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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

21 October 1983

*I think the telegram too mild
 in tone. If U.S. this
 will seem to encourage
 be very hostile in public
 such a decision - very
 Dear John, President
 critical of the
 State Dept. statement
 Prime Minister
 agree with the contents of
 the enclosed telegram?
 A.S.C. 24/10.*

Falklands at the General Assembly: American Position

You will have seen from Washington telno 3031 (copy enclosed) that the Americans have told us formally that they intend to vote for the Argentine draft resolution. They have evidently also told the Argentines.

We have always thought it most unlikely that the Americans would change their position on a draft resolution which so closely resembles last year's. We must recognise that it would be difficult for the Americans, in terms of their relations with Latin America, to draw back from the position they adopted at the last General Assembly. The Foreign Secretary continues to think that we should not use up credit unproductively in trying to press the Americans to change their position. He accordingly does not suggest that the Prime Minister should take the matter up personally with President Reagan.

Sir Geoffrey does think however that we should make clear to the Americans our strong feelings about the position they have adopted at the United Nations and should do our best to minimise the impact of their decision on the thinking of our European partners.

The Washington telegram also confirms that the Americans are moving towards the resumption of arms sales to Argentina. We shall need to keep them fully aware of our misgivings on this front also, on the lines the Prime Minister has already taken with the President. But the time-scales are different and the Foreign Secretary thinks it best if the Ambassador concentrates on the UN problem for the moment.

I enclose a draft telegram to Washington and should be grateful for any comments you may have.

Yours ever

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

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Section and Division of the Office

Section 271-10

21 JUN 1983

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File No.

CONFIDENTIAL
OUTWARD

Security Classification CONFIDENTIAL
Precedence IMMEDIATE
DESKBYZ

Department UND

Drafted by
(Block Capitals) N C R WILLIAMS

TELEGRAM

Tel. Extn. 233 4330

FOR
COMMS. DEPT.
USE

Despatched (Date)
(Time)Z

POSTBYZ

PREAMBLE

(Time of Origin).....Z(G.M.T.)

(Restrictive Prefix).....

(Security Class.)..... CONFIDENTIAL

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Privacy marking).....

(Codeword).....

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TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON
(precedence) (post)

Tel. No.of.....

AND TO (precedence/post).....

AND TO SAVING.....

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INFO SAVING.....

Distribution:-

Falkland Islands
General

UND

Copies to:-

[TEXT]

YOUR TELNO 3031: FALKLANDS AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. Please let the Americans know at a suitably high level that the Prime Minister and I are disappointed and distressed that the United States should once again be proposing to vote with Argentina and directly opposite to us on a matter of such importance to us. We continue to find this an extraordinary posture for one close ally to adopt towards another at the United Nations. We also believe that the United States' attitude will set back

/rather

rather than advance the prospects for a relaxation of tension in the South Atlantic because it can only encourage the Argentine government, present and future, to continue on the present sterile course and damage the chances of the change of heart in Argentina without which there can be no improvement in the situation.

2. For your own information, I do not propose to press the Americans to change their position. We have always thought it likely that they would feel bound to support a draft resolution which so closely resembles last year's. As you have pointed out, the draft has been slightly strengthened, with the insertion of the seventh preambular paragraph and the expression of regret at the lack of progress since last year, which implies a criticism of us. But I have concluded that it is not (not) in our interest to press these points too hard with the Americans.

We do not want them to attempt to placate us by persuading the Argentines to make some modest adjustment to the draft which could then lose us the votes of some if not all of our European partners.

3. Last year the Americans announced their decision two days before the vote, thus compounding our difficulty with our partners in the final stages of our lobbying. This time they have given the Argentines three weeks notice of their position. We must expect the Argentines to make maximum use of this in their intensive contacts with the

/Europeans.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

Europeans. Please point out to the Americans that they have done us a disservice by taking this step at so early a stage and urge them to do nothing which might encourage the Italians, the French or other partners to change their vote. We note that the State Department do not propose to be active in support of the Argentine draft, but they may well be approached.

4. We hope the Americans could make it clear to any European enquirers that while they, for reasons peculiar to themselves, were proposing to maintain the position they adopted last year, they saw no reason why the United Kingdom's partners in European political co-operation should change the position they have adopted. We particularly hope that the Americans will refrain from endorsing the Italian idea that a vote diametrically opposite to the United Kingdom over the Falklands is a good way of offering encouragement to a new democratic government in Argentina. There are many ways in which such a gesture could be made. It should not be at our expense.

See new page overleaf.

~~5. Burt was unable to offer much cheer regarding arms sales, although we note that the Americans do not now intend to certify human rights in Argentina before the civilian government takes power. We shall wish you to keep up the pressure on this subject also, but in view of the different time-scale we would be content for you to make only passing reference to it when acting on this telegram.~~

NEW DRAFT PARAGRAPH 5 TO REPLACE EXISTING PARAGRAPH 5
IN DRAFT TELEGRAM TO WASHINGTON

5. Burt offered no help regarding arms sales. It is only small consolation that the Americans do not now intend to certify human rights in Argentina before the civilian government has taken power. You should keep up the pressure on this subject, which I regard as more important than the UNGA decision. You should emphasise that the resumption of United States arms deliveries to Argentina could significantly increase the threat to the Falklands. It would therefore be taken very badly by the British Parliament and public. Argentine attitudes remain menacing. The Junta have not even declared a formal cessation of hostilities and leading contenders in the election campaign have given no indication whatever that they might be prepared to renounce the use of force in the future. Decision in favour of certification and arms supplies would give precisely the wrong signals to the incoming Argentine Government and, mistakenly, confer a mark of international respectability on a nation which has recently committed a brutal violation of international law. The message in these signals will be intensified if there are further leaks such as the report datelined Washington in the Daily Telegraph of 22 October.

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Argentina
Relations

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

24 October 1983

Falklands at the General Assembly:
American Position

John Holmes wrote to me on 21 October enclosing a draft telegram to Washington.

The Prime Minister finds the telegram too mild in tone. She has stated that if the United States sells arms to Argentina she will find it necessary to make clear in public her hostility to such a decision. She is therefore inclined to think it wrong that in carrying out the instructions envisaged the Embassy in Washington should make only passing reference to the certification issue. I should be grateful if you could provide a revised and strengthened draft.

B/E /

A. J. COLES

P.F. Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

You did not like the first
draft of this telegram.

There is now a much stronger
final proposal about US
arms sale to Argentina.

Agree telegram?

Yes
no

A.J.C. $\frac{25}{10}$

See ECOT
A.J.C. 21/10/83

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

25 October 1983

Dear John,

Falklands: American Position

Thank you for your letter of 24 October passing on the Prime Minister's comments about the passage on arms sales in the draft telegram enclosed in John Holmes' letter of 21 October.

I enclose a revised draft of paragraph 5. We take it from your letter that the Prime Minister's remarks do not apply to the preceding paragraphs on the UN General Assembly, which are already drafted in quite strong terms.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

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Argentina - Relations P+35.

London 27/11/47



NEW DRAFT PARAGRAPH 5 TO REPLACE EXISTING PARAGRAPH 5
IN DRAFT TELEGRAM TO WASHINGTON

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

26 October, 1983.

Falklands at the General Assembly:
American Position

BR / Thank you for providing a revised paragraph 5 to the draft telegram enclosed with John Holmes' letter of 21 October. The Prime Minister has approved the text as amended.

A. J. COLLETT

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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