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Se refiere a:

ABR08 – ANALISIS DE LA APRECIACION (de ABR05/06) DEL EMBAJADOR EN BUENOS AIRES PREVIO A LA OCUPACION (fco 7/4490)

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PS

Handwritten notes:
Navy doubts
Secretary of State saw
meeting with
P. R. Fearn
9/4

Handwritten initials:
P. R. Fearn

FALKLAND ISLANDS: MR WILLIAMS CALL ON THE SECRETARY OF STATE: 9 APRIL

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1. You asked for a comment on Buenos Aires telno 174 for Mr Williams' call on the Secretary of State tomorrow.
2. I assume that you do not wish a detailed analysis of the papers for this purpose. But Mr Williams' general thesis is that his advice to us since at least mid-1981 has been that Argentinian patience was running out and that, if some means could not be found to get substantive negotiations on sovereignty going, the Argentine Government would turn to other ways of achieving their aims. This was true under President Viola and became more so under the more muscular leadership of President Galtieri. The key to Argentine intentions has throughout been their assessment of our willingness to negotiate seriously on sovereignty. If they became convinced that a transfer of sovereignty could not be achieved by negotiation, they would have no option but to turn to other means of exerting pressure, not excluding military action.
3. In this Mr Williams has been correct. At the same time his view on the likelihood of an Argentine resort to force has been conditional on the breakdown of negotiations: and has assumed that any armed action would be preceded by other means of applying pressure (eg through a withdrawal of facilities to the Islanders).
4. Mr Williams' assessment has been in line with our own, though it has tended to disregard the difficulty for any British Government of seeking to push through a settlement against the wishes or behind the backs of the Islanders. It was in recognition of the risks that we undertook the lease-back initiative in late 1980: and it was as much because of Parliamentary as Islander reactions that we were unable to push it through. Our negotiating policy since then has been firmly linked to the paramountcy of the Islanders' wishes, with the obvious dilemma that, if the Argentinians continued to insist on nothing less than a transfer of sovereignty and the Islanders stood fast on the status quo, we were inevitably heading for a confrontation.
5. Mr Williams is not however suggesting in his telegram that firm Argentine plans for an invasion at this time had long been laid: rather that the South Georgia incident provided an opening for the hawks (in particular the Navy) to capitalise on the opportunity which it provided and to force a decision on invasion, which would otherwise have been a longer term prospect.

ALQ 50/5		
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DESK OFFICER		REGISTRY
INDEX	PA	Action Taken

8 April 1982

Handwritten signature: P. R. Fearn
P R Fearn
Emergency Unit

cc: PS/PUS
Mr Giffard
Mr Ure
Mr Gillmore
SAmD

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