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Examination session (May or November)	MA	Year	

Diploma Programme subject in which this extended essay is registered: HISTORY
(For an extended essay in the area of languages, state the language and whether it is group 1 or group 2.)

Title of the extended essay: How credible is the former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher's statement that, "We cannot allow the democratic rights of the islanders to be denied by the territorial ambitions of Argentina as the principal explanation for her decision to militarily dislodge Argentina from her occupation of the Falklands Islands on April 2nd 1982?"

Candidate's declaration

This declaration must be signed by the candidate; otherwise a grade may not be issued.

The extended essay I am submitting is my own work (apart from guidance allowed by the International Baccalaureate).

I have acknowledged each use of the words, graphics or ideas of another person, whether written, oral or visual.

I am aware that the word limit for all extended essays is 4000 words and that examiners are not required to read beyond this limit.

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Please comment, as appropriate, on the candidate's performance, the context in which the candidate undertook the research for the extended essay, any difficulties encountered and how these were overcome (see page 133 of the extended essay guide). The concluding interview (viva voce) may provide useful information. These comments can help the examiner award a level for criterion E (engagement). Do not comment on any adverse personal circumstances that may have affected the candidate. If the amount of time spent with the candidate was zero, you must explain this, in particular how it was then possible to authenticate the essay as the candidate's own work. You may attach an additional sheet if there is insufficient space here.

The candidate did a first-class job in acquiring and interpreting his sources

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I have read the final version of the extended essay that will be submitted to the examiner.

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I spent 4 hours with the candidate discussing the progress of the extended essay.

Supervisor's signature:

Research Question: “We cannot allow the democratic rights of the islanders to be denied by the territorial ambitions of Argentina” (Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher) To what extent was this the main reason for Britain’s military response to the Argentine occupation of the Falklands/Malvinas in 1982?



Margaret Thatcher standing over the graves of British soldiers following the Falklands War.

Candidate Number:
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Session: May

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Introduction

The historical context against which the former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's justification for engaging Argentina's armed forces in 1982 after it had forcibly seized control of the British Overseas Territory of the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic Ocean, is as follows.

On April 2nd 1982 at 4.30am, 150 Argentine *Buzo Tactico* marine commandos landed at Mullet Creek in East Falkland. By 8.30am, Falkland Islands' Governor, Rex Hunt, was forced to surrender to fully armoured Argentine troop carriers in the islands' capital, Port Stanley.² Despite the fact that there were no British casualties, London experienced great embarrassment as her Overseas Territory had been stolen with such ease, displaying her lack of preparedness in the face of a dire situation.

General Leopoldo Galtieri, who took office in Argentina in December 1981, had as a primary aim: the reassertion of Argentina's regional supremacy which could involve conflict with Britain over the Falkland Islands. According to Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, an Argentinian reassertion of power over the Falkland Islands would serve as a "vindication of military rule and cleanse the reputation of the armed forces after the horrors of the 'Dirty War.'"^{3 4} Moreover, a Falklands invasion would hoist the Junta to a level of supreme authority in Argentina, which might lead to a rise in popular nationalism.

Prior to the invasion, however, growing tension in Britain caused the dispatch of three nuclear submarines within a short time space. The *HMS Spartan*⁵ was sent on March 29th, with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary *Fort Austin* providing support. Four days later *HMS Splendid* was sent. Thatcher's intentions based on these actions were to demonstrate her level of seriousness towards the matter.⁶ Lastly, *HMS Conqueror* was sent on April 4th. These actions

² Hastings, M, and Jenkins, S. *The Battle for the Falklands*. New York: Norton, 1983. 93. Print.

³ A state of war in Argentina when military and security forces conducted urban and guerrilla warfare against left wing groups.

⁴ Hastings, M, and Jenkins S. *The Battle for the Falklands*. New York: Norton, 1983. 59. Print.

⁵ *Ibid.* 77-78.

⁶ Thatcher, Margaret. *The Autobiography*. London: HarperCollinsPublishers, 1993. 343. Print.

illustrate the growing tensions between Argentina and Britain shortly before and after the Falklands invasion in early April 1982.

Caught in a whirlwind of demands to respond to the invasion immediately, Thatcher issued a swift response. A speech made to the House of Commons on April 3rd stated that the invasion had "not a shred of justification and not a scrap of legality."⁷ She proceeded to declare that, "It is the Government's objective to see that the islands are freed from occupation and are returned to British administration at the earliest possible moment."⁸ Shortly after this and a declaration from British Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington and the Secretary of State for Defence, John Nott, that Anglo-Argentine relations had been broken, a task force was dispatched to the islands. It was at this point that the battle for the Falkland Islands commenced.

This topic is significant because it explores the motives of Margaret Thatcher's decision to engage in warfare with Argentina over the Falklands. Although it is argued that her primary motive was to guarantee the "democratic rights of the islanders,"⁹ various other motives are also said to have prompted her into battle. These motives range from desires to win over the British public after widespread protests following economic hardship to redeeming herself for failing to foresee the invasion.

"The methods used in this investigation include a study of archived documents concerning the Falklands issue written by members of the UK Conservative Party in the late 70s and 80s, Thatcher's autobiography, poll rating websites and the Frank's Enquiry.

Secondary sources consulted consist of Young's biography of Thatcher, an account of the Falklands War by Max Hastings and several other significant sources.

The research question will be: "We cannot allow the democratic rights of the islanders to be denied by the territorial ambitions of Argentina" (Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher) To what extent was this the main reason for Britain's military response to the Argentine occupation of the Falklands/Malvinas in 1982."

The research question is clearly stated and the methodology outlined. Appropriate for this subject and sufficiently narrow to be investigated.

⁷ "HC S: [Falkland Islands]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation* *. N.p.,n.d. Web. 5 Mar. 2013.
<<http://margaretthatcher.org/document/104910>>.

⁸ *Ibid*

⁹ Thatcher, M. "Response to Argentine Invasion to House of Commons on April 3 1982." Speech.

1. The democratic rights of the islanders

When the Argentine flag was planted into Falkland soil, Thatcher's cries of a democratic violation were widely heard. As represented in her speech to the House of Commons on April 3rd, this appeared to be her primary motive for sending a task force to the Falklands shortly after. Her firm declaration that, "They (the islanders) do not want to be Argentine,"¹⁰ presented a clear message: Thatcher's intentions were to enable the islanders to remain on British territory.

Thatcher believed that the Argentinean invasion was a violation of international law. She states in her autobiography that self-determination is a fundamental component of international law and is moreover enshrined in the UN Charter.¹¹ Thatcher referred to the law and used it as evidence of the islanders' rights to self-determination. Moreover, the former British Prime Minister states in her autobiography that, "Their wishes must be paramount (the islanders)."¹² As was known, the wishes of the islanders were fundamentally not to be Argentine.

Evaluation is included here - rather concise but indicates some awareness of the limitation of the source.

Although the evidence provided suggests Thatcher's primary intention was to guarantee safety and justice to the Falkland islanders, one must evaluate the source used. Margaret Thatcher's autobiography exuded stern confidence and nationalistic notions. However, it would be unthinkable that she would have publicly admitted to ulterior motives. Thus this publication must be viewed with circumspection.

The British Prime Minister stated in her speech made to the House of Commons on April 3rd 1982 that her motive for going to war with Argentina over the islands was to defend and protect the islanders. This message is useful as it was meant for the House of Commons and British public. Nevertheless, at the time the speech was made Thatcher was fighting battles of dominance within her party. As a result of this, declaring that her motive for going to war

¹⁰ "HC S: [Falkland Islands]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation* *. N.p., n.d. Web. 9 Mar. 2013. <<http://margaretthatcher.org/document/104910>>.

¹¹ Thatcher, M. *The Autobiography*. London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993. 340. Print.

¹² *Ibid*

was anything other than for the sake of the islanders (a nationalistic and colonialist view shared by many other Conservative party members), would cause doubt amongst both the party and the British public.

Evaluation continues - this time, of the speech.

In a background briefing on the Falklands dispute titled, "Ure minute for Nick Ridley,"¹³ J B Ure¹⁴ explored various future possibilities regarding the Falklands Dispute on May 10th 1979.¹⁵ It stated he was exploring, "re-settling the Islanders elsewhere and negotiating whatever safeguards we could for those remaining under Argentine administration." This shows members of her government were considering extreme measures in order to ensure that the islanders remained British. Furthermore, it then states¹⁶ that the Government was considering "to go through the motions of negotiations with Argentina but to avoid any commitment to political changes which would upset the islanders or their supporters." This once again demonstrates that members in Thatcher's party were taking the islanders' feelings into serious consideration.

Analysis included here - refers to concerns over islanders.

One may view the "Ure minute for Nick Ridley" as largely objective. It is a contemporary source written in 1979 by members of Thatcher's government and important political advisors. During this period the document was not intended for the public eye and therefore was not compromised by fear of public opinion. Moreover, they would all have been read by the Prime Minister, and therefore are written with a high degree of precision, consideration and frankness.

Further evaluation - it could be inserted a little more discreetly but, nevertheless, it is present and reflects critical thinking.

There is, however, evidence to suggest the islanders' wishes were made paramount owing to fears of public and political repercussions. According to notes taken at a meeting held on June 30th 1981¹⁷, Nicholas Ridley stated that, "HMG (Her Majesty's Government) would face

¹³ Nick Ridley was one of Thatcher's Ministers of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and was likewise the Secretary of State for Transport and the Environment.

¹⁴ J B Ure was the Superintending Assistant Under-Secretary of State for the South America Department.

¹⁵ Ure, J. B. "Falklands: Ure Minute for Nick Ridley ("Falkland Islands") [background Briefing on Falklands Dispute] [declassified 2012]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation* *.N.p., 2012. Web. 15 July 2013. <<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/121824>>. Appendix Source 1.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* Appendix Source 2.

¹⁷ "Falklands: Fearn Minute to Ure ("Falkland Islands: Strategy Meeting") [draft Record of Meeting of FCO Officials, Falklands Governor Hunt and UK Ambassador to Buenos Aires] [declassified 2012]." *Margaret*

Some use of footnotes to explain roles of politicians mentioned in the text. This is acceptable.

serious difficulties in Parliament and in public" if they were to neglect the wishes of the islanders. Although this does not contradict the statement made by Thatcher in her speech to the House of Commons on April 3rd 1982, it shows that she and her government made the islanders' wishes key owing to fears of negative public opinion. Had Thatcher and her party disrespected the islanders' wishes, it is likely they would have lost political support both in the Falklands and at home.

Analysis of the advice offered and motives for this.

Based on the evidence presented, it can be said that Thatcher and her government treated the standpoint of the islanders with due seriousness. Although her reasons for doing this might be called into question, her pledge that: "We cannot allow the democratic rights of the islanders to be denied by the territorial ambitions of Argentina," cannot be denied. Throughout negotiations and meetings held with the islanders', their desires were handled with consideration and care, reflecting Thatcher's aspiration to keep them British.

Some well supported analysis and evaluation. There could be more on " democratic rights" but some sound critical thinking attempted.

2. Thatcher's lack of foresight

News of the Argentine invasion of the Falklands was met with shock and surprise on the streets of Britain. Indeed, Thatcher's reaction paralleled that of the British public. Hugo Young described the Argentine invasion as, "the most disastrous lapse by any British government since 1945."¹⁸ Moreover, Young argues that, "Britain's indifference, indecision and lack of foresight were the accessories before the fact of Argentinian aggression."¹⁹ So can one say that Margaret Thatcher went to war with Argentina to redeem herself for such a 'blunder'?

Perhaps Hugo Young's biography will be evaluated later... but it does need some consideration of value and limitation...he was a well-known political correspondent .

It is incontestable that Thatcher was oblivious to the threat of a full-scale Argentinian invasion. She states in her autobiography that she and her government, "had no intelligence until almost the last moment that Argentina was about to launch a full-scale invasion."²⁰ The Prime Minister even stated that she "was not expecting anything like a full-scale invasion."²¹ Many criticised Thatcher for her inability to foresee such an event. In her autobiography, she says that, "many Members were inclined to blame the Government for its alleged failure to foresee and forestall what had happened. My first task was to defend us against the charge of unpreparedness."²² As stated in the introduction, the British Prime Minister responded to the Argentine invasion by dispatching a task force within 48 hours. Based on the above statement made by Thatcher, one may theorise that she went to war in order to redeem herself for her mistake.

This assertion would need further support, but is relevant as it explores other factors (To what extent...)

But did Thatcher and her government really have no intelligence up until the invasion on April 2nd? The Franks Enquiry²³ concludes that, "The invasion of the Falkland Islands on 2 April could not have been foreseen."²⁴ This conclusion was made after evidence was provided from ministers and officials, the British Ambassador in Buenos Aires and the other

¹⁸ Young, H. *One of Us: A Biography of Margaret Thatcher*. London: Macmillan, 1989. 258. Print.

¹⁹ *Ibid*

²⁰ Thatcher, M. *The Autobiography*. London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993. 341. Print.

²¹ *Ibid*. 342.

²² *Ibid*. 347.

²³ Formally known as the Falkland Islands Review.

²⁴ Great Britain. *Falkland Islands Review: Report of a Committee of Privy Counsellors*. By Oliver Franks. London: H.M.S.O., 1983. Paragraph 266. Print.

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Embassy staff, the Governor of the Falkland Islands, Falkland islanders and persons outside Government with special knowledge of and interest in the area.²⁵ In addition, there is evidence to suggest that Dr Costa Mendez²⁶ was reported saying that the Junta did not finally decide upon the invasion until 10.00pm on April 1st.²⁷ Lastly, violent demonstrations in Buenos Aires on the night of March 30th/31st were also a large element in the Junta's decision to invade. This gives credence to the theory that Thatcher and her government could not possibly have known about the invasion before April 2nd.

Further support here...

However, evidence to suggest that they should and could have anticipated the invasion is available. The Franks Enquiry makes allusion to the fact that, "Argentina never wavered in its commitment to recover the Islands."²⁸ It was well known that repossession of *Las Malvinas* was a key policy for Argentine governments, thus one may criticise London for failing to properly acknowledge the threat of a possible invasion.

When?

Following Anglo-NATO discussions, restrictions were made on Britain's defence commitments, which coincided with a considerable increase in Argentina's military power. This resulted in increased Argentinian confidence over reclaiming the islands – a factor the British government failed to detect. One would assume that an increase in military strength could suggest future military action. This evidence thus contradicts Thatcher's statement made in her autobiography (page 7) and the conclusion made by the Franks Enquiry.

A little tenuous, would need Argentine sources to support this.

The British military possessed little power in the South Atlantic. A Royal Navy ice-patrol vessel, *HMS Endurance*, remained in the area during the summer months. Although of limited military value it was nonetheless symbolic of London's intent. The presence of such a vessel capable of transporting artillery and aircraft was believed to be a deterrent to Argentina when invasion was considered. Following the 1981 British Defence Review, it was decided that the *HMS Endurance* was to be withdrawn at the end of her 1981-82

Evidence?

²⁵ Great Britain. *Falkland Islands Review: Report of a Committee of Privy Counsellors*. By Oliver Franks. London: H.M.S.O., 1983. Paragraph 265. Print.

²⁶ A member of the Foreign Ministry under General Leopoldo Galtieri.

²⁷

Great Britain *Falkland Islands Review: Report of a committee of Privy Counsellors*. By Oliver Franks, London: H.M.S.O., 1983. Paragraph 263. Print.

²⁸ *Ibid.* Paragraph 269.

deployment.²⁹ This was highly significant as it suggested that the British government lacked firmness in the South Atlantic. The Franks Committee concluded that, "it was inadvisable for the Government to announce a decision to withdraw *HMS Endurance*."³⁰ The withdrawal of the ship resulted in a further growth in Junta confidence. Therefore one may once again criticise Thatcher's lack of foresight when agreeing to this strategic withdrawal.

Again, assertions about the Junta's intentions could be better supported.

Thatcher's lack of foresight can undoubtedly be linked to the lack of attention she gave to the situation. Hugo Young states that, "Margaret Thatcher was not adequately sensitive to the danger in the Falklands until it was too late."³¹ The evidence to support this is as follows: between January 1981 and 1st April 1982, the Defence Committee of the cabinet did not meet once to discuss the Falklands. First reference was made to the Falklands in full cabinet on 25th March 1982, which was a mere eight days before the invasion. Moreover, the America Current Intelligence Group met eighteen times between July 1981 and March 1982, but did not once discuss the Falklands situation.³² Based on this evidence it can easily be seen that Thatcher's lack of attention resulted in her lack of awareness of the situation.

Lack of attention because of lack of awareness, perhaps?

The final piece of evidence to suggest Thatcher could have gone to war in order to redeem herself for her lack of foresight is the resignation of the Foreign Secretary, Lord Peter Carrington, on April 6th 1982. In a farewell message written by Lord Carrington, he says, "I was responsible for the conduct of the policy and it is right that I should have resigned."³³

Some of the points regarding the internal disagreements within the Conservative Party at this time require some explanation, if they are relevant to the RQ. Alluded to here but not explained.

Despite the fact that the Foreign Secretary believed his resignation would unite the Party,³⁴ Carrington's departure only increased the criticism of Thatcher's government. The .

²⁹ Great Britain. *Falkland Islands Review: Report of a Committee of Privy Counsel/ors*. By Oliver Franks. London: H.M.S.O., 1983. Paragraph 114. Print.

³⁰ *Ibid.* Paragraph 287.

³¹ Young, H. *One of Us: A Biography of Margaret Thatcher*. London: Macmillan, 1989. 263. Print.

³² *Ibid.* 262.

³³ "Falklands: Carrington Message to FCO ('Farewell Message from Lord Carrington') ['Most of This Criticism [of Government Falklands Policy] Has in My View Been Unfounded. But I Was Responsible...and It Is Right That I Should Have Resigned'] [released 2013]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation* *.N.p.,n.d. Web. 09 Sept. 2013. Appendix Source 4.

³⁴ "Falklands: Carrington Letter to MT (Carrington's Decision to Resign) ['I Was Right to Go. There Would Have Been Continual Pressure & Such Advice as I Gave You Would Have Been Questioned. The Party Will Now Unite behind You...'] [released 2013]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation* *.N.p.,n.d. Web. 09 Sept. 2013.

government, notably Lord Carrington and John Nott,³⁵ held itself solely and unequivocally responsible for the disaster that was Argentina's invasion.

Not really supported here.

Thus, Mrs Thatcher's claims that the invasion was unforeseeable and unpredictable can easily be refuted. In addition, the Franks Enquiry, despite the fact it likewise concludes that the invasion could not have been foreseen, concedes to the inadvisable and regrettable withdrawal of *HMS Endurance*. Further evidence suggests that Thatcher and her government did not prioritise the Falklands issue, therefore precipitating an invasion on April 2nd, which leaves the government's reputation in tatters. It can be concluded that the evidence brings into question the credibility of Thatcher's statement that, "We cannot allow the democratic rights of the islanders to be denied," and suggests that she had a motive to restore her government's reputation by winning the war.

Focus is kept on the RQ with other factors being examined. Analysis is attempted and support given for conclusions. Not always sufficient to justify conclusions but, nevertheless, the methodology of asking a question, examining the evidence and, based upon analysis, arriving at a conclusion is present.

³⁵ The Secretary of State for Defence who withdrew his letter of resignation shortly after Carrington's resignation.

3 Political rebalance and public adoration

Thatcher's popularity in Britain before the Falklands War was at an all-time low. Economic hardship and despair loomed over the British public. A Real GDP growth of -2% in 1981³⁶ coupled with unemployment at 2.5 million and rising³⁷ left the British Prime Minister on the receiving end of single-topic questions: the economy. Not only was the question of the economy being frequently discussed in parliament during Prime Minister's Question Time, it was likewise being discussed in homes up and down the country. Growing frustration and destitution manifested itself in the form of protests and riots, such as the Irish Hunger Strike on March 1st 1981 and the Brixton Riot between the 10th and 11th April 1981.

Perhaps these will be discussed later but both require some brief explanation.

Combined with Thatcher's problem of a dire economy was disquiet within her own party. Upon coming into office in 1979, Mrs Thatcher "had won the country but not yet won the cabinet."³⁸ Evidence suggests that only two members of Thatcher's probable government, Keith Joseph and Norman St John Stevas, had voted for her in the secret ballot for the leadership election.³⁹ The Prime Minister was forced to contend with the unwanted and aggressive views of the *wets* within her party, making it difficult for her to amend economic policy in the way she wanted. The coming of the war was a perfect opportunity for Thatcher to regain authority within the Conservative Party and unite the public against Argentina's claim to the *Malvinas*, enabling her to regain popularity and to turn the public's discontent into united support.

Rather general assertions here.

Winning the Falklands War undoubtedly put Thatcher on a pedestal overseeing an adoring British public. Winning the war boosted both her prestige and credibility; Britain trusted her. In an article written for *The Guardian* Newspaper on April 9th 2013, Simon Jenkins describes the war as, "the turning point in Mrs Thatcher's premiership, indeed in her political

³⁶ "Margaret Thatcher: Poll Rating Trends." *Margaret Thatcher: Poll Rating Trends*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Aug. 2013. <<http://www.slideshare.net/IpsosMORI/margaret-thatcher-poll-rating-trends>>. See Appendix, Source 5.

³⁷ *Ibid.* See Appendix J Source 6.

³⁸ Young, H. *One of Us: A Biography of Margaret Thatcher*. London: Macmillan, 1989. 140. Print.

³⁹ *Ibid.* 138.

career."⁴⁰ British satisfaction polls⁴¹ show a constant increase in the percentage of dissatisfaction with Margaret Thatcher from January to March 1981, reaching a peak of 68% near the beginning of March. However, later polls show⁴² a decrease in the percentage of dissatisfaction from March (66%) to May (58%). Voting intention polls^{43 44} suggest the same trend but refer to voting intentions. A satisfaction with Thatcher and her government graph⁴⁵ shows only 30% of the British public was satisfied with Thatcher before she went to war with Argentina in April, but this increased dramatically to 59% by June. These sources all show that Thatcher greatly improved her image in the eyes of the public following victory over Argentina for the Falklands.

Hugo Young believes that, "Its triumphant end (the Falklands War), effacing the many tribulations on the domestic scene was what guaranteed the Conservatives' political triumph at the next election and on into the measureless future."⁴⁶ However, can one say that Thatcher went to war, aware of the consequences it would have for the soldiers fighting on both sides, in order to win the next election? Her infamous sinking of *The Belgrano*, an Argentine Navy light cruiser, on May 2nd 1982, resulting in the loss of 323 lives, put her integrity into question. In her autobiography, Thatcher states that, "The decision to sink the *Belgrano* was taken for strictly military not political reasons."⁴⁷ This suggests that she was not thinking about the politically strategic position it would put her in, but was determined to give her nation the edge in winning the war.

⁴⁰ Jenkins. S. "How Margaret Thatcher's Falklands Gamble Paid off." *The Guardian*. 9 Apr. 2013. Web. 07 Sept. 2013.

⁴¹ "Opinion Polls: Britto Note to Derek Howe ("Public Opinion Background Note 56") [weekly Survey Note] [released 2012]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation* *. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 Sept. 2013. <<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/121439>>. See Appendix, Source 8.

⁴² "Opinion Polls: Britto Note to Derek Howe ("Public Opinion Background Note 65") [weekly Survey Note] [released 2012]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation* *. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 Sept. 2013. <<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/121446>>. See Appendix, Source 10.

⁴³ Opinion Polls: Britto Note to Derek Howe ("Public Opinion Background Note 56") [weekly Survey Note] [released 2012]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation* *. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 Sept. 2013. <<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/121439>>. See Appendix, Sources 7 and 9.

⁴⁴ "Opinion Polls: Britto Note to Derek Howe ("Public Opinion Background Note 65") [weekly Survey Note] [released 2012]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation* *. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 Sept. 2013. <<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/121446>>. See Appendix, Sources 7 and 9.

⁴⁵ "Margaret Thatcher: Poll Rating Trends." *Margaret Thatcher: Poll Rating Trends*. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 Sept. 2013. <<http://www.slideshare.net/lpsosMORI/margaret-thatcher-poll-rating-trends>>. See Appendix, Source 11.

⁴⁶ Young, H. *One of Us: A Biography of Margaret Thatcher*. London: Macmillan, 1989. 279. Print.

⁴⁷ Thatcher, M. *The Autobiography*. London: HarperCollinsPublishers, 1993. 369. Print.

Thatcher's autobiography presents a limitation. The hypothesis that she went to war in order to buy herself another term as Prime Minister in 1983 would have been regarded by the public as unethical, cruel and selfish – and this is unsurprisingly not alluded to. However, the autobiography is valuable because it outlines what Thatcher herself wanted the public to believe were her motives, yet it needs to be viewed with scepticism.

Nevertheless, evidence is insufficiently conclusive that Thatcher militarily dislodged Argentina from the Falklands in order to guarantee herself another term in office; it merely shows that her victory was greeted with satisfaction in Britain. Although many seasoned political commentators on the liberal left such as Simon Jenkins and Hugo Young allude to the fact that the chances of Thatcher going to war for this reason are high, such a categorical conclusion cannot be arrived at.

To me further evaluation of Simon Jenkins and Hugo Young would be useful but both are identified as belonging to the "liberal Left" - though this should be explained. (Not sure, Jenkins belonged here in the 1980s when he wrote for The Times) .

4. Antarctica, oil and fishi

In a report written to the Prime Minister on 22nd September 1979, David Howell⁴⁸ stated that, "It is true that the presence of oil (or gas) has yet to be proven." Nevertheless, he proceeded by stating that, "recent geophysical surveys (which the FCO have seen) lead us to think that there is at least a good chance that hydrocarbons are there (the Atlantic Ocean and Antarctic)."⁴⁹ "Indeed, there was evidence to suggest that oil was present in both the Atlantic and Antarctic, but in what quantity? Furthermore, was it a substantial explanation for going to war with Argentina over the Falklands?

[Link to the RQ made here.](#)

The Antarctic Settlement of 1959 granted Britain's claim over a section of the Antarctic.⁵⁰ The reason for her claim was owed to the geographical location of the Falklands. Her claim comprised of south of latitude 60 degrees South, between longitude 20 degrees West and 80 degrees West.^{51 52} Although 98% of the continent was sheet ice, small quantities of hydrocarbons were believed to be present – and had been found in small non-commercial quantities.⁵³ Furthermore, commercial fisheries were established on the continent due to the presence of krill, finfish and crab.⁵⁴ A document titled, "Nick Ridley Minute to Ure," (written in May 1979),⁵⁵ shows Ridley's desire to, "put most emphasis on the fish and oil aspects of Antarctica."⁵⁶ Lastly, a "John Hunt Minute to MT," emphasises this point by saying, "agreement with Argentina... might strengthen our eventual prospects of

The documents mentioned, such as "...Minute to Ure" could be better explained to make it clear that these are memorandums written to Ministers.

⁴⁸ The Secretary of State for Energy.

⁴⁹ "Falklands: Howell Minute to MT (Carrington's Minute to MT on the Falklands) [consequences of Carrington's Suggestions on UK Access to Hydrocarbons] [declassified 2012]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation* *.N.p.,n.d. Web. 24 Nov. 2013. <<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/121927>>. See Appendix, Source 12.

⁵⁰ Hayton, R. D. "The Antarctic Settlement of 1959." *The American Journal of International Law* 54.2 (1960): n. pag. Print.

⁵¹ "British Antarctic Territory." *British Antarctic Territory*. N.p.,n.d. Web. 24 Nov. 2013. <<https://www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/british-antarctic-territory>>.

⁵² N.p.,n.d. Web. 24 Nov. 2013. <<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a4/BritishAntarcticTerritory.svg>>. See Appendix, Source 13.

⁵³ "Central Intelligence Agency." *The World Factbook*. N.p.,n.d. Web. 24 Nov. 2013. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ay.html>>.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*

⁵⁵ "Falklands: Nick Ridley Minute to Ure ("Falkland Islands") [Ridley's Comments on Options for Future Policy] [declassified 2012]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation* *.N.p.,n.d. Web. 24 Nov. 2013. <<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/121826>>. See Appendix, Source 14.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*

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preferential access to potential large mineral and hydrocarbon deposits there (Antarctica)."⁵⁷ Indeed, there was potential for the presence of large mineral and hydrocarbon deposits in Antarctica. Such deposits could be exploited by Thatcher and her government in order to strengthen Britain's economy.

In 1979 and onwards, British oil companies started developing interests in the south West Atlantic. Although unproven to contain oil resources, HMGs⁸ and British oil companies were confident there was a possibility. In a letter to Thatcher, David Howell said that if British

negotiations fell through with Argentina over the islands, the economy could make

significant losses if oil was found. Contrastingly, it could make significant gains by holding onto Las Malvinas.³⁹

Did Howell use this name for the Falklands?

Furthermore, possession of the islands would grant Britain with a fishing zone to obtain licensing revenues from fishing fleets in the waters. It is

evident that if Thatcher were to succeed in maintaining possession of the Falklands, this would benefit the economy.

A good point.

Although Britain's economy had the potential to flourish if Thatcher held onto the islands,

such a reason for war can be regarded as weak. In both Antarctica and the South Atlantic, there was merely the potential for oil and no more. Although revenue could have been made from fishing industries, it would have had a minimal effect on Britain's economy. For these reasons, going to war with Argentina for the sake of oil and fish was improbable.

⁵⁷ "Falklands: John Hunt Minute to MT ("Falkland Islands") [MT Comment on Leaseback Scheme: "I Cannot Possibly Agree to the Proposed Course of Action"] [declassified 2012]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation* *. N.p.,

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n.d. Web. 24 Nov. 2013. <<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/122459>>. See Appendix, Source 15.

⁵⁸ Her Majesty's Government.

⁵⁹ "Falklands: Howell Minute to MT (Carrington's Minute to MT on the Falklands) [consequences of Carrington's Suggestions on UK Access to Hydrocarbons] [declassified 2012]." *Margaret Thatcher Foundation*

*.N.p., n.d. Web. 24 Nov. 2013. <<http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/121927>>.

5. Conclusion

Margaret Thatcher's statement: "We cannot allow the democratic rights of the islanders to be denied by the territorial ambitions of Argentina," has caused much debate. This motive was undoubtedly what Thatcher intended the public to hear. In both the speech made to the House of Commons on April 2nd 1982 and in her autobiography, Thatcher makes it very clear that her intention was to keep the wishes of the islanders paramount and to protect them from becoming Argentinian.

Supported in the text

There is little evidence to deny the fact that Thatcher took the islanders' desires into consideration and that she presented this as her primary motive because of fears of public resentment if she did not.

Thatcher's fear of public dissent and criticism for not anticipating the Falklands invasion may have been enough to cause her to go to war with Argentina. Extensive evidence taken from the Franks Enquiry, her autobiography and Hugo Young's book, *One of Us*, argues that Thatcher and her government were disorganised and careless in their dealings with Argentina over the Falklands. Infrequent meetings and the withdrawal of *HMS Endurance* were unquestionably Thatcher's greatest mistakes in the build-up to the war, and the resignation of Lord Carrington provides further evidence that the government held itself responsible. Although Thatcher and the Franks Enquiry declare that the invasion was unforeseeable, broad evidence states otherwise.

A fair summary of this argument although "broad evidence" may be over-stating it somewhat. As this seems to be determining factor, however, it should come just before the final paragraph. Loses some of its impact here.

Sections of the British public also believe that Thatcher went to war with Argentina in order to buy herself more time in office. Her poll ratings before and after the war provide evidence to suggest that her reputation greatly improved after defeating Argentina. However this does not suggest that it was her principle motive, although several historical commentators argue that it was indeed her primary motive, the evidence collected is insufficiently conclusive.

Always rather difficult to determine public opinion but perhaps there could be have been further analysis/evaluation of the polls.

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The argument that Thatcher went to war in order to gain Britain oil and fish resources coupled with continuing possession of Antarctica is feeble as oil resources in the Atlantic and Arctic were only potential and nothing more.

However, could have been an argument that played a part in a decision to prevent the islands becoming Argentinian?

In conclusion, the combined and disputed motives of wanting to preserve the democratic rights of the islanders, fearing public resentment for not predicting the invasion, seeing the political opportunity in victory leading to a triumph at the next general election and wanting oil, fish and maintained possession of Antarctica, are all valid. Taking into account the

"Reliability" would be more appropriate.

credibility of the evidence collected and its usefulness, Thatcher's motive of redeeming herself for a lack of foresight is the most convincing argument. Indeed, Carrington's resignation suggests that the government assumed particular responsibility for the invasion, which makes Thatcher's redemptive motivation appear to be most logical in the circumstances.

The conclusion would have been stronger had it ended with the argument the analysis of the factor considered to be most important. Even so, a fair structure and quite coherently organised.

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Reports consulted and quoted:

Great Britain. *Falkland Islands Review: Report of a Committee of Privy Counsellors*. By Oliver Franks. London: H.M.S.O., 1983. Print.

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"....and quoted" is not necessary. Extensive appendices that would have been better placed in the text rather than at the end where examiners are not required to read them. If the information is relevant and important, it should be in the essay. Also, appendices need to be referenced. This impacts the formal presentation of the essay.

Appendix

Source 1

Future Policy

10. Over recent months the Argentines have been fully aware that we have been dragging our feet on these negotiations. They have understood that British Ministers could not make fresh initiatives or arrive at far reaching decisions in the last months of a dying Parliament. However there will undoubtedly be Argentine expectations that the new Government will re-open the negotiations in a more positive frame of mind.

11 This presents us with real difficulties because there are effectively four possible policies for us to pursue:

To refuse to discuss the substance of the dispute at all with Argentina, break off the talks and be prepared to maintain and defend the Falklands against Argentine boycotts on communications and supplies., Argentine harassment or worse.

This option is known as "Fortress Falklands. It" would involve very heavy additional expenditure on aid to the Islands and almost- certainly- on defence, with implications for our NATO commitments.

To give-up the Falklands, buying out and re-settling the Islanders elsewhere and negotiating whatever safeguards we could for those remaining under Argentine administration. This would be totally unacceptable to the Islanders and would provoke the sharpest possible attacks on the Government from both sides of the House on the grounds that we were "selling out - It appears to be politically - and probably morally indefensible.

Extended Essay

Source 2

(c) To continue to go through the motions of negotiations with Argentina but to avoid any commitment to political changes which would upset the Islanders or their supporters in this country. With two years of unproductive negotiations

Source 3

to provide the best basis for a solution. Mr Ridley had made it plain to Sr Ros that, while we understood the difficulties ^{posed by} of the Argentine Government, there could be no question of our acting other than in accordance with the Islanders' wishes. HMG would face serious difficulties in Parliament and in public if we were to renege on this policy. Sr Ros had been generally

Source 4

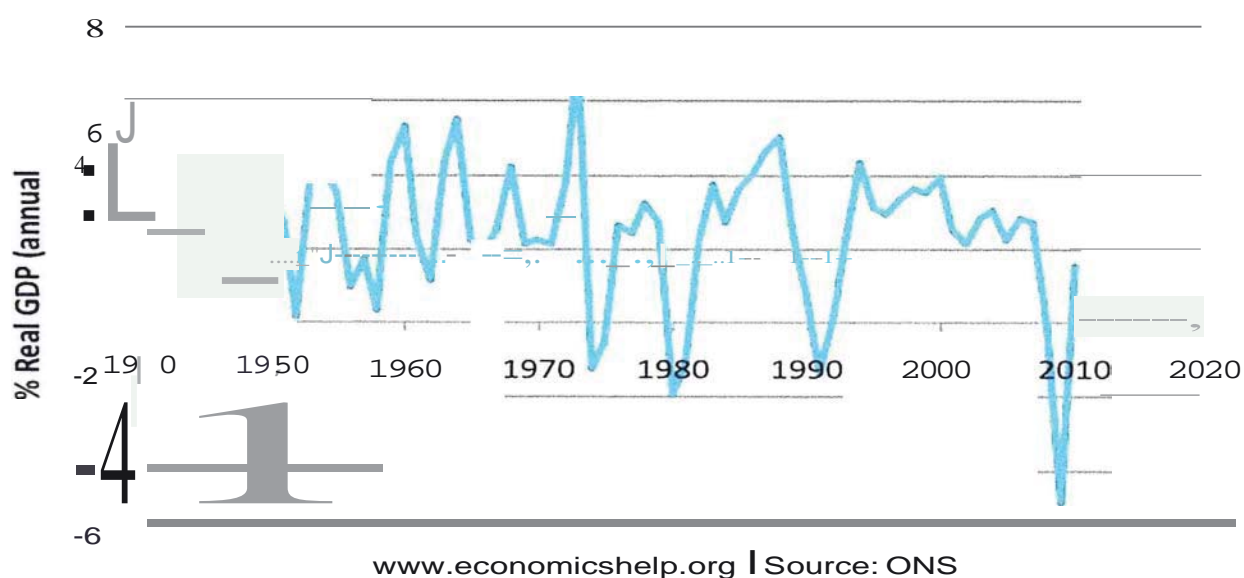
FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM LORD CARRINGTON

Lord Carrington has asked me to circulate the following farewell message:

"As you know, the Argentinian invasion of the Falklands has been very deeply felt in this country - perhaps more deeply than any single event in our relations with the outside world for a generation. It has led to strong criticism of Government policy in Parliament and in the press. Most of this criticism has in my view been unfounded. But I was responsible for the conduct of the policy and it is right that I should have resigned.

Source 5

Economic Growth 1949-2011

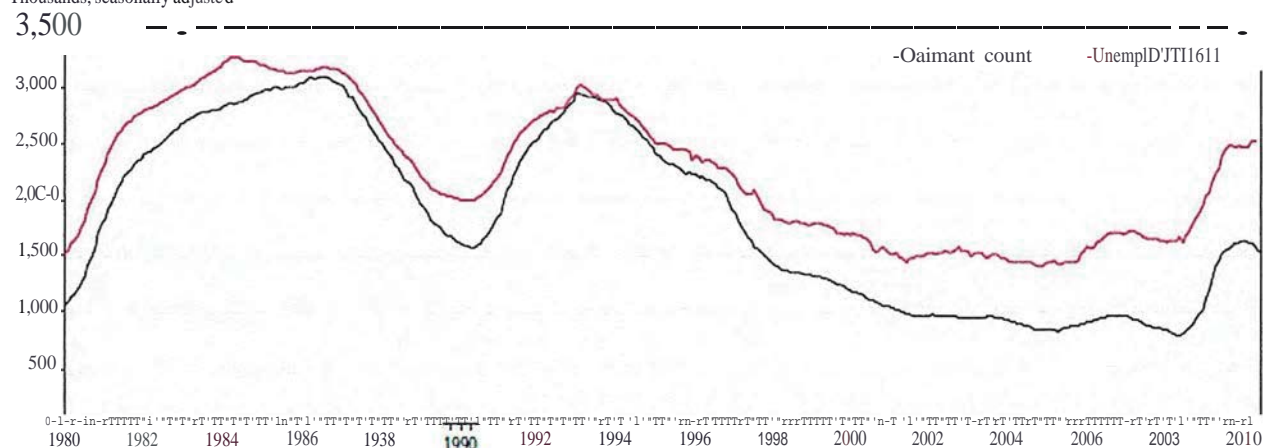


Source 6

Figure 1

Unemployment¹ and the claimant count,² 1980 to 2010

Thousands, seasonally adjusted



Notes:

Source: Labour force Survey and Jobcentre Plus administrative system

- 1 Unemployment estimates are for people aged 16 and over. This is consistent with the headline figures in the Labour market statistic bulletin . Full time series data are available from January 1971.
- 2 Claimant count figures are provided for people aged 18 years and over. This is consistent with the headline figures produced for the Labour Market statistical bulletin. Full time series data are available from January 1971.

Source 7.

VOTING INTENTION

(excluding don't knows)

	CON %	LAB %	LIB %	OTHER %	LEAD
1979					
May (GE)	43.9	36.9	13.8	5.5	+7.0
13/18 June*	42.0	43.5	13.0	2.5	-1.5
1980					
1/6 Oct	40.0	43.0	13.5	3.5	-3.0**
8/14 Oct	35.5	41.5	20.0	3.0	-6.0
15/20 Oct	40.5	43.0	14.0	2.5	-2.5**
22/27 Oct	37.5	42.0	18.0	2.5	-4.5
29 Oct/3 Nov	31.5	47.5	16.0	2.0	-13.0
5/10 Nov	41.5	40.5	14.0	4.0	+1.0
12/17 NOV	36.5	47.0	15.0	1.5	-10.5**
19/24 Nov	35.0	48.0	14.0	2.0	-13.0
26 Nov/1 Dec	35.0	49.5	13.0	2.5	-14.5
3/8 Dec	35.0	47.0	14.5	3.5	-12.0
10/15 Dec	35.0	47.5	14.5	3.0	-12.5**
1981					
7/12 Jan	34.0	48.0	15.0	3.0	-14.0
14/20 Jan	33.0	46.5	18.5	2.0	-13.5**
21/26 Jan	35.5	43.0	17.0	4.5	-7.5**
28 Jan/2 Feb	32.0	40.0	21.5	6.5	-8.0
3/9 Feb	34.0	39.0	20.0	7.0	-5.0
10/16 Feb	36.0	35.5	20.0	8.5	+0.5**
18/23 Feb	32.5	38.5	21.0	8.0	-6.0
25 Feb/ 2 March	31.5	36.0	21.5	11.0	-4.5
4/9 March	29.5	34.5	20.0	16.0+	-5.0

* First Gallup post-election survey

** published polls

+ includes 12% who said they would vote Social Democrat

Source 8

	<u>Mrs Thatcher</u>			<u>Mr Foot</u>			<u>Mr Steel</u>		
	Sat . %	Dis- sat. %	Don't Know	Is %	Is Not %	Don't Know	Is %	Is Not Of %	Don't Know
1981									
7/12 Jan	33	61	6	24	39	36	56	21	23
14/20 Jan	31	63	5	20	42	32	63	19	18
21/26 Jan	31	61	5	23	43	34	57	19	21
28 Jan / 2 Feb	32	63	6	21	46	33	62	17	21
3/9 Feb	35	60	6	24	49	27	60	19	21
10/16 Feb	34	60	6	22	49	30	64	16	20
18/23 Feb	33	60	5	20	52	28	58	18	24
25 Feb/2 March	32	62	6	23	50	27	57	22	20
4/9 March	28	66	6	25	52	23	62	18	20

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Source 9

VOTING INTENTION

	CON	LAB	LIB	SOCIAL DEMOCRAT	OT-JER	LEAD
	b	%	%	<u>l</u>	<u>a</u>	<u>b</u>
1979						
May (G.S.)	43.9	36.9	13.8		5.5	+7.0
13/18 June	42.0	43.5	13.0		2.5	-1.5
*	42.0	43.5	13.0		2.5	-1.5*
1981						
4/9 March	30.0	34.5	20.0	12.5	3.5	-5.0
12/16 March	30.0	34.0	18.0	14.0	4.0	-4.0
18/23 March	26.0	35.0	17.0	17.0	5.0	-9.0
25/30 March	30.0	30.5	18.0	19.0	2.5	-0.5**
31 March/6 April	29.0	32.0	17.0	19.0	3.0	-3.0
8/13 April	30.0	34.5	14.0	19.0	2.5	-4.5**
15/21 April	28.5	37.5	17.5	15.0	2.5	-9.0
22/27 April	30.5	36.5	15.0	15.5	2.5	-6.0
29 April/ 5 May	33.0	35.0	17.0	13.5	2.5	-2.0
6/11 May	32.0	35.5	18.0	11.0	3.5	-3.5+*
13/ 8 May	33.5	36.0	17.0	10.5	3.0	-2.5

* First Gallup Post-election survey

** Published polls

Source 10

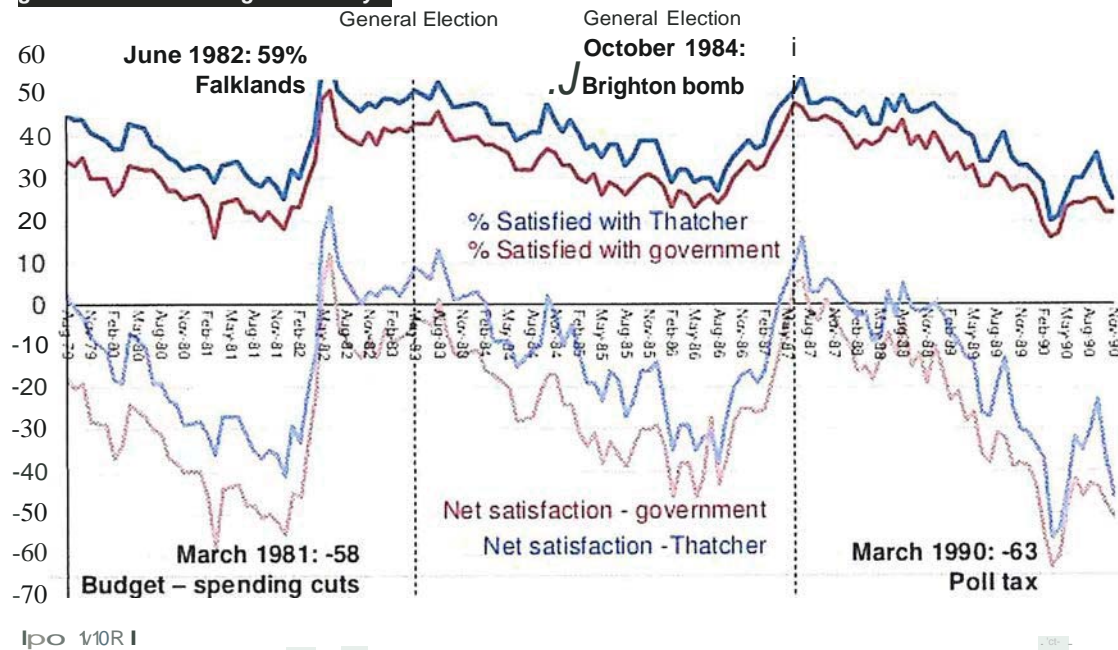
POPULARITY OF POLITICAL LEADERS

	Mrs Thatcher			Mr Foot			Mr Seeel		
	Sat.	Dis- sat.	Don't Know	Is	Is Not	Don't Know	Is	Is Not	Don't Know
	%	%	%	%	<u>GI</u> <u>DO</u>	%	%	%	%
198									
4/9 March	28	66	6	25	52	23	63	18	20
12/16 March	30	64	6	23	52	26	63	18	22
18/23 March	28	67	5	24	55	24	63	18	19
25/ 30 March	30	66	4	20	55	25	61	19	19
31 March/6 April	31	63	6	24	55	22	64	17	19
8/23 April	30	65	5	21	54	24	60	20	20
15/21 April	31	64	6	24	54	??	62	17	21
22/27 April	34	60	6	21	58	20	66	17	18
29 April/5 May	31	59	7	20	58	??	60	17	21
6/11 May	35	60	5	26	52	23	63	17	21
13/18 May	36	58	6	27	52	22	63	17	21

Source 11

Satisfaction with Thatcher and her government

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Margaret Thatcher is doing her job as Prime Minister/the government is running the country?

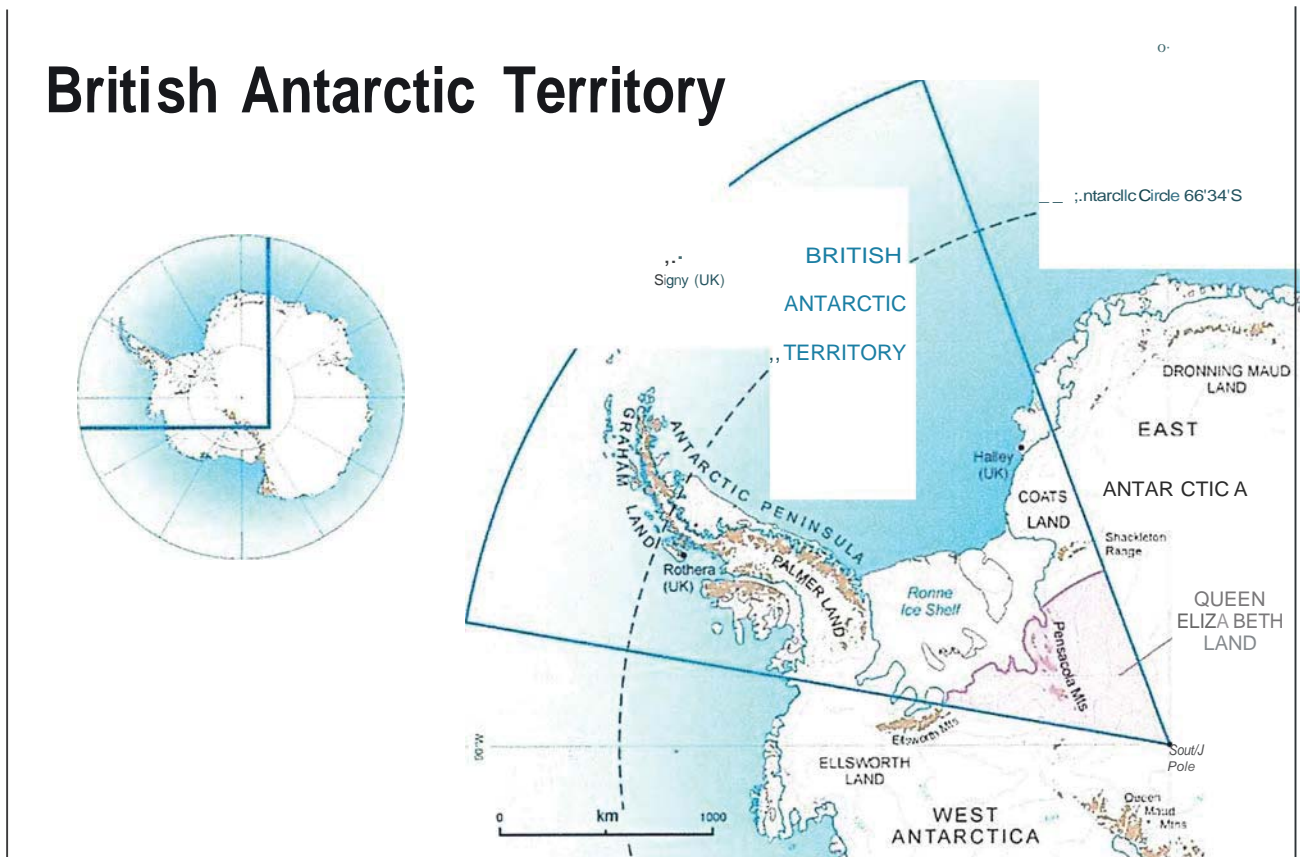


Source 12

I am, however, rather uneasy about the proposed arrangements for the maritime zones outside territorial waters. It is true that the presence of oil (or gas) has yet to be proven, but the continued interest of the oil companies and the results of the recent geophysical surveys (which FCO have seen) lead us to think that there is at least a good chance that hydrocarbons are there. We ought to be very

Source 13

British Antarctic Territory



Source 14

"the fourth option: is the only- possible one – but we must put most emphasis on the- fish: and oil aspects of Antarctica- I would hope- to- preserve the Falklands as British – maybe it's not possible – in:.. return for" helping Argentina to carve up the Antarctic with- us as a partner-.. I do: think it:s:: important for me to go

nuclear turbine contract now under discussion). Lastly agreement with Argentina, which has rival claims for sovereignty in Antarctica, might strengthen our eventual prospects of preferential access to potential large mineral and hydrocarbon deposits there.