

Saint Ignatius College Prep

SIMUN XVI

Saint Ignatius Model United Nations



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Letter from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

Hello, and welcome to SIMUN XVI. My name is Patrick Milito, and I will be chair for my committee, the 1982 British House of Commons. I am a Junior who has had the pleasure of participating on the Saint Ignatius Model U.N. Team for two years now. While I have Vice-Chaired for a committee last year at SIMUN XV, this is my first time chairing a committee.

This will be run as a Historical General Assembly, with a few crisis-like updates. We will begin our proceedings on April 3rd, 1982, the day after the first Argentine invasion of the Falklands Islands. This committee will explore first this conflict over these disputed islands. Then, we shall discuss the institution of Her Majesty's government new policies. The room is divided up into 50 delegates, from three different parties: 24 from Her Majesty's Government (The Conservative Party), 21 from Her Majesty's Most Loyal Opposition (The Labour Party) and 5 from another Opposition Party (The Liberal Party). Sometimes these terms may get confusing, so I would familiarize yourself with the lingo of British government and politics. You will all be assigned one real Minister of Parliament for your positions. Considering this is a general assembly, no member will have extra personal powers.

Bear in mind that because SIMUN is a training conference, many of our members may be unfamiliar with parliamentary procedure and other such aspects of how a Model U.N. committee works. Please be diplomatic, helpful and kind to all members in committee. I am very supportive of having fun in committee, but I ask of all delegates to try their very best in this committee. It will be better for everyone if you come prepared to engage in debate. To this point, being true to policy will be a very important factor in both improving the overall experience and winning awards. I would request that every delegate brings a **paper copy of their position papers to me on the day of the conference**. I will require two 12pt singled-spaced papers, one for each topic. If you have any questions about this committee, just email me at patrick.milito@students.ignatius.org.

Yours in Diplomacy,
Patrick Milito

TOPIC ONE: THE ARGENTINE INVASION OF BRITISH TERRITORIES IN SOUTH AMERICA

The Falklands Islands, South Georgia Island, and the Sandwich Islands are all islands in the South Atlantic Ocean that have long been contested territories. They have had Spanish, French, British and Argentinian claims over them throughout the centuries.



The legendary James Cook discovered both South Georgia Islands and the Sandwich Islands, claiming them for Britain and naming them after King George III and John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich respectively. Argentina claimed South Georgia in 1927 and claimed the South Sandwich Islands in 1938, despite British claims.



The Falkland Islands are an archipelago that has been inhabited since an ancient age, but came to be claimed by Britain first in 1766 by John MacBride and later in 1833 by British military forces. In between these two occupations, what would come to be Argentina had laid claim to a former Spanish operation there and appointed Luis Vernet, a German, to be governor of the archipelago. In 1833, Britain decided to reclaim the Islands and they remained a colony of the Crown until 1982. These islands became important whaling centers, Antarctic survey centers, and naval ports throughout the 20th century. While Argentina may have claimed to still have sovereignty

over all of these islands, they had no presence in them. Over time, the inhabitants became overwhelmingly supportive of British rule, and a majority of the inhabitants are descendants of British settlers.

Argentina was experiencing a great deal of domestic conflict in the years leading up to the invasion of the Falklands, South Georgia and Sandwich Islands. There was an unstable government in place ever since achieving independence in 1810. The next 172 years would be defined by mostly economically based coups, revolutions, civil wars, and the military *Junta*. The Junta was a military dictatorship that would come to power after it exiled Juan Domingo Peron, who had previously lead the country.\. It would maintain this power by launching what is known as the *Dirty War* against those who previously held power, the Peronists. The Junta supported State Terrorism in the form of guerilla warfare to maintain their own power by controlling their opposition groups by means of force. These groups included 15 thousand to 30 thousand left-wing activists and militants, mostly unionists, students and socialists and Peronists. There were more shifts of power between the left and right wing factions, all of which included massacre and violence. Throughout this time, the economy of Argentina had suffered due in no small part to the ruling parties.

By December 1981, the Junta was once again in charge with General Leopoldo Galtieri acting as President of a new regime. Another member of his regime, Jorge Anaya, designed a plan to once again gain the support of the country. Years of economic stagnation and memories of the atrocities of the Dirty War in their minds, the people were not supportive of the regime.

Anaya reasoned that by a military intervention in an area such as the Falkland Islands, an area which many Argentinians believed should be under Argentine control, they would demonstrate the military prowess of the Junta, add some much-needed legitimacy to the Junta, and most importantly divert attention from the economy and the Dirty War. Anaya also reasoned that the United Kingdom would not care enough about their possession of the Falkland Islands.

On the 19th of March of this year, 1982, Argentine Marines disguised themselves as scrap metal merchants in order to access South Georgia Island. Once landed, they raised the Argentine flag. In response, the UK has sent the HMS *Endurance* to counter this advance, but our contacts tell us by the time this committee begins on April 3rd, the Argentine Marines will have invaded South Georgia Island. They have also informed us that Argentina has invaded the Falkland Islands. This action was met by Governor Rex Hunt and the Royal Marines stationed on the Island, but the overwhelming size and force of the Argentine army compared to the few Royal Marines on the island has left them no choice but to surrender. It is now up to this committee to respond to this



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. **How should the BHOC respond militarily to these invasions?**
 - a. **How forceful should the military response be?**
 - b. **How long should a military presence be established after victory?**
 - c. **Will any offensive military action be taken?**

2. Assuming a British victory, how should Britain deal with Argentina in order to prevent similar incidents in the future?
3. How should Britain incentivize the colonies to stay under British sovereignty?

TOPIC TWO: IMPLEMENTING THATCHERISM

World War Two was a long, taxing, yet politically unitive war for Britain. A major result of the war on the politics of Britain was the emergence of a “post-war consensus”. This model was led by mainly liberal intellectuals such as John Maynard Keynes and William Beveridge. This model was accepted by all three major parties of Britain, although some argument about specifics did exist. Internationally, Britain would



move to begin to establish stronger European ties, counter Communism, support NATO, retain ties to the United States and the Commonwealth, and implement decolonization. Domestically, economic policies focused on building a mixed economy, nationalization of some major industries, and a belief in Keynesian economics. A welfare state was strongly supported, most notably establishing the National Health Service.

But the pendulum swings both ways. This consensus would begin to erode in both theory and in practice. Thinkers such as Keith Joseph, Enoch Powell, Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman began to question this consensus. Libertarians, Neoliberals, and other Conservatives started to expose the flaws of the consensus. The Conservative Party also began to distance itself from the policies it had once agreed to. Her Majesty’s Government under the lead of the Labour Party stumbled in an attempt to limit and control inflation of the pound. The movement to try and limit pay raises of lower-class workers upset many, and many unions began to strike in what was called the “Winter of

Discontent”. These strikes influenced the public’s perceptions of the Labour Party, and made many skeptical and unhappy with the road the Post-War Consensus had been taking them down. This series of strikes would bring one MP to the front of British politics: Margaret Thatcher.

Margaret Thatcher became Leader of the Opposition in 1975, taking control of the Conservative Party. She would radically change the ideology and goals of the Conservative Party, as they finally not only departed from, but totally rejected the post-war consensus with her own political theory: Thatcherism. Thatcherism was a systematic reversal of the policies of the past.



Privatization of industries was strongly supported in an effort to create a free market Britain. Thatcher would seek to decrease inflation through a tight control of the money supply, not interfere with wages as the Labour party did. She favored a much smaller state, rejecting the idea of a welfare, with the exception of the National Health Service. Thatcher would also oppose labor movements and unions. Her ideology is Neoliberal and libertarian, the latter of which is a departure of former “Tory” Conservative Party policies. However, Thatcher was known for using authoritarian means to her ends. She was most authoritarian about social matters, especially concerning education and sexuality. Finally, when it comes to international affairs, Thatcher was a strong supporter of the United States under Ronald Reagan, who

was very ideologically similar. She also opposed closer ties to Europe, under the reasoning that it weakens British sovereignty. She also would vehemently defend against Communism, socialism, in Britain and oppose diplomatically any country that supports it.

Both her popularity and that of her party surged with the Winter of Discontent. Unemployment was also a large issue facing the Labour Party, as successful slogans such as “Labour isn’t Working” epitomize. Britain was ready for a change, and a change was found in the 1979 general election. The “Tories” won a majority of seats and Margaret Thatcher became Britain’s first female Prime Minister. Now, three years into her Premiership, Margaret Thatcher and the Conservative Party face a myriad of issue that need to be addressed by this committee.

Firstly, the issue of Defense Spending is heightened by the conflict in the Falklands. A 1981 Defense Review by Defense Minister John Nott moved to cut the Royal Navy’s fleet. However, these cuts, if not cancelled, would have limited Britain’s possible response to the Falklands Crisis as it sought to cut the very ship used to defend the colonies. While creating a smaller government, limiting spending, and demilitarization are all issues different MP’s will support, it is unclear whether or not Britain can afford these cuts if it is to defend itself.

Secondly, an issue of Northern Ireland is ever present. In 1981, a large amount of



members of the Provisional Irish Republican Army and the Irish National Liberation Army that were imprisoned in the Maze Prison in Northern Ireland went

on a hunger strike in order to regain the status of political prisoners. Five years earlier, the government under the Labour Party revoked such status. The death of Bobby Sands, who was an MP, was the first of ten deaths before some rights were reestablished. Margaret Thatcher dismissed the idea of ever granting them the political status. While most Englishmen would never support a fully independent Northern Ireland, actions taken by those who support this movement may force this committee to respond.

Finally, the issue of the economy will play a major role in this committee. Considering the majority of Conservative seats in this Parliament, its main goal should be implementing Thatcherism. The country faces many problems concerning the economy, made worse in the last few years. The Conservatives want to implement “enterprise zones”, which lower taxes and regulations in some areas to attract businesses to partially depressed zones. This alone will not remedy the issues caused by the recent recessions. The real area of concern should be deflation. Thatcher has increased interest rates, added a value-added tax, favored other forms of indirect taxation, and maintained a tight grip over the money supply, which in effect has dramatically lowered the inflation rates, from 18% to 8.6%. However, these policies also had another less fortunate outcome: the massive unemployment problem. There are 3 million unemployed in the country. Two million manufacturing jobs alone were lost in the post-election recession due to Thatcher policies harming business owners. For a while, this was believed to be a positive change, as it was thought that the manufacturing industry was over-manned. This was only a temporary illusion, however, and it seems that despite a growth in efficiency, growth in output remained low, dropping 30% from 1971. This is such a problem that Britain now

operates with a balance of payments in deficit. The 1981 Brixton Riot shows the negative public reaction to unemployment. Pressure is on Her Majesty's Government to fix such problems, as the Conservative Party was elected in large part to counter such huge growths in unemployment. Unions have for many years affected the economy through riots and strikes, which is something the Conservative Party should seek to change. These and many challenges face the committee as we attempt to implement Thatcherism.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How should the Government fix the issue of the massive employment?
2. How should the Government remedy the failing industrial and manufacturing sectors?
3. How should the Government further help economically stagnating areas of Britain?
4. Should defense spending be cut, even at the risk of a weakened Britain?
5. In what ways should unions be regulated or supported?
6. How should other areas of Thatcherism, such a privatization, begin to be supported through legislature?

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