

E.M. 1/11/74
KkS.A. D
G. H. 1/11/74

Mr Upe

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FALKLAND ISLANDS: UK RESPONSE TO ANY ARGENTINE ACTION

1. If the Argentines do use force against the Falkland Islands, the first requirement would be to try to secure the withdrawal of their forces. Our options would include:

(i) Reference to the Security Council

This would be an essential first step. It is the only suitable forum for discussion of a threat to the peace. UKMIS New York have already advised (in a comment on a Secret report) that we should be unlikely to obtain the necessary nine positive votes for a resolution condemning the Argentine use of force and calling on them to withdraw their forces. But they would need to lobby intensively in New York and we should act in parallel in capitals.

(ii) Action with the Americans

The Americans have been involved from an early stage, including at the highest level. They are the one Western government in a position to exercise the most influence on the Argentines, and it would be essential to continue to press them to take every action on our behalf, in Buenos Aires, with the Argentine Ambassador in Washington, and with the Argentine Permanent Representative in New York.

(iii) Action with our EC partners

All our EC partners except Luxembourg have an Embassy in Buenos Aires. We may expect sympathy and support from all our EC partners but their influence with the Argentines is much less significant than that of the Americans. It would probably be best to be selective and lobby the French, Germans, Italians and Dutch intensively, asking the others to help as best they could. We should also consider the prospects of achieving an

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agreement in Political Cooperation of the Ten, that the Argentines should be urged to withdraw their forces and that the Presidency (Belgium) should deliver a demarche to them on this basis.

(iv) Action with South American countries

All South American countries traditionally support the Argentine claim to sovereignty over the Falklands, but they have generally made it clear that they wish to see a peaceful solution to the dispute. Argentina's relations with Chile are too cool for there to be any point in asking the Chileans to act on our behalf, but Brazil, Venezuela and Peru might all be asked to exert influence on the Argentine Government.

(v) Action with the Non-Aligned

The Non-Aligned Movement also traditionally support the Argentine claim to sovereignty and we could have little hope of exerting any influence on the Movement as a whole. But we might approach those members of the Commonwealth who are also members of the Non-Aligned.

2. There would be other action we should need to take which would have no direct effect on the situation. The main one would be to expel the Argentine Ambassador and possibly all the Embassy staff. The Argentines would certainly retaliate in kind. It would seem best to ask the Americans to look after British interests in Buenos Aires. Alternatives might be the Germans or the Swiss.

3. Action on the economic front (see attached paper) would be more likely to hurt us than the Argentines and some elements would cause us legal difficulties. But it might be necessary to take action for presentational reasons.

1 April 1982

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Emergency Room

cc PS/LPS
PS/MR LUCE
PS/PUS
MR GIFFARD