirmed that the plan to intercept the vessel had been in existence for about six weeks prior to the incident, and that the action had been inspired by the armed forces rather than the Argentine Government. The JIC concluded, nevertheless, that Argentina’s military commanders were opposed to military invasion and that a policy of ‘continued pin-pricks’ rather than a precipitated attack was likely.” 132

With Britain’s Ambassador now in London, the charge d’affaires in Buenos Aires, John Shakespeare, receives instructions to register a formal protest. At the same time, Shakespeare is summoned by Argentina’s Foreign Ministry to see the new Foreign Minister, Raul Quijano.

“I had not been with him more than thirty seconds before I realised that he in fact had summoned me to hand over an Argentine protest.” 133

“When the charge d’affaires sought an explanation in Buenos Aires, he discovered that the new Foreign Minister Raul Quijano had pre-empted his visit... Quijano blamed the British government for the incident...” 134

Shakespeare tells Quijano that the British Government; “... took the gravest view of the incident which, in other times, might well have been regarded as an act of war.”

In London, Argentina’s chargé d’affaires is also summoned to the Foreign Office to receive Britain’s protest. The chargé, Rafael Gowland, claims that the incident took place within Argentine waters.

February 5th, the incident is reported in Parliament by Edward Rowlands.

“The incident took place 78 miles south of Cape Pembroke as "Shackleton" was returning from a period of scientific work in the South-West Atlantic under an international programme. On learning of the incident, my right hon. Friend immediately instructed the chargé d'affaires at Buenos Aires to deliver the strongest protest to the Argentine Government and to request that the Argentine destroyer immediately be ordered to stop harassing the "Shackleton". I also protested to the Argentine chargé here in equally vigorous terms. The Argentine Government have been left in no doubt of the serious view we take of this incident.” 135

Argentina responds to the UK’s protest with a formal note verbale. 136

“The Ministry of Foreign Affairs ... has the honour to refer to the activities of the British ship Shackleton in maritime areas under the jurisdiction of the Argentine Republic. The Argentine Government is aware of the fact that the said ship has been engaged in scientific research activities geophysical and geological surveys - on the Argentine continental shelf, without having complied with the prior requirements of Argentine legislation on the matter, which is in conformity with existing

131 The Falkland Islands as an International Problem P. J. Beck 1987. Anecdotal accounts suggest that the two vessels came close enough together for the British sailors to respond by throwing turnips and potatoes at Almirante Storni’s crew. Endurance’s Captain, Philip Warne, subsequently received an OBE. Following this incident, an extension to the deployment of HMS Endurance was approved by Britain’s Ministry of Defence together with the deployment of a support vessel from the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.
132 Dillon 1989. The same policy that Argentina had employed in the 1930s.
133 Quoted in Donaghy 2014
134 Donaghy 2014
135 HC Deb 05 February 1976 vol.904 cc1414-7
136 A diplomatic communication drafted in the third person and unsigned . This is more formal than an aide-memoire but less formal than a note.
international law. In view of these activities an Argentine naval vessel told it to stop, with a view to exercising the right to inspect and board. This order was disregarded by the British vessel, which thus incurred another violation of the pertinent law. ... The situation is all the more serious in that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship had already reminded the Embassy, in its note of 14 November 1975, that if the planned research activities were to be conducted, the requirements of Argentine law must be respected, which was not done.

In view of the foregoing, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship lodges the most formal and vigorous protest of the Argentine Government and demands, without prejudice to the continued exercise of the rights on which it is relying, that the British Government take measures to punish those responsible and to prevent the recurrence of such acts.” 137

In London, the Defence Secretary agrees “reluctantly” to keep Endurance in service for at least another year. 138

February 6th, the UK writes to the President of the UN Security Council complaining of; “... an unlawful, and dangerous action by a warship of the Republic of Argentina against the Royal Research Ship Shackleton peacefully in passage on the high seas ... engaged in scientific research connected with the theories of the continental drift and was a British contribution to the International Geodynamics Project.” The letter contains a demand that Argentina “... refrain from further harassment on the high seas of peaceful vessels in contravention of recognized international law, and reserved the right to request at a later stage appropriate action by the Security Council on this matter.”

In Buenos Aires, the newspaper La Nacion reports.

“In spite of a request by the Command of Naval Operations, the Navy was not allowed to take more drastic action.”

“In the short term the incident prompted not only the precautionary deployment of a British frigate to the area and a reprieve for HMS Endurance (whose presence in the region was threatened by the 1974 Defence Review) but also the resumption of more meaningful negotiations on sovereignty.” 139

February 9th, on completing their mission, the Shackleton team return to the UK.

February 10th, in New York, Argentina also complains to the Security Council of a; “... serious violation of the legislation concerning Argentine maritime jurisdiction committed by the United Kingdom vessel Shackleton in consequence of the scientific-geophysical and geological research activities undertaken by that vessel on the Argentine continental shelf which were clearly directed towards geological surveying, with a view to the exploitation of hydrocarbons, if found.”

February 11th, Edward Rowlands flies into the USA with instructions to inform Minister Quijano and the UN that the British are fully prepared to defend the Islands if necessary.

“In February 1976 the chiefs of staff produced a paper on military options. It was the first of four such papers. According to the report all were similar in scope and the language used was substantially the same. Having noted the limitations of the airstrip at Port Stanley and other difficulties, the 1976 paper continued, it would not be practicable to provide, transport and support the force necessary in the Islands to ensure that a determined Argentine attempt to eject the British garrison was unsuccessful.” 140

137 UN Doc A3125/Rev.1 vol.4 Appendix II
138 As ever, Britain’s defence budget was under scrutiny and there was little support within the MoD for keeping a ship in the South Atlantic.
139 Beck 1987
140 Baroness Young in HL Deb 25 January 1983 vol.438 cc136-247
“At their rendezvous on 11 February, Quijano assured Rowlands that British ships would not be harassed ‘provided they took no survey work in the critical area’. … Quijano wanted to return the dialogue along the lines of earlier formulas. Yet he did not suggest any particular proposal… Quijano was open to the idea of returning the ambassadors once a basis for resuming talks had been reached.”  

“On 11 February Ted Rowlands, held talks with the Argentine Foreign Minister in New York. He was instructed to ascertain Argentina’s views on future sovereignty discussions and restate that the Islands would be defended … Ted Rowlands commented eleven years later that the Government had, ‘… no clear goal… [we] had to feel our way.’”  

**February 17th**, *La Nacion* reports that the British Government, in a *quid pro quo*, has promised that RRS Shackleton will not operate in Argentine waters; a report immediately denied by Rowlands in Parliament. 

Argentina writes to the Special Committee on Decolonisation disputing the UK’s interpretation of UN General Assembly resolutions. 

“In presenting its case, the United Kingdom … persists in citing resolution 2065 (XX) and 3160 (XXVIII) in such a way as to suggest that the question of the Malvinas is one involving self-determination. Both of these resolutions clearly refer to the "interests" of the population of the islands and not to its "wishes". When it is considered that Argentina was deprived of the islands by an illegitimate act of force, it becomes clear that the governing principle here is that of territorial integrity … to take any other view would mean accepting this act of force, which also entailed the expulsion of the indigenous Argentine population and its replacement by subjects of the colonial Power.”  

**February 19th**, in Britain, the Chiefs of Staff inform the government that it is not feasible to establish and maintain a garrison in the Falklands, capable of repulsing a determined Argentine attack.  

**March 3rd**, responding to Argentina’s February letter, the UK tells the Special Committee on Decolonization that it does; “.. not accept that resolutions 2065 and 3160 entail a commitment … to transfer sovereignty over the Falkland Islands. … (and) they cannot agree to any settlement of those differences which is not in accordance with the wishes of the Islanders.”  

“It may also be helpful (to) comment on the incident in 1833, … when British sovereignty was confirmed. In January 1833, a British naval vessel peaceably reasserted British sovereignty, which was first established in 1765. … It is a demonstrable fact that since 1833, that is to say for nearly a century-and-a-half, a period which, coincides very closely with the period during which the nation States of Latin America have been able to assert their own right to self-determination, the United Kingdom has maintained an open, continuous, effective and peaceful possession of the Falkland Islands.”  

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# Researcher’s Comment: Worthy of note as there have been remarkably few references by the British Government recalling the history of the British in the Falklands. English involvement in the Falkland islands actually goes back to 1592 – over 400 years of history. Argentina has hardly been in existence for half that.

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141 Donaghy 2014  
142 Ellerby 1990 p.212 citing *Rowlands interview with Charlton, The Little Platoon (BBC Radio 3)*, broadcast on 3.5.87  
143 A/AC.109/520. Those settlers to be found on East Falkland Island in 1833 were from France, Germany, Britain, Uruguay and the Argentine Confederation. They were most certainly not ‘indigenous.’ Nor were the members of the garrison from Buenos Aires, the only ‘population’ to be told to leave. cf. 1833  
144 Ellerby 1990 p.212  
145 Quoted in *UN Yearbook 1976*  
146 Ibid. cf. 2012
March 4th, Foreign Secretary Callaghan, after speaking to Lord Shackleton, suggests that the runway on the Islands is extended. Reg Prentice, the Minister for Overseas Development, from whose budget the costs are likely to come, is less than enthusiastic; “Shackleton pointed out privately that a longer runway would make rapid troop deployment possible in the event of a threatened invasion from the mainland.”  

March 10th, following a review of policy initiated by James Callaghan, the Cabinet approves proposals for fresh dialogue with Argentina on all aspects of the dispute. To include the possibility of Anglo-Argentine economic co-operation in the South West Atlantic, and “the nature of a hypothetical future constitutional relationship.”  

“Any agreement we reach eventually with the Argentines will still be subject to the islanders’ concurrence...”  

“... the then Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary was given a mandate to send a personal message to the Argentine Foreign Minister proposing that the two governments should start a fresh dialogue...”  

“The closest Argentina has yet come to military action against the Falklands was in the months before the 1976 coup, ie at a time when the Government of the day were anxious to divert attention from internal problems. The heat was only taken out of the Falklands dispute in 1976 when HMG showed a willingness to negotiate.”  

March 23rd, Argentina is informed of the willingness of the British government to enter into new talks, although it is made clear that discussions are to be on a ‘without prejudice’ basis. Also that - “at the appropriate stage” - the British delegation will include Islander representation; “Leaseback was not mentioned, I may say, at any time to the Argentines, even though I was prepared to consider it...”  

On the same day, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) comes into force.  

Argentina declines to ratify the agreement as it objects to the Covenant’s emphasis that; “all peoples have the right of self-determination...”  

March 24th, Argentina’s President, Isabella Perón, is ousted in a military coup.  

“The Argentines have long held that they have only two possible policies: negotiation or invasion. We believe that invasion was spoken of, though not prepared for, during the last confused weeks of Isabel Perón’s administration.”  

A junta consisting of General Jorge Rafael Videla, Brigadier-General Orlando Agosti and Admiral Emilio Massera take command of the country. Videla takes the position of President. Admiral César Guzzetti becomes Foreign Minister. Admiral Massera immediately proposes an invasion of the Falkland Islands - Plan Goa. This requires a surprise landing on the archipelago; the removal of the existing population to Montevideo and the introduction of Argentine settlers which would; “... neatly reverse the 1833 action and forestall any wrangling about the status of the islanders under Argentine rule.”

147 Hastings & Jenkins 1997  
148 Franks 1983 para 48  
149 Callaghan memorandum quoted in FO 7/3198  
150 Hugh Carless memorandum in FO 7/3201 at 304a  
151 ALW 0420/325/1 (FCO 07-3801) entitled UK/Argentina dispute over the Falkland Islands - Policy 1980  
152 Callaghan interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.53  
154 See below. Argentina eventually ratified the covenant on August 8, 1986  
155 Hugh Carless memorandum in FO 7/3201 at 304a  
156 Hastings & Jenkins 1997 p.39
Concerned about Britain’s submarine force, Massera’s plan is not adopted.

“The Argentine Government was in financial and political difficulties. General Jorge Videla, the Junta’s leader, instituted a 'Process of National reorganization'. All forms of opposition to the regime - encompassing liberals, communists and trade unionists - were liquidated. In 1977 Amnesty International published a report on a mission to Argentina the previous November which accused the military of committing atrocities (by 1982 the ‘dirty war’ is estimated to have resulted in 20,000 arrests, 11,000 murders and 2 million people fleeing the country).” 157

April 5th, James Callaghan takes over as Britain’s Prime Minister following the resignation of Harold Wilson. Anthony Crosland becomes Foreign Secretary. Speaking in Parliament, Viscount Boyd refers to the rights of the Islanders. During his speech, he quotes a Canadian newspaper.

“Somewhere in the Third World there must be hidden away the secret rules about who is entitled to self-determination. One suspects that they consist of just one rule and one exception. The rule seems to be that any colonial territory, however minuscule, is not only entitled to independence but obliged to demand it. The exception simply states that European populated territories are different.” 158

In Argentina, the controlling junta introduce a compulsory course on geopolitics in Argentine secondary schools designed to teach students about; ‘Argentine National Sovereignty’. 159

April 29th, Argentina’s new Foreign Minister responds to the March 23rd British message.

“Unlike his predecessor, Guzzetti sought clarification on the phrase about the future relationship between the Falklands and Argentina. He also ruled out the return of ambassadors until a basis for a new dialogue had been reached. Guzzetti did not object to islanders participating as part of a British delegation in talks over economic cooperation. However, this did not extend ... (to) sovereignty.” 160

In May, elections are held for seats on the Falklands Legislative Council.

“Some 1,119 persons voted, representing 13.8 per cent of the electorate. ... Following the elections, the Governor nominated H. L. Bound and A. B. Hadden as members of the Legislative Council.”

In London, Shackleton presents his 400-page report which, contrary to the previous assertions of the FCO, reveals that the Islands are not only self-supporting but make a profit for the Exchequer. Shackleton estimates that UK based companies had made a 4 million GBP 'profit' between 1950 and 1970, even after defence costs, subsidies and grants had been taken into account.

# Researcher’s Comment: A huge surprise and the cause of much consternation at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office which would attempt to suppress the report.

The report also criticises the powers that the Falkland Islands Company has to make decisions affecting the lives of the Islanders and notes that between 1951 and 1974 the absentee landowners had taken £11.5 million more in profit than they had reinvested in the Islands. Shackleton recommends public-investment projects totalling £13 million in addition to the cost of the proposed runway.

“A lot of the report was about the tremendous opportunities and enormous potential for development... our particular appreciation of the Shackleton Report... was that it would be just frankly physically, politically,

157 Ellerby 1990 p.212
158 Falkland Islanders cling to Britain in the Alberta newspaper. HL Deb 20 April 1977 vol.382 cc222-66
159 Dodds 2002 p.161
160 Donaghby 2014
militarily impossible to adopt. It was a grand scale concept of development without any form of negotiated settlement on the other issues.” 161

May 7th, Britain’s charge d’affairs in Buenos Aires considers Shackleton’s conclusions.

“It will be highly unpalatable... It will hardly escape their notice that the whole thrust of the report’s recommendations is in the direction of greater self-sufficiency for the Falkland Islands and thus greater independence from Argentina – the opposite, in fact, of what Argentina and, paradoxically, HMG have been trying to achieve...” 162

May 20th, the United Kingdom ratifies the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966). By the act of ratification the terms of the ICCPR are extended to Britain’s Overseas Territories, including the Falkland Islands.

“Article 1 - All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

Article 2 - All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.

Article 3 - The States Parties to the present Covenant, including those having responsibility for the administration of Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, shall promote the realization of the right of self-determination, and shall respect that right, in conformity with the provisions of the Charter....”

# Researcher’s Comment: This was important. Self-determination as a concept had its roots in the First World War but only came to be accepted as a principle to be pursued after the Second World War with the formation of the United Nations. Britain in the 1940s and 1950s had been reluctant to see self-determination as anything other than a general principle. The adoption of the Covenant by the UN in 1966 was not welcomed by the UK but ten years later, and still reluctantly, Britain had come to the realisation that self-determination had to be accepted as a right. A human right. In many ways British reluctance was well founded. Self-determination was seen as likely to complicate both international relationships and diplomacy. It has. However, the concept first laid out by Woodrow Wilson after the Great War had become unstoppable. Its merits could not be denied although many nations still attempt to do so. A simple truth. A dangerous simple truth. People power.

May 25th, Rowlands speaks to Shackleton regarding the report’s conclusions; “Rowlands felt it was a fantasy to consider proposals without close cooperation from Argentina, and spelled out to Shackleton the international political repercussions which could arise.” 163

June 2nd, in Buenos Aires, charge d’affairs Shakespeare is informed that the junta wish to reopen talks. It is suggested that a forthcoming conference in Paris may present a suitable opportunity for a meeting.

June 10th, in Santiago, US Secretary Kissinger and Argentine Foreign Minister Guzzetti meet to discuss their relationship. Guzzetti tells Kissinger; “Until now, the United States Government has abstained on the Falkland Island issue. The issue is very important to Argentina. We hope that the United States Government would reconsider its position and help us.”

161 Ted Rowlands interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.48
162 Shakespeare to Crosland May 7, 1976 in FO 7/3226
163 Donaghy 2014
Kissinger responds; “It is difficult for us to get involved... But I suspect that, even so, over time the problem can be solved. The original purpose of the British presence is no longer being served by the Falklands, which are no longer necessary to protect sea lanes.”

Guzzetti answers; “That is true, but what troubles us is that Great Britain wants self-determination for 2,000 people — and 1,600 of them are employees of the Falkland Island Company. This is not a question of historic rights. So long as this uncertain situation is unresolved it can always be complicated by collateral issues.”

**June 11th**, Rowlands notes that Shackleton’s report is likely; “… to embarrass and endanger HMG’s policy of opening a new dialogue with Argentina... the inference that any Argentine government will draw is that this report is nothing more than an assertion of British sovereignty forever and a day.”

On the same day, the FCO respond to the junta’s requests for talks in Paris. Shakespeare tells the Argentine Foreign Ministry that the British Government agrees to a conversation taking place provided that such is as; “informal and free-ranging as possible.” Most importantly any conversation has to be, “in confidence.” Ezequiel Pereyra responds that his delegation will be briefed only to cover the issue of sovereignty in any depth.

**June 22nd**, Shackleton acknowledges that his views are “not palatable,” coming at an, “awkward moment.”

Under pressure from the Foreign Office, Lord Shackleton agrees to amend his introduction to the report prior to publication. The revised introduction is to include a paragraph acknowledging the need for cooperation with Argentina.

During **July**, in London, islanders hold meetings with MPs and the Foreign Office. They are not informed of the Anglo-Argentine meeting in Paris.

**July 10th**, in Paris, delegates from Britain and Argentina sit down for informal, exploratory, talks. Argentina’s Deputy Foreign Minister, Gualter Allara, proposes that the two countries return to the idea of a joint administration of the Islands, similar to the previously abandoned condominium. Britain’s Robin Edmonds points out that Islander objection caused this to fail and that the Islands lobby could not easily be ignored.

A copy of the Shackleton report is handed over to the Argentine team.

“The exploratory talks… have so far remained strictly confidential and we have not informed the Islanders. They have been of use in initiating the fresh dialogue proposed by the then Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary in March…. the Argentines have predictably concentrated on moving towards their aim of bringing us to negotiate about the transfer of sovereignty. But, in contrast to their Peronist predecessors, they have shown some understanding of our position. In particular, they seem to accept that future discussions/negotiations should cover our theme of economic co-operation... as well as their theme of sovereignty – which we have so far insisted on referring to as “the nature of a hypothetical future constitutional relationship between Argentina and the Falkland Islands.” ...”

**July 13th**, Allara travels to Britain to speak to Rowlands. It is agreed that negotiations should resume in August.

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165 Rowlands to Croskland, June 11, 1976 in FO 7/3200
166 Freedman 2005 vol.1 p.45
167 Donaghy 2014
168 *The Friends of the Falkland Islands: Newsletter* Nov 1976
169 Hugh Carless memorandum in FO 7/3201 at 304a
**July 20th**, Shackleton’s report is published. Shackleton speaks to the Press.

“In recent years instead of the Islands living on Great Britain, Great Britain has been living on the Islands. More has come out as taxes than has gone in as aid.”

“Shackleton rejected at a news conference the idea that development was doomed without Argentine collaboration but thought it would be "foolish" not to seek it.” 170

**August 2nd**, Geoffrey Crossley, Britain’s Ambassador to Colombia, writes to the FCO.

“It is ludicrous that the interests of less than 2000 persons... should be allowed to be a thorn in the flesh of Anglo-Latin American relations... Surely the time has come for HMG to let the inhabitants of the Islands know that they are a nuisance...” 171

**August 7th**, *in-camera* negotiations between Britain and Argentina are held aboard *Fragata Sarmiento*, at anchor off Buenos Aries. Argentina proposes a gradual transfer of sovereignty, with a provisional administration lasting for a single period of eight years under alternating British/Argentine Governors. Each serving for 2 years. Britain’s delegation refer to the need for further Islander consultation.

“What means were envisaged for ascertaining the views of the islanders both during the negotiations of the proposed Agreement and prior to the specified date?” 172

“This question was avoided by the Argentines in their answer...” 173

**August 8th**, talks continue. Allara asserts that resolution 1514 limits the question to a matter of territorial integrity and that self-determination is inapplicable in this case. The dispute, therefore, is a bilateral one. It does not involve the islanders, whose *interests* only may be considered. Allara adds that his proposals extend to the Dependencies.

“At the second round of talks, the Argentines produced a paper proposing joint administration of the Islands to be followed, after 8 years, by the transfer of sovereignty to Argentina. As it stands, this paper is quite unacceptable.” 174

“... the British delegation made no written commitments. But Edmonds concluded by repeating that whatever the sovereignty model proposed, it would be examined by two interrelated criteria of great importance to the British government. (a) What was likely to be acceptable to the islanders? (b) What was likely to be acceptable to the British Parliament and public.” 175

**August 26th**, an article in *The Times* newspaper considers the Shackleton report and suggests that the Islands’ Governor is in favour of an Argentine take-over. 176

**September 14th**, advice from the Foreign Office’s legal advisers is sought and given.

“... an agreement on the lines of the proposal as it now stands would contain an unconditional undertaking by HMG to cede the Islands on a specified future date. ... such an agreement could only be...”

170 Ellerby 1990 p.205
171 Crossley to Carless, August 2, 1976 in FO 7/3229
172 Quoted in FO 7/3201 at 283a
173 Legal advice in FO 7/3201 at 283a
174 Hugh Carless memorandum in FO 7/3201 at 304a
175 Donaghy 2014
176 Governor: We must have cooperation with Argentina Michael Frenchman The Times August 26, 1976
implemented by Act of Parliament... It would also be necessary to use an Act of Parliament if the new arrangements for the Falkland Islands had the effect of restricting the right of Parliament or the Sovereign to legislate for the territory, or were repugnant to any previous Act of Parliament.” 177

**September 17**th, the Special Committee on Decolonization adopt a draft-resolution calling for the UK and Argentina to expedite negotiations concerning the dispute over sovereignty.

Argentina lands a military expedition on Southern Thule, in the South Sandwich Islands. Twenty soldiers under the command of a Major. A weather and radio station are established, and given the name Corbeta Uruguay. 178

# Researcher’s Comment: An invasion. There is no other word for it. Southern Thule had been claimed by Britain since 1908. By Argentina only after 1938 although 1952 is legally the more correct. A secret. The action was covert and not published nor mentioned by Argentina in any forum.

**October 8**th, in London, Hugh Carless submits an assessment of the situation for the Foreign Secretary.

“We have now reached a turning point where we must decide about the next stage in the dialogue. We cannot embark on a third round of talks without having some idea of where we intend to go thereafter, since our tactics will to some extent vary according to the strategy we choose.” 179

Carless lists four options; “… in the short term.” The first calls for talks to be stopped on the basis that the British side cannot accept any development into negotiations over sovereignty. His second option is to play for time - “The aim would be to persuade the Argentines that we were serious about making progress, without in fact taking any substantive steps forward.” Third is to develop the present talks into; “… substantive, but still secret, negotiations…” with the aim of securing Argentine acceptance of terms of reference for a series of negotiations about Anglo-Argentine interests. Finally, Carless suggests the option of going public about the intention to negotiate.

“If we chose this course, we must recognise (and probably state) that these negotiations could not exclude the question of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands. The experiences of Mr. Michael Stewart in the House in 1968 show that it would be essential to give assurances from its outset that we were being frank about the subject matter for negotiation and that the wishes of the Islanders would not be disregarded at any stage…. This option would allow us to retain the initiative and of reducing the Falklands lobby’s ability to launch accusations of planning a secret sell-out.” 180

Listing longer term objectives, Carless mentions ‘leaseback’, ‘joint sovereignty/condominium’, a ‘buy-out’ of the Islanders and ‘transfer of sovereignty.’ Concluding, he suggests that a public round of negotiations take place (option 4) with the long term aim of some ‘leaseback’ or ‘condominium’ arrangement.

“At every stage it will be essential to pay particular attention to nursing Islander opinion. Our ability to bring them along with us will be crucial to the success or failure of our strategy. Given that the Islanders are likely to reject the idea of an early transfer of sovereignty to Argentina, however qualified, we may have to adopt a two-stage approach to negotiations. This would mean concentrating initially on a politico-economic package which would fall short of full transfer of sovereignty but which the Argentines would see as a stepping-stone to a fuller settlement at a later stage – by which time the Islanders would, we hope, have adjusted to the prospect of a change in sovereignty status.” 181

177 FO 7/3201 at 283a & 304a
178 Some have seen this as the compensation offered to Admiral Massera for the junta’s decision not to adopt Plan Goa.
179 Hugh Carless memorandum in FO 7/3201 at 283a
180 Ibid.
181 Ibid
October 14th, Ted Rowlands notes; “All that can be said of successive British Governments is that they avoided war and brought the Islanders and Argentines marginally closer together... we are trying to reconcile two apparently irreconcilable demands: the Argentine demand for us to hand over sovereignty – or at least to talk about handing it over – and the demand of the Islanders and the Lobby here that we do no such thing.” 182

On the same day, the UK Falkland Islands Committee severs its link with the Falkland Islands Company.

Britain’s Overseas Development department rejects the Shackleton Report as overambitious. As regards the recommendations for an airport, a ‘feasibility study’ is promised.

“The British government was presented with a report containing proposals which it was incapable of fulfilling, and this could only spell further trouble for its relationship with the islanders...” 183

November 15th, at the UN, the Fourth Committee reviews the work of the Special Committee on Decolonization. Argentina’s representative makes a statement.

“General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 established quite clearly, in paragraph 6, that in certain circumstances - including without any doubt, those deriving from acts of territorial usurpation against a country - the applicable principle was territorial integrity and not self-determination.” 184

He also refers to the ICJ’s 1975 opinion concerning Western Sahara.

“... the Court, while recognizing the important role of the principle of self-determination, had pointed out that on a number of occasions the General Assembly had given priority to the principle of territorial integrity, particularly when the colonial Territory had been created to the prejudice of the country to which the Territory belonged originally. Furthermore, in paragraph 87 of the opinion, the Court had affirmed quite clearly that in all cases the "special characteristics” of the Territory should borne in mind. 185 However, the most decisive paragraph on the subject was paragraph 162, from a reading of which it was perfectly clear that in those situations where there was a dispute regarding sovereignty over a colonial Territory, whether or not the principle of self-determination should be applied depended on the nature of the link between the Territory in question and the State in question at the moment of colonization.” 186

182 FO 7/3201/307
183 Donaghy 2014
184 My emphasis. An assumption, without doubt.
185 See https://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/61/061-19751016-ADV-01-00-EN.pdf  Inaccurate. What para.87 actually said was - “Western Sahara (Rio de Oro and Sakiet El Hamra) is a territory having very special characteristics which, at the time of colonization by Spain, largely determined the way of life and social and political organization of the peoples inhabiting it. In consequence, the legal régime of Western Sahara, including its legal relations with neighbouring territories, cannot properly be appreciated without reference to these special characteristics. The territory forms part of the great Sahara desert which extends from the Atlantic Coast of Africa to Egypt and the Sudan. At the time of its colonization by Spain, the area of this desert with which the Court is concerned was being exploited, because of its low and spasmodic rainfall, almost exclusively by nomads, pasturing their animals or growing crops as and where conditions were favourable. It may be said that the territory, at the time of its colonization, had a sparse population that, for the most part, consisted of nomadic tribes the members of which traversed the desert on more or less regular routes dictated by the seasons and the wells or water-holes available to them. In general, the Court was informed, the right of pasture was enjoyed in common by these tribes; some areas suitable for cultivation, on the other hand, were subject to a greater degree to separate rights. Perennial water-holes were in principle considered the property of the tribe which put them into commission, though their use also was open to all, subject to certain customs as to priorities and the amount of water taken. Similarly, many tribes were said to have their recognized burial grounds, which constituted a rallying point for themselves and for allied tribes. Another feature of life in the region, according to the information before the Court, was that inter-tribal conflict was not infrequent.”
186 Again inaccurate. Para.162 actually said - "The materials and information presented to the Court show the existence, at
Britain exercises a right of reply.

“The United Kingdom delegation was told that the Falkland Islands was a special case. It did not accept that. ... The people of the Falkland Islands had the right to be consulted and to have their wishes about their own future taken into account. Yet, the draft which was before the General Assembly deliberately set those wishes aside as though the views of the people of the Falkland Islands were of no account.”\textsuperscript{187}

The draft-resolution calling for negotiations on the issue of sovereignty receives the Fourth Committee’s approval. However, more nations abstain than Argentina had anticipated, causing consternation among the Argentine delegation.

“While his delegation respected the right of every delegation to change its position on a particular question when and for whatever reasons it deemed appropriate, he said that his delegation was surprised at the decision of certain countries which, having voted in favour of resolutions 2065 (XX) and 3160 (XXVIII), had, on the current occasion, taken a different position.”\textsuperscript{188}

December 1\textsuperscript{st}, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopts Resolution 31/49 (XXXI).\textsuperscript{189}

“... 2. Expresses its gratitude for the continuous efforts made by the Government of Argentina, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the General Assembly, to facilitate the process of decolonisation and to promote the well-being of the populations of the islands;

3. Requests the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to expedite the negotiations concerning the dispute over sovereignty, as requested in General Assembly resolutions 2065 (XX) and 3160 (XXVIII);

4. Calls upon the two parties to refrain from taking decisions that would imply introducing unilateral modifications in the situation while the islands are going through the process recommended in the above-mentioned resolutions;..”

December 8\textsuperscript{th}, in London, the Cabinet approve a mixed approach to future talks with Argentina.

“It included two courses of action in the event of continued islander objections to leaseback. Firstly, the government would tell Argentina that it could not proceed with the negotiations against the islanders’ wishes. It could then buy time by making a series of minor arrangements (e.g. shared administration of the Dependencies) or a single large concession, such as an Argentine sovereign base on these uninhabited islands. In exchange Britain would seek Argentine economic cooperation covering fishing, oil exploration and

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\textsuperscript{187} UN Doc A32/23/Rev.1 Chapter 28

\textsuperscript{188} This resolution passed 102:1 (UK) with 36 abstentions. 13 Commonwealth countries voted in favour – Bangladesh, Cyprus, Ghana, India, Lesotho, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Uganda, Tanzania & Zambia.

research... This was to be followed by a ministerial visit to Stanley and Buenos Aires in February, the second stage of Crosland’s formula. Rowlands brief would be ‘to establish prospects for a move forward into some form of negotiations in 1977 which might lead towards the [politico-economic] package deal” 190

December 16th, James Roland Walter Parker is appointed as the next Governor of the Falkland Islands. 191

December 29th, a helicopter from HMS Endurance, visiting Southern Thule to retrieve scientific equipment left earlier in the year, discovers the Argentine military presence.

December 31st, Britain’s Secretary of State for Defence, Fred Mulley, proposes that, with tensions with Argentina easing, now is the time for Endurance to be withdrawn.

“... when I have been obliged to accept cuts in the defence budget for 1977/78 and 1978/79, I cannot justify the expenditure of an estimated £1.8m for a purpose which has no relations to our NATO commitments...” 192

1977 – January 5th, Argentina’s charge d’affaires in London is summoned to explain the presence of a military base on Southern Thule.

“A JIC assessment in January 1977 concluded that the Argentine Government were unlikely to order withdrawal until it suited them to do so and, depending on the British Government's actions in the situation, could be encouraged to attempt further military measures against British interests in the area.” 193

January 14th, Argentina tells the UK Government that the purpose of the Southern Thule operation is to establish a scientific station within the jurisdiction of Argentine sovereignty. They express the hope that nothing will cloud the, “auspicious perspectives” for negotiations. News of the landings is not made public in the UK.

A ‘Falkland Islands Office’ opens in London. 194

January 19th, the British Government formally protests the violation of British sovereignty on Southern Thule.

“... (Admiral) Guzzetti said to Rowlands, "These Argentine scientists are only going to be there for a short summer season." We accepted that explanation at the time. We accepted it because we were at the beginning of the Crosland concept of long-term negotiation... We agonised over it considerably. But if we had made a public song and dance about it, we would then have had to decide whether to break off the whole negotiating process. We decided that negotiation was more important.” 195

# Researcher’s Comment: Britain’s Labour Government not only acted inadequately in the face of an Argentine invasion of British territory, but then compounded the offence by keeping it a secret from the British public. More importantly, kept from Parliament. There is no doubt that the Commons would have erupted. How this could have been viewed as a reasonable policy under any circumstances is unfathomable. It would be 1982 before the Argentines were ejected from the Corbeta Uruguay base and the island of Southern Thule.

190 Donaghy 2014
191 The London Gazette No. 47113
192 Mulley to Crosland December 31, 1976 DEFE 24/911. Quoted in Donaghy 2014
194 This was under the control of the UK Falkland Islands Committee and the Falkland islands Research & Development Association. Not the Falkland Islands Government, whose representative office opened in 1983
195 Hugh Carless quoted in Charlton 1989 p.60
The British Government receive intelligence that Admiral Massera’s *Plan Goa* – an invasion of the Falklands – is actively being considered by the junta. 196

**February 1**\(^{st}\), Britain’s Joint Intelligence Committee assess the Southern Thule occupation; describing it as a political act that may be considered so successful by Argentina as to encourage further displays.

**February 2**\(^{nd}\), Foreign Secretary Anthony Crosland, makes an announcement to Parliament.

“... the time has come to consider both with the Islanders and the Argentine Government whether a climate exists for discussing the broad issues which bear on the future of the Falkland Islands, and the possibilities of co-operation between Britain and Argentina in the region of the South West Atlantic....

*I must make certain things absolutely clear. First, any such discussion, which would inevitably raise fundamental questions in the relationship between the Islands, Britain and Argentina, would take place under a sovereignty umbrella: that is, Her Majesty's Government would wholly reserve their position on the issue of sovereignty, which would in no way be prejudiced.

Secondly, any changes which might be proposed must be acceptable to the Islanders, whose interests and well-being remain our prime concern.

*In consequence, thirdly, there must be full consultation with the Islanders at every stage; nothing will be done behind their backs.*” 197

“At the same time he announced that the Government did not accept the more costly recommendations in the Shackleton Report, notably the enlargement of the airport and the lengthening of the runway. At a time when Argentina had just occupied British territory, what sort of a signal was that?” 198

**February 7**\(^{th}\), intelligence suggests that *Plan Goa* has been placed on hold over fears that the United Nations will not support it

“... later intelligence indicated that this plan had been shelved, not because of any action by the then British Government but because Argentina could not count on the support of the Third World or the Communist bloc.” 199

“Argentina could count on ‘qualified’ support: backing its claim in the fight against colonialism, but was not considered strong enough to .... achieve a fait accompli.” 200

**February 15**\(^{th}\), Edward Rowlands lands in Buenos Aires, en-route to the Falklands. He holds brief talks with the Argentine Foreign Minister before moving on.

**February 16**\(^{th}\), in Stanley, Rowlands is addressed by Islands’ councillors.

“*We wish to have co-operation with Argentina only in the form of a normal relationship between any two countries (Keep the Falkland Islands British).*” 201

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197 HC Deb 02 February 1977 vol.925 cc550-61 Crosland also provided the Government response to the *Shackleton Report*, rejecting the more costly recommendations and indicating that further inquiries would be conducted.
198 Baroness Young in *HL Deb 25 January 1983 vol.438 cc136-247*
199 *Ibid*
200 Donaghy 2014
201 The Falkland Islands Committee quoted in Ellerby 1990 p.214 citing *The Falkland Islands Times (Port Stanley)*, 8 Mar. 1977
“Initially councillors were non-committal, seeking to circumvent the sovereignty debate by stressing the need for a referendum. Yet Rowland’s patient, frank explanation turned their stance...” 202

**February 17th**, the Falklands Legislative Council issue a statement.

“We understand that the Minister will have to have discussions on the sovereignty question while in Argentina. We realise that these discussions will take place under the sovereignty umbrella and so the stand of all parties concerned will remain unaffected...”

**February 18th**, in London, the arbitration panel considering the Beagle Channel dispute between Chile and Argentina gives its decision. In favour of Chile. 203

“... the Parties were agreed in principle that their rights in the matter of claims or title to territory were governed prima facie by the doctrine of the uti possidetis juris of 1810. This doctrine - possibly, at least at first, a political tenet rather than a true rule of law - is peculiar to the field of the Spanish-American States whose territories were formerly under the rule of the Spanish Crown, and even if both the scope and applicability of the doctrine were somewhat uncertain, particularly in such far-distant regions of the continent as are those in issue in the present case, it undoubtedly constituted an important element in the inter-relationships of the continent.

As the Court understand the matter, the doctrine has two aspects.

First, all territory in Spanish-America, however remote or inhospitable, is deemed to have been part of one of the former administrative divisions of Spanish colonial rule (vice-royalties, captaincies-general, etc.). Hence there is no territory in Spanish-America that has the status of res nullius open to an acquisition of title by occupation.

Secondly, the title to any given locality is deemed to have become automatically vested in whatever Spanish-American State inherited or took over the former Spanish administrative division in which the locality concerned was stipulated (uti possidetis, ita possidenteis, - the full formula).

Looked at in another way, uti possidetis was a convenient method of establishing the boundaries of the young Spanish-American States on the same basis as those of the old Spanish administrative divisions, except that the latter were themselves often uncertain or ill-defined or, in the less accessible regions, not factually established at all, - or again underwent various changes.”

“... essentially an accord on boundaries between successor states of the same (Spanish) empire, not an assertion of sovereignty against outsiders.” 204

“As a principle, it could be applied only to a dispute between Latin American nations. ... Whether it is applicable in a dispute with a non-Spanish American nation is open to doubt.” 205

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202 Donaghy 2014
203 Reports of International Arbitral Awards: Dispute between Argentina and Chile concerning the Beagle Channel February 18, 1977 vol.xxi pp.53-264. See [http://legal.un.org/riaa/cases/vol_XXI/53-264.pdf](http://legal.un.org/riaa/cases/vol_XXI/53-264.pdf) An arbitration agreement had been signed by the two nations in June, 1971. Both had agreed to abide by the decision of Queen Elizabeth II acting as arbitrator, on the advice of a panel made up of ICJ judges. A right of appeal was included within the Compromiso. In January 1978 a letter was sent to both Chile and Argentina to discover whether they were content that the arbitration process had been completed. Chile answered in the positive and to say that, as far as it was concerned the Award had been duly implemented. Argentina did not reply. Nor did Argentina reply to a further inquiry in March, 1978, despite having already contacted Chile. On July 10, 1978, the President of the Court of Arbitration notified Queen Elizabeth II that, in its opinion, “... the Award stands fully and materially executed.” The arbitration panel then stood down. cf: 1978
204 Falklands Title Deeds M. Deas 1982
205 Falklands or Malvinas? The Background to the Dispute J. Metford 1968
February 20th, Rowlands arrives back in Buenos Aires for talks.

February 21st, in Buenos Aires, following negotiations between Rowlands and Allara, a joint-statement is released that merely stated the need for the two sides to consult their governments.

“In light of the concessions which we were able to bring them, the talks were much stickier than expected. It does not bode well for the next round, when the really difficult stage – of substantive negotiations – begins.” 206

In London, David Owen takes over as Foreign Secretary.

“It seemed to me that we had an obligation to try and ensure the economic prosperity of the islanders, to reduce its isolation, and to accept that they would live happily in the region if there could be a mutual understanding with Argentina. Did I believe that the Islanders should have a veto on negotiations? My answer to that, .. was no.” 207

February 22nd, Rowlands flies back to the UK.

“I came back convinced that it was a perfectly legitimate and, in my opinion, important right of British foreign policy to defend the rights of a minority. .. I came back convinced that while I believed I could carry the Islanders with me, if we could get a workable solution and something Argentines would agree to, I was also convinced that we could not actually over-rule the Islanders.” 208

February 23rd, the Guardian newspaper journalist Richard Gott, in a piece on Rowland’s round-trip, writes about the islanders.

“(They) need to be told quite firmly.. that although they wish the islands to remain a British colony, the British in 1977 plainly do not. The Falkland Islands are an absurd colonial anachronism.”

Falklanders’ respond.

“The South American way of life is as foreign to us as the oriental one is to you. Our cultures, laws, politics, language etc., are entirely different. If we wanted the South American way of life we would go there and live.” 209

March 3rd, in London, the Falkland Islands Research & Development Association is incorporated as a non-profit making business.

“Its objectives were to represent the interests of the Falklands and to promote the economic, social and cultural development of the Islands for the benefit of the inhabitants. The Association had four functions. First, to provide the U.K.F.I.C. and affiliated groups with an office and salaried staff in London. Secondly, to incorporate a members’ organization to which sympathizers in Britain and the people of the Falklands could subscribe. Thirdly, to provide Islanders visiting Britain and anyone interested in the Falklands with an information centre. Fourthly, to stimulate the commercial implementation of the Shackleton Report’s recommendations in accordance with the wishes of the Islanders.” 210

March 11th, Argentina proposes that there should be one set of negotiations. To include both sovereignty and economic cooperation. The British government agree.

206 Shakespeare quoted in Donaghy 2014
207 Owen quoted in Donaghy 2014
208 Ted Rowlands interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.57
209 An Island’s response in The Falkland Islands Times March 8, 1977
210 Ellerby 1990 p.240
“Allara was delighted. He emphasised the need to make a statement soon, since public opinion was getting ‘restless.’... Shakespeare believed his desire for an early announcement was linked to his government’s need to have something favourable to give the public, and offset the ‘disastrous effect’ of the forthcoming award to Chile.”  

In April, it is reported that a prominent Argentine businessman, Cao Saravia is prepared to pay $US 10 million for the Falkland Islands Company; at least $1 million more than the asking price. Rowlands makes a statement to the House of Commons.

“... no land can be alienated on Falkland Islands without the permission of the Falkland Islands Government itself; the British Government would not support such a move.”

“The Board of Directors of the Company announced that they would not agree to a transfer of ownership to Argentine interests and pointed out that in any event a pre-emptive right to purchase the Company is vested in the Falkland Islands Sheep Owners' Association Ltd. and that the Islands Government would need to approve any transfer of control to an alien.”

April 18th, the decision of the Beagle Channel arbitration panel case is ratified by Elizabeth II.  

April 20th, in Parliament, Lord Goronwy-Roberts makes a statement about the Falklands’ negotiations.

“There is absolutely no doubt in this country in legal or Government circles about where sovereignty lies. It is here, in the United Kingdom.”

April 26th, Foreign Secretary, Dr Owen, gives the House of Commons the Government’s Terms of Reference for Negotiations in a written parliamentary answer.

“The Governments of the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have agreed to hold negotiations from June or July 1977 which will concern future political relations, including sovereignty, with regard to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands, and economic co-operation with regard to the said territories, in particular, and the South West Atlantic, in general.

In these negotiations the issues affecting the future of the Islands will be discussed and negotiations will be directed to the working out of a peaceful solution to the existing dispute on sovereignty between the two states, and the establishment of a framework for Anglo-Argentine economic co-operation which will contribute substantially to the development of the islands. A major objective of the negotiations will be to achieve a stable, prosperous and politically durable future for the Islands, whose people the Government of the United Kingdom will consult during the course of the negotiations. The agreement to hold these negotiations, and the negotiations themselves, are without prejudice to the position of either Government with regard to sovereignty over the Islands.

The level at which the negotiations will be conducted, and the times and places at which they will be held, will be determined by agreement between the two Governments. If necessary, special Working Groups will be established.”

211 Donaghy 2014. The Beagle Channel arbitration decision had actually been reached 3 weeks before, but was not formally ratified by Queen Elizabeth II until April, 1977 and only announced in the May.
214 HL Deb 20 April 1977 vol.382 cc222-66
215 Quoted in FCO 76/1892 Annex 2. Also Franks 1983 para.60. Owen's willing inclusion of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands is unexplainable.
May 7th, Following an attempted assassination of Argentina’s Foreign Minister, the Montoneros Group claim responsibility. They assert that Guzetti had been negotiating a deal with Britain over the Falklands which would reduce Argentine sovereignty and allow for the exploitation of oil and the fisheries by British interests.

Argentina declares a 200-mile limit around the Falkland Islands.

“... in May 1977 Argentina declared a 200-mile fishing right around the Falkland Islands. Despite United Kingdom official protests, Argentina subsequently contracted fishing rights in this area with Japan and West Germany. It must be as apparent to noble Lords as it is apparent to me that the commercial and strategic importance of these waters is evidenced by the attention being paid to them by nations other than the United Kingdom...” 216

May 20th, the Ministry of Defence warns the FCO that it intends to withdraw Endurance in May, 1978.

May 23rd, Oscar Montes is appointed as Argentina’s Foreign Minister.

In July, the FCO prepare for negotiations with Argentina with a paper presented to the Cabinet’s OD Committee by Secretary Owen.

“... serious and substantive negotiations were necessary to keep the Argentines in play, since the Islands were militarily indefensible except by a major, costly and unacceptable diversion of current resources.” 217

“The Committee decided that the aim should be to keep the negotiations going. ... Broadly speaking it was the Government's strategy to retain sovereignty as long as possible, if necessary making concessions in respect of the dependencies and the maritime resources in the area, while recognising that ultimately only some form of leaseback arrangement was likely to satisfy Argentina...” 218

“The British objective, yet again, was to play for time.” 219

July 13th, delegations from Argentina and the UK meet in Rome for three days of talks.

“A change of location did not alter proceedings... minimal progress was being made. Allara repeated that the principle of self-determination was 'absolutely inapplicable' to the Falkland Islands archipelago, and that the restitution of Argentine sovereignty took priority over the economic dimension. ... The British team were unimpressed. Cortazzi ... (re-emphasised) that no British government could conform to proposals which were being forced on the Islanders.” 220

July 14th, Britain’s Daily Mail newspaper complains that talks are taking place “behind Islanders’ backs.”

July 15th, in Rome, negotiations come to an end without any clear way forward being found.

“We are told that in the talks the British side put forward the idea that the sovereignty of the uninhabited dependencies might be "looked at separately" from the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands themselves. The Argentine reaction to that further signal is not recorded.” 221

“Argentine proposals to establish ‘working groups’ were rejected by Cortazzi, who felt the gap was too large to begin discussing compromises. Allara suggested further negotiations in September but Cortazzi, citing party

216 Lord Morris in HL Deb 22 May 1979 vol.400 cc233-432
217 Quoted by Baroness Young in HL Deb 25 January 1983 vol.438 cc136-247
218 Ibid
219 Donaghy 2014
220 Ibid
221 Baroness Young in HL Deb 25 January 1983 vol.438 cc136-247
conferences and South Africa, said there would be no ministerial time until November. Allara accepted this and the talks fizzled out.”

**July 27th,** in Parliament, 140 backbenchers from all the parties sign a motion acknowledging the Falkland Islanders’ wish to remain British.

**July 28th,** a meeting is held at the House of Commons, attended by the Falkland Islands Company, the Foreign Office and representatives of Britain’s fishing industry.

“It was sponsored by James Johnson, the Labour MP for Kingston-upon-Hull West (a constituency seriously affected by the decline in the distant-water fishing fleet) and chaired by Bill Hunter Christie. As a result the S.A.F.C.\(^{223}\) was formed composed of representatives from British United Trawlers, Christian Salvesens Ltd., the Confederation of Fried Fish Caterers’ Associations, the National Farmers’ Union, the National Fish Fryers’ Federation, the White Fish Authority, Alginate Industries Ltd. and the F.I.C.”\(^{224}\)

In **August** an expedition from Cambridge University arrive in the Falklands to collect data on wrecks.\(^{225}\)

In London; “... a ‘Falkland Islands Week’ was held which included the presentation of a petition to 10 Downing Street. National newspapers produced photographs of Sukie Cameron, a daughter of Norman Cameron, modelling a ‘Keep the Falkland Islands British’ T-shirt.”\(^{226}\)

**August 17th,** the Special Committee on Decolonization refers the Falklands issue to the Fourth Committee.

In **September,** Argentine Navy vessels fire on Russian and Bulgarian fishing boats working in Falklands waters.

Adrian Monk, representing the Falkland Islands Legislature, attends the **23**\(^{rd}\) Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Ottawa.

“We .. wonder why, when the Argentinian claim to our country is discussed in the United Nations and elsewhere, so few Commonwealth countries support our desire to retain our democratic, British way of life. We are continually being pressured to join with that country, whose way of life is alien to us, a country often without even the pretence of a democratic government, a country where human rights are virtually non-existent, a country with different cultures and a different language. ..”

**September 23**\(^{rd}\), in the *The Sunday Times.*

“The Falkland Islands have undoubtedly suffered from the amalgamation of the Commonwealth Office with the Foreign Office; passing under the control of the Latin American department whose main care is to foster easy relations with those States, not to defend a handful of people’s rights to self determination.”

Britain’s Foreign Secretary, David Owen, meets Argentina’s Foreign Minister, Oscar Montes, at the UN.

**September 25**\(^{th}\), *The Observer,* asks whether the FCO are intent upon “giving away” the archipelago.

Argentina’s navy ‘arrest’ Russian and Bulgarian fishing vessels operating within Falklands waters.

**October 4**\(^{th}\), the FCO prepare for a round of negotiations with Argentina scheduled for November.

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\(^{222}\) Donaghy 2014

\(^{223}\) South Atlantic Fisheries Committee


\(^{225}\) Cambridge Expedition to the Falkland Islands 1977: Report to the National Maritime Museum

\(^{226}\) Ellerby 1990 p.244
“Rowlands sent Owen a four-page minute outlining the FCO position. It contrasted sharply with the cautious approach adopted at Rome. Leaseback was now being pushed to the front of the agenda; a development which would again illustrate the differing views of Foreign Office diplomats and senior ministers.”

**October 24**<sup>th</sup>, negotiations scheduled for November are postponed to December.

**October 26**<sup>th</sup>, Britain’s *charge d’affairs* in Buenos Aires is summoned to the Foreign Ministry to be told that Argentina is intending to complete its installation on Thule Island.

> “Unless we are prepared to deploy sufficient power physically to dislodge the Argentines from Southern Thule, we must surely tolerate them as squatters…”

**October 28**<sup>th</sup>, Britain's Joint Intelligence Committee reports its concern regarding Argentina's increasingly hostile attitude. In particular, the belligerence of the Argentine Navy. Port Stanley airfield’s fuel supply is cut off by the Argentine navy which also announces its refusal to fly the Falklands' red ensign while in Falklands waters.

**November 10**<sup>th</sup>, at the UN, the Fourth Committee considers the report of the Special Committee on Decolonization. Representatives of Ghana and Zaire assert the self-determination right of the inhabitants of the Falklands. Argentina claims that three General Assembly resolutions have established that the dispute could only be resolved through negotiations between itself and the UK. To take into account the 'interests' of the inhabitants but making no mention of the application of self-determination.

**November 16**<sup>th</sup>, in London, the Secretary of Defence accepts the need to retain *Endurance* in the South Atlantic for the foreseeable future.

**November 21**<sup>st</sup>, following an intelligence assessment that Argentina may be planning an incident along the lines of the Southern Thule encroachment, British Ministers decide to establish a military presence in the area.

From Stanley, the Legislative Council urge the British Government to implement Shackleton's proposals.

> “We must not be deterred from initiating and developing such ventures as coastal and off-shore fishing and similar activities merely because this would be against the appeasement policy of the British Government towards Argentina.”

**November 22**<sup>nd</sup>, with talks deferred to December, the FCO conclude that Islands' representatives should not be present.

> “The newly elected councils had given no indication that islanders wished to participate at these talks (a similar stance to Rome). Instead it was agreed that Ted Rowlands, popular after his successful February visit, would meet islander representatives in Rio de Janeiro shortly after the New York summit had been concluded.”

**November 24**<sup>th</sup>, frigates HMS *Alacrity* and HMS *Phoebe* are ordered to proceed to the South Atlantic, and stand-off about a thousand miles distant from the Falklands (*Operation Journeyman*).<sup>231</sup>

Stanley Airport opens for operations.

**November 26**<sup>th</sup>, a nuclear submarine, HMS *Dreadnought*, is ordered to close on the Falklands from Gibraltar.

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227 Donaghy 2014
228 Carless to Owen October 27, 1977 in FO 7/3375
230 Donaghy 2014
231 *Operation Journeyman*. James Callaghan only revealed this operation in 1982
“The rules were quite explicit... If Argentine ships came within 50 miles of the Falkland Islands and were believed to have displayed hostile intent, the submarine was to open fire.” 232

“According to the report, Ministers accepted that, such a force would not be able to deal with a determined Argentine attack” ...” 233

**November 28th,** at the UN, the General Assembly defer consideration of the Falkland Islands until 1978.

**December 1st,** the *Financial Times* reports that “major international oil companies” are to carry out seismic exploration for oil in the waters around the archipelago.

**December 7th,** in the House of Commons, the Government is questioned as to why it is prepared to negotiate with a “Fascist-type dictatorship about the future of a democratic British community.” Rowlands responds.

“.. we are negotiating because, following my visit to the islands and by agreement with the islands council, it was decided that it was necessary to have negotiations on the economic and sovereignty issues. Otherwise we would let the stalemate of the position of the islands continue, and that would be a much worse prospect for the islanders themselves. ...”

MP Jeremy Thorpe asks a question.

“Will he confirm that Argentina has not accepted that part of the Hague Convention whereby it agreed to be bound by the decision of the International Court? Does this not shed some light on its lack of competence in international law in laying claim to the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands? May we take it that the question of sovereignty is not a matter that the Minister regards as being for negotiation in his New York meetings later this month?”

Rowlands responds.

“On the first part of the question, yes, that is the position... Sovereignty has been part and parcel of the terms of reference of the negotiations and will therefore be subject to negotiation in New York. .. They are not just about sovereignty they are about the whole issue of political and economic cooperation between Britain, Argentina and the Falkland Islands. ... Sovereignty issues are also involved. I repeat yet again that we shall not bring any proposals to the House unless they are acceptable to the islanders.” 234

**December 8th,** the London Falkland Islands Office organises a ceremony at the Cenotaph to commemorate Falkland Islands Battle Day 1914. 235

**December 13th,** a further two days of talks between Britain and Argentina commence in New York.

“Gaulter Allara opened proceedings by venting frustration over the lack of progress on sovereignty. ... Rowlands assured the captain that his government had no desire to conduct Byzantine (never ending) talks, pointing out that it had 'crossed the Rubicon' in February by taking the decision to discuss sovereignty. The Argentine premise, Rowlands argued, was that the negotiations were simply related to how and when Britain would transfer sovereignty. But the British government's concern was with how a compromise could be reached.... If the issue was the principle of sovereignty there could be scope for discussion. But if Argentina

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232 Foreign Secretary David Owen quoted in Donaghy 2014. Following the revelation in 1982 of this task force’s deployment there was some controversy over the accuracy of Owen’s memory regarding the rules of engagement. See Donaghy 2014 for a full account.
233 Baroness Young in HL Deb 25 January 1983 vol.438 cc136-247
234 HC Deb 07 December 1977 vol.940 cc1359-64
235 Now an annual event
wished to ‘transform the islanders, exercise all the actual attributes of sovereignty over them’, then there would be considerable difficulty.”  

The Argentine delegation propose an 8-year joint administration before a recognition of total Argentine sovereignty by Britain. Rowlands rejects this; instead offering the FCO’s ‘mixed approach’ - involving economic cooperation and the possibility of cessions from amongst the Dependencies. Allara rejects these proposals.

**December 14th**, a final statement emerges from the negotiation.

“The two sides recognized that there was a wide range of issues involved which would require detailed study. They accordingly agreed to establish at official level two parallel working groups on political relations, including sovereignty, and on economic co-operation, to pursue these studies in depth and to report back to the heads of delegations. ... A further round of negotiations will be held ...”

**December 16th**, in the House of Commons, a debate is held on the Shackleton Report. MP Hugh Fraser makes mention of the negotiations.

“Today, we have had an announcement in The Times of what has happened in the joint talks. It seems that the British and the Argentine Governments have agreed to form two joint working parties on the issues of sovereignty and economic development. I do not want to go into the issue of sovereignty, but I do not see how we can have an effective working party on a matter which should be a subject for a judicial decision. A working party seems to be a bit of a nonsense. The subject of that working party, I would have thought, should be one for The Hague court. With regard to the second working party, I would have thought that there was grave danger of burying the Shackleton Report before it is implemented. Lord Shackleton spent four months finding out what the developments were. I suggest that a further working party on economic development would only support what Lord Shackleton, recalling the 20 earlier reports, said in his report. When asked to define the Falkland Islands, he said: The Falkland Islands is a piece of land entirely surrounded by advice”. There is far too much of that already.”

Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Overseas Aid, John Tomlinson, makes a statement.

“British aid is not imposed on the Falkland Islands but is provided at the request of, and after discussion with, the Falkland Islands Government—we have to consider the amount of aid which the Falkland Islands can absorb without putting strains on its economy. The islands have hitherto been self-supporting, in the sense that the United Kingdom has not provided them with financial means to balance the budget.”

**December 18th**, in Rio de Janeiro, Edward Rowlands meets with the Governor and Falkland Island Councillors to update them on the progress of the negotiations

**December 20th**, the small British task force is instructed to quietly retire; “No evidence has emerged that Argentina was made aware of the British defence plans... Owen, a close friend of Callaghan has always maintained that Operation Journeyman remained covert.”

“The more I consider the 1977 deployment, the more I realise what an irresponsible and useless act it was.”

237 UN Doc A3323/Rev.1 vol.4
238 HC Deb 16 December 1977 vol.941 cc1226-36
239 Ibid
240 Donaghy 2014
241 John Nott quoted in Donaghy 2014 p.17
1978 – January 9th, Argentina presses for talks earlier than planned. Foreign Secretary Owen accepts.

January 25th, in a letter to Chile, Argentina formally rejects the decision of the arbitral Court regarding its dispute over the Beagle Channel. Argentina does not bother to inform the arbitration panel or the Hague judges.

“... the Government of the Argentine Republic, after carefully studying the arbitral Award by Her Britannic Majesty on the Beagle Channel dispute, has decided to declare the Arbitrator's decision irrevocably null and void under international law.” 242

A further agreement would be signed between Chile and Argentina in 1979 to take the dispute to Papal arbitration. Argentina did not like that result either and again acted disgracefully in refusing to accept the result. A second Papal decision in 1982, also favouring Chile but much watered down, was finally accepted by Argentina following a national plebiscite. Any agreement with Argentina needs to be considered in light of this history.

“..., Argentina, having accepted the jurisdiction of an international court of arbitration on the Beagle Channel dispute with Chile, then refused to accept its results. It is difficult to believe in Argentina's good faith with that very recent example in mind. ... it would be hard to have confidence that Argentina would respect a judgement that it did not like.” 243

Reviewing the situation following the Beagle Channel decision, the FCO conclude that Argentina’s failure in its dispute with Chile has increased pressure on the junta to gain some success over the Falkland Islands.

February 6th, the British Foreign Secretary suggests to the Prime Minister that there may be a need to station a nuclear submarine near the Falklands for some time. Part of the reasoning is Argentina’s “disreputable” attitude towards the Beagle Channel arbitral decision. 244 Secretary of Defence Mulley disagrees.

February 15th, Britain and Argentina resume talks in Lima. Argentina’s head of delegation is Medina Muñoz while for Britain, the delegation is led by George Hall.

“No sooner had the British delegation taken their seats than a further complication arose. The head of the Malvinas department was attempting to separate the question of the continental shelf from the negotiations; a stance which would jeopardise any hope of reaching an agreement on economic or scientific cooperation.” 245

Despite the 1958 Geneva Conventions246, Argentina refuses to acknowledge that the Falklands have any continental shelf rights. The Argentine delegation also refuses to accept proposals for economic cooperation as they rest on Islander rights that Argentina does not recognise.

“Argentina's new stance was linked to its quarrel over the Beagle Channel. If Britain were to cede sovereignty over the continental shelf, the Argentine position in the dispute with Chile would be strengthened.” 247

242 Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic to the Ambassador of Chile in Argentina January 25, 1978
243 Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher speaking to the House of Commons HC Deb 29 April 1982 vol.22 cc980-1059
244 Owen to Callaghan, January 6, 1978 in PREM 16/1504
245 Donaghy 2014
246 cf. April & June 1958
247 Donaghy 2014
February 17th, the Lima talks end; “No joint communiqué was issued at the close of the meeting, which was characterized as preparatory to plenary round discussions scheduled to be held at a ministerial level during the second quarter of 1978.” Britain’s delegation report back to London; “Medina Muñoz made it absolutely clear that they saw these negotiations as a long process which should not be hurried…” 248

The Argentine military base on Southern Thule is seen by the Antarctic survey ship RRS Bransfield. Information of this sighting is quickly relayed to London where Foreign Secretary David Owen, fearing a back-lash once the occupation becomes public knowledge, passes it on to the British Embassy in Buenos Aires.

“... the crew might talk about this on their arrival in Port Stanley on February 20th.” 249

“Ministers were informed and it set in train a series of urgent messages between London and negotiators in Lima highlighting a possible plan to legitimise the base as a joint scientific station before it came to light. Officials warned the Argentines of the "danger of a leak" and urged them to agree quickly. ... In the event of a leak ... the British Government would need to make it clear publicly that they had protested to Argentina about a violation of British sovereignty. It would be a complicating factor in our negotiations.” 250

March 23rd, in Parliament, Minister Rowlands raises the issue of the continental shelf.

“...it would be incorrect to assume that these activities were in any way concealed from public knowledge. I understand that they were reported at the time in the news media; that is, towards the end of 1976. As to the other two points made by the noble Lord, I entirely agree. It is the fact that we are pursuing negotiations across the board on all outstanding issues, including the general issue of the future of that part of the world, with the Argentinians. Indeed, we expect that the two working groups on political and economic matters will reconvene this summer, followed by a ministerial meeting. It is in that context that an incident or a situation like this—which, again, I agree is a serious matter and should not be allowed to prejudice the success of the larger negotiations—will be viewed... The Argentinians established a research station on Thule Island some time in 1976. We protested, and in that way protected our legal claim to sovereignty. We understood that the residence, if I may call it that, was to be temporary; and it is a fact that, because of climatic conditions, seasonal adversity, it is practically impossible to be there all the year round. In that sense, it is a non-continuous residence. However, it is important, in the context of the larger negotiation now proceeding, in which we are seeking general accord and general co-operation for the development of the South-West Atlantic area, to the mutual benefit of all three countries—the United Kingdom, the Falkland Islands and Argentina—that incidents or situations like this, whether temporary or not, should not be allowed to grow out of proportion and imperil those larger and vital negotiations.” 251

248 FO 7/3528
250 The Telegraph December 29th, 2008
251 HL Deb 10 May 1978 vol.391 cc976-81

46
On the same day, the Argentine Government issue a statement affirming their sovereignty claim to Southern Thule and the South Sandwich Islands, and rejecting the British protest of January, 1977.

**May 13**th, a Polish fishery vessel, *Zulawy*, moored in Berkeley Sound is harassed by an Argentine aircraft.

“We have formally protested to the Argentine Government about this violation of Falkland Islands airspace and left them in no doubt of our concern about unauthorised overflights of any kind and the need to avoid their repetition.”

On the same day, the Polish trawler *Otol*, is stopped and boarded by marines from an Argentine destroyer whilst fishing 63 miles north of the archipelago. *Otol’s* Captain is told that he is fishing in Argentine waters and ordered to leave the area.

“... may I ask the noble Lord whether Her Majesty’s Government would not agree that the Argentinians’ somewhat petulant belligerence, their recent boarding of a trawler under the threat of traversing guns, their buzzing of a trawler in Berkeley Sound, their continued occupation of Southern Thule... together indicate Argentinian frustration at Her Majesty's Government's most praiseworthy resolution and diplomatic determination over the question of the sovereign integrity of British possessions in the South-West Atlantic?”

**May 16**th, Rowlands speaks to the Commons with regard to Southern Thule.

“The Argentines carried out scientific work on Southern Thule in the 1954 and 1956 Antarctic seasons and established their present scientific station in late 1976. There have been no other cases of unauthorised foreign activity in the Falkland Islands, South Georgia or the South Sandwich Islands. Argentine Service personnel provide logistic support for Argentina's Antarctic scientific activities. We have remained in communication with the Governor throughout, and he has reported that the Islands councillors know of and fully support our actions to protect British sovereignty.”

**May 24**th, Minister Rowlands further informs Parliament that the Argentines have not left the Southern Thule base and that a further protest has been sent to the Argentine Government.

**June 10**th, in Buenos Aires, President Vidella reaffirms his country’s claim to the Falklands.

“... on Malvinas Day, which they celebrated recently, President Videla referred to the successful outcome, as he hoped, of current negotiations;... This gives hope that the current negotiations based on the two working groups, political and economic, may possibly bear fruit.”

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252 Mr. Luard in *HC Deb 19 June 1978 vol.952 cc79-80W*
253 *Falkland Islands Newsletter* June 18, 1978
255 *HC Deb 16 May 1978 vol.950 cc160-1W*
256 Lord Goronwy-Roberts *HL Deb 13 June 1978 vol.393 cc175-80*
June 22\textsuperscript{nd}, in Parliament, Goronwy-Roberts speaks regarding the measures proposed in Shackleton’s report.

“… we have made further progress. We are financing the construction of an all-weather road from Darwin to Stanley and of a new school hostel in Stanley. We are also … carrying forward our urgent discussions with the Falkland Island Government on expanding the internal air service…”

June 25\textsuperscript{th}, after Argentina wins the FIFA World Cup. Admiral Massera suggests Plan Goa commences. \textsuperscript{257}

July 5\textsuperscript{th}, in the Commons, Edward Rowlands again addresses the situation in Southern Thule.

“We are not dealing with an illegal occupation of the Falkland Islands themselves. … Nor are we dealing at this time with a military occupation. It is important to say that. Although the Argentines use service personnel for logistic support in their Antarctic work, their activities on Thule are purely scientific. I do not think that anybody has challenged that assumption. …

We object to the fact that they are being carried out on British territory without our permission. That is the bone of contention …

What the Argentines are doing there does indeed constitute a violation of our sovereignty, and, as hon. Members are already aware, we have firmly protested to them about this. Our sovereignty position has thus been protected fully and explicitly… When we learnt of it, we pursued the matter immediately.

We are going back 18 months, but at that time we had reason to believe that the dispute would be resolved speedily and satisfactorily. I had a difficult decision to make on how to handle the issue. I thought that it would be wrong for us to have a slanging match with the Argentine Government…” \textsuperscript{258}

Constantino Davidoff, a Buenos Aires scrap metal merchant, approaches Christian Salvesen seeking a contract to remove the old equipment from the whaling stations at Leith, Stromness and Husvik on South Georgia. Christian Salvesen seeks advice before proceeding, leading Governor Parker to advise against allowing Davidoff onto South Georgia. Britain’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office, however, raise no objections. \textsuperscript{259}

August 24\textsuperscript{th}, Foreign Secretary Owen suggests talks recommence towards the end of September.

September 29\textsuperscript{th}, Owen meets Argentina’s Foreign Minister at the UN. Talks are agreed for December.

“I make no secret of the fact that I would not transfer sovereignty to Argentina. … I must make it clear that when in office I was never prepared to contemplate it. I never accepted lease-back, and have great difficulty with it. The furthest that I was prepared to go was a sharing of sovereignty. In those days, one of the options that I thought was most hopeful was that sovereignty over the uninhabited islands would be transferred to Argentina, and the inhabited islands—the greater space, I admit—would remain with Britain, with a shared economic unit covering all the islands, inhabited and uninhabited, and the territorial waters…” \textsuperscript{260}

November 1\textsuperscript{st}, in the Commons, MP Michael Hutchinson speaks on the outstanding matter of Southern Thule.

“I am not convinced that a protest is sufficient. If the Argentine party has been in the island for more than 12 months, that strengthens Argentina’s position and weakens ours. International law is by no means united on what the exact position is. Therefore, I should very much welcome a statement from the Minister concerned. It seems to me that there are two courses open to deal with the matter. One is to

\textsuperscript{257} Hastings & Jenkins 1997 p.39
\textsuperscript{258} HC Deb 05 July 1978 vol.953 cc620-30
\textsuperscript{259} Freedman 2005 vol.1 p.146. Negotiations between the company and Davidoff resulted in a contract being signed in September, 1979.
\textsuperscript{260} Dr. David Owen speaking in 1985 in Falkland Islands (Foreign Affairs Committee Report) HC Deb 14 March 1985 vol.75 cc492-530. A change in attitude from October, 1977 or a failure of memory?
mount a small police expedition to remove the intruders. That is my instinctive reaction and choice. The other is to set up our own scientific party and to land it in the island so that the Argentine claim is reduced.”

**December 13th**, at the United Nations, the General Assembly defers consideration of the Falkland Islands question until its 1979 session.

Tensions rise again between Argentina and Chile over the unresolved Beagle Channel dispute.

“In November and December 1978 a propaganda campaign was organised by the Argentines, with Army, Navy and Air Force units prepared to fight a just war against Chilean territorial encroachment.”

**December 18th**, in Geneva, a further round of negotiations take place between delegations from Argentina and Britain. Agreement is reached over scientific activities on Southern Thule and within the Dependencies.

“The Argentines accepted that, under such an agreement, these activities – including their station on Thule, would have no implications for sovereignty... We rejected the idea that the aim of the negotiations was simply to transfer sovereignty to Argentina.”

“The more problematic issue was co-administration of the Dependencies maritime zones. Allara agreed that Argentina and Britain should jointly declare a 200-mile fishing zone, but failed to explain how he planned to reconcile this with Argentina’s own sovereignty claim... Allara held out for a transfer of the Dependencies as his price for an agreement to the co-administration of a fisheries zone. Rowlands rejected this out of hand.”

The two sides agree to meet again towards the end of March.


**January 8th**, militarily weaker than its neighbour, Argentina reaches an agreement with Chile to refer their dispute to the Pope in Rome.

“... an important by-product of this tension was that the Argentine Government spent billions of dollars on arms procurement, including 40 A-4 Skyhawk aircraft and five Chinook helicopters bought from the United States, and 42 Dagger aircraft purchased from Israel. The Argentine armed forces were therefore mentally and physically prepared for war...”

**January 13th**, in Stanley, the agreements achieved at Geneva are rejected by Islanders, with Councillors fearing an erosion of British sovereignty.

“An Anglo-Argentine agreement over Southern Thule would have been difficult to digest; the inclusion of South Georgia made it nigh impossible.”

An American researcher visits the archipelago, noting that there are 10 US citizens living on the Islands. Also that all but one of them are associated with the religious sect ’Bahai’.

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261 HC Deb 01 November 1978 vol.957 cc9-156
262 The Falklands War D. George Boyce 2005
263 ALW 045/325/1 Part A filed at the Margaret Thatcher Foundation
264 Donaghy 2014. See also ALW 0420/325/1
265 The Falklands War D. G. Boyce 2005
266 Donaghy 2014
“Members abstain from political activity and alcohol, but are not rigidly organized or segregated. The reporting officer did not detect any aberration or coercion in connection with their presence or activities in Stanley.” 267

**February 6th**, in Parliament, Lord Goronwy-Roberts, speaking on behalf of the Government, explains the agreement over scientific activities in the Dependencies. 268

> “... it relates to a wide range of scientific questions, from meteorology to Antarctic questions generally. It is the kind of question that arises in conditions and circumstances of this geographical sort. The scope of the discussions, while not including hydro-carbons, is sufficiently wide not only to offer hope for development in the Dependencies but also perhaps to give added strength and confidence to the larger discussions which are proceeding amicably between us and Argentina in regard to the future of the Falklands. ...”

_The illegal station in South Thule remains illegal._

_We have asserted, and continue to assert without reservation, our claim to sovereignty over South Thule, as indeed over these Dependencies generally. However, any discussions specifically aimed at advancing matters in the Dependencies can only help to resolve not only the disagreement about the station in South Thule but, as I said, the larger question of our relations with Argentina, a country with which, historically, we have for many years enjoyed close and fruitful relations.”_

Goronwy-Roberts confirms that the Government regard the continental shelf around the Falklands as British sovereign territory.

**March 21st**, three days of talks start in New York.

> “There is no question of any decisions being taken in New York this month; our intention is to pre-empt trouble and continue talking.” 269

> “Domestic considerations hindered meaningful dialogue... Hall explained that the scientific cooperation agreement could not proceed, due to the islanders’ ‘deep suspicion’ of Argentine motives... Subsequent discussions yielded no progress.” 270

**March 23rd**, negotiations come to an end with no firm agreement and no decision as to future talks.

> “Anglo/Argentine exchanges on the Falklands date from 1966,... The most active periods have been 1967/8, 1972/3 and 1977/9. Differences over sovereignty have been central: we have never been able to get the Argentines to accept our view that sovereignty cannot be transferred against the wishes of the Islanders; we have refused to accept the Argentine formula recognising only the "interests" of the Islanders.” 271

An Argentine stamp-set celebrates 150 years since the 'Civil and Military Command of the Malvinas.' 272

In the April Falkland Islands Newsletter.

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268 *HL Deb 06 February 1979* vol.398 cc589-91. cf. 1958
269 *ALW 045/325/1 Part A*
270 Donaghy 2014. In Britain, the winter of 1978/79 was known as the *Winter of Discontent* with action by unions over a pay freeze making life difficult and uncomfortable; undermining the authority of the Labour Government.
271 *FCO 76/1892 Annex 3*. See October, 1979
272 See 1829
“Talks between the British and Argentine governments over the future of the Falkland Islands appear to have failed. ... The communique issued following the discussion gave no indication of their substance and was markedly less cooperative in tone ...” 273

From Stanley, the Falklands’ Legislative Council calls for a 200-mile maritime limit to be declared around the archipelago.

In London, 118 MPs sign a Commons motion demanding that the Government implement the Shackleton recommendations.

May 1st, in the islands, a refurbished airport is formally opened at Cape Pembroke by Sir Vivian Fuchs.

“The construction of the permanent airfield had just been completed at a final cost of £6m million. Yet the new runway, measuring 1,370 yards, could only take short and medium-haul aircraft. The islanders thus remained reliant on the airport at Comodoro Rivadavia, southern Argentina, as their only available staging post for reaching the outside world.” 274

May 3rd, following a General Election, Margaret Thatcher becomes Prime Minister of the UK. Lord Carrington is Foreign Secretary. 275

May 10th, John Ure, under-secretary in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s South American Department, minutes Nicholas Ridley, the new Minister responsible for the Falkland Islands.

“There is a vociferous and highly organised Falkland islands lobby in this country with the capacity to enlist considerable support in Parliament and the media. Its function, in the name of the Falkland Islanders, is to monitor and oppose any attempt by the British Government to establish closer links between the Falkland Islands and Argentina. .... The Argentine claim enjoys widespread international support....” 276

May 14th, Minister Ridley responds to Ure.

“... I would hope to preserve the Falklands as British – maybe its not possible – in return for helping Argentina to carve up the Antarctic with us as a partner. I do think its important for me to go a) to the Falklands, b) to Argentina.”

May 16th, a paper entitled, 'The Malvinas (Falkland) Islands: A Political and Social Review' is transmitted by the US Embassy in Buenos Aires to the Department of State in Washington.

“Argentina will eventually regain political sovereignty over the disputed Malvinas Islands, as a result of gradualist bilateral negotiations with Great Britain. Deterioration of the current talks could postpone but probably not avoid the eventual end of Britain's admittedly anachronistic colonial rule...” 277

May 22nd, the issue of the Falklands’ fisheries is raised in the House of Lords.

“I beseech the Conservative Administration as a matter of urgency to review, report back upon and act upon the desk survey by the White Fish Authority, which was commissioned by the former Administration, and to do so in conjunction with the most admirable report of the noble Lord, Lord

273 Falkland Islands Newsletter No. 6 April 1979
274 Donaghy 2014.
275 Lord Carrington would later refer to the Falklands question as having been “number 249” on his list of priorities when he became Foreign Secretary.
276 ALW 045/325/1 Part B

51
May 24th, Margaret Thatcher invites Lord Carrington and Home Secretary William Whitelaw to a working lunch at Chequers.

“Carrington mentioned that one of the problems he faced was what to do about the Falklands. "I think we will soon be in trouble if we go on having meetings about them with the Argentines without saying anything at all," Carrington said. "One of the options which seems to me worth exploring is a leaseback arrangement similar to what we have in Hong Kong." Lady Thatcher "erupted in anger", ... She spent the next ten minutes denouncing the very idea of exploring a Hong Kong solution. "That's the trouble with your Foreign Office," she said. "Everyone in it is so bloody wet!" 279

June 4th, Ridley minutes Lord Carrington, seeking a decision as to the policy to be adopted.

“I have been looking at the various options open to us. These seem to be: (a) thumbing our noses at the Argentines and provisioning and defending the Falkland islands – the "Fortress Falkland" option: (b) selling out the Falkland Islanders: (c) negotiating with Argentina. I think that negotiation is the only valid option.

The Argentines will not negotiate unless the negotiations include questions of sovereignty so, although I am much more interested in negotiating with them about economic co-operation, we will have to agree to discuss sovereignty. If we are going to do this we must keep the Falkland islanders with us. If we do not they will complain and we will have a blow up in Parliament and in the press. I am therefore proposing to go out to the Islands in July...” 280

June 7th, La Prensa reports that a further meeting has been arranged for later in the month between Deputy Foreign Minister Cavándoli and Nicholas Ridley. Topics include; “.. an analysis of the state of negotiations on the Falkland Islands, the establishment of the basis for a formal meeting to be held at Buenos Aires in July 1979 following Mr. Ridley’s visit to the Territory, and the resumption of bilateral relations at the ambassadorial level.”

June 12th, Cavándoli indicates that his Government requires sovereignty to be central to negotiations.

June 14th, Carrington responds vaguely that Britain is willing to continue with discussions.

“The talks ... between 1977 and 1979 were based on the prospect of some deal on sovereignty being possible. We kept the Argentines in play only with difficulty and there was continuing suspicion among the Argentine officials about the genuineness of our intentions.” 281

June 26th, speaking in Cordoba, Dr. Carlos Helbling, an Argentine banker, calls for; “The reconquest of the Malvinas; effective control of the Antarctic and the reoccupation of the geopolitical area belonging to the nation.” 282

In July, Nicolas Ridley arrives in the Falkland Islands.

278 Lord Morris in HL Deb 22 May 1979 vol.400 cc233-432
279 The Telegraph October 12th, 2013
280 ALW 045/325/1 Part B
281 ALW 0420/325/1 (FCO 07-3801) 1980
282 FCO ALA 020/1 Part A Political Relations between UK and Argentina File No. 141/1. Helbling would seem, at that time, to have been Baring Bank’s agent in Buenos Aires.
“He considered 'lease back' the best available option, as did foreign office minister Nicolas Ridley, but Thatcher was hostile and could sense unease among Conservative MPs who already resented the compromises that had been made to arrange a settlement in Rhodesia. Ridley was sent to the Falklands in July 1979 ... for discussions. The islanders were still firmly against a transfer of sovereignty.”

July 11th, an Argentine executive decree announces; “... the concession contract for the Rio Gallegos Area (8,700 km²) and the Magellan Area (4,700 km²) of the Austral Basin to Shell Hydrocarbons and Shell Argentina. This contract is closely related to the proposal of the Foreign Office to postpone any claim on our sovereignty in the Malvinas and to enter into negotiations on a vast program of (economic) cooperation, related in the first instance to the exploitation of oil in the Marine Basin Austral and Falklands Basin. ... the Minister of the Economy Dr. (Jose Alfredo) Martinez de Hoz in his various trips to London, has unconditionally accepted the program of "economic cooperation". So the contract with Shell is the principle of execution of a tacit agreement.”

July 21st, Ridley flies to Buenos Aires for preliminary talks with the Argentine Foreign Ministry where agreement is reached on the reinstatement of Ambassadors - but little else.

As Ridley is about to depart, the Argentine Foreign Ministry present an aide-memoire stating that they will find it unacceptable for the Islanders to become 'third parties' to the negotiations and that Argentina “demands” that negotiations move at a more dynamic pace; “Ridley returned to London determined to sort this one out once and for all.”

August 17th, an internal FCO minute considers negotiations.

“... we need to clear our lines with Cabinet on the next moves in our dispute with Argentina on sovereignty over the Falkland Islands. I recommend that the Secretary of State write to the Prime Minister and her OD colleagues seeking their agreement to resume negotiations with Argentina in the autumn, to see whether an overall solution involving a leaseback, or some other special status, is possible. ... No solution stands any chance of success if we do not take the Islanders with us.”

September 19th, Davidoff contracts with Christian Salvesen to recover whaling equipment on South Georgia during 1980. Under the agreement, any equipment remaining after March 1982 reverts to Salvesen.

“I can confirm that in the period leading up to the conclusion of the contract there were a number of exchanges between Salvesens, the FCO and the then Governor of the Falkland Islands. Mr. Davidoff also contacted the Embassy in Buenos Aires. ... While there were misgivings about the political implications of the contract, legal advice was that there was no lawful way of preventing Salvesens concluding the agreement if they were determined to do so. Accordingly Salvesens were not obstructed in their pursuit of a contract. Ministers were consulted at the time and approved. There is no letter from the FCO to Salvesens acquiescing in the arrangement.”

284 Contrato con Shell coopera con los ocupantes de las Malvinas in El Diario del fin del mundo July 7, 2017, quoting Adolfo Silenzi de Stagni of the Política Petrolera y la Cuenca Marina Austral from July 7, 1979. The implication is that this decree was prepared for the benefit of Ridley’s visit, but there is no evidence that he was ever made aware of it.
285 Hastings & Jenkins 1997 p.47
286 Ure to Hall August 17, 1979 ALW 045/325/1 Part C. OD is short for the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee.
287 Davidoff to Williams March 25, 1982 in AW 040/325.12
288 This was subsequently extended to December 31, 1982 and then to March 31, 1983
289 Falkland Island Dependencies: Whaling Stations February 1, 1983 FCO note to Downing Street.

53
“Thatcher’s Foreign Office not only cleared the way for Salvesens to enter into a salvaging contract, but it also sweetened the deal. First the Foreign Office authorized Salvesens to acquire the Albion Star leases at Husvik and Grytviken, giving the company control over all four of the whaling stations on the island. Then, Salvesens offered Davidoff an option contract to dismantle the stations at Leith, Stromness, and Husvik, all located at Stromness Bay and one more than Davidoff originally sought. The fourth station, at Grytviken, twenty miles away from the other three, where the BAS were located, was excluded from the deal. Although Davidoff signed a three-year contract with Salvesens in September 1979, and despite the fact that scrap metal prices reached their historic peak in 1981, Davidoff’s enterprise lay dormant until activated in late 1981.”

September 20th, Carrington seeks consensus on policy within the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee. He puts forward options: 1) Fortress Falklands; 2) protracted negotiations with no concession on sovereignty; or 3) substantive negotiations on sovereignty. The Foreign Secretary recommends the last option and again suggests that the best solution is some kind of leaseback arrangement with a preferred term of 99 years. He highlights that it will be necessary to ensure that the option has the support of the Islanders, and of Parliament.

September 21st, Cabinet Secretary John Hunt, minutes the Prime Minister.

“Lord Carrington… proposes that in the margin of the UN General Assembly meeting next week he should suggest to his Argentine Foreign Minister that negotiations should start soon… In these negotiations we should, for the first time, formally put to the Argentine the suggestion that we might concede sovereignty over the Falklands and the Dependencies in return for a leaseback to ensure continued British rule for as long as possible….”

Thatcher writes on the top of the minute; “I cannot possibly agree to the proposed course of action.”

September 22nd, Energy Secretary David Howell writes to Thatcher.

“I have seen Peter Carrington’s paper to you on the subject of the Falkland Islands … It is true that the presence of oil (or gas) has yet to be proven, but the continued interest of the oil companies and the results of recent geophysical surveys.. lead us to think that there is at least a good chance that hydrocarbons are there. We ought to be very careful about adopting a course which could lead to British oil companies losing a favourable position …”

September 25th, after speaking to Thatcher, Carrington informs Ridley that the Prime Minister will not be rushed into making a decision on his proposals and that Ridley should inform Argentina that this; “complex problem” was being considered.

At the UN, Argentina’s Foreign Minister proposes a “programme of work” in which Ridley meets with Argentina’s Deputy Foreign Minister informally twice a year with an open agenda.

October 1st, in anticipation of a discussion on the Falklands at the next Defence and Overseas Policy Committee (OD), John Ure circulates a memo.

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290 The Reagan Revolution II: Rebuilding the Western Alliance Richard C. Thornton 2004
291 PM/79/81
292 PREM 19/656 fl 14 Margaret Thatcher Foundation
293 PREM 19/612
294 Franks 1983 para.73
295 A Cabinet Committee. Its existence was first announced in 1962 and was confirmed as still in existence by Margaret Thatcher in 1979. Until 1992, the membership of Cabinet Committees, their remits and decisions were kept secret.
296 The OD Committee meeting was scheduled for October 4, 1979. I have, as yet, found no record of it.
“On historical and legal grounds we are confident that our sovereignty is soundly based. Nothing in the negotiations so far has eroded this. Equally, no progress has been made. ...

Our objectives in the dispute include the following (i) To defend the right of the British settlers to remain under British administration. (ii) To end a dispute which is damaging to trade; damaging to international relations (most of the UN vote against us) and politically explosive at home... (iii) To ensure that the UK derives advantage from the economic resources of the area: possibly oil and certainly fish.

Argentine objectives appear to include: (i) achieving nominal sovereignty for reasons of national pride. (ii) Securing a share of the economic offshore resources. (iii) A possible non-national objective in providing a cause to further the ambitions of individual Argentine officers.”

Three options are raised for discussion: a refusal to negotiate; negotiation but a refusal to make concessions on sovereignty; or the adoption of: "... a more constructive approach... insisting on preserving our essential interests... On sovereignty, we could explore various arrangements, the most promising of which would appear to be a "leaseback" analogous to the New Territories in Hong Kong, under which Argentina would acquire nominal sovereignty while the Islanders continued to enjoy the security of British rule. ...

Annex 3 to Ure's memo notes.

“The question of British sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and their Dependencies has not been submitted to the International Court of Justice or to any other international arbitration. Since Argentina has not accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, and reference to the Court could only be made with the agreement of the Argentine Government.”

October 2nd, John Grundon, an Exploration and Commercial Manager for British Petroleum informs the Government's Energy, Science and Space Department that; “... BP had all but written off the Falkland Islands as a prospective offshore oil area. This was not because of the political obstacles... The main reason for BP lack of interest was geological.”

October 12th, Lord Carrington again seeks a decision from Cabinet.

“I.. invite my colleagues to agree that the FCO should resume talks with the Argentines at Ministerial level. The purpose of the talks in the first instance would be to explore, without commitment, political and economic solutions... We would seek not to rush matters: so long as the Argentines believe we are negotiating seriously, they will desist from precipitate action. “

October 15th, Thatcher defers the issue.

“The Prime Minister has seen the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's memorandum of 12 October... She has asked that discussion of the Falkland Islands by OD should be postponed until after the Rhodesia issue has been settled.”

297 FCO 76/1892. Original emphasis.
298 Ibid
299 Ibid. In Annex 3, 1947's decision of the Law Officer was highlighted; while the 1966 legal advice which broadly agreed with that of 1947, was only mentioned. cf. 1947 & 1966
300 Ibid.
301 CAB 148/183
302 ALW 040/325/14
November 2\textsuperscript{nd}, in London, Argentina’s charge d'affaires invites Minister Ridley to meet with Deputy Foreign Minister Cavándoli. Ridley turns down the invitation.

November 21\textsuperscript{st}, the UN General Assembly defer consideration of the Falklands until 1980.

November 27\textsuperscript{th}, the Governor of the Falklands writes to Christian Salvesen Ltd to express his “reservations” regarding that company’s contract with Davidoff.\textsuperscript{303}

In December, Argentina’s Finnish Embassy complains about a scheduled television programme to be aired on MAINOS-TV; Falkland Islands: Summer in the middle of Winter refers to the archipelago as British. As a result of the protests, the recording is re-edited to avoid any political references. An internal FCO memo notes; “The (Finnish) Foreign Ministry’s rather silly reaction no doubt gave the Argentinians immense satisfaction.”\textsuperscript{304}

1980 – January 9\textsuperscript{th}, Governor Parker gives his response to the proposal of a lease-back arrangement; “... maybe I have been here too long but after even only three years among the Islanders I would instinctively find it as difficult to accept as they would.”

January 24\textsuperscript{th}, a confidential FCO memo sums up an internal debate on recognition of Indonesia’s de facto possession of East Timor; occupied by force in 1975. Identifying that the result of such recognition could set an embarrassing precedent, the memo notes.

“... there is a residual danger of an Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands and should this take place, Britain’s UN case would be seriously flawed were we to accord full legal recognition to the Indonesian seizure; ...”\textsuperscript{305}

January 28\textsuperscript{th}, Governor Parker, coming to the end of his 3 year term, sends a valedictory despatch to London.

“(The) greater part of a Governor’s time is taken up by the day-to-day maintenance of the community’s services ... it is a necessary part of the job also devote time to the planning of the further improvement of those services, alongside long term schemes for urban and rural development - just as if the place had the longest of all futures. And then the cold thought comes: that all this work and planning could be set at naught because of the need to meet the emotional and nationalistic demands of a country, Argentina, 400 miles away across the sea ... It might clarify thinking considerably if Britain were to drop her attitude of apparent detachment, assess her advantages and interests, and openly meet the Argentines on the same terms in the dispute as they have chosen for themselves.”\textsuperscript{306}

Robin Fearn, head of the FCO’s South America department, receives Parker’s despatch.

“Mr Parker tends to look at the problem from the islanders’ viewpoint. ... We must try to ensure that the new Governor retains a more objective view of his mission and of the need to bring the Islanders to recognise the narrow options open to them and to us.”\textsuperscript{307}

# Researcher’s Comment: This sums up rather well the attitude displayed by the FCO throughout the 1970’s. Is it surprising that even today, 40 years later, the islanders' view the Foreign Office with suspicion?

January 29\textsuperscript{th}, an OD Committee meeting at Downing Street considers the relative strengths of Argentina and Britain regarding the Falklands.

\textsuperscript{303} Falkland Island Dependencies: Whaling Stations February 1, 1983 FCO note to Downing Street. cf. September, 1979  
\textsuperscript{304} ALW 0420/325/1  
\textsuperscript{305} Ibid  
\textsuperscript{306} Parris & Bryson 2012  
\textsuperscript{307} Ibid
“Argentina’s legal claim to sovereignty over the Falkland Islands was very weak. That was why they did not wish to let the matter go to arbitration. Any agreement to discuss sovereignty might damage Britain’s strong legal position.” 308

Summing up the debate, the Prime Minister says; “… that the nub of the problem lay in the danger that any resumption of talks might appear to foreshadow a surrender of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands at some time in the future. There was no legal basis for such a surrender.”

The meeting agrees to a new round of talks, and asks Carrington to seek agreement from the Islanders that negotiations with Argentina resume.

“In January 1981 a further meeting of that committee—the eighth collective discussion—was held to review the situation in the light of the islanders’ reactions to the leaseback proposal and the comments in both Houses on the Statement of December 1980. The committee endorsed the noble Lord, Lord Carrington’s, proposal that the aim should be to keep the negotiations going with a view to finding an acceptable basis for a negotiated settlement. They agreed to early talks for which Argentina was pressing, and at which the islanders were to be represented.” 309

February 7th, Stanley’s Penguin News editorial says;

“We can trust the British Government as little as we trust the Argentina Government and feeble cries of 'Keep the Falklands British' and other cliches will win us no support. Instead we should look to ourselves and proclaim the Falklands belong to us, and not to Britain, Argentina or any other foreign country. .. independence.”

February 11th, an internal FCO memo notes with regard to Britain’s dependent territories.

“The present British Government are fully committed to the policy followed by successive Governments since 1945 of giving every help and encouragement to those Dependent Territories which wish to become independent, while not forcing independence on those which do not wish it... Where local government have made it clear that they do not wish their territories to become independent, we are content to retain sovereignty for the time being. But we must also retain the legal powers necessary to ensure that we are able to fulfil the responsibilities that sovereignty entails. ... Each case will be considered on its merits, bearing in mind the constraints imposed by external political circumstances and the wishes of the local population.... Responsibility and power must go together. Political development must therefore stop some way short of full internal self-government where territories choose to remain dependent. In such cases the British Government, through the Governor, will retain overall responsibility for:-

(i) external affairs;
(ii) defence;
(iii) internal security, ..;
(iv) the administration of the police;
(v) the administration of the public service;
(vi) the judiciary...” 310

308 CAB 148/189
309 Baroness Young in HL Deb 25 January 1983 vol.438 cc136-247
310 ALW 040/325/1. The first three appear reasonable. The remainder, less so.
February 13th, in Stanley, the Falkland Islands Government agree to renewed talks, with an Islander present. This provided that the negotiations remain 'general,' 'exploratory' and 'without commitment.'

Briefing notes issued by the FCO call into question Argentina's interpretation of UN resolutions.

“The UK does not accept the assertion by Argentina that the "illegality of the occupation of the Falkland, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands by the United Kingdom has been recognised by the United Nations." Resolutions have simply called for the settlement of the dispute by negotiation between the two Governments.” 311

In April, a study into fish resources around the Falklands is released.

“The study concluded that there were two principal species of fish found within 200 miles of the Falklands. Patagonian hake was fished intensively by Argentine, German, Japanese and Spanish vessels and was thought to have reached the maximum sustainable yield. The unexploited blue whiting stocks could produce an estimated yield of 800,000 to 1 million tonnes a year. There was an urgent need for conservation measures. The White Fish Authority identified a number of problems with the S.A.F.C. ’s proposals. The fillet freezer trawlers, which were required for the exploratory voyage, had nearly all been sold or converted to whole fish freezing. The development of the fisheries would be constrained by Port Stanley's limited facilities. Finally, the declaration of a 200 mile fishing zone would be unprofitable to police.” 312

April 28th, British and Argentine delegations meet in New York for two days of talks. Councillor Monk represents the Islanders. Nicolas Ridley's brief, supplied by the FCO, notes.

“Sovereignty Options: Points to Make (only if raised by Argentines)... this exploratory round is not the place to undertake any substantive discussion of sovereignty proposals. 3. All these have to be seen in the context of the paramountcy of Islanders' wishes... International Arbitration: Points to make (Defensive) 1. We should not raise this question and it is most unlikely that the Argentines will. If they do ask whether we would consider taking the dispute to an international tribunal, Mr. Ridley should say that he will need time to consult his Ministerial colleagues before giving HMG's answer. ... Legal Advisers do not dissent from the views expressed by the Law Officers in 1966, nor do they consider the composition of the ICJ as any more favourable to the UK position than in 1966.” 313

On the issue of a leaseback option.

“It would be a formidable task to negotiate an agreement of this kind acceptable to Britain, Argentina and the Islanders. It would require Argentine agreement to leave the administration and way of life of the Islanders unchanged throughout the period of the lease. It would probably also require outside guarantees.” 314

April 29th, on the second day of talks, Minister Cavándoli says that; “Sovereignty was a sine qua non, an underlying condition, for progress on the other questions,” and that sovereignty must be discussed. By the end of the the day, however, little has been achieved and an impasse arises over the wording of the final joint communiqué. Britain wishes to refer to the meetings as 'discussions' while the Argentine's want to call them, 'negotiations'. A decision is left to the next day.

311 A4 ALW 0420/325/1
314 Ibid - Brief No. A4
April 30th, a final communique states that; “the discussions were of a comprehensive and wide-ranging nature, and were conducted in a cordial and positive spirit...” and that the two governments, “intend to hold future meetings in order to continue these exchanges.”

May 21st, in a House of Lords debate on the Canberra Conference relating to Antarctic fishing and marine conservation, Lord Trefgarne offers assurances; “There is no question of any change in sovereignty arising from this convention. Furthermore, the Falkland Islands fishing rights in the seas around the dependencies remain unaffected by this new convention.”

June 6th, in The Times newspaper.

“Yesterday, Dr Jose Alfredo Martinez de Hoz, the Argentine Minister of the Economy, who is on an official visit to Britain had discussions with ministers and officials and called on Mrs Thatcher, .. He said in an interview: "For the first time some progress has been made and there is a little light on the horizon . . . and I think the economic side can help. We have two common interests, which could be oil and fishing. So long as some sort of discussions on sovereignty can go on at the same time we might be able to reach some kind of agreement on joint oil exploration or fishing which would be the beginning of a get-together on this issue". ...”

June 27th, in an internal FCO memo, Lord Carrington proposes an agreement involving transfer of title over the Falklands and the Dependencies provided that these were immediately 'leased back' to the UK for an indefinite period. Arrangements could then be made regarding co-operation on fishing and oil exploration.

July 2nd, the OD Committee consider Carrington's proposals; “In discussion there was general agreement with the practical advantages of the course of action proposed although considerable misgivings were expressed about its domestic political implications.” At the end of the debate, Lord Carrington is authorised to initiate 'exploratory' and 'confidential' talks with Argentina.

July 30th, the British Government informs Parliament that it is publishing a White Paper on the issue of nationality containing proposals for new legislation.

“We have, .. been impressed with the argument that a separate citizenship should be established for the dependencies as a whole. We propose that this should be called citizenship of the British dependent territories. I emphasise that the establishment of this separate citizenship will not alter the United Kingdom's obligations and commitments to our overseas territories. Those who are now citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies but do not qualify for British citizenship or for citizenship of the British dependent territories will become British overseas citizens.”

“The perception of the Government trying to get rid of the islands was reinforced in 1980 when its work on a reformed British Nationality Law was widely discussed. ..”

August 7th, Rex Masterman Hunt takes over as Governor of the Falkland Islands.

September 10th, Ridley and Cavándoli hold secret talks near Geneva.

“Mr Ridley opened the proceedings by saying that he had the authority of his Ministerial colleagues to put forward the ideas which he was about to explain but that anything agreed at this meeting would have to be ad

315 HL Deb 21 May 1980 vol.409 cc955-1004
316 CAB 148/189
317 HL Debate 30 July 1980 Hansard vol.412 cc891-8
318 Gustafson 1988
319 The London Gazette No. 48277

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referendum and would be subject to endorsement by the British Cabinet and, no less important, would have to be acceptable to the Islanders.” 320

Ridley suggests a 200 year lease.

Minister Cavándoli responds that; “The only difficulty he saw was in the length of the lease ... a period of, say, 20 years would have to be ruled out as being much too short for the Islanders. We ought to think of some median figure (Comandante Bloomer-Reeve suggests 75 years).” 321 Cavándoli goes on to propose that the British Government remove the Royal Marine detachment from the Islands, to underline to Islanders that Argentina was no longer viewed as a threat; and to please Argentine public opinion. He also suggests that the terms of any lease should include an Argentine right to buy or rent land in the Falklands.

September 11th, Ridley hands over an 'exploratory proposal' to Cavandoli suggesting:

1. Titular sovereignty to be transferred to Argentina;
2. Continued British administration via a lease-back arrangement for 99 years. Subject to periodic review;
3. British and Argentine flags to be flown side-by-side;
4. British Governor with locally elected Council responsible for the administration of the islands;
5. Argentina to be represented by a Commissioner-General; 6. a Joint-Council to arrange co-operation over economic development.

It is agreed that both parties should report back to their respective Foreign Ministers.

September 12th, the Falkland Islands office complains that the Nationality White Paper proposes; “.. second class citizenship on several hundred Falkland islanders who do not have grandparents who were born in the United Kingdom, but whose pure British nationality extends unbroken since the early nineteenth century, ..” 322

Back in London, Ridley reports to Carrington.

“... we are left with a clear option .. We can either seek a solution by negotiation along the lines of the Geneva talks (to which I think we could get Argentina to agree), or we could say that the concessions are beyond our political ability to deliver, and break off the talks (with all the obvious consequences). I do not think that there is much to gain by attempting to find a different package: both sides are close to their rock bottom positions. ... I believe it can be sold to the Islanders, but I am not certain.”

September 25th, Lord Carrington and Argentine Foreign Minister Carlos Pastor meet in New York. 323

November 5th, Ambassador Williams reports that the junta have endorsed the concept of lease-back but will wish to negotiate over the length of the lease.

November 6th, Argentina's State Petroleum Company (YPF) advertises for tenders for oil exploration licences over an area it calls, 'Magalenes Este,' which extends to within 96 miles of the Falklands archipelago - crossing the median line between Argentina and the islands.

November 7th, the OD Committee suggest that Ridley visits the Falklands in order to assess Islander views.

November 11th, the UN General Assembly defer the issue of the Falklands until 1981.

320 FCO 7/3808
321 Ibid.
322 Quoted in The Sovereignty Dispute over the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands L. S. Gustafson 1988
323 A.AC.109/670
November 18th, *The Times* reports.

“... it is stressed in London that British policy towards the Falklands remains as it has always been, that no solution would be acceptable that was not agreed by both the islanders and the British Parliament.”

November 21st, Ridley, en-route to the Falklands, stops over in Argentina. Unaware that the Minister was intending to do so, Argentine authorities are irritated. 324 His speaking to the press doesn't help matters. 325

“... if the islanders were to accept total change in favour of Argentine sovereignty or economic control we would be very surprised.”

“Mr Ridley told reporters that he had come to meet the islanders on whose total acceptance depended any solution to the dispute.” 326

“He made it clear that the Islanders’ wishes would be paramount and that their readiness to contemplate lease-back could not be taken for granted. He also made it clear that the concept was not regarded with any enthusiasm in London and it would not be easy to satisfy Parliament...” 327

November 22nd, Ridley arrives in Stanley with a set of objectives agreed in London.

“1) to persuade Councillors (and through them Islanders) that the prolongation of the dispute is not in their interests or those of HMG: and that we must work towards a negotiated settlement with the Argentines; ii) therefore to obtain their agreement that we should enter into negotiations with Argentina to explore the scope for a settlement based on leaseback; iii) to impress upon them our respect for their wishes to remain British, our interests in their welfare and our concern for their future.” 328

November 23rd, *The Times* reports on attitudes back in Argentina following Ridley's stop-over.

“Argentine feathers have been ruffled .... The local press enjoyed an orgy of indignation, and the Foreign Ministry replied in a communiqué that the British Government had not made one positive move to solve the sovereignty question.” 329

November 24th, Ridley meets Island Councillors in Stanley

“Mr. Bennet asked if the question could be taken to the ICJ. Mr. Ridley said that internationally, we were in a minority of one on the issue. The Argentines would not accept ICJ arbitration...” 330

At a public meeting, Ridley puts forward his three proposals which are met with annoyance and anger and he is shouted down. Clearly not expecting this response, Ridley loses his temper and tells the Islanders' that they would be to blame for the consequences.

“To many he had seemed aloof and intolerant of what he regarded as the short-sightedness of many Falklanders. ... A future member of the Islands Council, John Cheek, was harsher: "If anyone other than Ridley had tried to sell us leaseback, then it would have had a chance."...” 331

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324 At a 1990 International Conference on the Falkland Islands, Argentine author Virginia Gamba-Stonehouse claimed that Ridley had agreed a ‘lease-back’ arrangement with Argentina before moving on to the islands. This would seem unlikely.

325 *Falkland Islanders at War* Graham Bound 2002
326 *The Times November 23rd* 1980
327 PREM 19/656/62 at the Margaret Thatcher Foundation.
328 ALW 040/325/1
329 *The Times* November 23, 1980
330 ALW 0400/352/12

61
November 25th, in Stanley, further meetings take place between Ridley, the FIG and other groups.

“During his meeting with the Sheep-owners, Mr Ridley said that another option would be to break off talks altogether but he felt that this might antagonize the Argentine Government.” 332

November 26th, The Times newspaper reports.

“Britain is suggesting that the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands be transferred to Argentina, ... This is said to be one of a number of options which are being put to the islanders by Mr Nicholas Ridley, .. who is now in the Falklands.... Air Commodore Frow said that the lease-back solution, which has been raised before, is the one which is preferred by Whitehall.... A spokesman at the Foreign Office said last night that he could neither confirm nor deny the reports... When asked if Britain intended to cede the sovereignty of the islands to Argentina the spokesman said ... no solution can be finally agreed without the endorsement of the islanders and Parliament...” 333

Argentina's Postal Service announce the establishment of an office at Corbeta Uruguay on Southern Thule.

November 27th, the newspaper report is raised in Parliament with both MP's and Lords calling for a statement.

“Following an alarmist headline in The Times on 26th November, ... soothing answers were given to questions in Parliament.. These answers made clear that any solution to the dispute over the Islands would have to be endorsed both by the Islanders and by Parliament.”

Ridley's staff send an optimistic telegram back to London.

“It will take time for a clear reaction to emerge and one cannot be optimistic on the prospects for leaseback.” 334

November 29th, Minister Ridley's final meeting with the Islands Council fails to result in any decision.

Interviewed by Penguin News, Nicholas Ridley is asked whether Argentina was prepared to make life difficult for the Islanders.

“I am a man of peace. I would feel that I had failed if that happened. I can't foresee what Argentina would do, your guess is as good as mine, because you live near them and know them perhaps better even than I do. I merely say that in the long term one has to come to terms with one's neighbours and one has to live in peace with them. What one cannot do is live in a perpetual state of siege and antagonism, suspicion and bellicosity.” 335

As Minister Ridley departs on the LADE flight back to Argentina he is jeered by an angry crowd of Islanders.

December 2nd, back in London, Nicholas Ridley makes a statement to Parliament.

“We have no doubt about our sovereignty over the Islands. The Argentines, however, continue to press their claim. The dispute is causing continuing uncertainty, emigration and economic stagnation ... Following my exploratory talks with Argentina in April, the Government have been considering possible ways of achieving a solution which would be acceptable to all the parties. ... we should be guided by the wishes of the Islanders themselves.... I have asked them to let me know their views in due course.” 336

332 The Times November 26, 1980
333 Ibid.
334 PREM 19/656 Telegram No.183 of 27 November
335 Bound 2002 p.10. 40 years later little has changed, but life goes on in the British Falkland Islands.
336 HC Deb 02 December 1980 vol.995 cc128-34
“No one listened. Alerted by the Falkland Islands Committee to the Minister’s leaseback enthusiasm, MPs gave Ridley a battering worse than anything MPs could recall in the course of the Parliament.... One MP said that he had just watched a man wreck his career on a pile of rock.” 337

“I have never seen such a mauling, of any of my colleagues, in all my life. Nicholas Ridley, who had shown great courage in putting this forward, was looking pretty white by the end of it, poor chap.... Now that rough ride was not just from the Conservative side; it was from the Labour side; it was from the Liberals. It was absolutely united in its violent sense of opposition to the idea of leaseback.” 338

Minister Cavándoli is sent a telegram stressing the need for patience.

“Islander distrust of Argentines acute. Even if agree to lease-back being explored, eventual acceptance will depend on very long lease, no Argentine presence, international guarantees and probably financial assistance to develop economy.” 339

In the Buenos Aires newspaper, La Prensa.

“15 years of useless negotiation: London’s proposals are unacceptable from every point of view.”

December 3rd, The Times reports.

“The House of Commons came together in total concord yesterday to voice its deep suspicion of the intentions of the Foreign Office and of Mr Nicholas Ridley, a Minister of State, for the future of the Falkland Islands and their relationship with the Argentine. Seldom can a minister have had such a drubbing from all sides of the House, and Mr Ridley was left in no doubt that whatever Machiavellian intrigues he and the Foreign Office may be up to, they will come to nothing if they involve harming a hair on the heads of the islanders. ... 

From the Conservative benches, Mr Julian Amery told the minister that his statement was profoundly disturbing. For years the Foreign Office had wanted to get rid of this commitment, although the islands had an important part to play in the future of the South Atlantic...

A few moments later, Mr Ridley floundered into deeper water when he was asked whether the Government would accept the views of the islanders if they opted for the maintenance of the status quo. The minister seemed to many to be dodging the issue... ”

At Downing Street a further meeting of the OD Committee considers the situation.

“The Prime Minister, summing up the discussion, said that the Committee would wish to resume consideration of the subject when the Islanders’ leaders had reported further on local opinion. Unfortunately, Parliamentary hostility to the idea of a settlement was now so strong that, even if the islanders considered view was that one should be sought, this might be regarded as merely the result of pressure from Government. It should therefore be made clear that, if the islanders favoured maintaining the status quo, they would be fully supported. Further thought would need to be given to the way in which the proposed nationality Bill would affect the Islanders...”

“It agreed that this was a highly emotive issue for parliamentary and public opinion, while noting that the Islanders’ hostility to Ridley’s appeal seemed to have been exaggerated; and concluded that it would

337 Hastings & Jenkins 1997 p.50
338 Richard Luce quoted in Charlton 1989 p74
339 Quoted in Freedman 2005 vol.1 p.112
be 'tragic' is the Islanders' chances of escaping from economic blight were to be dismissed by the attitude of their champions at Westminster. This was not quite to appreciate the depth of the Islanders' feelings...”

**December 11th**, in London, Ambassador Ortiz urges Minister Ridley to arrange more talks.

In New York, the General Assembly adopt Resolution 35/118 entitled - 'Plan of Action for the Full Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.’

“Annex – 8. Member States shall adopt the necessary measures to **discourage** or prevent the systematic influx of outside immigrants and settlers into Territories under colonial domination, which disrupts the demographic composition of those Territories and may constitute a major obstacle to the genuine exercise of the right to self determination and independence by the people of those Territories.”

# Researcher’s Comment: Worthy of note, when Argentines' argue that they have never been allowed to settle in the Falklands archipelago.

**December 15th**, referring to the Argentine oil company's invitation for oil tenders, Lord Carrington makes a statement in Parliament.

“No agreement has been reached between the United Kingdom and Argentine Governments on the delimitation of the continental shelf as between the Falkland islands and Argentina. In the absence of an agreed boundary, neither party, in Her Majesty's Government's view, would be entitled to exercise continental shelf rights beyond the median line between the Falkland Islands and Argentina. We have protested to the Argentines about the YPF tender which does indeed go beyond the median line...”

**December 17th**, during an unattributable press briefing, Minister Ridley tells selected journalists that the dispute with Argentina blights the daily lives of the Islanders and cannot be ignored.

“The Islanders were, Hunt said, ‘mature, intelligent, law-abiding people, not a bunch of impossible schoolchildren who need to be told what is in their best interests’.”

**December 18th**, Minister Ridley answers MPs' questions in the Commons.

“... we want to maintain the British link, British rule and the British way of life, of which my hon. Friend and I are so proud. We desperately want to develop the economy of the islands. My hon. Friend mentioned improved farming and markets for farming produce. A great deal of credit is needed to open up those possibilities, and we must get commercial banks to perform their functions in the islands. There is also the question of revenue from the rich harvest of fish and the possibility—there can be no certainty—of finding oil. My hon. Friend wanted us to exert our undoubted rights over the fishing zones and the economic zones that surround not only the islands but our dependencies.

My hon. Friend mentioned the vexed question of Magellanes Este, the oil block that straddles the median line. Nothing would give us more pleasure than to be able to say that we had agreed the median line and that we and the Argentine respected that median line, so that oil exploration and exploitation could go ahead. That is also common ground. We hold the same view about control of the seas. There have been two incidents recently, when seas that would have been in the Falkland Islands maritime zone

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340 Boyce 2005
342 My emphasis. Argentina had been pushing for greater freedom of movement to and from the Islands including the right for Argentines to buy and sell property, and to live there.
343 Boyce 2005
were subject to harassment by Argentine vessels. My hon. Friend was right to raise the question of Southern Thule.

At the talks in New York in April, I protested again to the Argentine Foreign Minister about the presence of the Argentine mission on Southern Thule without the permission or consent of the British Government. It is impossible to establish any of these things because the Argentine Government have never conceded our sovereignty over either the Falkland Islands or the dependencies, nor have they agreed that we should declare the various zones of the seas around them to which we would normally be entitled...

At present, the relationship between Great Britain and Argentina is good and friendly. We are still negotiating in a series of talks with the Argentine Government, as we were for many years before this Government took over. In spite of that, it is still not possible to declare those 200-mile fishery zones, to get the licence fees from foreigners fishing in those zones, to explore or exploit oil or to legalise the position of Southern Thule. Even the commercial banks are unwilling to set up in the islands because of the political risks. These hazards are real. It must be recognised that solving these problems requires an overall political settlement.” 344

With regard to Shackleton’s Report, Ridley adds; “... a very large number of the recommendations have been implemented - 49 out of 90. Of the remainder, 14 have been rejected, 20 are in train and 7 are undecided. I concede that the bulk of the recommendations in terms of money have not been implemented because we come immediately to the question of the runway.” 345

In Buenos Aires, La Nacion publishes a private letter from banker César Alberto Cao Saravia demanding that his Government interrupt communications to the Falklands; ban the importation of British goods and break off diplomatic relations with the UK. 346

December 31st, Adrian Monk addresses the Falklands people in a speech broadcast on Falklands radio.

“I think the whole campaign stinks... Don’t be misled. Don’t be worried about the consequences of saying “We are British.” Our country will remain British.” 347

“(It) certainly changed the minds of a lot of people in the Falklands without doubt, and a lot of people will not now admit that they considered leaseback as a possibility.” 348


“While this House does not like any of the ideas put forward by Mr. Ridley for a possible settlement of the sovereignty dispute with Argentina, it agrees that Her Majesty’s Government should hold further talks with the Argentines at which this House should be represented and at which the British delegation should seek an agreement to freeze the dispute over sovereignty for a specified period of time.” 349

January 13th, Carrington sends a message to Cavándoli; “Ministers will need to give careful consideration to the Islanders’ response and to next steps before any decision can be taken on a meeting... we may be unable to present firm proposals before the end of the month.”

344 HC Deb 18 December 1980 vol.996 cc647-52
345 Quoted in Ellerby 1990 p.218
346 Savaria had previously been reported as willing to purchase the islands from Britain.
349 HC Deb 21 January 1981 vol.997 cc248-9
January 20th, the US Embassy in London sends an assessment of the situation to Washington.

“The end-of-year push to achieve some movement toward a settlement with Argentina on the Falklands dispute came to naught. Ridley’s efforts to employ a forcing strategy in negotiations with the Islanders were thwarted by a small but highly-effective Falklands lobby in London, concentrated in the House of Lords and the Conservative media. As a result, Ridley was forced to back off and give public assurances that nothing would be done to change the status of the Islanders without their express approval. The Foreign Office, though discouraged, will probably have another go at moving things off dead centre before the current Parliament is dismissed. Ridley may have decided it is simply not worth the trouble.” 350

January 27th, Argentina demands that negotiations on sovereignty are resumed, “sooner, rather than later.

The Foreign Ministry also complains about a group of new emigrants to the archipelago. 351

“The Falkland government's plans to obtain a small number of immigrants from St. Helena have met with a large stumbling block in the form of Argentine official anger. Commodore Carlos Cavandoli told the British Ambassador to Buenos Aires that his government was concerned at reports from various sources of migratory movements towards the Falklands. Many Argentine newspapers appear to be disturbed that the potential immigrants may be black and are somewhat obsessed with the fact. There are very few black people in Argentina. The Penguin News has checked with the government here, and they have confidence that the race of potential immigrants is not being taken into consideration, and providing they are suitable in other ways, they will be welcomed regardless of race. Only four families are to be accepted for the present. Should this pilot scheme prove successful more families could follow at a later date.” 352

January 29th, in London, a meeting authorises talks with Argentina; “On 29 January 1981 the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister, endorsed Lord Carrington's recommendation that the aim should be to keep the talks going and to let the Islanders come to see the need to explore a solution based on leaseback.” 353

February 23rd, in New York, representatives from Argentina and Britain meet for two days of talks; Adrian Monk and Stuart Wallace represent the Islanders. Britain’s delegation report back promptly to London.

“Comodoro Cavándoli … could not understand or accept that Argentina's one requirement, sovereignty, should be ignored permanently.

The British side had said that Islander wishes had to be taken into account; why could not Argentine wishes be taken into account? … any progress had to include the question of sovereignty... The two sides could not go on endlessly meeting in New York. Time for Argentina had now run out; these meetings could not continue year after year simply expressing views... Mr. Ridley wanted to make it quite clear that the British Government had no doubt at all of the legality and strength of their title to the Islands. He had always said to the Islanders that the legal position was not in doubt. It would indeed be possible to go on resting on that position for all time... Mr. Monk pointed out that one of the UN's basic principles was the right to self-determination. Why were the Argentines not prepared to accept the Islanders' rights to determine their own future?

350 Telegram 1165 from London, Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File D810029-0299
351 PREM 19/656 Telegram No. 27 of 27 January. In 1980, the FIG had advertised in St. Helena for people willing to live and work in the Falklands. With spare housing for three families, the FIG expected to get few applications. In fact, over 300 Saints applied to move.
352 The Penguin News March 5, 1981
353 Ellerby 1990 p.260

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Sr. Ortiz de Rozas said that the relevant UN resolutions referred to the principle of territorial integrity. Argentina’s had been harmed. Mr. Ridley said that the principle of self-determination was nevertheless overriding;...” 354

“The Argentines were in a belligerent mood even before the talks began. They were incensed by a proposal being considered by the Islanders to encourage the immigration of laborers from the British dependency of St. Helena. The Falklands have a labor shortage and St. Helena has a labor surplus. What the Islanders viewed as a mutually beneficial economic arrangement sent the Argentines straight up the wall. They regarded it either as a scheme to ensure long-term British domination or as an insidious plot “to dilute Argentina’s racial stock.” Not the best way to start negotiations, ...” 355

February 24th, on the second day of talks Cavandoli speaks directly to the Islanders’ representatives.

“.. He offered them 'most pampered region status' within Argentina; they could keep their laws, local government, language and customs, yet receive roads, school, television. Just let him have the one word: sovereignty.” 356

“It was announced on Tuesday 24th February that the Falkland and British delegation to the latest round of negotiations in New York had failed to achieve their aim: the establishment of a freeze on all claims concerning sovereignty of the Islands... The leader of the Argentine delegation reaffirmed the Argentine rights of sovereignty over the Falkland islands... He went on to explain that the British proposal for a freeze on the sovereignty issue was unacceptable to the Argentine delegation, because it disregarded the request addressed to both parties by resolution 31/49 of the United Nations General Assembly to expedite negotiations with a view to resolving the dispute.” 357

February 26th, a final communique is released; but, following a last minute intervention by the Argentine Embassy, a dramatically shorter version than that agreed during the talks. This merely says that the question will be examined in “further negotiations.” 358

“The victor in the sterile talks had been Britain, since she had won time.” 359

“With the failure of the talks in New York we are faced with the problem of deciding what to offer them (the British and the Argentines) next. The choice has been narrowed down, and of the Ridley proposals we are left with only one: leaseback. There is, however, one other choice that was not offered in Mr. Ridley's package. That is independence. More and more people are now beginning to give the idea some consideration and we have seen the subject brought up at recent Council meetings and even at the negotiations in New York. It is certainly not as ridiculous as many people like to think.” 360

February 27th, Foreign Secretary Carrington and US Secretary Haig meet.

“Carrington briefly outlined what he regards as the principal elements of the UK dispute with Argentina over the Falkland Islands. Argentina will not agree to put its claims before the International Court because they are not valid. Problem for Britain is similar to what they frequently encounter when they try to cast off a colony: The people who live on the Falkland Islands do not want to become

354 PREM 19/612
355 Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D810117–1025
356 Jenkins & Hastings 1997
357 The Penguin News March 5, 1981
358 See PREM 19/612 Annex B (Original Joint Communique) and Annex C (Agreed Joint Communique).
359 Editorial in La Prensa March 6, 1981 quoted in ALW 040/325/2 Part B 76-150
360 Editorial in The Penguin News no.12 March 5, 1981

67
Argentines. The British tactic is to keep the ball in the air as long as possible in order to avoid a showdown with Argentina. One idea the British are considering is to cede sovereignty of the Falkland Islands to Argentina on the understanding that Argentina would lease back the Islands to Britain for 99 years. The Falkland Islanders don't like this idea.” 361

February 28th, Adrian Monk and Stuart Wallace hold a press conference to outline their views of the talks. Their comments receive international attention in the press, creating some difficulty for the Argentine delegation back in Argentina where news of the talks had not been made public.

March 7th, an Argentine ship Yehuin, is ordered away from French Harbour on Weddell Island.

“The Captain of Yehuin said that he was sheltering from south-westerly gales and he was instructed by the Master of Endurance to leave the harbour as soon as weather permitted. Weddell Island Manager Bob Ferguson reported that the Argentine ship had left later that day.” 362

March 13th, in London, Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington tells the Prime Minister that there is little point in further talks while the Islanders remained hostile to the leaseback proposal.

“We can reach no conclusions now; ... If in the end the Islanders decide that they would prefer the status quo to any deal involving cession of sovereignty, then we must prepare for the possibility of a deterioration of our relations with Argentina: ... ” 363

March 17th, a Papal arbitration panel considering the Beagle Channel dispute between Argentina and Chile, gives its verdict. As with the 1977 arbitration decision, this favours Chile. Argentina immediately rejects the result. 364

# Researcher’s Comment: Once again Argentina proved that its word was not its bond.

April 30th, following interest by the Shell oil company, the FCO takes out an advert in the International Herald Tribune, restating Lord Carrington’s announcement (December 15, 1980) refuting the November, 1980 YPF invitation for oil tenders.

“Her Majesty’s Government assume that oil companies will take the above into full account in considering whether to place tenders to drill for oil in the Magallanes Este block.” 365

May 5th, from Buenos Aires, Ambassador Williams telegrams the FCO to urge a further round of talks which he sees as necessary to keep diplomatic channels open.

May 29th, General Galtieri, C-in-C of Argentina’s Army, refers to the dispute in a speech.

“Neither are we prepared to allow those who are discussing with us the return of island territories that are Argentine by historical inheritance and legal right to interfere in the slightest way with the search for and exploitation of the wealth of our continental shelf... Nobody can or will be able to say that we have not been extremely calm and patient in our handling of international problems, which in no way stem from any appetite for territory on our part. However, after a century and a half they are becoming more and more unbearable.”

362 The Penguin News no.13 April 19, 1981
363 Carrington minute to MT March 13th
365 Falkland Islands Newsletter No. 10 June 1981. HL Deb 10.11.1981 vol.425 c170 Hansard
In London, the Ministry of Defence is asked by the FCO for a short assessment of the UK's ability to respond to a range of possible Argentine actions.  

**June 7th**, the base commander at Grytviken, South Georgia reports that an Argentine C130 Hercules aircraft, with military markings, has flown over the base.

“It would seem that despite our protests Argentina overflights of Falkland islands and Dependencies are increasing. Such incidents only harden the Islanders' resolve to stand firm against any proposal to have closer links with the Argentines.”

On the same day, FCO assistant under-secretary John Ure flies into Buenos Aires where he has talks with Foreign Minister Camilion and Ambassador Enrique Ros.

“In Argentina, I found the Ministers and officials with whom I spoke reasonably relaxed about the progress – or lack of progress – on the Falklands negotiations and well disposed towards the lease-back idea... while they themselves appreciated the constraints on our progress in the Falklands negotiations, their military masters were less patient ...”

**June 9th**, Ure arrives in Port Stanley.

“I formed the impression that opinion was not yet irrevocably hardened against the lease-back proposal and that many of the better informed and more progressive islanders recognised that an accommodation with Argentina was necessary ...”

**June 18th**, First Lord of the Admiralty Sir Henry Leach, has a meeting with PM Thatcher about defence cuts.

“The point he wished to emphasise was the most serious miscalculation which we would be making [if] we disregarded the deterrent effect of a major maritime capability in peacetime.”

**June 30th**, in London, a review of policy takes place at the FCO in a meeting chaired by Minister Ridley. Falklands' Governor Rex Hunt is present, as is Ambassador Williams. Hunt makes it clear that the Islanders wish to have nothing whatsoever to do with Argentina, and that they do not believe that a leaseback settlement can provide the guarantees they want.

The meeting concludes that the British Government should play for time; that the new Legislative Council, when elected, should be persuaded to allow negotiations to continue; that the Islanders should be educated as to the various pros and cons; and that contingency plans should be updated.

On the same day, Lord Trefgarne speaks to the House of Lords on the subject of defence cuts.

“HMS Endurance will be paid off in 1982 on her return to the United Kingdom, following her deployment in the South Atlantic and the Antarctic Region later this year. There are no plans to replace her. However, the Royal Marines garrison in the Falkland Islands will be maintained at its present strength, and from time to time Her Majesty’s ships will be deployed in the area.”

In **July**, aware of the reports about Endurance, a response from the FIG is transmitted to the London.

“The people of the Falkland Islands deplore in the strongest terms the decision to withdraw HMS Endurance from service. They express concern that Britain appears to be abandoning its defence of British interests in the South Atlantic and Antarctic at a time when other powers are strengthening their position in these areas. They feel that such a withdrawal will further weaken British sovereignty in this
area in the eyes not only of islanders but of the world. They urge that all possible endeavours be made to secure a reversal of this decision.”

July 9th, in Cabinet, intelligence threat assessments suggest that Argentina is more likely to pursue diplomatic and economic measures than any use of force, although an attempt to establish a foothold on one of the Dependencies, or even on one of the more remote Falklands Islands, is considered a possibility. 369

From Buenos Aires, the British Embassy report that several Argentine newspapers are carrying articles about the withdrawal of HMS Endurance from the South Atlantic - claiming that Britain is; “abandoning the protection of the Falkland islands.” 370

July 20th, Ridley warns Lord Carrington that if Argentina concludes, possibly by early 1982, that the British Government is unable or unwilling to negotiate seriously; retaliatory action must be expected.

July 27th, Dr. Oscar Camilion writes to Ambassador Williams expressing his concern at the lack of progress in the decade following the communication agreements.

“... to postpone further a profound and serious discussion of the complex essential constituents of the negotiations – sovereignty and economic co-operation – in a simultaneous and global fashion with the express intention of achieving concrete results shortly. A resolute impetus must therefore be given to the negotiations. The next round of negotiations cannot be another mere exploratory exercise, but must mark the beginning of a decisive stage towards the definitive termination of the dispute.”

That same day, Argentina declares negotiations to have become; “... an unpostponable priority for its foreign policy ... it is not possible to defer this question which affects territorial integrity and national dignity.”

In August, Constantino Davidoff applies to the Argentine Navy for permission to use one of its Antarctic transport ships to get to South Georgia. The stated purpose is the inspection of the whaling stations to assess what needs to be done in fulfilment of his contract to recycle the equipment on the island.

“Ministry officials, acting on the perceptions of the moment regarding the need to reaffirm an Argentinian presence on all South Atlantic islands, enthusiastically recommended Davidoff to the Transportation Bureau of the Navy (auxiliary ships). The legal presence of Davidoff’s men would prevail long after the British Antarctic Survey left the place, ... In international forums this action would reassert Argentina’s interests in the sub-Antarctic.” 371

In early September, Argentine Admiral, Jorge Anaya, knowing that Davidoff’s venture on South Georgia offers a unique opportunity, instructs his planning staff to consider the options for establishing a presence there - 'Project Alpha'. 372

“... there was .. a scheme to take advantage of the Davidoff venture to establish a base covertly. ... This was to replicate the successful venture in 1976 when, in one of the first Junta's earliest acts a presence had been established on South Thule in the South Sandwich Islands. ... The precedent was enticing. ... The plan was to infiltrate Davidoff’s workforce with military ‘scientists’ who would then be part of the 'legal' landing party on South Georgia. They would later be joined by a group of marines ... and establish a more permanent military base of some fourteen men from April onwards.” 373

369 Franks 1983 para.94
370 Ibid.
371 The Falklands/Malvinas War: A Model for North-South Crisis Prevention Virginia Gamba-Stonehouse 1987 p.121.
372 Painful Choices: A Theory of Foreign Policy Change David A. Welch 2005 p.78
373 Signals of War: The Falklands Conflict of 1982 Lawrence Freedman & Virginia Gamba-Stonehouse 1990
Davidoff receives permission to use a Naval ice-breaker, the *Almirante Irizar*, from the Antarctic Squadron. Britain's defence attache supports an Argentine request to purchase 12 Vulcan bombers from the UK.

“The aircraft would not be appropriate for use against the Falkland Islands.” 374

**September 7**th, Carrington asks the FCO to review the possibility of taking the Falklands dispute to the ICJ. 375

**September 14**th, in London, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) announces that HMS *Endurance* will be withdrawn before the end of March, 1982. Britain’s Defence Secretariat prepares a draft-submission for the approval of the Chief's of Staff.

“Military measures to deter or counter Argentine military action against the Falkland Islands would require the despatch to the area of additional forces, primarily naval, and possibly on a substantial scale. Any such deployment would be costly and pose considerable logistical difficulties. To deter or repel even a small scale invasion would require a significant commitment of naval resources at the expense of commitments elsewhere, for a period of uncertain duration. To deal with a full scale invasion would require naval and land forces with organic air support on a very substantial scale, and the logistic problems of such an operation would be formidable.” 376

“She (Thatcher) quoted the September 1981 paper by the chiefs. They, .. concluded that to deter a full-scale invasion, a large balanced force would be required, ... There was a danger that its dispatch could precipitate the very action it was intended to deter.” 377

An intelligence report quotes Argentine diplomatic correspondence as believing that; “.. the withdrawal of HMS *Endurance had been construed .. as a deliberate political gesture.” 378

**September 15**th, Carrington writes to Thatcher.

“... the Argentines are showing renewed impatience ... They have sent a Note and circulated a Communiqué at the United Nations deploring the hitherto slow speed of negotiations and the lack of results and making clear that, if progress is not made soon, they may have to look to other means of achieving their purpose... In short, the present outlook is not good.” 379

**September 22**nd, in New York, Dr. Camilion addresses the UN General Assembly.

“It is a strange paradox that our country, which was in the vanguard of the struggle for national independence, should still suffer from a breach of its territorial integrity, and anachronistic persistence of colonialism. The Malvinas Islands have not been restored to Argentina in spite of the long time elapsed since this General Assembly adopted Resolution 2065 (XX) in 1965. The Malvinas are still a colony to this day, ... Obviously, Mr. President, the Malvinas cannot remain a colony, nor can Argentina passively accept that part of its territory be one of the last colonies.”

**September 23**nd, at the UN, Lord Carrington informs Camilion that the British Government cannot coerce the Islanders and that, therefore, it would be preferable if Argentina put forward proposals when talks resumed.

374 *The Daily Express* September 6, 2015. In fact these long-range aircraft could have been easily adapted to take a conventional bomb load. The purchase was cancelled in early 1982 after concerns were expressed by the FCO’s Robin Fearn, and the Ministry of Defence.

375 *ALW 040/325/1 Part B 26*

376 *Defence Implications of Argentine Action Against the Falkland islands (A Note by MOD officials) COS (Misc) 268/742 at the Margaret Thatcher Foundation (50DBC02EAA664225A8ECBE065CD1306)*

377 Charlton 1989 p.141

378 Franks 1983

379 *ALW 040/325/2 Part D 226*
Camilion responds that the key question remains that of sovereignty, which can only be negotiated between the UK and Argentina; and that the Islanders cannot be allowed a veto. 380

“For the British, the Falklands are item 242 in the order of priorities in foreign policy.” 381

“HMG’s Ambassador here, Anthony Williams, told me that Lord Carrington made clear to Camilion in New York that the question is not one of respecting the “interests” of the Islanders, but rather of respecting their “desires.” Williams says that the current elections in the Islands seem to be producing an even harder line there. The general sentiment in his understanding is against any more talks whatsoever with the Argentines. Williams nevertheless expects a new negotiating session, if not before the end of the year, in the early months of 1982. But he looks for nothing positive by way of results. In his view HMG has about exhausted its ingenuity, particularly with the idea of ceding sovereignty and then leasing back the Islands. The Argentines, on the other hand, seem unwilling or unable to go beyond saying “the Malvinas are ours.” ...” 382

September 24th, in the Argentine press, Camilion is quoted as saying that; “Lord Carrington advanced to the point of saying that the present status quo is difficult to sustain today.” Camilion is also reported as dismissing the forthcoming Island elections as of no importance to Argentina. 383 When questioned, Carrington responds that the Argentine Minister; “... can have been left in no doubt about our commitments to respect the wishes of the Islanders.”

October 2nd, Ambassador Williams expresses his opinion that there is now a clear risk that Argentina will conclude that talking is a waste of time. He believes it better to speak frankly, and face the consequences.

October 4th, Foreign Minister Oscar Camilion is interviewed by the press on his return from the USA.

“The Minister replied to a question on the attitude of the inhabitants of the Islands with the statement that Argentina is committed to respect their interests but will not consult them. In his view, the Islanders have no right to veto in a negotiation that is between the UK and Argentina. According to the press, the Minister became irritated and refused to answer when questioned as to what specific steps the GOA (Gov of Argentina) might take to resolve the issue.” 384

October 14th, in London, having reviewed a possible submission to the ICJ, the FCO reports.

“The question of British sovereignty in the area has not been submitted to the ICJ or to any other international tribunal.

In 1947 and subsequently HMG offered to submit the dispute over Argentine claims in the Dependencies to the ICJ; and in 1955 HMG applied unilaterally to the Court against encroachments on British sovereignty in the Dependencies by Argentina and Chile. However, the matter could not be pursued since both Argentina and Chile declined to submit to the Court's jurisdiction in the matter.

In 1966 the question arose as to whether in the course of negotiations with the Argentines, the UK should offer to refer the dispute over the Falkland Islands to the ICJ. ...” 385

380 ALW 040/522/1 Telegram No. 909
381 Camilion quoted in Falklands: The Secret Plot Oscar Cardoso, Ricardo Kirschbaum & Eduardo van der Kooy 1983.
This appears to have been 'borrowed' from a statement by Lord Carrington referring to his appointment as Foreign Secretary.
382 Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D810469–0965
383 PREM 19/656 Telegram No. 259 of 24 September
384 Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D810469–0965
385 See March 24, 1969. There is some evidence that an offer was made to Argentina that the question be put to the ICJ, but that this was turned down.
The question was not, however, pursued further. This was partly because reference to the Court would have had no attraction for Argentina (as Argentina does not accept the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ, any reference to the Court could only be made with the agreement of the Argentine Government.)... If for political reasons it seemed advisable to offer international adjudication or arbitration to the Argentines again as a method of resolving the dispute, the Law Officers would first need to be consulted. Legal Advisers also consider that reference to an ad hoc arbitration tribunal might be preferable to reference to the ICJ since the composition of the former would have to be agreed between us and the Argentines. But given the Argentines repudiation of the award made by an arbitration tribunal in the Beagle Channel case, despite their prior agreement to accept its findings, no reference to international arbitration is likely to help solve the dispute. The Argentines would be unlikely to accept a ruling that the Islands were British and it would be politically very difficult for the UK to hand them over to Argentina, if the ruling went the other way. If arbitration went in our favour we might gain some advantage at the UN, but this would be only temporary as the great majority of UN member-states will continue to see the dispute as a colonial problem. ” 386

On the same day, from Buenos Aires, Ambassador Williams reports on a conversation with Dr. Camilion, who told the British representative; “For serious and constructive negotiations it was necessary to tackle all the component parts of what was a complex issue.” 387

“I was trying to convey first of all that it was necessary to start meaningful negotiations, and it was necessary to find a new approach. In those days I was toying with something like a Hong Kong style approach ...” 388

Talks scheduled to be held in Geneva in December are postponed, at the request of Argentina.

Following elections, a new Legislative Council takes over in Stanley.

**October 30th**, the British Nationality Act receives Royal Assent; to take effect on January 1st, 1983.

“... Margaret Thatcher stripped them - and all other overseas territories - of (full UK citizenship) in 1981 in order to stop the people of Hong Kong moving to Britain before the handover to China.” 389

Following budget cuts, the British Antarctic Survey suggests they close their base at Grytviken, South Georgia.

**November 10th**, in the Lords, Lord Murton argues against the proposed withdrawal of HMS Endurance.

“... Argentina continues to press her claims to the Falkland Islands. The recent argument put forward is that they form part of the Argentinian continental shelf.... Against the general background of uncertainty in the region it seems improvident of the Ministry of Defence - one presumes with the tacit acceptance of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office - to withdraw the Royal Naval Ice Patrol Ship HMS "Endurance" from Antarctica in 1982 as part of the wider decision to reduce the size of the active fleet. ... Could this decision not be interpreted by all other involved nations as a sign of declining interest in the Antarctic by Great Britain? Obviously there can be no such intention. But the best and most obvious way to prove it, in my view, is to reverse the decision to scrap HMS Endurance.” 390

**November 16th**, US envoy, Vernon Walters, arrives in Buenos Aires for discussions with General Galtieri.

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386 P. R. Fearn to Nick Ridley October 14th, 1981 ALW 040/325/1 Part B 26
387 Charlton 1989 p.106
388 Oscar Camilion interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.107
389 Banished Islanders are Citizens Again Anthony Browne in *The Guardian* May 12, 2002
390 HL Deb 10.11.1981 vol.425 Hansard
“Walters was in Buenos Aires, intermittently, for many days, between October 1981 and February 1982. He discussed, inter alia, the establishment of a South Atlantic Treaty Organisation. He also discussed the advantages for such an organisation of an island-base in the Falklands, somewhat along the lines of Diego Garcia. However, the understanding was that the agreement on Hemispheric and other grounds should be between the United States and Argentina, the bulwark of American policy in the South Atlantic, and not between the US and Britain. Asked by the Argentine Military what Britain would do, the American replied to the effect that the British would huff, puff and protest, and do nothing, with the implication that the Americans could soothe ruffled British feathers.” 391

“When asked whether the United States would remain neutral in the event of a conflict, Walters intimated that neutrality would be contingent upon the absence of any British casualties from Argentine military action.” 392

**November 25th**, at the UN, the General Assembly defer consideration of the Falklands' question until 1982.

In Buenos Aires, Constantino Davidoff puts his final plans together for the dismantling of the scrap on South Georgia.

“... in late November, two high-ranking naval officers and two foreign office officials met with Constantine Davidoff at a restaurant in Calle Florida a popular shopping district in downtown Buenos Aires. One of the navy men was Captain Adolfo Palau, of naval transport command, and the other was Captain Cesar Trombetta, of the navy's Antarctic Squadron.... the purpose of their meeting was for the navy officers to tell Davidoff that the Argentine navy was now prepared to transport him free of charge to South Georgia and for the foreign office officials to confirm that the scrap metal he brought back would enter duty-free, increasing his profit margin... Davidoff, never having been to South Georgia, proposed to make a brief trip to inspect the whaling stations. Trombetta agreed; it would provide an opportunity to take a closer look at the island and test the likely British reaction.” 393

**December 2nd**, Lord Carrington writes to the Prime Minister.

“... talks are due to be held on 17 and 18 December in Geneva;... Islander opinion is even more strongly opposed to any 'deal' with the Argentines over sovereignty. ... We therefore have little room for manoeuvre,.... Argentines have requested this meeting, so we can allow them to make the running.” 394

“HMG views Argentina as the proposer and HMG as the responder in the upcoming talks. The sovereignty issue remains central, and the Islanders seem more determined than ever to remain British. HMG's position is straightforward: It seeks a resolution of the issue, but will not agree to a settlement "over the heads of the Islanders." ...” 395

**December 8th**, in a palace coup, a new junta takes over in Buenos Aires led by Army Commander General Leopoldo Galtieri, Admiral Jorge Anaya and Air Force General, Lami Dozo. In a deal with Anaya, Galtieri becomes President-elect whilst retaining his position as head of the Army.

“It is said by associates of both men that this agreement ... involved assurances on a number of policy issues. One of these was an understanding that the recovery of the Falklands should be achieved within the two years of Galtieri's presidency term, preferably before January 1983 ...” 396

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391 One Man’s Falklands Tam Dalyell 1982 pp.133-4
392 The Reagan Revolution II: Rebuilding the Western Alliance R. C. Thornton 2004
393 Thornton 2004. There are different versions of this story; none of which can be confirmed.
394 ALW 040/325/2 Part E 301
395 Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D810588–0688
396 Jenkins & Hastings 1997
“(Anaya) was an ardent ‘Malvinist’, but the suggestion that he made the recovery of the islands a condition of his support for the new President is not supported by senior Argentine Admirals. They believe that when Galtieri became President he asked Anaya and Brigadier Lami Dozo, the air Force member of the junta, what future plans the old junta had been developing ... the head of the list for foreign policy was the resolution of the ‘Malvinas problem.’...” 397

“Contrary to popular impression, however, Galtieri obtained neither a mandate nor a full term of office, and would be required to relinquish his army command in a year. In short, as president, Galtieri could count on exercising considerable power for a year, after which the junta would be enlarged by an additional member, Galtieri’s replacement as army chief. This arrangement was clearly an incentive for Galtieri to take action while his power was relatively unconstrained.” 398

Dr. Nicanor Costa Mendez is appointed Foreign Minister.

**December 14th**, dealing with a question regarding the occupation by Argentina of Southern Thule, Lord Carrington states; “… if my noble friend is suggesting the use of force, he will recollect that international law and the United Nations Charter require disputes to be settled by peaceful means. That is what we have been trying to do,...” 399

**December 15th**, Argentina requests a postponement of the talks due to start on the 17th. Britain agrees.

“One Tuesday 15 December 1981, Admiral Jorge Anaya flew from Buenos Aires to the main Argentine naval base at Puerto Belgrano, 280 miles away to the south-west. He went there to perform the official installation of Vice-Admiral Juan Lombardo as the new Chief of Naval Operations; ... After the ceremony, Anaya surprised Lombardo by quietly telling him to prepare a plan to occupy the Falkland islands: to ‘take them but not necessarily to keep them’ are the words Lombardo remembers.” 400

**December 16th**, Constantino Davidoff leaves Argentina for South Georgia aboard the Almirante Irizar, commanded by Captain Cesar Trombetta.

“... Davidoff’s enterprise lay dormant until activated on late 1981. At that point scrap metal prices began to plummet from $93 to $63 per ton, suggesting that profit was not necessarily the reason for the venture...” 401

“The business was inviting. It was estimated according to The Sunday Times that (for) those 35,000 tons of metal Davidoff had paid £115,000, when in 1979 a tonne of scrap was sold at £214, representing a profit of £7 million.” 402

Davidoff’s letter informing the British Embassy of the proposed visit is only delivered after his departure. 403

“Davidoff deliberately delayed sending the letter to the embassy, on Trombetta’s advise, who intended it as a “provocation”. But Davidoff also sent a telex to Christian Salvesens in Edinburgh, informing the company of his trip, and Salvesens had promptly informed the Foreign Office. London had thus been informed of Davidoff’s visit well in advance of his arrival.” 404

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397 Argentine Fight for the Falklands Martin Middlebrook 2003
398 Thornton 2004
399 HL Deb 14 December 1981 vol.426 cc5-6 . At this time, Argentina's meteorological station on Southern Thule was staffed by seven naval scientists and four civilians of which three were radio technicians.
400 Argentine Fight for the Falklands M. Middlebrook 2003
401 Thornton 2004. There are different versions of this story. None can be confirmed.
402 Malvinas: las causas inmediates de la Guerra M. Meneghini 2015
403 In correspondence with the British Ambassador dated March 25th, 1982, Davidoff would later claim that this letter was delivered to the Embassy on December 11th.
404 Thornton 2004
December 18th, in Buenos Aires, the new junta meet to discuss action in the Falkland Islands.  
“(Dr. Méndez) .. briefed the Junta ... as to the dismal state of negotiations with Britain and the need to develop a policy prior to the resumption of talks in the coming February. ... From the Argentine perspective serious discussions, addressing the sovereignty issue, only took place for two short periods during .. sixteen years: between 1966 and 1967, and from 1977 to 1980. For the rest of the time the Falkland Islands lobby undermined the flexibility of the Foreign Office and its conduct of the negotiations. ...The immediate Argentine objective was to return to the original negotiating framework of 1965-7.”

December 20th, Almirante Irizar arrives off South Georgia.  
“Trobetta traversed the 1,650-mile passage in four days maintaining radio silence, an unusual procedure, and without radioing the magistrate at Grytviken, the official port of entry, of his impending visit. Upon arrival on December 20, Trombetta declined to follow prescribed landing procedures by obtaining clearance at Grytviken. Instead he proceeded directly to Leith...”

December 21st, Davidoff lands and inspects the whaling station at Leith.  
“There he inspected the material that (he) had purchased: 30 fuel storage tanks, cooking plant, diesel power plant of 1,500 kw, boiler and machinery, in Leith; other facilities in Husvik and Stromnes, plus two floating docks of 700 and 1,000 tons in the latter port.”

December 22nd, in his inauguration speech, President Galtieri surprisingly makes no reference to the Islands.  
Admiral Anaya orders his head of Naval Operations, Vice-Admiral Juan Jose Lombardo, to update existing Falklands invasion plans.

December 23rd, after the Argentine vessel has sailed from South Georgia, a member of the BAS checks the Leith station to find the phrase - ‘Las Malvinas son Argentinas’ - scrawled on the walls.

December 31st, London is informed of the unauthorised visit of the Almirante Irizar. Governor Hunt advises a strong protest and legal proceedings against Davidoff.  

1982 – January 4th, Ambassador Williams is instructed to make a formal protest to the Argentine Foreign Ministry. Governor Hunt is informed and instructed not to start legal proceedings against Davidoff, as such an action would; “... risk provoking a most serious incident which could escalate and have an unforeseeable outcome.”

January 5th, in Buenos Aires, the junta again meet to consider the Falklands issue; deciding; “... to follow a double policy. It resolved to 'reactivate to the fullest extent all negotiations for the sovereignty of the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands' and at the same time 'prepare a contingency plan for the employment of military power should the first alternative fail.'”

“It was only a contingency plan. The mood was dictated by the absolute lack of progress in negotiations... at that time, at the end of five years of fruitless negotiations, we had become very frustrated.”

405 Freedman 2005 vol.1 p.132  
407 Thornton 2004. This author suggests that the Argentine vessel remained only a few hours. Other sources suggest it was three days.  
408 Meneghini 2015  
409 Franks 1983  
410 Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990  
411 Rear-Admiral Gaulter Alara quoted in Middlebrook 2003
January 6th, Williams protests Davidoff’s violation of British sovereignty and demands compliance with Dependency laws. Argentina’s Minister requests time to investigate. Williams also presents a proposal from Carrington that a further round of talks should take place in New York in February.

Minister Costa Mendez repudiates the arbitration treaty with Chile regarding the Beagle Channel dispute. 412

January 12th, Argentina’s governing junta establishes a planning group to refine invasion plans; made up of Lombardo, Army General Garcia, and the Air Force’s Brigadier Sigfrido Plessl. It is recognised that casualties amongst the Islanders would be politically unacceptable.

“The first issue was logical since the population, although they were not sympathizers of Argentina as such were situated inside Argentine territory and therefore should be protected as much as possible. The idea of a bloodless operation also meant no unnecessary destruction should accompany the operation. On the issue of British troops this meant that the fewer the military casualties for Britain, the less the need for an emotive reaction on the part of the population or of the British Government.” 413

“The other armed services soon became involved. Their work was overseen by a Comisión de Trabajo – a Working party – which held its first meeting at Army Headquarters in the Liberatador Building in Buenos Aires in mid-January 1982. ... Admiral Anaya’s initial plan to take the islands but not necessarily to stay or to defend them was abandoned at an early stage... A date of 15 September was given for the completion of the planning. No move was envisaged before that date...” 414

January 19th, in Buenos Aires, the junta approves ‘National Strategy Directive 1/82’.

“The Military Committee, faced with the evident and repeated lack of progress in the negotiations with Great Britain to obtain recognition of our sovereignty over the Falklands, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands; convinced that the prolongation of this situation affects national honour, the full exercise of sovereignty and the exploration of resources; has resolved to analyse the possibility of the use of military power to obtain the political objective. This resolution must be kept in strict secrecy ...”

January 24th, La Prensa predicts that Argentina will present strict conditions for the continuance of negotiations with Britain. Journalist Iglesias Rouco also refers to probable US support and expresses his belief that; “... Buenos Aires will recover the islands by force this year... an ambitious diplomatic and strategic plan which would assure the country of a relevant role in the South Atlantic.”

January 25th, commanding officer Captain Nick Barker takes Endurance into the southern Argentine port of Ushuaia. In contrast to previous occasions, he receives a frosty welcome.

“They declined to play football against the ship and even refused the use of their ground for a match against a local civilian side. All this was completely against the pattern of cordiality we had experienced on previous visits to Argentine ports, even as recently as our visit to Puerto Belgrano two months earlier. There was a partial belief that this may have had something to do with the fact that we were going on to Punta Arenas in Chile, but was this enough to explain such a complete snubbing? I did not think so and reported my misgivings in a signal. When I went to call on Captain Russo, in the absence of Admiral Zaratiegui, I was informed that I was in the Malvinas War Zone... I laughed and asked who the Argentines were fighting. 'You,' he said without a flicker of emotion... All this I reported to London.” 415

413 Operation Rosario Admiral Carlos Busser 1984
414 Middlebrook 2003
415 Beyond Endurance: An Epic of Whitehall and the South Atlantic Nicholas Barker 1997. Barker’s warnings to the
“As Endurance was leaving, the Argentine harbor pilot had confided to Barker that something was ‘very wrong’ with the Argentine navy.” 416

**January 27th**, the junta responds to Carrington’s proposal in a *bout de papier* delivered to the British Embassy; agreeing to a fresh round of negotiations but calling for them to be “serious” and “in-depth” and to culminate; “within a reasonable period of time and without procrastination.” There is also a pre-condition.

“... in the first place, British recognition of Argentine sovereignty ... It remains a sine-qua-non requirement for the solution of the dispute. So long as this question is unresolved the dispute will continue.”

Argentina proposes the establishment of a permanent negotiating commission, to meet in the first week of each month, and subject to denunciation by either side without notice. 417

“Averypublic discussion in newspapers *La Prensa* and *The Buenos Aires Herald* consider the advantages and disadvantages of military action to seize the Falkland Islands.

**February 2nd**, while the junta consider *Operation Alpha*, Davidoff is instructed not to visit South Georgia.419

In Britain, after considering an Argentine request to purchase 12 *Vulcan* Bombers, the MoD decide against the proposal; “… a sale of strategic bombers to Argentina would bound to be misunderstood or at least misinterpreted (by Chile).” At the FCO, Robin Fearn raises another issue; “On the face of it, a strike aircraft would seem to be entirely suitable for an attack on the Falklands.” 420

**February 8th**, Britain’s Ambassador responds to the *bout de papier* of the 27th.

“(The UK) can not .. accept the Argentine assumption that the purpose of the negotiations is the eventual recognition by HMG of Argentine sovereignty in the area...” 421

“... Ambassador Williams delivered a low-key response to the Argentine note, agreeing to resume talks on February 27, but loudly protested Davidoff’s three-hour (sic) December stay on South Georgia.” 422

**February 9th**, in *The Buenos Aires Herald*. 423

“New Argentine Governments, no matter what their provenance or their ideology, have at least two things in common: they all aspire to reduce the inflation rate and they all strive to establish, once and

Admiralty appear to have been dismissed as an attempt to save his ship, which was due to go out of service. Captain Barker had been energetic in the defence of *Endurance* before the decision by the MoD, and had been active in the campaign to have that decision reversed. These actions had not endeared him to the MoD’s political masters, in particular Michael Power, the Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry. Nor, indeed, Secretary of State John Nott. The Frank’s commission of inquiry that followed the Falklands War do not appear to have been fully informed of the warnings issued by Barker. This may be seen as some tactical whitewashing by the Conservative Government.

417 ALW 040/325/1 Part C 101
418 Latin American Weekly Report February 12, 1982
419 Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990 p.44
420 Quoted in *The Daily Express* September 6th, 2015
421 ALW 040/325/1 Part C 101 Annex B
422 Thornton 2004
423 ALW 040/325/3. Documents released to the Margaret Thatcher Foundation per FOI request 0181-12.
for all, unquestioned Argentine sovereignty over the islands known in English as the Falklands ... This Government is no exception but ... its Falklands approach will be far tougher than anything we have seen so far. Besides the attendant historical rights and the infinite patience so far shown by Argentina, the truth of the matter is that the Malvinas situation is seriously interfering with our security in the South Atlantic, is limiting our economic and geopolitical plans, including ones relating to Antarctica, and bears moreover in a most negative fashion on our dispute with Chile over the Beagle.

Looking at the subject from an international, or western, viewpoint, the British presence there deprives Argentina of its proper participation in the defence of the region against constant Soviet penetration ... this makes any strategic planning for the area virtually impossible or of doubtful value.

So if it is borne in mind that it is not only this country which finds itself daily more prejudiced by Britain's inexplicable obstinacy, it seems easy to predict that an initiative involving force could count not only on the understanding of the international community, particularly of the third world, but also on the support, or at least the interested tolerance, of NATO ...

February 13th, two members of the Joint Services Expedition arrive at Leith harbour to find three yachts moored there. Isatis and Kim are French registered and have complied with entry procedures, although Kim has overstayd. Caiman's origins are unknown and she is flying the flags of the UK, Belgium and Panama. Her crew appear to be in contact with Buenos Aires. 424

"Although flying the Panamanian flag, on board were an Italian crew of three and an Argentinean bank official, Adrion Marchessi. Marchessi claimed that his bank was financing Davidoff's enterprise and he was simply inspecting the whaling stations. Suspicions were raised when three "very sophisticated" radios were found aboard the yacht, and more so when Davidoff, contacted by the British embassy to verify Marchessi's story, denied it." 425

February 15th, Lord Carrington writes to the Prime Minister regarding Argentina's demands.

"The Argentine Government have given us, as a prior notification of their position and objectives at New York, a substantial and toughly worded document which asserts that the sole purpose of the negotiations is to cede sovereignty to Argentina, denies the relevance of the Islanders' wishes (as opposed to interests) and, without explicit threats, refers to the Islanders' dependence on services provided by the Argentines." 426

Thatcher responds that it should be made clear that the wishes of the Islanders remain paramount. 427

"... the British were pursuing two contradictory policies: (1) negotiate a settlement with Argentina over the Falklands; and (2) protect the rights of the Falkland Islanders as British citizens. Both were undermined by the inherent difficulties of doing things "in twos." Britain was unable to make the kind of offer to the Argentine government that would have settled the issue peacefully, because the islanders and their supporters in Britain would have seen this as betrayal." 428

424 Caiman's owner was an Italian, Giovanni Raggio. It has been suggested that this vessel, and possibly the French yachts too, were on a spying mission for Argentina. See Large Animals and Wide Horizons: Adventures of a Biologist Richard M. Laws Scott Polar Research Institute undated.
425 Thornton 2004
426 ALW 040/325/1 B 51-100
427 Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990
428 When Governments Collide in the South Atlantic: Britain Coerces Argentina during the Falklands War Patrick Bratton & Wallace Thies 2011 in Comparative Strategy 30:1 1-27
February 18th, Argentina rejects Britain’s February 8th protest regarding Davidoff. *La Prensa* reports.

“The least that can be asked of military governments is that they do not dither in the face of any military eventuality when questions of sovereignty are involved. After decades of fruitless negotiations, Argentina has good cause to know that Great Britain will not give up the Malvinas either voluntarily or via any agreement that would mean losing its administrative power in the islands... the time is approaching for Buenos Aires to think in terms of force.”  429

February 23rd, Davidoff turns up at the British Embassy in Buenos Aires and apologises. He informs the Embassy that he wishes to return to Leith on March 10th, with 30 workers, and expects to stay some 6 months. Embassy staff warn him that the appropriate formalities must be complied with on arrival at South Georgia.

“Davidoff was never, of course, given any permission by this Embassy but, on the contrary, warned personally in February ...” 430

“... the time to conduct salvage operations on South Georgia was between November and March, not March and October. Yet, Davidoff’s declared plan of operations called for his men to work for the next four months through the worst of South Georgia’s winter when there would be nineteen hours of darkness out of every twenty-four, heavy winds and several feet of snow. This was a poor choice of timing for what purported to be a purely commercial enterprise.” 431

“Whitehall’s complacency was shared by the ambassador in Buenos Aires, Anthony Williams, who, belonging to the Neville Henderson school of diplomacy, believed that even a horrible dictatorship like General Galtieri’s would not stoop to actual aggression, especially if Britain kept on good terms with it. Williams, a ‘brilliant’ public-school and Oxford diplomat, carried weight in the Foreign Office; Rex Hunt, the Governor of the Falkland Isles, a plain commonsensical man who shared Barker’s fears, did not.” 432

February 26th, negotiations resume in New York with Argentina’s delegation led by deputy-Foreign Minister Enrique Ros. Britain’s delegates are led by Richard Luce.

“We knew before the talks took place in February 1982 what the Argentines were going to propose. Lord Carrington agreed that I should accept their concept of a ‘negotiating commission’ which would look at every facet of the Falkland Islands problem, including sovereignty. However, I was to make it absolutely clear to them that, as far as sovereignty was concerned, there would be no change without the consent of the Islanders and of Parliament. Against that background I was given the broad brief to go into negotiations, to keep dialogue going and, to be quite blunt about it, if things were getting difficult, we would just have to buy time. ... I say, quite bluntly, that we were blocked in. Leaseback had not made any progress, and we saw no easy way out. We hoped, I hoped, that perhaps the Argentines would come forward with something positive out of the negotiating commission, which might lead us to a new way forward... all we could do was buy time. We had run out of any innovating ideas. Of those, leaseback had been the most important.” 433

429 Iglesias Rouco quoted in *ALW* 040/325/3
430 Ambassador Williams in a telegram to London dated March 20, 1982 quoted in *PREM* 19/613. The ‘warning’ was actually given by Richard Gozney, a junior member of the Embassy staff, and later described by *Endurance*'s Capt. Barker as: “so weakly worded it was no more discouraging than a few dandelions in the lawn of opportunity.”
431 Thornton 2014. Thornton calls the Embassy reaction - “nothing less than extraordinary” after Davidoff’s December inspection and the failure to follow established procedures. Thornton’s consideration is sadly tainted by his adherence to the fantasy that Thatcher’s government was complicit in the fomenting of a conflict for its own political ends.
432 The High Cost of Cuts Correlli Barnett in *The Spectator* May 16, 1997 p.42
433 Richard Luce interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.182
Representing the Islands people are Tim Blake and John Cheek.

“Mr. Luce explained that he wished to make the British position clear from the outset. We had no doubts about British sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and the Dependencies. The wishes of the Islanders themselves were paramount ... Sr. Ros recalled that Argentina had been trying to reach a solution to this dispute for over 16 years ... He stressed that the principal question for Argentines’ was sovereignty. The key to their position was the need for Britain to recognise Argentine sovereignty in the area. ... Argentina had no intention of disturbing the Islanders’ style of life; what they wanted was a balance between Islanders' interests and Argentine sovereignty rights. ... For the Argentines it would not be possible to accept any agreement that excluded the Argentine claim to sovereignty, ...” 434

A telegram to the State Department from the US Embassy in Buenos Aires reports on rumours.

“Some of our contacts in the GOA have sought to convey a sense of urgency about the current round of negotiations... we have also heard references to an Argentine desire to accelerate the pace of the negotiations but it is hard for us to tell what precisely the Argentines hope to accomplish.” 435

March 1st, a joint statement is released to the press by the negotiating teams.

“The meeting took place in a cordial and positive spirit. The two sides reaffirmed their resolve to find a solution to the sovereignty dispute and considered in detail an Argentine proposal for procedures to make better progress in this sense.”

“Ros’s superiors in Buenos Aires were furious. Here the assessment was that Britain was procrastinating once again. The aim of demonstrating British intransigence before the international community was not going to be helped by cryptic reports of cordial meetings. The key fact was that Britain had not formally accepted the Argentine proposal and had given no indication of when it intended to do so.” 436

Argentina’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs issues its own statement.

“... the representatives of Argentina and Great Britain considered an Argentine proposal to establish a system of monthly meetings with a pre-established agenda, pre-arranged meeting place, and led by top-level officials. The aim of such meetings will be genuinely to speed up to the maximum the negotiations in train to achieve recognition of Argentine sovereignty ... The new system constitutes an effective step for the early solution of the dispute. However, should this not occur, Argentina reserves the right to terminate the working of this mechanism ...” 437

“The talks appeared to go well and resulted in an agreement to set up a commission that would consider both parties’ demands. The Argentines, however, decided to turn up the pressure on London rather than wait to see what the commission might accomplish.” 438

In New York, the British delegation responds that this; “... creates a more difficult and unhelpful climate for continuing the negotiating process.” 439

434 ALW 040/325/1 Part C 101
435 Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820105–0567
436 Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990 p.28
437 ALW 040/325/1 B 51-100
438 Bratton P. & Thies W. 2011 p.4
439 Freedman 2005 vol.1 p.137

81
March 2nd, in Buenos Aires, the newspaper Clarin reports on the talks.

“The press release stated that Argentina had negotiated for more than fifteen years with the UK, with patience, loyalty and good faith and within the framework of the UN and had proposed a new mechanism for negotiations which is to include South Georgia as well as the Sandwich Islands. If there was no agreement, Argentina retains the right to .. resort to whatever procedure is commensurable with the interests of Argentina. This last paragraph obviously does not exclude the possibility of military occupation of the islands.”

Brigadier-General Mario Benjamin Menéndez is informed that he will head the military government on the Falklands, once they have been seized. 440

Tim Blake and John Cheek return to the Islands but are unable to comment due to the level of confidentiality insisted upon by the FCO.

“The meetings have been shrouded in secrecy to a degree that would not exist in most other democratic countries ... we, whose way of life is up against the wall are left uninformed and wondering.” 441

March 3rd, La Prensa reports that Britain has only a limited time period in which to acknowledge Argentina's sovereignty over the Islands. The Buenos Aires Herald sees the Foreign Ministry announcement as containing a “veiled threat”, and warns Britain that this time Argentina, “means business.” 442

On receiving news of the Argentine press reports, PM Thatcher minutes; “we must make contingency plans.”

“On 3 March Mr Luce sent a personal message to Enrico Ros referring to the agreement that the discussions should remain confidential until Governments had been consulted. He said the communique and residual press comment had created more difficulty and an unhelpful climate for continuing the negotiation process. He added, 'I am deeply disturbed by what may be interpreted as threats...’” 443

March 5th, the Cabinet in London ask that the next OD Committee paper include; "Annexes on both civil and military contingency plans for counter-action against Argentina.”

Unidentified military aircraft are reported to have flown over Stanley.

Costa Mendez tells Ambassador Williams that he is dissatisfied with the progress of negotiations.

David Joy, a member of the Embassy staff in Buenos Aires, reports a conversation with Raul Schmidt from the Chilean Embassy.

“The Schmidt thesis is based essentially on the Argentine Navy's need of a strategic port further south than its current and most secure port, Puerto Belgrano. The obvious option Ushuaia was not satisfactory from a security point of view because it is under constant Chilean surveillance. Therefore the Argentines are, according to Schmidt, desperate to have some other secure port further south, a goal that could be satisfied by having access to the islands south of Beagle or the Falklands. In this context, he believes the sovereignty disputes are linked.” 444

440 Cardoso, Kirschboom & van der Kooy 1983 p.52
441 Penguin News
442 ALW 040/325/1 B 51 - 100
443 Barker 1997
444 Quoted in Daily Telegraph 21.2.2013

82
March 6th, an Argentine LADE Hercules transport aircraft lands at Stanley airport citing an in-flight emergency involving a fuel leak.

“Overflights by Argentine military aircraft were a frequent topic of conversation. The emergency landing of an Argentine C-130 at Stanley Airport ... had given the people the jitters. (As port Stanley reported by telegram, the plane arrived without formal warning and it was only thanks to a local ham radio operator that anyone knew it was coming in. The control tower was not manned since it was a Sunday, and the plane could presumably have landed before anyone could have got out to the airport. As it was there was still time for the Airport Manager, Mr. Gerald Cheek, and a contingent of armed marines, to drive out to the airport before the plane landed). The incident certainly demonstrated the relative ease with which unannounced military aircraft could land at Stanley ...” 445

“Ricupero cited the recent surprise landing of an Argentine air force Hercules at Stanley and surmised that despite what Costa Mendez had told his own Ministers, this might indicate the sort of additional pressure which the Argentines might feel tempted to use.” 446

Alejandro Orfila, Argentine President of the Organization of American States, when visiting Mendoza, makes a statement; “It will not be long before that corner of national territory flies the flag of the Fatherland.” 447

March 8th, Margaret Thatcher asks the FCO and MoD to prepare for an Argentine blockade or invasion. HMS Endurance is instructed to remain ‘on station’ at the Falklands while Governor Hunt increases security at the Islands' airport. In the midst of these preparations, Lord Carrington telegrams Rex Hunt asking him to discern the views of local Councillors to a resumption of negotiations with Argentina. 448

In Buenos Aires, Assistant US Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Thomas Enders, holds meetings with Foreign Affairs Minister Costa Mendez and Under-Secretary Ros; during which he raises the question of the Falklands negotiations.

“We were contacted by the British government prior to my trip. They raised their fears about the unproductive character of these talks, and that they might be broken off. I raised that fear with the foreign minister of Argentina, saying that the United States did not intend to change its historic view – which was not to take a position, one way or the other, on the territorial dispute. We wanted countries with which we had friendly relations to solve that problem, but we were concerned that the talks appeared to be headed nowhere. Costa Mendez did not commit himself, although he was not negative.... He said they were ‘working on it’ and they ‘hoped to have something.’...” 449

“Ros presented a picture of British intransigence. The GOA has long been willing to accord the Islanders every kind of special status to safeguard their way of life, he said. However, the GOA insists that the British recognize Argentine sovereignty in the Malvinas and their dependencies. When Enders observed that HMG's position does not seem to be based on economic or strategic concerns but on its belief that the wishes of the Islanders must be respected, Ros said that UN decision on the Island clearly set aside the concept of self-determination for the Islanders. Ros said with emphasis that 'the United Nations did not give the Islanders the right of veto.' Ros stated that at the recent bilateral talks with the British, the GOA had proposed the establishment of a permanent high-level commission in London and

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445 ALW 040/325/1 Part C 101. Hickson minute following duty call to the Island dated 19th March 1982
446 PREM 19/657 Telegram No.42 of 11 March 1982. This telegram details a conversation in Brasilia between Ambassador George Harding and the Head of the Brazilian America’s Department.
447 Cardoso, Kirschbooom & van der Kooy 1983 p.51. Orfila would later deny any pre-knowledge of the Junta’s plans.
448 PREM 19/657 Telegram No.30 of 8 March 1982
449 Thomas O. Enders interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.165. This 'historic' view had only become policy after 1945.
Buenos Aires to seek out a solution. The GOA is now waiting for the British answer. Ros stated that his government is under increasing pressure from various sources to solve the Malvinas problem. Now the government is trying to see if the British are really interested in resolving the issue or instead are just looking for ways to procrastinate. Argentina is willing to do its utmost to find a negotiated solution but a solution cannot be delayed indefinitely, Ros stated.”

March 9th, in Argentina, the initial plan for an invasion approaches completion.

“The basic landing plan was ready by the third week in February and was presented to the junta on 9 March. The junta accepted it and forwarded it to Admiral Suárez del Cerro…”

March 10th, in Buenos Aires, the British Embassy receive a message from Davidoff to say that he is sending a party of 41 workers to South Georgia to dismantle the derelict whaling station at Leith, and that an Argentine naval support vessel, Bahia Buen Suceso has been chartered for the operation. Embassy staff try to contact Davidoff in order to remind him of his obligations, but are unable to locate him.

March 11th, Davidoff’s lawyers are warned, by the British Embassy, that there will be consequences should he not comply with the landing restrictions. Christian Salvesen confirm that they are aware of Davidoff’s plans, and that his contract has been extended to March 31st, 1984. Bahia Buen Suceso sails for South Georgia from Buenos Aires, under the command of Captain Oswaldo Miello.

“The ship carried Davidoff’s equipment and the forty-one civilian workers of his party; it also carried some general cargo for delivery to the Argentine port of Ushuaia... Sr Davidoff was not on board the Bahia Buen Suceso when it sailed from Buenos Aires; one of his engineers would be in charge of the dismantling crew.”

At around the same time, Argentine military aircraft again overfly South Georgia.

“The Argentines are considering a wide range of options for ‘unilateral action’, according to sources in Buenos Aires, .... These include initiatives in the UN, a break of diplomatic relations and, in the final analysis, an invasion of the islands.”

London’s intelligence reports indicate that Admiral Anaya is behind the more belligerent press reports.

“The military planning was, with the Falklands in Argentine hands, to invade the disputed islands in the Beagle Channel. That was the determination of the navy…”

March 16th, South Georgia’s Magistrate leaves a prominent notice at the old whaling station at Leith.

‘British Antarctic Survey... Leith Field Station... Unauthorised Entry Prohibited.’

March 18th, the US Embassy in London reports to Washington.

“FCO South America Department Head Robin Fearn has told us that the negotiations over the Falkland Islands are in real danger of breaking down. At the recent meeting in New York, he said, the Argentine delegation was “clearly uninterested” in discussing anything other than the early transfer of sovereignty. ... HMG is anxious to keep the negotiations going, fearing that Argentina might otherwise

450 Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820137–0228
451 Middlebrook 2003
452 Ibid.
453 Latin American Weekly Report March 12, 1982
454 Memorias Políticas Oscar Camilion 1999
455 Freedman 2005 vol.1 p.149
feel impelled to attempt a military solution. The British remain convinced of the legality of their position and the issue is an emotional one in Parliament, particularly in the House of Lords. Fearn fears that talks may be broken off if the Argentines refuse to take a more flexible approach. Should negotiations break down, HMG is considering the feasibility of bringing the question before the United Nations. The British believe they would stand a good chance of winning there, given the Argentine record on human rights, the UK’s recent successes in decolonization (Zimbabwe and Belize), and the contrast between British democracy and the Argentine Junta. HMG would prefer, however, to avoid such a course if at all possible.”

“In March 1982, in the light of the growing Argentine pressure, the Buenos Aires Embassy suggested that it might be worth offering to submit the Falklands to the (ICJ) ‘as a last resort if things really turn nasty.’ If the offer was refused, which was quite likely given the Argentine attitude, then Britain would have gained moral support; if accepted then the whole matter would be put on ice for a considerable period... In March the FCO saw insufficient merit in adopting this strategy, but it was agreed that it would be reviewed in light of circumstances.”

March 19th, Bahia Buen Suceso sails directly into Leith Harbour, bypassing Grytviken in defiance of British instructions. A large party of both civilian and uniformed personnel are observed to land; shots are fired, and the Argentine flag raised.

“The workers at Leith raised an Argentine flag, in a ceremony without much pomp. According to military sources, this act had previously been agreed by Davidoff with the Navy.”

“... I was deeply concerned at the way this happened. Nevertheless, I was informed that, quite clearly, he had this contractual arrangement, it seemed to me that the problem really lay in the fact that he was there without clearance from our Embassy in Buenos Aires. The important thing therefore was for him to get his papers in order. My concern was to smooth this one over... The advice from our Ambassador was "Look, I think we can see a way through this one, because all we need to do is to try and legitimize his papers..." Clearly Governor Hunt was concerned about the position, and saw it from a slightly different viewpoint...”

Following an exchange of messages between the Falklands and London, instructions are sent to Grytviken requesting that the Magistrate, Peter Witty, demand that the Argentine commander lower his country's flag.

In London, Argentina's Minister is summoned and told that the incident is regarded as serious. He is also told that if the Bahia Buen Suceso does not leave forthwith, the UK will take whatever action it deems necessary.

March 20th, following the receipt of further instructions from London, two BAS staff on South Georgia deliver a message from Governor Hunt to the Captain of the Bahia Buen Suceso.

“You have landed illegally at Leith without obtaining clearance. You and your party must go back on board the Bahia Buen Suceso immediately and report to the base commander

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456 Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820146–0021
457 Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 2: War and Diplomacy Lawrence Freedman 2005. There is some evidence that an offer to take the issue to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) was taken by US Secretary Haig to General Galtieri in April, 1982. See April 29, 1982 for Haig's comments.
458 Cardoso, Kirschboom & van der Kooy 1983 p.67. Middlebrook (2003) gives the date of arrival as March 16, 1982. Meneghini (2015) suggests that the shots were fired by a party from a French yacht, hunting deer, but, in support, erroneously quotes a message of the 17th. There are a few references to a 40' French yacht, Cinq Gars Pour, having arrived at Grytviken on, or around, the 14th. Damaged in a storm, the crew of 3 (Serge Briez, Olivier Gouon and Michel Roger) sought assistance from the BAS and hunted deer for their food supplies.
459 Richard Luce interviewed in Charlton 1989 p.184

85
Grytviken for further instructions. You must remove the Argentine flag from Leith. You must not interfere with the British Antarctic Survey depot at Leith. You must not alter or deface the notices at Leith. No military personnel are allowed to land on South Georgia. No firearms are to be taken ashore.”

Argentina’s flag is lowered 15 minutes later. Leith’s Customs House is found to have been broken into.

From Buenos Aires, Ambassador Williams telegrams London.  

“I suggest that great restraint be used at least until it is clear whether this is a deliberate challenge authorised at high level, or just a piece of low level bravura combined with Davidoff’s well-known fecklessness.”

HMS Endurance is ordered to sail immediately with a combined detachment of marines.  

“The prompt dispatch of Endurance did not accord with the Argentine strategy. Buenos Aires was at this stage unprepared both militarily and diplomatically for a sudden escalation in the Falklands dispute. Yet Argentine citizens were ashore on territory which Argentina claimed as her own. The British were demanding the formal acknowledgement of sovereignty through the obtaining of permits, on pain of removal by force. This would constitute a conspicuous loss of face for Buenos Aires. … The South Georgia incident had come at least six months too soon … Endurance .. should have been safely back in Britain before any invasion.”

March 21st, Captain Adolfo Gaffoglio, the LADE representative at Stanley, informs Buenos Aires of the departure of Endurance. He also reports that his office has been broken into and the Argentine flag covered with a Union Jack. “Tit for tat you buggers,” is written on the desk in toothpaste and “UK OK” on the office windows.

Costa Mendez tells Williams that the Bahia Buen Suceso is not in South Georgia officially; that it has no military personnel on board and that the ship will depart that day. He expresses the hope that the significance of the affair will not be exaggerated. Ambassador Williams makes it clear; “.. that if the party left without regularising their conduct at Gryviken they would have made an illegal landing and be liable to arrest.”

In London, the FCO informs Argentina’s charge d’affairs that they accept the explanations provided by Minister Mendez and trust that the ship will depart with the landing party.

A BAS observation point is established overlooking Stromness Bay. At Leith, the Bahia Buen Suceso sails away early evening; but some personnel are seen to remain.

“Contrary to some accounts, she did not take any of the scrap-metal workers with her; they were all left at Leith. The ship set course for Ushuaia, her captain and crew unaware of the intense diplomatic activity caused by the visit.”

March 22nd, Grytviken reports to London.

“Base Commander has confirmed presence of at least six Argentines still ashore at Leith, .... In addition to launch ... they had also seen a landing craft ... they also observed a vehicle with a mechanical arm on the jetty...”

460 PREM 19/613.
461 PREM19/613 f53. Its own marines plus Naval Party (NP) 8901 amounting to 22 Royal Marines.
462 Hastings & Jenkins 1997 p.70
463 PREM 19/657 Telegram No. 85 of 21 March 1982
464 Middlebrook 2003
465 ALW 040/325/12 Part A 1 – 100 Telegram No. 45 of 22 March Rex Hunt to FCO. In fact there were 39 still onshore.
Lord Buxton, visiting Stanley, telegrams the FCO in London; “It has been naïve to regard Davidoff as a casual scrap dealer and it is abundantly clear that every move has been carefully researched, planned and timed throughout... If our reaction is placatory and is not firm and final this time I predict that more unopposed illegal landings will follow ... British reactions are being tested.” 466

HMS *Endurance* receives orders from London to remove any trespassers from South Georgia. Captain Barker's instructions clearly state that he is not to use force however and, if resisted, should withdraw and seek fresh instructions.

“Ministers have agreed that HMS *Endurance* should continue to South Georgia in order to remove the remaining Argentines. The continued Argentine presence at Leith, ... leaves us no option but to take this action. ... It is hoped that the political consequences, with careful handling on both sides, can continue to be minimised. But it should be quite clear that this situation has not been of our seeking. It has been Davidoff’s irresponsible action and the apparent inability of the Argentine Government to take the necessary remedial action which has brought it about.” 467

From Buenos Aires, Ambassador Williams also telegrams the FCO.

“*The Argentines .. appreciate the gravity of the hoisting of the Argentine flag, but say that they have just received reports that there has been a parallel insult to the Argentine flag at the LADE office in Stanley.*” 468

Williams urges; “... no forceful action be taken which would irritate public opinion in Argentina.” 469

*Endurance’s* Capt. Barker reports that overheard radio traffic indicates collusion between Davidoff and the Argentine Navy.

“*The naval headquarters in Buenos Aires had congratulated the Bahia Buen Suceso on a successful operation and directed her to return to Buenos Aires as soon as possible.*” 470

**March 23**th, in Buenos Aires, Williams copies *Endurance’s* orders to Argentina’s Foreign Ministry. On receipt Costa Mendez expresses surprise that the British are proceeding so rapidly to such very grave action, without exhausting the diplomatic options. He gives a warning that, if the action to remove the party on South Georgia is not postponed, those like himself, who are trying to deal with the dispute in a moderate way, will lose control of events. Mendez threatens that harsh action will precipitate a harsh response, and that perhaps the men should be removed by an Argentine vessel in order to take some heat out of the situation. 471

Ambassador Williams, conveying this to the FCO, adds that he considers the events at South Georgia as “trivial and low-level misbehaviour.”

The FCO respond; “Our intention is to conduct this operation correctly, peacefully and in as low a key as possible. We hope that the Argentine Government will, if they are able to do so, advise the Argentine workmen at Leith to co-operate. ... any lesser action than we are now taking would not be defensible to public and parliamentary opinion.”

In Britain, a statement is made to Parliament.

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466 Quoted in Freedman 2005 vol.1 p.154
467 Quoted in Cardoso, Kirschboom & van der Kooy 1983 p.71
468 PREM 19/657 Telegram No. 82 of 22 March 1982
469 Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990
470 Franks Report 1983 para.175
471 *Ibid* para. 182
“We were informed on 20 March by the Commander of the British Antarctic Survey based at Grytviken on South Georgia that a party of Argentines had landed at Leith nearby. The Base Commander informed the Argentine party that its presence was illegal as it had not obtained his prior authority for the landing. We immediately took the matter up with the Argentine authorities in Buenos Aires and the Argentine Embassy in London and, following our approach, the ship and most of the personnel left. However, the base Commander has reported that a small number of men and some equipment remain. We are therefore making arrangements to ensure their early departure.”

There is uproar in the House of Commons; “... if she [Mrs Thatcher] doesn’t get the Argentines out by next week there will be a major disturbance.”

HMS Endurance is ordered to ‘hold’ off Grytviken.

“In view of continued diplomatic activity at ministerial level aimed at allowing Argentine authorities an opportunity to remove party and equipment by Argentine vessel, HMS Endurance should proceed to Grytviken and await further instructions. Pending these instructions, HMS Endurance should not, repeat not, enter nor conduct any Naval operations in the vicinity of Leith harbour.”

Lord Carrington sends a message to Costa Mendez.

“... it is now essential for the Argentine personnel that still remains in South Georgia to be evacuated promptly. If the Argentine Government can order the immediate return of the Bahia Buen Suceso to Leith Harbour to carry out this action, the use of HMS Endurance will not be necessary. If this is not done, we would have no alternative but to proceed. ...”

Argentina’s Navy Command orders the ice-breaker Bahia Paraiso to take its marines as quickly as possible to Leith to protect the Argentine workers there.

Vice-Admiral Juan Lombardo is; “... directed by the junta to accelerate planning so that an invasion force could launch within 48-72 hours of notification.”

“They did not think that there would be a military reaction by the British.”

“I immediately ordered an increase in my staff, and we worked all through that night and very hard in the next two days. We gave an answer to the junta on the 25th: I think that Admiral Lombardo went to Buenos Aires and told them that the decision was that it would be possible to land on the Malvinas on the 1st of April.”

A message is sent from the US Embassy in Buenos Aires to the US State Department reporting a conversation between the Argentine Foreign Ministry and the US Ambassador.

“During a meeting March 23, the Foreign Minister and Under Secretary Ros at their initiative briefed the Ambassador on the Argentine version of this affair. They said a local entrepreneur had entered into a contract in London to take the scrap from the whale ‘factory’. He then hired a crew of workmen (four they thought) and bought passage for them on the ‘Bahia Buen Suceso’ which deposited them in Leith. Ros emphasized that the ship regularly plies those waters, is unarmed and crewed entirely by civilians. ... HMG protested because permission was not sought to land the workmen. As indicated in

473 Quoted in Barker 1997
474 Quoted in Freedman 2005 vol.1 p.157
475 The 1982 Falklands-Malvinas Case Study Douglas N. Hime 2010
476 Vice-Admiral Lombardo quoted in Middlebrook 2003
477 Rear-Admiral Büscher quoted in Middlebrook 2003
the press, the ship has departed; but, contrary to the impression left by the press accounts, the workmen are still there, according to Ros. He was unable to say how long they might remain, that presumably depending on the time required to finish the scrap job and on when the ship might come around again. It would seem, at least, that the incident may not be closed.” 478

**March 24th**, intelligence reports suggest that the forced removal of the workforce at Leith will be used by the junta as a pretext for military action either at South Georgia, or against the Falkland Islands. Lord Carrington, writes to the Prime Minister; “... the situation on the dispute has developed to a point where we now face the prospect of an early confrontation with Argentina.” 479

Bahia Paraiso arrives at Leith. Teniente de navio Alfredo Astiz, and ten Marines, disembark. Three landing craft and a military helicopter are noted by the observation team; shortly after joined by Capt. Barker.

“Tony Ellerbeck flew me to the top of one of the mountains and we landed at 3000 feet on a narrow section of flat ground with excellent binocular vision over Leith Bay... all we could do was to sit and watch. We noted the continuing disembarkation of stores from the Bahia Paraiso and it was clear to us that the operation had been long pre-planned.” 480

In London, a Parliamentary motion signed by 91 MPs calls for a tough line in the UK's dealings with Argentina.

The US Embassy in Argentina telegrams Washington.

“... we doubt that an attempt at a "military solution" will be made any time soon. Foreign Minister Costa Méndez and others in the GOA are looking for ways to enlist U.S. support for the Argentine cause. This issue is likely to complicate Argentine-U.S. relations...” 481

**March 25th**, in Buenos Aires, Dr. Méndez suggests to Britain's Ambassador that the impasse could be broken if it is accepted that the workers at Leith now comply with the landing formalities by going to Grytviken and having their 'white cards' stamped before returning to work on the whaling stations. Informed of Méndez's proposal, Foreign Secretary Carrington’s responds that; “only passports will do.” This is passed on to the junta.

“A series of progressive demands culminated in the imposition that the Argentine workers of the Davidoff company – who were on land that we consider under a sovereignty dispute – should seal their passports at Grytviken, as if they were entering a foreign territory...” 482

“Britain's escalation of the dispute – especially its demand about passports – came as a complete surprise ... There was unanimous agreement that we could not permit it.” 483

Well informed, America's Embassy in Buenos Aires reports to Washington.

“It appears likely that the Argentine Navy will in fact act if the Endurance attempts to remove the working party.” 484

In Buenos Aires, Admiral Lombardo informs the junta that an invasion force can be ready for April 1, 1982. Lombardo is instructed to proceed.

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478 *Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820154–0489*
479 *ALW 040/325/1 Part C 101*
481 *Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820157–0409*
482 *President Galtieri in La Nueva Provincia November 28, 1985*
483 Interview with Larni Dozo quoted in Welch 2005
484 *Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820160–0043*
March 26th, Bahia Paraiso is observed to sail away from Leith.

“Argentine party are still ashore at Leith. Although only two people were actually sighted this morning, smoke was emerging from several buildings and 2 boats were still alongside jetty. 65 blue drums had been stacked at inshore end of jetty. A large quantity of stores and equipment was visible, even dead reindeer. Consider shore party were working late into evening yesterday disembarking stores from Bahia Paraiso and are now established for a long stay at Leith. It is clear that this operation had been preplanned for some time as Bahia Paraiso came from Antarctic...”

Governor Hunt telegrams London regarding Méndez’s proposal regarding the authentication of white cards.

“... I am more than ever convinced that this whole exercise was carefully planned ... Proper documentation does not (repeat not) mean stamping of white cards. I am instructing the base commander to ask for passports and, if produced, to stamp them in the normal way with an entry permit ...”

“Now the British assert that the 1971 treaty does not extend to South Georgia, although it had always been understood that the dependencies of the Falklands were included. (I can confirm that this was also Ambassador Williams’s understanding until yesterday.)”

# Researcher’s Comment: The agreement of 1971 made no mention of South Georgia, so how it could have been ‘understood’ to have applied to that island? When it came to contracts, treaties and formal agreements, the words used are important. Britain had never considered that the ‘white card scheme’ applied to its uninhabited dependencies.

Marines arrive at Port Stanley to relieve the garrison there, which has completed its tour.

“Defence was the responsibility of the small Royal Marines detachment, NP 8901.”

In Buenos Aires, the junta meet again to listen to their Foreign Minister.

“Costa Mendez’s view was that, from 1956, Britain’s behaviour was always to deal, but not on the basis of force. Rhodesia was the most recent example. There Britain had abandoned 600,000 British subjects. The sum of perceptions led to the conclusion that Britain would not respond with force. ... How could we doubt his judgement?”

Hearing that a British submarine has been seen leaving Gibraltar, the junta agree to bring forward its plans.

“We interpreted the sailing of an SSN from Gibraltar on 26th March as coming south and that the Brits would keep one on station indefinitely thereafter, so therefore the September operation wasn’t really going to be on and we had about twelve days in which to fix it.”

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485 PREM 19/613
486 Shlaudeman to State Department March 26, 1982 in Dept. of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820162–0574.
487 Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 2: War and Diplomacy L. Freedman 2005 vol.2
488 Interview with Admiral Jorge Anaya, quoted in Welch 2005 p.87
489 Hastings & Jenkins 1997. In Charlton (1989 p.187) it is suggested that the news was published in the Daily Express. This particular submarine was actually headed north. No decision to despatch a submarine to the Falklands was made until March 29, 1982.
“... that is what (Admiral) Anaya describes as a ‘war-starter.’ That announcement turned out to be false. But based on that announcement he decided to execute a contingency plan... He decided to advance it because, if he did not, he would never be able to do it.” 491

After the meeting, Dr. Costa Méndez makes a public statement.

“... a firm decision has been taken to give the men on South Georgia all necessary diplomatic protection... nor is this protection diplomatic only, since there is a navy ship called Bahia Paraiso in the area to provide any necessary protection.”

US Ambassador Shlaudeman informs Washington; “...it would appear from here that the Endurance is the key to the problem of the moment. If the ship moves in to take off the workmen, there will surely be trouble. If it stays where it is, the impasse and the tensions accompanying it will continue.” 492

Argentina’s naval planning committee informs the Junta that their forces could be ready to sail on the 28th. 493

**March 27th,** Ambassador Williams reports his fears that Costa Méndez has been less than honest with him; that Argentina had been “playing us along” and that the Bahia Paraiso had armed marines on board.

“I cannot, however, discount the possibility that any action on our part to disrupt the Argentine working party at Leith will be taken as a trigger for armed action by the Argentines.” 494

“Anthony Williams and Whitehall making 'Tut! Tut!' noises is not impressing the Argentines. Rex Hunt and a few others taking a good firm stand. C-in-C (Fleet) is sailing some ships in support. In my view some Buccaneers are required.” 495

From Buenos Aires, Britain’s defence attaché, Stephen Love, reports a number of ships, and a submarine, leaving the Rio de la Plata. 496

In London, PM Thatcher considers again the prospect of taking the question of the Falklands to the ICJ; ”.. if we win or if we lose, at least we know where we are.” 497

**March 28th,** Lord Carrington telegrams US Secretary Alexander Haig to inform him of what is happening.

“I should accordingly be grateful, if you would consider taking the matter up with the Argentines. Stressing the need to defuse the situation and find a solution we can all accept. ... I fear the gravest consequences.”

“To his astonishment, he received a message from Haig’s deputy, Walter Stoessel, pointing out that both Britain and Argentina were ‘good friends’ of the USA and counselling caution. America’s Ambassador ... would nevertheless see what he could do. ... Carrington hit the roof.” 498

Carrington summons America’s London charge d'affairs, Edward Streeter.

“(The UK had) supported American policy in Sinai, had supported it in El Salvador; that this support had not been particularly willing, not wholly consistent with our own better judgement, but we had

492 Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820162–0574
493 From an interview with Rear-Admiral Carlos Busser in Charlton 1989 p.115
494 Franks 1983 para.207. PREM 19/613 Telegram Nos.110 & 113 of 27 March 1982
495 From Capt. Barker's *Endurance* diary in Barker 1997
496 Barker suspected that Love's sources were local Argentine newspapers; and the information old or simply inaccurate.
497 Freedman 2005 vol.1 p.164
498 Hastings & Jenkins 1997 p.82
given it; and now we expected a better response than this not very friendly message, equating our case and position with that of Argentina.” 499

In Argentina, all leave for military personnel and diplomatic staff is cancelled. Argentina’s Embassies around the world are told to await new instructions.

“There were no major setbacks, and the troops started loading in the ships at Puerto Belgrano at 8.00am on Sunday 28 March. Secrecy had been well maintained. ... The Argentine newspapers announced that a joint anti-submarine exercise was to be carried out with the Uruguayan Navy.” 500

Ambassador Williams receives a statement from the Argentine Foreign Ministry.

“The activities of the group of workers disembarked at Leith are of a private and peaceful character based on the undisputed fact that they were known in advance by Her Britannic Majesty's Government and in any case on the fact that they are being carried out on territory subject to the special regime agreed in 1971 between the Argentine and Great Britain. It is moreover within Your Excellency's knowledge that these territories are considered by the Argentine Republic as her own and that the sovereignty dispute about them had been recognised by the United Nations in its relevant Resolutions.

Your Excellency's Government has accepted the existence of the sovereignty dispute. However the British Government has reacted in terms which constitute a virtual ultimatum backed by the threat of military action in the form of the despatch of the naval warship Endurance and a requirement for the peremptorily immediate evacuation of the Argentine workers from the Island. ... In light of this attitude my Government can only adopt those measures which prudence and its rights demand, in this context the Argentine workers in South Georgia must remain there since they have been given the necessary documentation to do so. ... the present situation is the direct result of the persistent lack of recognition by the United Kingdom of the titles to sovereignty which my country has over the Malvinas, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. This is confirmed by the negative attitude of your Excellency's Government throughout many years of negotiations ....” 501

Williams reports that Costa Méndez insists that South Georgia was included in the white card scheme.

On receiving a copy of the Argentine message, Governor Hunt telegrams London.

“The 1971 Communications Agreement does not apply to the Dependencies .. (and) .. does not absolve the holder of the requirement to present himself to an immigration officer at a recognised port of entry ... I am appalled at the arrogance of the message which confirms my previous fears that the Argentine Government are using Davidoff as a front to assert with a physical presence their sovereignty claim over South Georgia.”

Elements of the Argentine fleet sail from Puerto Belgrano, including the Cabo San Antonio, a tank landing ship, and the troop carrier, Islas de los Estados. Intelligence indicates that the Argentine submarine, Santa Fé, is making a reconnaissance of the beaches near Stanley. Bahia Paraiso is observed holding station, 15 miles off the north coast of South Georgia.

499 Quoted in Freedman & Gamba-Stonehouse 1990
500 Middlebrook 2003
501 PREM 19/657 Telegram No.116 of 28 March 1982
“Those of us who knew where we were going were very proud. We felt very lucky that we had been chosen and extraordinarily fortunate to have the opportunity to regain the Malvinas.... April was a lovely month that year.” 502

**March 29th**, Margaret Thatcher and Lord Carrington fly to Brussels for a meeting.

“By the time their plane landed at Brussels, they had agreed that three nuclear submarines should be sent south immediately. John Nott at the MoD was telephoned from the airport and instructed accordingly. Considering the abuse heaped on British ministers and their cabinet staffs in the prelude to the Falklands invasion, it is worth pointing out that a submarine force was ordered to sea within two and a half days of the junta's probable decision to proceed with an early invasion.” 503

HMS Spartan, a nuclear powered submarine, is directed to embark stores and weapons at Gibraltar while the support vessel, RFA Fort Austin, is instructed to sail from Gibraltar to resupply HMS Endurance. First Sea Lord Sir Henry Leach and his senior staff meet at the Ministry of Defence; after which Defence Secretary John Nott advises the Prime Minister that it will take a week to ready a “viable” naval force, then three more weeks to get them to the Islands; although a group of 7 destroyers and frigates, on Exercise Spring Train in the mid-Atlantic, could be off the Falklands within two weeks.

In Buenos Aires, newspapers refer to the cancellation of all military leave, and report that 5 Argentine warships are heading towards South Georgia. Ambassador Williams writes to the FCO.

“I am receiving gestures of sympathy ... but I fear that in general, the Argentine Government will not only gain in popularity by playing the jingoist drum, but be accepted as doing the right thing in taking even the most extreme measures.”

Out in the Atlantic, Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Sir John Fieldhouse, observing Exercise Spring Train from HMS Glamorgan, receives notification of events. Fieldhouse summons the flag officer in charge of the exercise, Rear Admiral Woodward, to a conference before flying to Gibraltar and then on to London.

US Ambassador Shlaudeman reports to Washington from Buenos Aires.

“British Ambassador Williams called on me this morning... Williams is now persuaded that the Argentine military have stage-managed this entire incident as a means of pressing the British for accelerated negotiations on the Falklands/Malvinas without revealing their full intentions to the Foreign Ministry. One particular piece of evidence in this regard is the fact that the Bahia Paraiso has been unloading equipment at Leith Harbor. Costa Méndez told Williams initially that the ship had been sent there suddenly to watch over the working party and perhaps to evacuate them.” 504

At sea, Argentina’s fleet encounters bad weather.

“The intention was to sail down the coast of Argentina until well past the Falklands and then approach the islands from the south, but a fierce storm which blew up on... Monday the 29th – lasted for forty-eight hours and spoiled that plan.” 505

**March 30th**, in Parliament, Richard Luce announces that Endurance is to remain ‘on station’ for as long as necessary. Luce adds cryptically; “The question of security in the Falklands area is being reviewed. Although the House will understand that I prefer to say nothing in public about our precautionary measures.”

502 Rear-Admiral Büsser quoted in Middlebrook 2003
503 Hastings & Jenkins 1997 p.76
504 Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820165–0179
505 Middlebrook 2003
From the opposition benches, James Callaghan reveals his deployment of a covert force in 1977.

“... is the Minister aware that there have been other recent occasions when the Argentinians, when beset by internal troubles, have tried the same type of tactical diversion? Is the Minister aware that on a very recent occasion, of which I have full knowledge, Britain assembled ships which had been stationed in the Caribbean, Gibraltar and in the Mediterranean, and stood then about 400 miles off the Falklands in support of HMS "Endurance", and that when this fact became known, without fuss and publicity, a diplomatic solution followed? ...” 506

After a in-camera meeting of the Conservative back-bench Committee, at which Luce refused to confirm anything, news leaks that a submarine force is heading south. This is immediately broadcast by the International Television News (ITN) service.

“The information was flashed to Buenos Aires where it confirmed rumours already current ... Britain's Parliament, ... had turned a covert deterrent to invasion into a public invitation to one.” 507

While demonstrations in Buenos Aires' Plaza de Mayo call for democracy, four more Argentine warships are reported as sailing from Puerto Belgrano.

The FCO telegram Argentina's Foreign Ministry.

“"The potentially dangerous position which has now developed has in no way been of our seeking. ... A confrontation, which could have far-reaching consequences and which would seriously prejudice our attempts to resolve the whole Falklands issue through peaceful negotiation, is in neither of our interests." 508

In London, the Defence Operations Executive receives intelligence of an Argentine task force lying 800 miles north of the Falklands; consisting of an aircraft carrier, 4 destroyers and an amphibious landing craft. 509

A nuclear powered submarine, HMS Splendid, deploys from Faslane while a third, HMS Conqueror, is readied.

US Ambassador Shlaudeman calls on Minister Méndez and offers to mediate over South Georgia.

March 31st, all the Argentine fleet are reported to be at sea albeit in poor weather conditions 510

“On the morning of Wednesday 31 march, with the planned landing less than twenty-four hours away, it became obvious that the proposed timetable could not be met, even by sailing directly to the Falklands from the north. It was decided to postpone the landings by one day, until Friday 2 April.” 511

Now aware of the submarines heading towards the South Atlantic, Costa Mendez is widely quoted as saying; "Argentina would not give way to threats of force,..." and that the workers at Leith are; "... Argentine workers working on Argentine soil."

Intelligence reports received in London indicate that April 2nd has been appointed as the junta's 'day of action' and that an infantry brigade has been readied for an invasion.

506 HC Deb 30 March 1982 vol.21 cc163-70. In fact, there is no evidence that Argentina ever became aware of the deployment of these vessels. cf. 1977
507 Hastings & Jenkins 1997
508 PREM 19/657 Telegram No.77 of 30 March
509 The DOE acted as the executive agency for the Chiefs of Staff. Franks 1983 para.224
510 Stephen Love would later accuse the Ministry of Defence of “burying” his reports and warnings. cf. The Threads that Link the Falklands to Iraq Simon Jenkins London Spectator March 30, 2007
511 Middlebrook 2003
GCHQ Cheltenham reports Argentine radio traffic ordering the submarine Santa Fé, to take reconnaissance troops to Mullet Creek, near Stanley. Defence Secretary John Nott seeks an urgent meeting with the Prime Minister who is in Parliament.

“John gave the MOD’s view that the Falklands could not be retaken once they were seized. This was terrible, and totally unacceptable. I could not believe it: these were our people, our islands. I said instantly: "if they are invaded, we have got to get them back." ...” 512

Admiral Sir Henry Leach appears at the House of Commons unbidden. He asks to speak to the Prime Minister. Leach is allowed into the meeting where he, in opposition to much of the advice already given, tells Margaret Thatcher that Britain could, and should, send a task force if any of the Islands are invaded.

“Because if we do not, or if we pussyfoot in our actions and do not achieve complete success, in another few months we shall be living in a different country whose word counts for little.”

“... the main thrust of this was that I left ... with full authority to assemble, but not yet sail, a task force.” 513

“Leach’s advice was that whatever was done must not be half-hearted, for that was likely to result in a shambles. .. He argued for sending every element of the fleet of any possible value. ... Leach’s conviction that a fleet able to look after itself if subjected to air and sea attack by Argentine forces would be ready to sail early the next week made a deep impression on the politicians present.” 514

HMS Endurance is ordered back to Port Stanley. Capt. Barker transfers a platoon of Royal Marines onto South Georgia to maintain a presence and protect the unarmed BAS civilians.

Governor Hunt, informed of the probability of an invasion, reviews his options. At his immediate disposal are the marines of NP 8901, their replacements, 11 Royal Navy personnel onshore from HMS Endurance and one Islander who was an ex-Royal Marine and who promptly re-enlisted: a total of 69.

Of the Falklands Defence Force, 21 men report for duty. 515

“Major Gary R H Noot, the outgoing commanding officer, and his replacement, major Mike J Norman, were halfway through the administrative handover when the first hints of the impending invasion were received. The handover meant that the defending force was about twice what might otherwise have been expected...” 516

In Washington, Ambassador Sir Nicholas Henderson calls on Alexander Haig to convey intelligence from London. Disturbed to discover that the US agencies have no information, Haig immediately alerts the White House. At the same time, Thatcher telegrams President Reagan requesting that he; “.. talk urgently with the Argentine President and ask him to give you an immediate assurance that he will not authorise any landing, let alone any hostilities.”

At the United Nations, Argentina’s new Permanent Representative, Eduardo Roca, informs the President of the Security Council (SC) that his country is considering putting the issue of South Georgia before the SC. 517

512 Thatcher 1993
513 Sir Henry Leach in The Falklands War A. Dorman, M. Kandiah & G. Staerck (eds) 2005 p.28
514 Freedman 2005 vol.1 p.181
515 Defence Force members were: Ally Biggs, Fraser Wallace, Marvin Clark, Teddie Summers, Len McGill, Gavin Short, Brian Summers, Rag McAskill, Neil Ford, Robert King, Martyn Smith, Owen Summers, Les Harris, Derek Pettersson, Vernon Steen, Gerald Cheek, Kenneth McKay, Dougie Hansen, Stewart Wallace, Irwan Summers and Taff Davies.
516 Freedman 2005 vol.2
“It is appropriate for me to emphasise in the clearest possible terms that the means employed by the British Government and their unilateral acts have created a situation of serious tension whose continuation could jeopardise the maintenance of international peace and security.” 518

Pérez de Cuéllar, the UN’s Secretary-General, asks both Roca and Parsons to see him.

“As the crisis developed on 31 March he was about to leave for a tour of Europe. He summoned both Roca and Parsons successively to express concern at the rising tension and urge a diplomatic resolution of the dispute... By this time Roca was already preparing the diplomatic ground for the invasion, circulating a letter to the President of the Security Council, referring to the South Georgia incident and the dispatch of British warships to the area, and complaining about Britain’s ‘obstinately negative’ approach to Argentine efforts to find a peaceful resolution to the illegal occupation of the islands” 519

Security Council members, Russia and China, both receive a request from Argentina that they use their vetoes in the case of an SC resolution. Argentina’s Embassy in Moscow is informed that the; “...objective is that the USSR apply its veto in the Security Council to any proposal that goes against the interests of our country.” 520

In Buenos Aires, Minister Costa Méndez hands a declaration to Britain’s Ambassador Anthony Williams.

“Since the problem raised is disregard of Argentine sovereignty, I judge pointless the despatch of a person to examine the events in the Georgias since Argentina considers this incident resolved. ... I cannot omit to draw attention to the unusual British naval deployment towards our waters reported in the international press which can only be interpreted as an unacceptable threat ...” 521

At 1900 local time, HMS Endurance slips away from South Georgia. 522


“Foreign Minister Costa Méndez called me in late this afternoon .. The Minister said he had conveyed my demarche of yesterday to the governing Junta. ... he gave me the following response from the three commanders: the GOA is prepared to accept the proffered good offices of the USG, but only on the basis that HMG first recognize the sovereignty of Argentina over the Malvinas and agree to deliver those Islands and their dependencies to Argentina within a reasonable period of time.

The good offices of the U(N)SG would then be employed to help arrange such details as the future status of the Islanders under Argentine rule and the establishment of a permanent British fueling station to support operations in the Antarctic. ... he reiterated that there would be no confrontation unless the British tried to take the working party off South Georgia.

I said we would regard any confrontation as most serious. ... Costa Méndez closed the meeting by delivering himself of some harsh observations on the British, asserting that the GOA had had enough, that HMG had tried to dupe and string along Argentina for years and that the GOA was prepared “to break relations” without any qualms.” 523

Shlaudeman adds a comment; “It sounds like Galtieri playing Patton.”

518 Quoted in Freedman 2005 vol.2
519 Ibid
520 Cardoso, Kirschboom & van der Kooy 1983 p.91. It is not clear how much information regarding Argentine intentions was attached to the request.
521 Ibid
522 Barker 1997
523 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Argentina (01/01/1982–04/02/1982). Haig’s message of the 31st did not arrive in Buenos Aires until after this meeting.
Secretary Haig writes to the US Embassy in London.

“I am instructing our Ambassador in Buenos Aires to convey my concern to the Argentine Foreign Minister and to urge that his government take no steps which would aggravate the present crisis. Furthermore, I am urging the Argentine Government to abide by existing arrangements and understandings concerning regularizing the status of foreign residents on South Georgia Island. We will, of course, have a greater chance of influencing Argentine behavior if we appear to them not to favor one side or the other. We will continue quietly to try and move the Argentines away from taking further steps which would make a peaceful resolution more difficult to achieve.” 524

April 1st, Secretary Haig also telegrams the US Embassy in Argentina.

“Request you contact Galtieri immediately. Tell him we have disturbing reports. Tell him that we don’t want to overreact, but would like very much to be reassured. Tell him that from the US point of view we believe that we are embarked on one of the most fruitful periods in the history of our relationship, in which we can become not only the partners in the struggle against Communism in the Hemisphere, but together we can again achieve that standing in international life which we both can rightfully claim. Tell him that should any military action occur, for whatever reason, it is a simple fact that overriding internal and external pressure would be brought to bear on us to abandon the new and promising relationship we are building.” 525

At the UN, Britain's Ambassador Sir Anthony Parsons, demands that the President of the Security Council, Kamanga, convene a meeting and call upon the Argentine Government to refrain from the use of force.

“. . . we had never been to the Security Council before with this dispute. It had only touched the Fourth Committee; it had scarcely been to the plenary of the General Assembly and it hit everyone by surprise. The day before the invasion I got word to call an emergency meeting of the Security Council which I did. I rang up colleagues in turn personally, saying would you be down at the Council in an hour’s time, the invasion of the Falklands is pending. My American colleague (Jeanne Kirkpatrick), who was very mixed up with Latin American policy, said that I had gone mad and that she would block the vote.. I said that if you are going to block me from having a meeting you will have to do it in public and I shall insist on a public meeting so . . .?

My Russian colleague said: it is April 1st and I know this is an April Fool’s joke, the kind of thing you do the whole time, but you don’t know your own rules; it is after mid-day. I had quite a problem persuading him that this was serious . . .” 526

“Kirkpatrick, . . . was less than pleased, having told Roca that such a move was unlikely... Parsons was suspicious of Kirkpatrick’s ‘close and sympathetic relationship with Roca.’ He suspected that she had given the Argentine Ambassador to understand that, if Argentina could support the US over Nicaragua, she would return the compliment over the Falklands.” 527

On being informed that a meeting of the Security Council is to be held, Roca responds.

“It was ironic and inadmissible for the Council to be convened by the United Kingdom on that day to consolidate the spoils of colonial plundering. Argentina rejected being accused when in fact what should be judged, if justice was to be served and peace preserved, was the conduct of the accuser.”

524 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 03/31/1982–04/01/1982
525 Ibid
526 Sir Anthony Parsons interviewed by Jane Barter March 22, 1996
527 Freedman 2005 vol.2
US Secretary Haig sends a message to Carrington indicating that the USA will do all it can to help and that their Ambassador in Buenos Aires is seeking an urgent meeting with President Galtieri who is resisting the invitation to hold a personal telephone conversation with President Reagan. 528

In Washington, Haig tells Argentina's Ambassador that any use of force.

"Would reverse our cooperation in Central America and the hemisphere. The reaction of the American people will be overwhelming, we will have to side with the British, and US-Argentine relations will be back to the worst days."

In Buenos Aires, US Ambassador Shlaudeman speaks to President Galtieri.

"With respect to US/Argentine relations, the President insisted that Argentina has the support on this issue of the great majority of nations and that the failure of the U.S. to understand its position would do us damage in the Southern Cone and elsewhere. He referred several times to Argentine support for our position in Central America—support which I acknowledged—and seemed to suggest there should be a quid-pro-quo in this case." 529

Informing Washington, Shlaudeman notes; “Galtieri was emotional and, I believe, quite nervous. I'm still not certain that he means to take action tomorrow. It would be in his nature to run a bluff to the very end. On the other hand, his ego shows signs of serious inflation and I'm afraid that he is capable of doing something stupid.”

Britain's Ambassador in Washington receives a message from the US State Department.

"... that their Ambassador has informed them from Buenos Aires of his meeting with the Argentine President. The latter would not say what the Argentines were going to do. The Americans have deduced from this that the Argentinians are therefore planning to go through with their military operation. The Argentine President muttered some mumbo-jumbo, to use the State Department's phrase, about the need for the British to talk about surrendering sovereignty...”

Information regarding the approaching invasion fleet is relayed to Governor Hunt; “We have apparently reliable evidence than an Argentine task force will gather off Cape Pembroke early tomorrow morning 2 April. You will wish to make your dispositions accordingly.” 530

A signal from Buenos Aires to its invasion force informs General Garcia and Rear-Admiral Allara that the garrison at Stanley was larger than usual and that the Governor is aware of their approach.

"This recent information undoubtedly came from inside Stanley, almost certainly from the Argentine airline office based there.... A LADE officer, Vicecomodoro Hector Gilobert, ... had just returned unexpectedly to Stanley, ostensibly to check some financial documents. This officer, experienced in local conditions, was probably the source of the intelligence now reaching the landing force." 531

Without the advantage of surprise, the invasion plans are changed. The target beach is changed due to fears that it would now be defended. The Goose Green operation is cancelled and its forces added to those attacking Stanley; “... making a total of 940 Argentine troops who would be attacking eighty-one British marines and

528 General Galtieri “resisted” for 4 hours. Haig's message had to be passed to Costa Mendez for delivery to Galtieri.
529 Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Country File, Latin America/Central, Argentina (01/01/1982– 04/02/1982)
530 FCO 7/4490 f113 The Governor is alleged to have responded; "They might have added goodbye and the best of British!" cf. The Guardian November 12, 2012
531 Middlebrook 2003
sailors.” Government House is now to be taken by the sixteen members of the Amphibious Commandos under the command of Lieut-Commander Pedro Giachino.

At 2015hrs local time, Governor Hunt goes on the local radio to transmit a warning to the Islanders.

“... there is mounting evidence that the Argentine armed forces are preparing to invade the Falkland Islands. ... I have alerted the Royal Marines and now I ask for all serving members of the Falkland Islands Defence Force to report to the Drill Hall as soon as possible. They will be on guard tonight at key points in the town. Schools will be closed tomorrow. The radio station will stay open until further notice. ... I would urge you all to remain calm and stay off the streets...”

Capt. Barker on Endurance is ordered back to South Georgia.

“I made for the south-east corner of the island. This was because we had a report that two corvettes, two destroyers, a submarine and a tanker were heading for South Georgia; the assumption was they would make their approach from the north.”

Hunt reports to London.

“(1) Royal marines disposition will be made near expected landing beach and will do what they can to contain landing and to defend airport. (2) FIDF will round up Argentines in Stanley before dawn tomorrow and bring them to Government House for safe-keeping. They will then deploy at probable helicopter landing sites. (3) Marines will fall back to outskirts of Stanley but will not fight in Stanley. Survival party will take off to the hills as Argentine forces reach Stanley. I shall remain at Government House. ...”

ARA Guerrico, a corvette with two helicopters and 40 marines aboard, joins the Bahia Paraiso at South Georgia.

Off the Falklands, Argentina’s invasion force commences its operation.

“At 9.30pm on 1 April, half an hour before President Reagan finally managed to speak to President Galtieri on the telephone, the Type 42 destroyer Santisima Trinidad anchored one mile south of the Falklands coast. Twenty-one inflatable rubber boats were lowered into the sea, and the marines of the Amphibious Commando Company transferred to the small craft.”

At 2210hrs, Buenos Aires time, Galtieri finally agrees to take a telephone call from US President Reagan -

Reagan: “I have reliable news that Argentina is about to adopt force in the Falkland Islands. As you will understand, I am very worried about the repercussions such an action would have. I want to express to you Mr. President, the concern of United States in this matter and the need to find an alternative to the use of force.

Galtieri: “... I want to remind you that my country has always maintained a favourable attitude towards negotiations in this dispute with Great Britain. This is demonstrated by seventeen years of fruitless discussion under the auspices of the United Nations. We have conducted these negotiations with a

532 Ibid.
533 Times are complicated by the distances involved crossing more than one time zone. I have tried to use the local time wherever an event was occurring. The military campaign HQ at Northwood insisted the timing would be 'Zulu' time (GMT) despite the time in London being one hour ahead of that (BST), and the time in the Falklands, three hours behind GMT. I have chosen to use the 24 hour clock in the hope that it will be familiar to readers.
534 Quoted in Phillips R. The First Casualty 2017 pp.115-116
535 Barker 1997
536 FCO 7/4490 f124 Telegram No. 64 of 1 April 1982. Endurance had left 57 marines at Stanley, 2 officers and 9 men.
537 Middlebrook 2003
nation which, more than a century and a half ago, used force to usurp a territory which by right belongs to Argentina. Our negotiating position remains the same - but the patience of the Argentine people has a limit. Great Britain has threatened Argentine citizens legitimately going about their business in South Georgia, and my government has an obligation to protect them. Besides, the United Kingdom persists in ignoring Argentine claims in order to put an end to the negotiations and has not responded – in spite of our insistence – to the last proposal that we formulated in order to speed up the process. I want to repeat to you, Mr. President, that our negotiating stance has not changed…”

Reagan: “I understand, Mr. President, but I consider it essential to continue the discussions and seek an alternative to force. … Believe me, … I have good reason to assure you that Great Britain would respond with force to any Argentine military action.”

Galtieri: “Argentina has always been in favour of a peaceful solution to this dispute. It will only be possible to find the alternative you seek, Mr. President, if there is recognition on the part of the United Kingdom of Argentine sovereignty over the Falkland Islands. And that recognition would have to be explicit and public.”

Reagan offers mediation via Vice-President Bush and Jeanne Kirkpatrick but Galtieri rejects the offer.

“... There are all those resolutions of the General Assembly, such as 1514, 2065 and others which repeatedly call on the parties to seek a negotiated settlement to this sovereignty dispute. ...”

Reagan: “Mr. President, I believe that it is my obligation to bring to your notice that Great Britain is ready to respond militarily to an Argentine landing. This has been made known to me by the United Kingdom. Furthermore, Mrs. Thatcher, a friend of mine, is a very determined woman and she would have no other alternative than to make a military response. The conflict will be tragic and have grave consequences for the Hemisphere. ... I want to make clear, therefore, that the relationship between your country and mine will suffer greatly. American and world-wide opinion will take a negative attitude to an Argentine use of force.”

At around the same time that Reagan put the telephone down, the first elements of Argentina’s invasion force land on the Falkland Islands – Operation Rosario. 539

“The ninety-two marines were all present. They removed their neoprene outer suits, took their weapons and other equipment out of waterproof packs and prepared to move. The small party under Lieutenant-Commander Giachino who were to capture Government House had the shortest distance to go – two and a half miles due north – but Moody Brook Barracks, the destination of the main party, was six miles away over a high ridge.” 540

“The Marines split into two groups, the larger making for the Royal Marines barracks at Moody Brook, and the smaller for Government House.” 541

President Reagan telephones PM Thatcher with the result of his conversation with President Galtieri.

“... I conveyed to him my personal concern about the possibility of an Argentine invasion. I told him that initiating military operations against the Falkland islands would seriously compromise relations

538 Quoted in full in Cardoso, Kirschboom & van der Kooy 1983 pp.83-86
539 Originally code-named Azul, the name was changed to honour the Virgin of Rosario. cf. Argentina’s Failed Crusade J. Burns published in the Tablet 2002.
540 Middlebrook 2003. It would take the main group six hours to cross the difficult ground. Far longer than had been expected or planned for.
541 Freedman 2005 vol.2
between the United States and Argentina and I urged him to refrain from offensive action. I offered our
good offices and my readiness to send a personal representative to assist in resolving the issues between
Argentina and the United Kingdom.

The General heard my message, but gave me no commitment that he would comply with it. Indeed, he
spoke in terms of ultimatum and left me with the clear impression that he has embarked on a course of
armed conflict. We will continue to cooperate with your Government in the effort to resolve this dispute.
Both in attempting to avert hostilities and to stop them if they should break out.

While we have a policy of neutrality on the sovereignty issue, we will not be neutral on the issue of
Argentine use of military force."

“The over-riding complication is the President’s closeness to Mrs. Thatcher. The President called Galtieri and
Galtieri told him to mess out.”

Governor Hunt is sent permission to destroy Stanley airstrip; “.. if you can do so, to prevent it being used after
invasion to resupply an invasion force.”

At the UN the Security Council meets in public session.

“We decided in the Mission that if we were going to get a Resolution – we didn't think the odds were good but
we must do it quickly, avoid all the negotiations over blue drafts and black drafts and I don’t know what other
drafts, we must slap down something we could live with – we must demand that Argentina withdraw and we
must get a vote on it within 24 hours because if we allowed it to drag out it would be fatal. So we did exactly
that;”

Parsons addresses the Security Council.

“As members of the Council will be aware, there have been differences for many years between my
Government and the Government of the Republic of Argentina concerning the Falkland Islands. My
Government has asked for this emergency meeting of the Council because it now has reason to
believe that the Government of Argentina is planning to attempt to invade these Islands. ... For
several years, the affairs of the Falklands have been discussed by the General Assembly. The
Falklands are one of those territories about which the United Kingdom reports to the United Nations
under Article 73(E) of the Charter. At the most recent session of the General Assembly, a decision
was adopted to the effect that the Committee of 24 should keep the situation in the territory under
review. The Assembly has not adopted a Resolution on the subject for several years but has
contented itself with taking note of developments. My Government and the Government of Argentina
have held a series of meetings to discuss the situation in the Falkland Islands. In these meetings,
elected representatives of the local population have regularly taken part. Reports have been
submitted to the General Assembly about these meetings, most recently in Notes dated 1 April 1981
(document A.36/156). In this Note, it is stated that: “Both delegations agreed that this question
should be examined in further negotiations at an early date.” Such discussion did in fact continue,
most recently in New York at the end of February. Representatives of the two Governments
confirmed on that occasion their wish to continue their discussions within the negotiating framework

542 PREM 19/657 Telegram from White House to Cabinet Office, London
543 Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary International Security Affairs (Noel C. Koch) to the Senior Military Assistant to
the Deputy Secretary of Defense April 2, 1982. Washington National Record Center, OSD Files, FRC 330–84–0003
544 FCO 7/4490 f104 Telegram No. 50 of 2 April 1982. A hand written note suggests that this was not received by Hunt.
545 See https://falklandstimeline.files.wordpress.com/2019/05/security-council-discussion-1-to-3-april-1982.pdf
546 Quoted in British Diplomatic Oral History Project (Interviewing Sir Anthony Parsons) J. Barder 1996
referred to in the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. But regrettably the Argentine Government appears to have decided, following those discussions, that it did not wish to continue on this course. The Joint Communique which had been agreed at these talks in New York was not published in Buenos Aires. Recently, relations between the United Kingdom and Argentina deteriorated as a result of an incident in South Georgia, one of the Dependencies of the Falkland Islands...On 31 March the British Ambassador in Buenos Aires proposed to the Argentine Foreign Minister that a senior official should visit Buenos Aires to discuss a diplomatic solution, adding that the diffusing of this incident would help prepare the way for a resumption of a dialogue on the broader sovereignty issue.

Earlier today, the Argentine Foreign Minister gave the reply of his Government to the British Ambassador in Buenos Aires. His reply was negative. He declined to discuss further the problems occasioned by the illegal presence of Argentine nationals on South Georgia. He specifically stated that he no longer wished to use diplomatic channels to discuss the situation in South Georgia.

Mr President, ... the purpose of my Government in calling this meeting of the Security Council is to consider the threat not to South Georgia but to the Falkland Islands... We have evidence that the Argentine Navy is about to launch an invasion, possible as early as tomorrow morning. ...

Mr President, my Government views the present situation with the utmost seriousness. We call on the Security Council to take immediate action in order to prevent an invasion. We ask this Council to exercise its responsibility under the Charter to maintain international peace and security. We ask this Council to call upon the Government of Argentina to refrain from the threat or use of force against the Falkland Islands and to exercise restraint. I can assure the Council that my Government has conducted the recent negotiations in perfect good faith and that the British Government stands ready to continue these negotiations in the future. What is unacceptable is an attempt to change the situation by force. ...”

“After a brief exchange between myself and Ambassador Roca, who appeared to be taken by surprise by this development, the President read out the statement. I immediately took the floor to assure the Council that my government would be guided by the Presidential appeal and challenged Ambassador Roca to respond similarly. He remained silent.”

The die was cast. Argentina's military government had abandoned negotiation and chosen trial by combat. An historic approach to dispute resolution. Also, the final act of dispute resolution. There could only be one winner, and that winner must be seen to have right on its side – as tradition would have it.

Paper 12 considers the following 74 days in some depth but with particular emphasis on the diplomatic and political battles that surrounded the main fight. Lives would be lost and all for a 150 year old Argentine fantasy about inheritance. There should be better principles to die for.

Bibliography [https://falklandstimeline.files.wordpress.com/2019/04/bibliography-1.pdf](https://falklandstimeline.files.wordpress.com/2019/04/bibliography-1.pdf)

548 Parsons 1983 p.170