

SUBJECT.

PRIME MINISTER'S / 3
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 55/82

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FM CABINET OFFICE LONDON
TO WHITE HOUSE

BT
TOP SECRET
PERSONAL FROM PRIME MINISTER THATCHER
FOR PRESIDENT REAGAN
DEAR RON,

YOU WILL KNOW ABOUT THE DISTURBING INTELLIGENCE REPORTS BOTH FROM YOUR SOURCES AND FROM OURS THAT THE ARGENTINE NAVY COULD BE PREPARING TO INVADE THE FALKLAND ISLANDS WITHIN THE NEXT 48 HOURS. THERE ARE LESS THAN 2,000 INHABITANTS THERE. WE MAINTAIN ONLY A SMALL GARRISON OF ABOUT 75 MARINES AT PORT STANLEY - THE CAPITAL OF THE FALKLANDS - AND THE ONLY ROYAL NAVY VESSEL WHICH WE HAVE IN THE AREA AT THE MOMENT IS AN ICE PATROL SHIP. AN ARGENTINE ASSAULT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY RESULT IN LOSS OF LIFE. WE COULD NOT ACQUIESCE IN ANY ARGENTINE OCCUPATION: THE FALKLAND ISLANDERS HAVE ALWAYS MADE IT CLEAR THEY WISH AND INTEND TO REMAIN BRITISH.

WILL YOU 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. YOU CAN TELL HIM THAT WE WILL NOT ESCALATE THE DISPUTE OR START FIGHTING. MEANWHILE, WE ARE PURSUING URGENT DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES WITH THE ARGENTINE TO REACH A SETTLEMENT AND I WOULD ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN THIS EFFORT TOO.

WARM PERSONAL REGARDS,
MARGARET.

BT

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THANKS