



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

4 May 1982

A. J. C. 4/5.

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Dear John,

Mr Pym's Statement in Parliament

I enclose a copy of the statement which Mr Pym proposes to make in the Commons this afternoon. He has seen it and approved its general terms, but it may be amended further before delivery. I am copying this to David Omand (Ministry of Defence).

Yours ever

(J E Holmes)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing Street

STATEMENT BY THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY IN

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

4 MAY

Since we debated the Falklands crisis last Thursday, there have been some notable military achievements. My Right Honourable Friend will report on these in a few minutes.

Meanwhile, I wish to pay tribute to the efficiency and courage of our forces. Our relief that British lives have not been lost is inevitably tempered by our deep regret at Argentine casualties. I know the whole House would wish to be associated with these sentiments.

These military achievements have been in support of our overall strategy; they have not been and will not become a substitute for it. As the House knows, we are maintaining the maximum pressure on Argentina in the diplomatic, economic and military fields with the objective of securing Argentine withdrawal at the earliest possible moment in compliance with the mandatory resolution of the United Nations Security Council.

The military pressure we have exercised has been challenged despite our clear warnings and our desire to use the minimum force. Our response in the circumstances was as inevitable as it was right. But I can assure the House that what we are seeking is not the military humiliation of Argentina but a victory for the rule of law in international affairs.

Since the House last met, I have visited Washington and New York to reinforce our diplomatic efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement as soon as possible. I had extensive talks with Secretary Haig. These covered the diplomatic, economic and military dimensions of the crisis.

On the diplomatic side, Mr Haig made it clear that, just as we have not abandoned our diplomatic endeavours following Argentina's rejection of the earlier American proposals, nor has he. We discussed a range of ideas for a settlement. We are continuing our work with all urgency.

As the House will be aware, other governments have also been active in promoting a settlement. We welcome this and are in close touch with them.

We are therefore working actively on various ideas, including those put forward by the President of Peru. I can assure the House that we are losing no time in developing our thoughts about them and communicating our own constructive views to those concerned. The framework for a settlement remains as I have outlined it to the House.

Proposals are needed which cover the essential elements of Resolution 502, withdrawal and negotiations on the future, unprejudiced in any way. They must also address the interim arrangements and guarantees required.

On the economic front, Mr Haig described the measures which the United States have recently announced. They are a tangible sign of American support for our cause. I know that the Americans have not closed their mind to additional steps.

On the military front, Mr Haig and Mr Weinberger confirmed that they are ready to provide material support for our forces. I welcomed this. We shall be following it up through the usual channels.

In New York I discussed diplomatic possibilities with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and with the President of the Security Council. I made it clear to them that our immediate concern is the implementation of Security Council Resolution 502; and that we are open to any ideas which would achieve this on a satisfactory basis, namely an Argentine withdrawal followed by negotiations on the longer-term solution without prejudice to basic principles.

We were able to consider together the various possible ways of involving the United Nations. We recognised that a solution will require not only the right ideas but the right timing and the right sequence of events. I know that the Secretary-General is in touch with the Argentine Government. The burden of compliance with what has already been decided of course rests squarely with them.

It must not be forgotten that we remain the victims of a totally unprovoked act of aggression in defiance of the UN Charter.

We are seeking to ensure that Argentina does not profit from aggression and to uphold the rule of law in international affairs. This is an interest which all members of the United Nations must share.

Our resolve should not be doubted. Neither should our readiness to talk and our will for peace.