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THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

26919

6 April

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saying we will
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APRIL 6, 1982 39

SENSITIVE

WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ALEXANDER M. HAIG, JR. 

SUBJECT: FALKLAND ISLANDS DISPUTE

In keeping with the initiatives you have taken with both Prime Minister Thatcher and President Galtieri and your offer of our good offices to help settle this most unfortunate dispute, I have begun to explore what we might be able to do. Today, I have talked personally with the UK and Argentine Ambassadors, as well as with the new UK Foreign Secretary, Francis Pym, by phone following receipt of a letter from him. Tonight I met with the visiting Argentine Foreign Minister. My objective in these discussions has been to listen to both sides and look for opportunities for diplomacy. I believe we have found a few.

We need now to move quickly, while there is still uncertainty on both sides and while each is having second thoughts. Furthermore, we should act before we are placed in an untenable position of having to compromise our impartiality if we are to be responsive to escalating British requests for assistance. In this connection you have just received a letter from Thatcher asking us to take a range of economic measures on their behalf.

Subject to your approval, and an indication from the British that they agree, I propose to go to London and Buenos Aires, leaving tomorrow or Thursday. The principal objective of this mission would be to test our understanding of each side's minimum requirements for a solution to the immediate problem of a prospective

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armed conflict in this hemisphere between two friends. If we are correct that the greatest concerns of the British are withdrawal of Argentine forces and respect for the rights of its subjects, and that the Argentines must have at least a change from UK administration of the Islands with the clear prospect of ultimate sovereignty, we will have a base on which we may be able to build at least a temporary settlement. Only a beginning, but an essential step to avert hostilities and lay the groundwork for a lasting solution.

Neither the British nor the Argentines want the OAS or the UN involved. Consequently, we are thinking of the formation of a neutral force to administer the Islands while the sovereignty issue is settled. This might include ourselves (the British will not accept less), the Canadians and two Latin countries. This will be a high risk mission but one I believe we must take if we are not to suffer a major setback to our policies in this hemisphere.

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