

Prepared for publication as an Occasional Paper by the
Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution
George Mason University

**Prospects for a Settlement of the
Falklands/Malvinas Dispute**

**An Analysis of Public Opinion in
Britain and Argentina***

by

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and

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March 1992

* The South Atlantic Council and the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution are grateful to the Glad Foundation for funding which enabled the commission of the March 1990 survey in Argentina. Without this generous support, the research could not have been carried out.

INTRODUCTION

One of the research projects currently under way at the Institute is the monitoring of Anglo-Argentine relations after the 1982 war and the analysis of the protracted conflict over the South Atlantic islands, known in Buenos Aires as the "Malvinas" and in London as the "Falklands". [See an earlier product of this research in W. Little & C.R. Mitchell (eds) In the Aftermath, College Park, MD: University of Maryland Press, 1989.]

The original focus of our research was on the nature and causes of the conflict itself and on the efforts of the parties [the Argentines, the British and the Islanders] to rebuild relationships after the short, but violent war and to seek long term solutions to the fundamental issues in conflict. Recently, its focus has broadened to a more general consideration of alternative governance systems or "regimes" for small island communities and of innovative solutions for conflicts over such communities.

Whatever ingenious resolutions might be discussed or devised, however, there always remains the problem that options and agreements have to be "sold" to constituents and general publics, so that the process of arriving at a long term resolution of any conflict needs to take into account the barriers which public views and attitudes may [or may not] pose to policy changes. Accurate assessment of the "ripe moment" needs, therefore, to take into account both the flexibility or intransigence of public opinion as well as leaders' perception of their own room for maneuver within that range of opinion.

This present Occasional Paper throws considerable light on this issue by analysing the dynamics of public opinion in both Argentina and Britain in the period since the 1982 war. The Institute was fortunate that Dr. Noguera and Dr. Willetts were both interested in carrying out the survey they conducted in 1990 and agreeable to presenting their findings in both an Institute and in a South Atlantic Council Occasional Paper. We were able to support this work out of a grant from the Glad Foundation in New York. We would like to express appreciation to both researchers and to the Foundation for making the research and the publication of this paper possible.

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1. INTRODUCTION

A small group of islands in the South West Atlantic is known in the Spanish-speaking world as the Malvinas and in the English-speaking world as the Falkland Islands. They are nearly a thousand nautical miles from Buenos Aires, but less than two-hundred miles from the southern Argentine province of Tierra del Fuego. The temperate climate sustains an economy that used to be based on sheep farming. Since 1986, the main income has been derived from licensing international fishing fleets, in a Falkland Islands Interim Management and Conservation Zone (FICZ) covering the waters around the Islands.

There are just two thousand permanent inhabitants of British descent, with another thousand expatriate residents, consisting mainly of the British Army garrison at Mount Pleasant, plus small numbers of business people involved in the fishing industry and officials employed in government services. The Argentine government claims "Las Malvinas son Argentinas" by virtue of geography, history, and international law. It is argued that the Islands were a Spanish possession and that Argentina succeeded to the Spanish title until they were taken by the British by force in 1833. The British government claims that more than a century and a half of continuous, effective, peaceful control and the clear wishes of the inhabitants justify the Islands remaining British. The Argentine military dictatorship sought to end this dispute by an invasion of the Malvinas in April 1982, but were astonished to be faced with a British Task Force being sent to recapture the Falklands. The British victory in June 1982 concluded this stage of conflict for the immediate future, but the underlying issues still remain.

In the 1960's it appeared that Britain might transfer sovereignty over the Islands to Argentina. In 1964 Argentina brought its claim to the UN Special Committee on Colonialism

and in the following year the Committee's report placed the question before the General Assembly. The result was Resolution 2065 (XX) of 16 December 1965: it invited the two governments to negotiate "without delay", "bearing in mind ... the interests of the population of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)." The British only abstained on this resolution, so that it was passed unopposed, and then they proceeded to negotiate with the Argentineans. By August 1968 the two sides had agreed on a Memorandum of Understanding providing that "a final settlement will recognize Argentina's sovereignty over the Islands", "after four and within ten years." The combination of reactions from the Islanders, from Parliament and from the media led the British government to reject the Memorandum and Michael Stewart, then the Foreign Secretary, went as far as endorsing "the paramountcy of the Islanders' wishes." A similar process occurred in 1980 when negotiations between Britain and Argentina were moving towards the idea of a 'lease back' agreement. Under this proposal the British would have recognized Argentina's sovereignty claim, but the Argentineans would have agreed to allow the British to administer the Islands for a fixed period of years. (The British Foreign Office was envisaging a period of 99 years, whereas the Argentine Foreign Ministry wanted something nearer to five to ten years.) Again the Islanders' lobby and parliamentary opposition forced withdrawal of the compromise proposal.¹

After the cease-fire in 1982, a debate on the future of the Falkland/Malvinas Islands continued in many forums. At the official level the British government confidently assumed the continuation of the current status quo, while the Argentine government with equal confidence asserted its claim to sovereignty. The clash was most evident in the 1980's at the annual debates of the United Nations General Assembly and in the two mini-crises over the declaration of the

fishing zone around the Islands in October 1986 and over the British "Fire Focus" military exercises in March 1988. At the same time there was an implicit desire by both sides in the 1980's for relations to improve, as evidenced by the attempt at talks in Bern in July 1984, the British lifting of trade restrictions in July 1985, President Alfonsin's conciliatory proposals of November 1986, the exchanges via Washington in 1987-88, President Menem's offer to put sovereignty "under an umbrella" in July 1989 and the talks in Madrid that led to the re-establishment of diplomatic relations in February 1990. Since the exchange of ambassadors there has been a rapid improvement in bilateral relations, but no attempt to work towards an agreed future for the Islands.

Within Britain two groups have put pressure on the government to shift the emphasis on policy. On one side the Falkland Islands Association has promoted the rights of the Islanders, been cautious about contacts with the Argentines and argued for a strong unilateral policy to regulate fishing in waters around the Falklands. On the other side the South Atlantic Council has promoted contacts with Argentina, supported long-term settlement of the dispute and put forward the case for a multilateral regime for fishing around the Falklands. In Argentina the main lobbying has come from the various groups representing those who were wounded or bereaved as a result of the war, and from several research institutes.² None of these have sought any change in Argentine government policy on the future of the Islands. However, there have been disputes between some relatives of the soldiers who died in 1982 and the government, with the relatives wanting the bodies returned for burial at home and the government objecting to a transfer from the Malvinas to the mainland. In addition business interests have been keen to promote the resumption of economic relations with Britain.

The debate about the future of the Islands has produced a variety of creative solutions.³

In both Britain and Argentina lease-back still has some adherents, notably among active and retired diplomats.⁴ In Argentina the emphasis has usually been upon recognition of the Malvinas as an Argentine province, with it being granted a special autonomous constitutional status, so that the Islanders could maintain control over their way of life.⁵ No problems arise over the Islanders maintaining their religion, their educational system, use of English and driving on the left-hand side of the road. Somewhat more controversial are the questions of whether they would retain a separate currency and local control over immigration from the mainland. In Britain the idea of an autonomous province has been explored by the South Atlantic Council, in a paper analysing similar provisions that have operated since 1921 in the Aland Islands.⁶ Some of the more internationally minded have advocated the territory coming under the UN Trusteeship System. One variant of this idea is that the Falklands could be designated a "strategic area" under the Security Council, in which the British government would have the right to veto any decisions, rather than under the Trusteeship Council, in which the British could be outvoted.⁷

The problem with the UN Trusteeship is that it is regarded in the UN Charter as a temporary system pending "progressive development towards self-government or independence."⁸ However, a new form of permanent UN administration could be established by the Security Council or the General Assembly under provisions for the "Pacific Settlement of Disputes."

Martin Dent, from the University of Keele, has been a persuasive advocate of Argentina and Britain sharing sovereignty over the Islands and leaving the day-to-day decision-making to a Governor and local Council.⁹ Edna Lemle, a New York business woman with a commitment to conflict resolution, has proposed a "pentocracy" for the Islands, consisting of five elements:

the two external disputants, the local community, business interests and the UN as the voice of the international community. This scheme is designed as a model for resolving many regional disputes.¹⁰ Occasionally there are hints from the Islands that independence might be a desirable option, though that would be meaningless unless it was either accepted by the Argentine government or guaranteed by a continued British military presence.¹¹

The debate at both the official level and among private groups has been, exclusively within Britain and predominately with Argentina, a debate within two small elites consisting of individuals who each have very personal reasons for the issue being salient to them. This paper will examine opinion poll data in Britain and Argentina to see how the general public in each country responds to the concerns of the two elites. First we will analyse public attitudes to the improvement of bilateral relations between Britain and Argentina. Secondly, it is important to know whether attitudes towards changes in the status quo are inflexible or whether a negotiated settlement to the Falklands/Malvinas dispute might be acceptable.

In their normal coverage of public attitudes in Britain to a wide range of issues, the Gallup Poll asked a limited number of questions on British-Argentine relations on three occasions in July 1984, October 1984 and February 1986. Meanwhile, in Argentina SOCMERC have held a regular series of polls and in March 1990 it was commissioned by the South Atlantic Council to ask the same questions of the Argentine electorate as Gallup was asking that month in Britain. Thus the March 1990 polls in each country give a basis for direct comparisons of attitudes in the two countries. A further poll in Argentina in August 1990 updated some of the March 1990 results.¹²

2. ATTITUDES TO IMPROVED ARGENTINE-BRITISH RELATIONS

If we consider, first of all, what were British attitudes to five specific steps that might be taken to normalize relations, we find there was overwhelming approval for better relations between Britain and Argentina and no suggestions that the breaks caused by the war should have continued. Those interviewed were asked whether they would have approved or disapproved "if the government decided to do the following: resume trade between Britain and Argentina; allow relatives of dead Argentinean soldiers to visit the graves in the Falklands; reach an agreement with the Argentineans on fishing in the seas around the Falklands"; or "resume diplomatic relations between Britain and Argentina."¹³

It is striking that on each occasion more than 60% of the British electorate said they "approve" or they "strongly approve" of each measure, while less than a quarter said they "disapprove" or "strongly disapprove". Although one might have thought it was the least sensitive step to take, the resumption of trade relations received the least approval and the most disapproval. Support for a fishing agreement fluctuated, with a dip in February 1986 and an increase in March 1990, for which there seem to be no obvious explanations. The establishment of diplomatic relations received somewhat higher levels of approval, though there was less approval when relations were re-established after eight years than in the earlier period shortly after the war. The variation in responses to these three steps is essentially little more than sampling fluctuations against a uniform pattern of high approval. When we come to the question of whether the public would approve if the government decided to allow visits to the war graves, the difference was dramatic: approval for the visits was absolutely overwhelming.

TABLE 1

Britain: Percentage approval of steps to improve relations with Argentina
(Figures in brackets give the percentage who said "strongly approve")

Steps	July 1984	October 1984	February 1986	March 1990
Resume trade	69 (19)	65 (10)	-	68 (14)
Allow direct air flights	-	-	-	69 (13)
Agreement on fishing	69 (18)	70 (10)	62 (11)	74 (19)
Diplomatic relations	76 (22)	74 (12)	70 (13)	70 (17)
Visits to war graves	94 (42)	92 (31)	87 (26)	90 (36)

The results do not show any significant variation between Conservative and Labour voters.¹⁴ This is contrary to what might have been expected from the idea of a 'Falklands factor' sustaining support for the Conservative Party. A long debate has raged in the academic journals between those who argue that the Conservative government's popularity increase in 1982 can be explained by the economy moving out of the 1981-82 recession and those who argue that there was in addition a substantial benefit to the Conservatives from public support for fighting and winning the Falklands war. What is common to all those in the debate is that unemployment made the government unpopular in 1980-81 and it continued to be important during and after the 1982 war. It also must be agreed that the Falklands factor emerged in May and June 1982 and declined thereafter. (Some of the early writers, using data just for 1982-83, gave the impression that the Falklands factor was "permanent", but that should now be interpreted as "a substantial effect continuing until the 1983 general election." Clearly, with the Conservative government having recorded in early 1990 the lowest level of support since polls began, it would be preposterous to suggest there had been a truly permanent effect.) An Essex University team argued that the government was only boosted by four percent in the polls and this effect

evaporated rapidly. Norpeth estimated the gain was 11% in June 1982 decaying to five or six percent by the end of 1985. Either way the Falklands factor was no longer significant in the late 1980's and thereafter.¹⁵ Nevertheless, to say that the Falklands factor ceased to explain support for the Conservative Party, when the war was supplanted by other issues, does not automatically mean that there will be no variation in attitudes by party on questions that invoke the Falklands dispute. Yet, in practice in the British Gallup surveys, memories of the war or loyalties to Mrs. Thatcher scarcely differentiated the attitudes of Conservative supporters from those of Labour supporters towards improving relations with Argentina.

TABLE 2

Party choice and support for improving relations, March 1990

% that "Agree strongly" or "Agree" with each point	UK Total	Cons	Lab	Argentine Total	PJ	Rad	DP+ UCD	Left
Ending trade restrictions	68	66	70	75	76	79	93	63
Direct air flights	69	67	69	78	73	85	93	74
Fishing agreement	74	73	75	71	74	73	71	63
Diplomatic relations	70	69	70	81	81	79	89	67
Visits to war graves	90	88	91	95	95	97	96	94

{Figures are given for the main parties; Conservative; Labour; Partido Justicialista (Peronist); Union Civica Radical (Radical); the Democrat Party and the Union of the Democratic Centre (right wing); and the Movement for Socialism, the Intransigents and other left parties. In both countries there were also minor parties and those who made no choice.}

Nor is there any variation in attitudes when the results are broken down by the sex or the age of the respondent. The first impression from the results might be that men were more in favor of improving relations than women were. However, women were markedly more inclined to answer "Don't Know". When the percentages are re-calculated excluding those who said

"Don't Know", the differences become minimal. There was some impact of class in the March 1990 survey, though less in the previous ones. "Strong agreement" with the measures was about 10% less in the lower D/E class category than in the higher A/B/C1 category. In the July 1984 survey, Gallup also asked the voters a battery of eighteen questions about Mrs. Thatcher's image. Again, if Mrs. Thatcher's personal standing had been enhanced permanently by her leadership during the Falklands war, attitudes to questions on Argentine-British relations might be expected to have related to whether she was accorded a positive or a negative image. None of the eighteen questions on Mrs. Thatcher's image correlated even minimally with any of the four questions on Argentine-British relations.¹⁶

Attitudes in Argentina in March 1990 were very similar to those in Britain; all the measures to improve relations received majority support, with trade, direct air flights, diplomatic relations and visits to the war graves each obtaining 7-11% more support in Argentina than in Britain. Only on the questions of reaching "an international agreement, including Britain, Argentina, Uruguay and the other fishing countries, to manage and conserve the fish in the South West Atlantic" did the level of Argentine support fall below the British level and then only marginally. The difference on this point may be explained by the lower saliency of the economic and environmental aspects of the conservation of fisheries in Argentina and the higher sensitivity to the sovereignty aspects of the fishing question. As in Britain there were no significant differences between the two main parties, the Justicialistas (commonly known as the Peronists) and the Radicals. (There was just one curious anomaly that a greater proportion of the Radicals wished to see direct air links). Nor were there differences in attitudes based on sex or age, except that, again, women were slightly more likely to reply "Don't Know". In contrast to Britain, the results for Argentina showed a definite effect of class upon responses. There was

a very big increase in the "Don't Know" reply in the lower class category, reaching 27% on trade, 35% on fishing and 38% on air flights. This inevitably reduced the proportion in the approval categories. Nevertheless at least half of the lower class approved of each of these measures. The drop in the level of approval compared to the other classes was still apparent in the lower class, albeit to a lesser extent, even after re-percentaging excluding the "Don't Know" category.

When we consider the minor Argentine parties, there are distinct differences in the responses. The right-wing parties, the Union of the Democratic Centre and the Democrat Party, which support free enterprise and a greater integration with the West, but also number some nationalists among their supporters, managed to produce even bigger proportions approving three of the measures. Their supporters showed 8%, 15%, and 18% more than the national average approving of resuming, respectively, diplomatic relations, air flights and full trade relations. On the other hand, supporters of the Movement for Socialism, the *Intransigents* and other small left-wing parties have been both strongly anti-business and highly nationalist. Their supporters showed a lower average proportion approving any of the measures, particularly being 8% down on a fishing agreement, 12% down on trade and 14% down on diplomatic relations. Nevertheless, considered on their own, the figures for the hard left in Argentina still show high approval for all the measures to improve relations between the two countries.

Thus, neither the British government nor the Argentine government has anything to fear from any sector of their electorates. All the variation in attitudes towards improvements in bilateral relations is simply between high levels and overwhelming levels of approval. The results are particularly striking when one considers the points that might have evoked a more emotional response. In both countries humanitarian concerns for the families that suffered

bereavements during the war override nationalist antagonisms that can be invoked over soldiers' graves. In Britain, media coverage of the visit to the Falklands by two members of the Gimenez family in October 1986 for the funeral of Lt. Miguel Gimenez displayed some of the tabloid press at their worst.¹⁷ A few Islanders then and since have expressed misgivings about Argentine people coming to the Islands, even for the purpose of visiting the war cemetery.¹⁸ Similarly in Argentina, the Gimenez family received only discouragement from the government over their desire to go to the funeral and the organizations for the relatives of the war-dead have been caught up in political divisions. Soon after the 1982 war a nationalist figure, Snr. Di Stefano, tried to exploit the question by taking a ship full of relatives to challenge the British exclusion of Argentine shipping from the Falkland's waters. Public opinion as measured in these polls show that such excesses made the politicians more cautious than they needed to be in forming policy on visits to the war-graves.¹⁹

It could be argued that the questions considered so far have not shown any relationship with party preferences in Britain, because they did not touch on 'political' contacts between the two countries. During 1985 real progress began to be made in the non-official relations between Britain and Argentina, particularly in the work of the South Atlantic Council, the World Council of Churches and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The public occasions of most note were the meetings between Mr. Neil Kinnock and President Alfonsin at the Socialist International conference in Paris in September 1985 and the meeting between Mr. David Steel and President Alfonsin at the Liberal International in Madrid in October 1985. The first visit by any Argentine politicians to London then came in February 1986, when four Congressmen - Senator Adolfo Gass, the Radical Party Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and Senator Julio Amoedo, with Deputy Federico Storani and Deputy Julio Bordon for the Lower House - were

guests of the South Atlantic Council and met members of the British Section of the IPU in the Palace of Westminster.²⁰ In the February 1986 Gallup survey, respondents were asked about their attitudes to these events.

When they were asked whether they thought the meetings of Kinnock and Steel with Alfonsin were a good or a bad idea, two-thirds of the sample responded positively. This time there were differences between supporters of the different parties: 70% of Labor supporters and 75% of those who said they were Alliance, Liberal or SDP thought the meetings were a "very good idea" or a "good idea", whereas only 49% of the Conservative supporters approved. The idea that the Argentinean Congressmen should meet British Members of Parliament gained higher approval, 76% on average. However, on this question there were only minimal differences between the parties. On neither question was there any difference by sex, but on both there were reductions in approval of the meetings among those aged 65 or more. On just the question of parliamentary contacts, there was a drop in approval of 17% from the A/B/C1 class group to the D/E group. For the party leaders meetings, no sex, age or class category dropped below 53% approval and for the parliamentary meetings no category dropped below 66% approval. Thus the largest effect was the difference between the parties on the first question. However, it is difficult to see the party differences on the first question as more than a response to the names of Kinnock and Steel being invoked, because the effect disappeared when such a closely related question as approval of parliamentary contacts is asked.

TABLE 3

British Reactions to political contacts, February 1986

	<i>Kinnock/Steel-Alfonso meetings</i>				<i>Congressmen's visit to London</i>			
	Total	Cons	Lab	Lib/SDP	Total	Cons	Lab	Lib/SDP
Very good idea	11	5	15	11	13	10	14	14
Good idea	54	44	55	64	63	66	60	66
Bad idea	17	26	13	15	11	11	13	10
Very bad idea	5	11	4	2	4	5	4	3
Don't Know	13	13	14	7	10	8	10	7

If the topic of political meetings is taken one step further with a question on attitudes to contacts at the governmental level, then in the February 1986 survey the proportion approving actually moved to a higher level. The fact that the same group of Conservatives (who gave less approval to the Kinnock/Steel meetings than Labour supporters) now showed a slightly higher than Labour approving of governmental contacts, sustains the argument that the previous party differences were not the result of fundamental attitudes to the Falklands dispute. A very similar question asked in March 1990 does show some party differences in the United Kingdom sample, but this is mainly the result of more Labor supporters being conciliatory four years later, rather than Conservatives reducing approval for governmental contacts. Curiously, there were some differences between the responses in the three categories used by Gallup in 1986, but these differences were not evident in 1990. As with all the comparisons made so far, the results in Argentina and Britain were remarkably similar to each other. (The class differences in Argentina

TABLE 4

Reactions to governmental meetings

Do you think a government minister should or should not be willing to meet the Argentinean Congressmen when they are in London?

(UK, February 1986)

	Occupational Class						
	Total	Cons	Lab	Lib/SDP	A/B/C1	C2	D/E
Should	78	78	75	84	84	76	72
Should not	12	13	15	10	10	11	16
Don't Know	10	9	10	6	5	13	12

Do you think that British government ministers should be willing to meet Argentine ministers face to face?

(UK, March 1990)

	Occupational Class						
	Total	Cons	Lab	Lib/Dem	A/B/C1	C2	D/E
Yes	84	75	89	87	84	83	84
No	7	14	5	2	7	8	7
Don't Know	9	11	6	11	9	9	8

Do you think that ministers from Argentina and Great Britain should be willing to talk directly to each other?

(Argentina, March 1990)

	Total	PJ	Rad	DP/ UCD	Left	Upper/ U Mid	Middle	Lower Middle	Lower
Yes	74	73	79	75	83	79	76	76	56
No	10	10	8	21	11	10	9	12	8
Don't Know	16	17	13	4	7	11	15	12	36

were again the effect of variation in the number saying "Don't Know" and the differences in the levels of approval for governmental contacts disappear after excluding the "Don't Know" group.)

The conclusive evidence that political relationships between the two countries are not a problem for public opinion in either country comes with a question that was deliberately biased by an emotional argument against having contacts. The results show that the suggestion that "it is disloyal and disrespectful to those who died in the war, if we have contacts" with politicians from the other country, is rejected by a substantial margin in each category among the electorates of the two countries. A slight party difference was found on this question in Britain in February 1986, but in the opposite direction to that expected: Conservative supporters were more likely to disagree with the charge of disloyalty. In Argentina the supporters of the main parties, but not the minor parties, are again remarkably close to those in Britain, with the right-wing being noticeably more conciliatory toward the British and the left being somewhat less conciliatory. In both countries there is a definite expression of class differences in the responses, with slight differences based on sex and age: the working class, women and older people being the less likely to reject the charge of disloyalty.

TABLE 5

Reactions to charges of disloyalty

Some people say that it is disloyal and disrespectful to those who died in the war, if we have contacts with Argentine politicians. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with this?

(UK results, February 1986)

	Occupational Class						
	Total	Cons	Lab	Lib/ SDP	A/B/C1	C2	D/E
Strongly agree	4	5	7	2	4	4	6
Agree	18	19	20	16	11	23	22
Disagree	54	59	48	61	64	53	43
Strongly Disagree	12	10	12	13	15	10	11
Don't Know	11	8	13	8	5	10	18

Some people say that it is disloyal and disrespectful to those who died in the war, if we have contacts with Argentine politicians. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with this?

(UK results, March 1990)

	Occupational Class						
	Total	Cons	Lab	Lib/ Dem	A/B/C1	C2	D/E
Strongly agree	5	11	4	2	5	7	5
Agree	17	15	17	16	12	17	22
Disagree	52	57	50	48	55	53	48
Strongly disagree	15	9	18	24	18	11	14
Don't Know	11	8	11	9	10	11	11

Some people say that it is disloyal and disrespectful to those who died in the war, if we have contacts with English politicians. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with this?

(Argentine results, March 1990)

	Total	PJ	Rad	DP+ UCD	Left	Upper/ U Mid	Middle	Lower Middle	Lower
Strongly agree	5	4	4	4	9	5	3	4	8
Agree	20	20	21	14	13	14	24	21	23
Disagree	56	51	62	71	63	64	50	54	47
Strongly Disagree	7	11	4	11	0	8	11	4	3
Don't Know	13	13	9	0	15	9	12	16	19

It is worth noting that the evidence from the opinion polls that there need be no worry about public opinion affecting direct Argentine-British bilateral relations is also substantiated by the range of bilateral contacts that began without any problems in the mid-1980's. Religious and academic contacts began smoothly in the early years and cultural and sporting exchanges soon followed (with the significant exception of polo). Even an Argentina-England soccer match in the 1986 World Cup in Mexico passed off without trouble between the rival fans, despite one goal being controversial. Trade and other commercial activities took longer both because of economic difficulties and because of official impediments, but much effort has been put out by business people as soon as diplomatic exchanges in 1989 led to official encouragement of trade. As early as June 1984 a South Atlantic Council delegation consisting of Cyril Townsend MP (Conservative), George Foulkes MP (Labour) and Lord Kennet (SDP) successfully made a wide range of contacts in Buenos Aires. The only hostility came from one individual throwing eggs at the MPs at the final press conference. When the Argentine Congressional delegation came to London in February 1986, members of the Council were very worried about the risk that virulent hostile comment might be stirred up in the popular press, but the worries proved to be groundless and the delegation was very well received.²¹ Since the initial visits, many politicians have made short trips in each direction without the events being considered at all newsworthy. The first direct governmental contact occurred cautiously at the UN in New York between Senor Caputo and Sir Crispin Tickell in December 1988, but with no controversy, and governmental contacts are now part of the normal flow of diplomacy. At no point was there significant public reaction in Britain or Argentina against these developments.²²

3. ATTITUDES TO THE SOVEREIGNTY DISPUTE

If there are no serious problems impeding direct Argentine-British bilateral relations, what is the situation with respect to the Falklands/Malvinas sovereignty dispute? The first question about the dispute asked in the surveys covered the possibility of lease-back being acceptable as a settlement. Respondents were told "Before the war Britain and Argentina discussed the idea of 'lease-back', that is Britain would give the Falklands to Argentina but the Islanders would remain under British control for the lifetime of the present Islanders." They were then asked "Do you think that this would have been a very good, good, bad or very bad idea?" In all four polls in Britain there was a majority against lease-back, with the majority becoming slightly higher in the March 1990 survey. While there is little difference by sex, age or class, we do now find a difference in attitude between the parties. In March 1990, nearly two-thirds of the Conservatives rejected lease-back compared to only half of the Labour supporters, (a 16% difference in the proportions saying it was a "bad" or "very bad" idea) and in the previous survey the party difference had been somewhat more pronounced (there being a 22% difference in February 1986). The results in Argentina in March 1990 were relatively similar to those in Britain, except that the right-wing did produce a majority favoring lease-back. The only marked difference in Argentina, by sex, age and class, was in the tendency for more women, older people and the lower class to say "Don't know."

In the 1984 and 1986 surveys in Britain other possibilities for a settlement of the sovereignty dispute were explored by asking "What do you think would be the best long-term future for the Falklands - to remain permanently British, to be handed over to the Argentineans with suitable guarantees, to be under lease-back, to be under joint control of the two countries, or to be under a United Nations administration?" The results show there was high continuity

TABLE 6
Response to the idea of lease-back for the Falklands

March 1990 simultaneous surveys

	UK July 1984	UK Oct. 1984	UK Feb. 1986	UK Total	Cons	Lab	ArgentT otal	PJ	Rad	DP+ UCD	Left
Very good idea	8	9	8	6	4	8	4	2	5	4	2
Good idea	30	29	26	23	19	28	28	29	25	54	33
Bad idea	33	27	32	36	35	35	47	41	49	36	48
Very bad idea	15	15	13	17	28	12	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know	14	19	21	19	14	17	21	28	21	7	17

TABLE 7
Options for the Future of the Falklands

February 1986

	July 1984	Oct. 1984	Total	Cons	Lab	Lib/SDP
Permanently British	37	37	38	51	32	34
Handed to Argentina	9	12	10	4	17	10
Lease-back	5	6	6	6	4	8
Joint control	15	13	13	9	16	11
UN administration	24	21	19	18	16	22
Don't know	10	11	14	11	14	14

between the three polls, with remaining permanently British being the preferred option and UN administration as the compromise receiving the most support. This could be interpreted as the British public desiring to maintain "Fortress Falklands" and rejecting change in the *status quo*, until one notes that less than 40% chose the "permanently British" option. The four options involving a change in the current situation and some possibility of a settlement with Argentina together were endorsed by half the electorate, (just over half in 1984 and just under half in 1986). It is not surprising that at this point we find the strongest differentiation in attitudes between Conservatives supporters and those from the other parties. Nevertheless, the Conservative supporters are *not* united in wishing to maintain sovereignty; 44% of the Conservatives in October 1984, 37% in February 1986 and 44% again in March 1990 were prepared to endorse giving up British rights to the Islands, by choosing one of the compromise options.

These surprising findings were explored in more detail in March 1990 survey, by asking separate questions about the possible compromise outcomes. The first question simply asked for a choice between four outcomes: the two official governmental positions, evading the conflict by giving the Falklands independence or a general unspecified compromise arrangement. The results in Britain were close to the three previous surveys, except that the new option of an independent Falklands gained substantial support. Only a third of the British electorate supported the official British government position of keeping the Islands permanently British. The same question produced results in Argentina that were rather more in the pattern one might have expected. Even so, a total of 28% of the Argentine population were prepared to choose an option other than the Malvinas coming under the Argentine flag. The nationalist traditions of the Justicialistas and the pro-British traditions of the right-wing show clearly in the party differences on this question. In both countries the largest group supported the official position, but the

British electorate were much less solidly behind the maintenance of British sovereignty than the Argentine electorate were behind their government's claim. Interestingly, in both countries a tenth of the people had no commitment at all the sovereignty dispute: 9% of the British were

TABLE 8

British and Argentine willingness to compromise, March 1990

What do you think would be the best long-term future for the Falklands - to remain permanently British, to be handed over to the Argentines, to be independent, or some compromise arrangement?

	UK Total	Cons	Lab	Argentine Total	PJ	Rad	DP+ UCD	Left
Permanently British	33	48	29	2	1	1	7	4
Handed to Argentina	9	5	13	66	75	64	54	63
Be independent	22	20	19	8	5	8	11	11
Some compromise	25	19	27	18	11	24	25	17
Don't know	11	8	11	6	7	4	4	4

willing to leave the Islands with Britain or to accept that they could be independent. Again sex, age and class make little difference in either country, with just one exception; that acceptance in Argentina of independence for the Islands drops from 16% in the youngest group to 3% and 6% in the two oldest groups.

The possibility of a compromise settlement looked much stronger when various possible options were put directly to the voters, but people in the two countries had very different ideas about which compromise they would make their first choice. The Argentines overwhelmingly preferred just to give guarantees to the Islanders, so that their way of life could be preserved. But with this reassurance the proportion of British voters willing to hand over the Falklands only went up from 9% to 13%, the increase being the same for both Conservative and Labor supporters. Neither side gave more than minimal support to lease-back, while the "perfectly-balanced" compromise of joint control gained the support of an eighth of the voters in both

Labour supporters were somewhat more likely to opt for joint control and Conservative supporters were somewhat more likely to choose a UN administration.

The next four questions constrained the respondents even further, by forcing them to say separately for each compromise option whether they would find it acceptable. Although the questions thus bias the respondents towards serious consideration of some of the possible compromises, they were free to reply that they did not find them acceptable. This is a realistic way to put the questions before the electorates. If the Argentine and British governments were to negotiate a settlement at some time in the future, the electorate would simply be faced with accepting or rejecting the agreed compromise, by voting in a general election or perhaps in a referendum in Argentina. On these questions the reactions to lease-back and to joint control again showed no significant differences between the voters in the two countries. Each of the two potential compromises was rejected by clear majorities in both countries. The party differences did appear, as before, but only in the case of the Argentine right-wing is the majority reversed to provide acceptance of joint control.

TABLE 10

British and Argentine acceptance of each compromise

Percentage acceptance of each option considered separately, March 1990

	UK Total	Cons	Lab	Argentine Total	PJ	Rad	DP+ UCD	Left
<i>Argentine province with guarantees</i>								
Acceptable	33	24	41	87	87	86	100	89
Unacceptable	47	60	41	5	7	4	0	7
Don't Know	20	16	18	8	6	10	0	4
<i>Lease-back</i>								
Acceptable	20	11	26	24	23	18	39	28
Unacceptable	56	69	51	62	66	66	61	61
Don't Know	24	20	23	14	11	16	0	11
<i>Joint control</i>								
Acceptable	30	22	39	34	30	29	54	28
Unacceptable	53	65	46	56	63	56	46	63
Don't Know	17	13	15	10	8	14	0	9
<i>United Nations administration</i>								
Acceptable	57	55	63	14	13	17	15	14
Unacceptable	25	28	22	69	74	72	69	83
Don't Know	18	17	16	17	13	11	15	3

British voters continued to show that a UN administration was their preferred compromise, particularly among Labour supporters. This time, when considered as a separate question, acceptance of a UN solution in Britain gains a two to one majority, both in the electorate as a whole and among Conservative supporters, almost reaching a three to one majority among Labour supporters. Now that Mrs. Thatcher has resigned any other British Prime Minister has a good chance of being able to "sell" a UN administration to the electorate as an acceptable compromise settlement of the sovereignty dispute. Unfortunately, it is not possible to make a proper comparison between the British and the Argentine publics' attitudes to the UN, because this question was not put in Argentina in the March 1990 survey due to an administrative error. The

results in the table, for just the UN question, are from the August 1990 survey. Nevertheless, it is clear that the idea of a UN administration received much less support in Argentina than it did in Britain. Also a UN administration compared unfavorably for the Argentine public, with an autonomous Argentine province or joint Argentine-British control.²³ While the results touching on the dispute over the Islands produced more party differences in Britain than did the earlier questions, they did not show the Conservative supporters staunchly maintaining British sovereignty over the Islands. Virtually half the Conservatives opted for a United Nations administration as their preferred compromise, while little more than a quarter of the Conservatives rejected it, when this option was put directly to them. Once again the results were scarcely compatible with a nationalistic pride generating a continuing 'Falklands factor'.

With this set of restricted questions on the options, it becomes very clear that the Argentine government would have no problem selling to its own people a settlement that made the Malvinas an Argentine province, with guarantees to the Islanders. On the British side this option was acceptable to a somewhat higher proportion of voters than was lease-back or joint control, but it still clearly failed to obtain majority acceptance. Equally, one may note that the Falklands being an Argentine province was acceptable to a third of the British electorate, including a quarter of the Conservative supporters. This result could not be described as demonstrating a widespread national commitment to the Islands. Even though we now find the biggest differences between the Conservative and the Labour supporters, this question would still not serve to provide clear differentiation between the parties. In March 1990 Labour support was at record levels and this meant the majority of those rejecting the Falklands being an Argentine province were Labour supporters. Any British government would have to work hard to sell such a settlement to the voters and it is difficult to imagine they could do so, unless many of the Falkland Islanders also came to support this solution, a situation that is not foreseeable in the current circumstances.

The overall conclusion on public attitudes to the compromise options is that there is much more willingness to compromise in both countries than is suggested by the narrow official positions on sovereignty. Neither lease-back nor joint control come out well in either country when compared to other options or when considered separately on their own merits. Although lease-back had been the option preferred by the diplomats before the 1982 war, joint control comes out with more support among the general public in the two countries. Nevertheless, it would still appear to have minority support that reduces its viability. The electorates in each country do offer majority support to one of the options, but not to the same one. More research needs to be done to see whether the option preferred by the Argentine electorate of the Falklands becoming a province, with guarantees for the Islanders to maintain their way of life, could become more attractive to the British electorate with a tighter specification of the guarantees. Similarly, we do not know whether the option preferred by the British electorate of setting up a UN administration could be made more attractive to the Argentine electorate by emphasizing the removal of the British government presence, even if an Argentine government presence were not established in its place. A further point is that we do not know whether a form of independent, self-governing status - as with the small islands of Kiribati, Tuvalu and Niue - might be attractive on all sides. Finally, of course, the one piece of research nobody has done is to discover what leeway for changed attitudes there might be among the Islanders themselves, not in the immediate future, but in the medium to long-term.

4. GOVERNMENT POLICY FOR HANDLING THE DISPUTE

Since the end of the 1982 war, each government has exercised caution in relations with the other, avoiding any bellicose statements or actions. On the other hand, misunderstandings and resentments did develop on each side because of the poor communications until 1989. At times, set-backs or even mini-crises have occurred over fishing, 'normal' military activities or

one side's failure to respond to the other's positive initiatives. The British and the Islanders are currently the ones who can feel the least dissatisfied with the *status quo*. It is therefore important to know what are attitudes in Argentina about how the *status quo* might be challenged.

SOCMERC has investigated this several times since 1982 by asking "What do you think Argentina should do concerning the Malvinas?" Initially in June 1984 the respondents were expected to choose between "pursue the conflict" ("proseguir el conflicto", which carries quite active connotations) and "negotiate." As the total of 83% in favor of negotiating was so very high, in subsequent surveys an intermediate option of "demand the return of the Islands" was included. Later the negotiate option was split into "negotiate without prior conditions" and "negotiate only if the subject of sovereignty is included." The results show stability, but with a trend across time: more people were coming to support negotiations and there was a steady decline in the relatively hard-line desire to demand the return of the Islands. (This may be partly due to an increasing realization, with the passage of time, that simply making demands will have no effect on the situation). Even the small group wanting to pursue the conflict actively seems to be dwindling away. The breakdown by party preference in the most recent poll does not show any major differences between the Justicialistas and the Radicals. However, this question produces the sharpest differentiation in the whole survey between the positions taken by the supporters of the minor parties, with a much more conciliatory set of responses from the right wing and the left taking the hardest stand on sovereignty.

TABLE 11

Argentine policy towards the dispute*What do you think Argentina should do concerning the Malvinas?*

	Dec 1984	June 1985	Aug 1985	Oct 1985	Apr 1986	March 1990
Negotiate	37	43	47	52	56	58
Demand the Islands' return	46	40	41	35	31	30
Pursue the conflict	5	6	5	4	4	1
Don't know, no reply	12	12	7	8	10	10

March 1990 sample

	Total	PJ	Rad	DP+ UCD	Left	Upper/U Mid	Middle	Lower Middle	Lower
Negotiate without Conditions	19	14	23	46	4	24	18	16	1
Negotiate about sovereignty	39	35	39	43	50	44	42	38	22
Demand the Island's return	30	37	32	11	43	25	28	34	42
Pursue the conflict	1	1	1	0	0	1	3	2	1
Don't know, no reply	10	11	5	0	2	6	9	10	25

The interviewing in March 1990 was carried out only a short while after Britain and Argentina had concluded a successful round of negotiations on bilateral relations, without the Argentine government imposing any preconditions on the talks. It is interesting that this did not influence the poll's results and lead to a general increase in support for negotiations on the Malvinas. Furthermore, the 1990 Madrid negotiations, with sovereignty being "under an umbrella", has been seen as very much the personal product of President Menem, yet the

Justicialistas gave less support to negotiations on the Malvinas than did the Radicals. While the policy positions chosen did not vary by sex or age, the table shows that there were substantial variations by class. Both the negotiation positions received only half as much support among the lower class as among the upper class and support for negotiation gave way to the desire to demand the return of the Islands. As party choice is related to class in Argentina, the party differences on Malvinas policy may well be explained by these class-based differences in attitudes rather than being a product of party loyalties.

The equivalent question asked by Gallup in Britain covering the government's tactics was "What do you think that Britain should do now about the Falkland Islands?" The options given were one hard-line position of "nothing except maintain the base" and three alternative approaches to negotiations. The hard-line position receives a comparable level of support to the equivalent position in Argentina and does not vary between the two main parties. However, party differences do appear on the question of whether sovereignty can be discussed. Just under two-thirds of both Conservative and Labour supporters opted for some form of talks with the Argentines, but twice as many Conservatives as Labour supporters wanted the qualification that sovereignty must be excluded. Nearly a third of the Conservatives were willing to go against the British government's position, by including sovereignty, but nearly a half of the Labour supporters were willing to do so.

countries. The totals were made up by the British giving the highest support to the idea of the United Nations administration, but this obtained minimal endorsement from Argentines.

TABLE 9

British and Argentine preferred compromise, March 1990

Various compromise arrangements have been suggested. Which of the following do you find the most acceptable?

	UK Total	Cons	Lab	Argentine Total	PJ	Rad	DP+ UCD	Left
An Argentine province with guarantees of a separate way of life for the Islanders	13	8	16	75	79	75	68	78
Lease-back	6	4	7	1	0	1	0	0
Joint control of the two countries	13	8	16	11	9	13	14	13
A United Nations administration	42	48	42	3	2	1	14	4
None, Don't know	26	32	20	10	9	11	4	4

Unfortunately, the question did not translate to have an equivalent weight in the two political cultures, because giving the Falklanders guaranteed rights within an Argentine province is much easier for Argentines to accept than any of the other compromises. It would have been better had this option at least referred to autonomous status within Argentina, guaranteed by a United States or United Nations military presence. Nevertheless, even when offered a 'perfect compromise', fewer Argentines made their first choice the Falklands being a province of Argentina than had supported direct air flights to Britain, re-establishment of diplomatic relations or visits to the war graves earlier in the same survey. The figures did not leave much room for party differences to emerge. The March 1990 figures appear to show the right-wing giving higher support than the other groups to UN administration, but this finding was not repeated in the August 1990 survey. The party differences in Britain did appear, but not in a major way:

TABLE 12

British policy towards the dispute, March 1990*What do you think Britain should do now about the Falkland Islands?*

	Occupational Class							
	UK Total	Cons	Lab	Men	Women	A/B/C1	C2	D/E
Nothing, except maintain the base	24	28	26	22	27	18	27	29
Talk with Argentina on all subject except sovereignty	24	33	15	30	18	28	24	18
Have talks allowing the Argentines to state their case on sovereignty	20	16	23	18	21	21	20	18
Negotiate with Argentina about sovereignty	20	13	25	23	17	23	18	18
Don't know	12	11	12	7	17	10	10	16

On average the British population is almost equally divided into four groups, one taking a harder line than the government, one endorsing the government's position and two being more conciliatory than the government. A slight gender difference shows women tending to be a little more hard-line than men. Yet another result for Britain is similar to that in Argentina: there was an effect of class upon attitudes, though not as marked as in Argentina. The A/B/C1 groups of professional, managerial and skilled working class people were less willing to do nothing and more willing to negotiate, the main difference being in the proportion wanting to talk excluding sovereignty, with only a small increase in those from this upper and middle class group being conciliatory enough to include sovereignty.

5. ATTITUDES TO THE ISLANDERS

In Argentina, in April 1986, SOCMERC asked their sample a question about attitudes to the people on the Islands, the 'Kelpers' as they are called colloquially. This question was then repeated in the March 1990 survey in both countries. In 1986 as many as a quarter of the

TABLE 13
The right of the Falkland Islanders
What do you think about the Islanders?

	March 1990 UK Total	Cons	Lab	March 1990 Argentine Total	PJ	Rad	DP+ UCD	Left	April 1986 Argentine Total
They have the right to decide about the future of the Islands	63	70	60	24	26	21	21	22	15
Their interests should be taken into account, but they shouldn't be the ones to decide	26	21	27	37	32	39	43	46	27
They are a secondary factor and they must adapt to whatever is agreed for them by Britain and Argentina	4	2	6	29	30	34	32	24	34
Other answer given	1	2	1	2	0	2	4	9	-
Don't know	6	5	6	8	11	5	0	0	25

Argentineans were unable to give an opinion about the Islanders and less than half were willing to concede any right of the Islanders to affect the situation. By 1990 attitudes had changed substantially in Argentina in two ways: the "Don't know" response had dropped down to the more usual level for most attitude questions (below 10%) and recognition of the Islanders' rights had risen to 61%.

Two options offered to the respondents recognize the Islander's rights. The strongest version "they have the right to decide about the future of the Islands" corresponds quite closely to Mrs. Thatcher's view that their wishes must be "paramount." The weaker version that "their

interests should be taken into account, but they shouldn't be the ones to decide" corresponds to the position in Britain of the Labour Party, the Liberal Democrats and many Conservative back bench MPs. It is also the position adopted by most of the political elite in Argentina. Thus it is somewhat surprising that a sizeable proportion of the Argentine electorate - a quarter - chose the stronger version of the Islanders' rights. These responses did vary a little by party and somewhat more by class, with the lower class being less willing to recognize the Islander's rights. Support for the stronger version of the Islanders' rights was relatively constant and the variation was mainly in the level of support for the weaker version of their rights.

The lack of a more marked variation by party is contrary to expectations in the case of the right-wing parties. While on the previous question the right wing did show themselves to be much more sympathetic to the British desire to negotiate without conditions, their British links and pro-British attitudes did not translate into greater awareness of the Islanders and their importance in British politics. On the other hand, the left, who took a much harder line about negotiations, had more sympathy for the Islanders than any of the other parties. As the main targets of the military repression in the 1970's, the hard left has mainly been distinguished since then by their punitive stance towards those who violated human rights. Thus, the fact that this particular question was evoking reactions both to the Falklands dispute and to human rights explains the responses from the minor parties not fitting into their usual patterns.

So far we have found similarity between Argentine and British responses on many questions. The two electorates were very close in supporting improvements in bilateral relations; they clearly differed on a crude summary question about the future of the Islands, but they were closer in their acceptance of various possible compromise solutions; and both sides were conciliatory in wanting some form of negotiation process. When we consider the British response to the question on the rights of the Islanders, we find for the first time in these surveys that a clear majority of the British public took a position contrary to that of both the Argentine

government and the Argentine public. Support for the rights of the Islanders does not drop below 85% for any category of party preference, sex, age or class and it is the stronger version rather than the weaker version of their rights that is chosen by at least a two-to-one margin in all categories. Much of the political elite in Britain would refuse to make the wishes of the Islanders paramount, but 63% of the electorate endorsed this position. There is some party variation around this average figure, with 70% of the Conservatives and 60% of the Labour supporters going for the stronger version of the Islanders' rights, but this hardly constitutes a significant division between the parties. The result is all the more striking in comparison to the relative lack of sensitivity about sovereignty in the previous questions. For the electorate, the British commitment is to the people of the Falklands and not to sovereignty over the territory. While only a third wanted the Islands to be permanently British and a majority were willing to hand over to the United Nations, nearly two-thirds thought the Islanders "have the right to decide about the future of the Islanders."

6. THE SALIENCE OF THE DISPUTE

Finally, we can find hidden in some general questions the beginnings of an explanation of why the survey results do not demonstrate a 'Falklands factor' in either country. Early in each of the March 1990 sets of interviews, the respondents were asked "What would you say is the most urgent problem facing the country at the present time?". In Britain the mention of the Falklands was zero and in Argentine it was one percent. When the respondents were prompted to name a second problem facing the country and a count was made of the two answers combined, the Falklands still remained at zero level in Britain and only went up to two percent in Argentina. In both countries domestic economic problems were the prime concern, with inflation followed by unemployment dominating the answers in Argentina and with housing, including the poll tax and mortgages, followed by inflation receiving the most mentions in

Britain. One interesting difference is the environment being given as one of their two answers by 12% in Britain, but zero percent in Argentina.

The respondents were next asked "What are the most important international problems facing Britain/Argentina now?" Again the Falklands received zero rating among the first responses in Britain, but sufficient "Falklands" answers did appear after the prompting to reach one percent, when the two responses were combined. In Argentina, the Malvinas was now mentioned by 22% as their first response and a total of 41% in the two answers combined, but it clearly received less mentions than the problem of Argentina's foreign debt. Supporters of the main parties differ little, but supporters of the minor parties are somewhat less likely to mention the Malvinas. The right wing stand out as making relations with the 'First World' as their priority, while the left gave somewhat more attention to Latin American integration. In Britain a diverse range of international problems was of concern. The environment was top of the list with 10% among the first answers and 9% among the second. The Common Market, Hong Kong, South Africa, Eastern Europe, world peace went over one percent in Argentina.

Table 14

International problems facing Argentina, March 1990

	<u>First replies given</u>					<u>First and second replies combined</u>				
	Total	PJ	Rad	DP+ UCD	Left	Total	PJ	Rad	DP+ UCD	Left
Foreign debt	42	42	44	29	41	64	63	64	72	61
Malvinas	22	21	22	18	24	41	43	41	25	35
Latin American integration	10	10	12	11	22	25	20	29	25	39
Relations with the 'First World'	8	5	8	39	2	15	9	21	60	19
World Peace	5	3	4	0	7	15	12	15	7	14
Don't know, no reply	7	13	3	0	2	19	33	10	0	9
Other	6	4	7	4	2	21	16	21	11	23

In Britain the situation was unambiguous: the Falklands was of almost no salience at all in comparison to other contemporary domestic and international problems. In Argentina, the official position is that the Malvinas are an occupied section of Argentine territory, yet it clearly does not have this resonance for the Argentine public, because the Malvinas was mentioned as an *international* problem rather than a *domestic* problem ("problema internacional" rather than "problema en nuestro pais"). The significance of the Malvinas as an international problem is not high given that it came second to the foreign-debt problem and that it was not mentioned at all by 59% of the electorate. In addition, now that the Beagle Channel dispute has been resolved, Argentina does not face any other problems in its foreign relations, so there was nothing to compete with the Malvinas for the attention of the public. In Argentina, too, the Falklands/Malvinas dispute has no relevance to the ordinary person's daily life and can be of little salience, unless someone fought in the 1982 war or had a relative or friend killed in that war. The dispute may be able to generate some emotion in an abstract debate, but its low salience to the average member of the British public or the Argentine public means it is unlikely to affect voting patterns.

7. CONCLUSION

Both governments can feel pleased that the agreements reached in Madrid in February 1990 are warmly welcomed by the people of the two countries. Major differences remain about the long-term future of the Falkland Islands, but both sides are willing to consider some form of compromise settlement. Debate is needed in Argentina on how far they are willing to go in making guarantees to the Islanders that their way of life could be maintained. If the Argentine government could convince the Islanders that guarantees of the Islander rights were permanent and reliable (and for the time being that is a very big "if"), then a long-term agreement would clearly be possible and acceptable to the voters of both Britain and Argentina.

Footnotes and References

1. *For a more detailed historical background, see Peter Beck, The Falkland Islands as an International Problem, (London: Routledge, 1988).*
2. *The main groups in Buenos Aires that have worked on Argentine-British relations and the Falklands question in co-operation with British groups are Centro de Estudios del Atlantico Sur (CEAS), Consejo Argentino para las Relaciones Internacionales (CARI), Centro de Investigaciones Europeo-Latinoamericanas (EURAL) and Fundacion Universitaria del Rio de la Plata (FURP).*
3. *The main discussions of the various options for the future of the Falklands are in: House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, Falkland Islands, Vol. I, Report and Minutes of Proceedings, (London: HMSO, HC(1983-84) 268-I, 25 October 1984, pp.xlii-xliv); Minutes of Evidence, (London: HMSO, HC(1982-83) 31-i to 31-xiv, November 1982 to February 1983); and Minutes of Proceedings, (London: HMSO, HC(1982-83) 380, 11 May 1983, pp. xlv-lv.) W. Little and C. R. Mitchell, In the Aftermath: Anglo-Argentine Relations since the War for the Falklands/Malvinas Islands, (Maryland: Center for International Development and Conflict Management, University of Maryland, 1989); B. George, MP and W. Little, Options in the Falklands-Malvinas Dispute, (London: South Atlantic Council, Occasional Paper No. 1, April 1985, out of print, reprinted in Little and Mitchell); P Beck, *op cit*, Chapter 6.*
4. *Information from the authors' conversations with various diplomats and former diplomats.*
5. *J. R. Vanossi, Provincialisation with a Pact of Incorporation, reprinted in Little and Mitchell.*
6. *D. Bullock and C. R. Mitchell, The Aland Islands Solution, (London: South Atlantic Council, Occasional Paper No. 3, March 1987).*
7. *Rt. Hon. David Owen MP put the case for the Falklands to become a strategic UN Trust Territory under the Security Council in a debate on "The Falkland Islands (Foreign Affairs Committee Report)" on 14 March 1985. See Hansard Official Report, Sixth Series, Commons Vol. 75 1984-85, c508-9.*
8. *Charter of the United Nations, Article 76(b).*
9. *M. Dent, Shared Sovereignty: A Solution for the Falklands/Malvinas Dispute, (London: South Atlantic Council, Occasional Paper No. 5, March 1989).*
10. *The scheme has been outlined in a paper circulated privately by Mrs. Edna Lemle.*
11. *Within the Island community there is deep suspicion of the Foreign Office and some hostility towards the expatriate civil servants; comments by Councilors to the UN Special Committee on Colonialism have sometimes suggested that they sought greater autonomy*

from Britain; but the Marplan poll released by the UK Falkland Islands Committee on 26 March 1986 showed 94.5% of the Islanders wanted to remain British, with only 1.6% opting for independence.

12. *Social Surveys (Gallup Poll) Ltd. carries out weekly 'omnibus' surveys with a mix of standard questions, on voting intentions and other major political variables, plus questions on current issues such as the Falklands dispute, plus market research topics. The respondents come from national quota samples controlled for sex, class and region. Usually there are approximately a thousand respondents. Despatch of the main survey in March 1990 was slightly affected by a local postal strike, with the result that the sample was only of 856 voters, interviewed from 28 February to 5 March 1990. In Argentina 800 adults were interviewed by SOCMERC (Mora y Araujo, Noguera and Associates) in the main survey from 1-13 March 1990, from a random national sample controlled for sex and region.*
13. *The answers given to these questions in each survey were not strictly comparable, partly because the passage of time put them each in a different general political context and partly because the questionnaires were slightly different from each other. In particular the results for 1984 and 1986 cover steps that had yet to be agreed between the two governments, whereas the results for 1990 cover steps that had by then been agreed at the February 1990 Madrid talks.*

In the two 1984 surveys the questions on bilateral relations were introduced as follows:

"Now that two years have passed since the Falklands War, some people are talking about improving relations with the Argentineans. Would you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove if the government decided to do any of the following ...".

Then the questions on trade, war graves visits, fishing and diplomatic relations were put as given in the main text. In February 1986, the introduction was amended to read "Now that more than three years have passed ..." and the same wording was then re-used, except that the question on trade was not put. (The British government had in July 1985 lifted its restrictions on trade with Argentina).

In March 1990 four of the measures had already been agreed at the previous month's Madrid talks, so the wording was amended to reflect this. The wording on fishing was amended more substantially to focus on the possibility of a multilateral regime. The complete wording then was as follows:

"There have now been two rounds of talks in Madrid between the British and the Argentine governments, aimed at improving relations between the two countries. Do you agree strongly, agree, disagree or disagree strongly with; the resumption of diplomatic relations between Britain and Argentina; the establishment of direct air flights to Argentina; the lifting of restrictions on trade with Argentina; allowing relatives of dead Argentinean soldiers to visit the graves in the Falklands?"

The question on fishing was put separately:

"Would you agree strongly, agree, disagree, or disagree strongly if the government agreed to sign an international agreement, including Britain, Argentina, Uruguay and the other fishing countries, to manage and conserve the fish in the South West Atlantic?"

14. In the March 1990 poll the Liberal Democrats seemed to have been slightly more in favor of improving relations, but, given the small size of this group, this was within the range of sampling error. The difference was very slightly in the opposite direction for the Liberals in the earlier polls.

15. The debate about the effect of the Falklands war upon public opinion has produced an extensive academic literature. See particularly:

I. Crewe, 'How to Win a Landslide Without Really Trying: Why the Conservatives Won in 1983', pp. 155-96 of A Ranney (Ed), Britain at the Polls (New York: Duke University Press, 1985).

P. Dunleavy and C T Husbands, British Democracy at the Crossroads: Voting and Party Competition in the 1980's, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1985).

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D. Sanders, H. Ward, and D. Marsh, with T. Fletcher, 'Government Popularity and The Falklands War: A Reassessment', British Journal of political Science, 1987, Vol.17, pp.281-313.

H. Norpoth, 'The Falklands War and Government Popularity in Britain: Rally Without Consequence or Surge Without Decline?', Electoral Studies, Vol.6 1987, pp.3-16.

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16. The eighteen questions on Mrs Thatcher's image in Gallup's July 1984 survey, when correlated with the four questions on Argentine-British relations, gave 72 correlation statistics that might indicate some evidence of a 'Falkland factor'. The highest correlation turned out to be 0.13 and the 71 others were less than 0.1, so no relationships existed between these variables.

17. The Daily Mail report of 4 October 1986 suggested British soldiers objected to the sympathetic treatment given to Snr. Isaias Gimenez and his daughter Maria, mocked the

Foreign Office official who met them and said some Islanders were "shocked."

18. *The Daily Telegraph of 4 October 1986 said "Mr Robin Pitaluga a former member of the legislative (sic) attacked the presence of Argentine relatives at the funeral" of Lt. Gimenez. The Times of 31 March 1990 quoted Tricia Card saying of Argentines in general "We don't want anything to do with them. We don't even want them to come and visit the cemetery,...although I suppose that's all right as long as they don't stay".*
19. *A short while after the war the British government officially accepted that visits by Argentine relatives to the war graves on the Islands could be organized by the Red Cross (Prime Minister's answer to a Written Question, 31 March 1983 and several subsequent statements). However, during the 1980's it did not actively attempt to ensure that the visits did take place. The Argentine government did not publicly endorse the possibility of the bereaved travelling to the Falkland Islands, until the communique from the Madrid talks in February 1990. Even then the arrangements for the visits were felt to be sufficiently sensitive that the first major visit did not actually occur until more than a year later, in March 1991, with the two governments minimizing the media coverage.*
20. *All four members of the Congressional delegation were important leaders. Senator Amoedo was from a small party allied to the Justicialistas and Chairman of the Senate Committee on International Parliamentary Affairs; Deputy Storani of the Radical Party was Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Deputies; and Deputy Bordon was a leading Justicialistas, who subsequently became Governor of Mendoza.*
21. *Only one problem arose with the February 1986 Congressional visit to London. The British government did invite the delegation to meet Timothy Eggar MP, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, who was responsible for policy on the Americas and the UN. The delegation felt too worried about possible repercussions at home to be able to accept the invitation and, not surprisingly they faced some sharp press questions on this point.*
22. *The one exception to the public acceptance of Argentine-British contacts, negative press comment of Isaias and Maria Gimenez's visit to the Falklands, has already been mentioned in note 18 above. The situation is quite different in the Falkland Islands themselves and there has been particular unease about Argentine-British relations since mid-1989.*
23. *The poll in Argentina in August 1990 was less detailed than the one in March 1990. The effect of this was that some comparability was lost even where identical questions were asked in the two surveys. The four questions in the acceptability of various compromise options were set in a different context in August (1) by omitting the questions on bilateral relations that in March had received a high favorable response, (2) by adding a question on the Beagle Channel that sharply divides the Argentine electorate, (3) by omitting the separate, introductory question on lease-back that educated the respondents about the concept, and (4) by asking the preferred option after, rather than before, considering them individually. These four changes all bias the August 1990 results towards a lower Argentine level of acceptance of controversial compromise options that was shown in the March 1990 survey. There is a swing of 12% from March 1990 to August 1990 halving the level of acceptance of lease-back, but such a swing could easily be the product of the four factors changing the context of the question. In August 1990 a UN administration*

was accepted by marginally more Argentine voters than was lease-back. It is a reasonable assumption that this would also have occurred if the question had been asked in March 1990. On this basis the figures for Argentina in Table 10 might well have been 26-30% acceptance and 54-58% rejection of a UN administration. This would still have made it much less acceptable than an autonomous Argentine province, but near to the level of minority acceptance of joint British- Argentine control.