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**The Impact of the Falklands War 1982 on Margaret
Thatcher's Politics**

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Dedication

First of all, I give Allah Almighty, all the Praise and Glory . Without your Divine providence. Through my successes and failures, my life's ups and downs. You've never forsaken me even I didn't make a call.

My great teacher and messenger, Mohammed (May Allah bless and grant him), who taught us the purpose of life,

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Abstract

The Malvinas /Falklands War was fought in 1982 between the United Kingdom and Argentina over the sovereignty of a small group of islands in the South Atlantic. This thesis uses a historical case study approach to examine the impact of the Falkland War on Margaret Thatcher politics shaping decision during the conduct of war. The history part is focused on the conflict and their development. It examines the Falkland War, its causes and consequences. In this study, we have proved that the Falklands victory considered as a successful mean to achieve Thatcher's objectives. The war had been well used by Margaret Thatcher to regain the public support and to cover her failure in such domestic issues. The Falklands victory had many impacts on Thatcher's politics. The thesis includes a research which reveals how current British people think about the conflict between Argentina and Great Britain.

KEY WORDS:

Falklands War, Argentina, South Atlantic, Great Britain, Margaret Thatcher, General Gonsalves.

List of Abbreviations

UK United Kingdom

UN United Nations

US United States

UNCLOS United Nations Convention on Laws of the Sea

EEZ Exclusive Economic Zone

TEZ Total Exclusion Zone

MEZ Maritime Exclusion Zone

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

EEC European Economic Community

OAS Organization of American States

HMS Royal Navy ship

Lists of Figures and Tables

Figure 1: The Falkland Islands.....	5
Figure 2: Map of the Falkland Islands.....	6
Figure 3: HMS Sheffield on fire after being hit by Exocet missile....	13
Figure 4: Operation Corporate.....	16
Figure 5: Operation Rosario.....	17
Figure 6: Map of the South Atlantic Theatre of Operation.....	18
Figure 7: A famous picture of a soldier bringin tba Union Back.....	23
Figure 8: Nicknamed “the Iron Lady” , Margaret Thatcher(1925-2013), The first Prime Minister Female.....	25
Figure 9: HMS Sheffield.....	29

List of Tables

Table 1: Falkland Islands Population (1980- 2016).....	7
Table 2: The Level of the War Support.....	21
Table1-8: Questionnaire Result Analysis.....	38

Table of Contents

Dedication.....	I
Acknowledgment.....	II
Abstract.....	III
List of Abbreviations.....	IV
List of Figures.....	V
List of Tables.....	V
Table of contents.....	1
General Introduction.....	3
Chapter One: The Background of the Falkland War	
1-1- Introduction.....	5
1-2- Geography of the Falkland Islands.....	6
1-2-1- population.....	7
1-3- Historical Background of the Falkland Islands.....	8
1-4- The Dispute Leading Up to the War.....	9
1-5- Reasons for War.....	11
1-5-1- Argentine Claims.....	11
1-5-2- British Claims.....	12
1-6- The War.....	12
1-6-1- Falkland War Timeline.....	13
1-7- Conclusion.....	14

Chapter Two: The Falkland War

2-1- Introduction..... 15
2-2- The British Diplomatique Responses.....15
2-3- The Invasion of the Falkland Islands.....17
 2-3-1- The British Reaction to the Invasion.....19
 2-3-2- Support for Britain20
2-4- The British Public Opinion.....20
 2-4-1- The British Common People.....21
 2-4-2- Self-Determination (the Falklanders).....21
2-5- The Fall of Port Stanley.....22
2-6- Falkland Victory.....22
2-7- Conclusion..... 23

**Chapter Three: The Impact of the Falklands War on Margaret Thatcher’
Politics**

3-1- Introduction.....24
3-2- What is the Falkland Factor?24
3-3- Did the media help Thatcher in her Politics?25
3-4- The Falklands impact on British Politics25
 3-4-1- Before the War.....25
 3-4-2- During the War.....28
 3-4-3 The aftermath.....30
3-5- Research.....31
3-6- Conclusion.....34
General Conclusion35
Work Cited.....36
APPENDIX38

General Introduction

The Falkland Islands are a group of barren, rocky islands in the Southwest corner of the Atlantic Ocean. This group of islands which Argentina designates with the name of "Islas Malvinas," and Great Britain, with the name of "Falkland Islands," forms an archipelago centered around two main islands called, under the Argentine denomination, "Gran Malvina" and "Soledad," and under the British one, "West Falkland" and "East Falkland," respectively.

Before 1982, hardly anyone in Great Britain knew or was concerned about a distant archipelago called the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic Ocean. On the other hand, practically all Argentines were confident that the Islands, rightfully belong to them. These islands have been a subject of territorial dispute over their sovereignty. Spain, France, Argentina and Britain claimed their sovereignty over the Falkland Islands. One of the most famous modern armed dispute was between Argentina and Britain that lasted for 74 days (2 April- 14 June 1982) leaving around a thousand dead: 255 British – 649 Argentine and 3 civilian Islanders.

The Falkland war that occurred between April and June, was a culmination of a long-standing dispute over the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands caused by miscalculation and miscommunication as well as lack of diplomatic negotiations and the breakdown of deterrence. It was example of the decisive and successful use of force to achieve any strategic objective. The war started when the Argentine Junta under General Leopoldo Galtieri, the president and the head of the military junta used the military power in invading the Falkland Islands. The British quick response to defend and recapture their territory was a success after just 74 days of heavy fighting. However, the cost to both sides was enormous. Besides high economic expenditures, the death toll was not. Although the war fought over rather small and, at that time, economically unimportant archipelago, it had a considerable impact on domestic politics not only in both participating countries, but also introduced significant changes in international politics and dramatically changed the lives of the islanders.

Margaret Thatcher, Britain's first Prime Minister, was losing her popularity and was about to lose the upcoming general elections. Despite the problems, she decided to retake the Falkland Islands by force. The victory of the war had a substantial impact on Thatcher's domestic politics. It helped her regain the public support and assured her a second term in office by winning the 1983 general elections.

The Falkland War is considered as one of Thatcher's greatest achievement. This achievement was well used by Thatcher in resolving the British internal problems. Although she had a little political experience, she was successful in in resolving her political crisis. Thatcher had proved in the Falkland War that such foreign affair could be a successful mean to achieve a domestic objective. As result of the victory in the Falkland War, the British internal situation became more stable. And Britain regains its self-confidence again as one of the greatest nations in the world.

The aim of this thesis is to explore reasons of both countries about the Falkland War to fight a short but bloody war and its impact on the domestic politics of Margaret Thatcher. When I read some articles about Margaret Thatcher, I found that she was very successful in her policies, especially using such foreign affairs to achieve a domestic objective. That is what we are going to study but we did not emphasize on Thatcher, we have dealt with her policies in general.

To study this topic, we are going to ask two main questions that will help us to understand Thatcher policy. We want to know how did started the conflict between Argentina and Great Britain over the Falkland Islands? And what were the Falkland War main impacts on the British politics?.

To answer these questions, the work will be divided into three chapters.

The first one will be descriptive; we are going to analyse the historical background of the dispute of the Falkland Islands and the geographical situation, to be easier to the reader to understand, then we mention the reasons for fighting the war in both countries.

The second chapter deals with the British attitude toward the invasion, and some important battles fought in the South Atlantic such as Stanley Port.

In the last chapter, we will discuss and analyse the impacts of the Falkland's on the politics of Margaret Thatcher. In addition to that, we are going to define new term that appeared during that time "the Falklands Factor".

References that are used in this research paper include many books, the memoire of Margaret Thatcher the Dawning Street Years. We take also her speech from her website which contains an official document; also we used articles from internet.

Chapter One: The Background of the Falkland Islands



Figure 1. Falkland Islands.

1-1- Introduction:

The Falkland Islands (also known as *Islas Malvinas* in Argentina) are a group of islands consists of approximately 200 islands with a total area of 12,173 square km in the South Atlantic. The two main islands, East Falkland and West Falkland.

The Falkland Islands are considered as a British military base from 1833 until nowadays. There were many claims over the sovereignty of these islands, and from many different countries. Beginning with Spain and France till Argentina and Britain. The Falklands sovereignty had caused many conflicts between nations due to its economic richness, one of the most important was fought between two Western countries Argentina and Britain.

The Falkland war of 1982 involved fighting by the four physical environments of land, sea, air and underwater, using various weapons which ranged from the cutting edge to the antiquated. It was also a war in which Western naval warship were exposed for the first time to prolonged aerial attacks from multiple jet aircraft. The war began over a territorial dispute involving the Falkland Islands even though the islands have formed part of the British overseas territories (self-governing/ autonomous region under the United kingdom) since the eighteenth century with Argentina launching a surprise attack to take control of the islands. In response, Britain launched air strikes and a naval bombardment preparatory to an amphibious assault which resulted in the recapture of the islands and an end to the conflict. The issue is almost geopolitical in which the countries in conflict are both vying for control without considering social, economic or cultural needs.

This chapter is divided into six subchapters. The first chapter describes the geographical features and location of the Falkland Islands. The second subchapter deals with the historical background of the dispute from the discovery of the Falklands between Great Britain and Argentina from their viewpoints. The third subchapter contains an account of events and negotiation that lead to the outbreak of the war. The fourth subchapter dealing with the dispute from the discovery of the Falklands and the fifth subchapter examines the reasons and rationale that both countries used to fight the war and the last one set out as a time-line.

1-2-Geography of the Falkland Islands:

The Falkland Islands are an island group and United Kingdom overseas territory situated in the South Atlantic Ocean 480 km from the mainland coast of the South American continent and 14000 km from London. The Falkland Islands consists of approximately eight hundred small islands and inlets.

The geographic situation of the isles makes them an ideal base for the exploration of the Antarctic 1200 km away. The two main islands, East Falkland and West Falkland and they represent approximately 4,700 sq. miles of land (Figure 1). They are surrounded by 800 isles and rocks amounting to a total surface area of 12173 km² which is about the same at that of Northern Ireland. The isles cover a region of 257 km in length (East- West) by 136 km in width (North- South).

The largest city and capital is Port Stanley which lies just under 7,800 miles from the United Kingdom and 1,140 miles from Buenos Aires. About 800 miles south of the Falklands is South Georgia and a further 500 miles are the South Sandwich Islands. With rugged terrain and cliff-lined coastline, it is home to sheep farms and abundant bird life (Isaacs, 2000, p. 443). The climate is heavily influenced by the ocean, with high levels of humidity and strong winds. The economy depends mainly on farming and fishing, with plans for tourist development and hydrocarbons.



Figure 2: Map of the Falkland Islands

1-2-1-Population:

According to the latest Falkland Islands Census from 2012, the population in Falkland Islands consists of 2,562 permanent residents (excluding military personnel). 74.7 % of the total population lives in Stanley, the capital city. The fact that there were more than 600.000 sheep in the area determined profession of many citizens there sheep farming was, and still remains, the most important industry in the area. The area was profitable but in comparison to the state budget it still represented just a marginal and unimportant part. However, almost each of the islanders wanted to stay British which had been one of the reasons Great Britain had not left the islands before the Falklands conflict.

The main religion is Christianity and the official language is English. 61 % of the population is under the age of 45. As for their place of birth, 47% of the overall population was born in the Falkland Islands, 28% born in the UK, 10% in St. Helena, 6% in Chile and 8% born elsewhere. The Argentine living on the Islands constitute a small group of 1.3%. The population of the Islands at the time of the war was over 1,800 inhabitants, as recorded in the 1980 census. For the first time, the 2012 Census asked people to state their National Identity. As the official report states, “this was included to ascertain the cultural group that people most closely identify with (and need not be related to the person’s place of birth or citizenship)”. The results show that 57% of residents consider their national identity to be ‘Falkland Islander’; 24.6% consider themselves British; 9.8% St. Helenian and 5.3% Chilean. There were 89 respondents who described their national identity as “Other”. Regarding their place of birth, 47% of the overall population was born in the Falkland Islands, 28% born in the UK, 10% in St. Helena, 6% in Chile and 8% elsewhere.

Year	Population	Yearly % Change	Yearly Change	Sex ratio	Density (P/Km²)
2016	2,912	0.31	9	98.32	0.24
2015	2,903	0.42	12	98.28	0.24
2014	2,891	0.49	14	98.22	0.24
2013	2,877	0.49	14	98.14	0.24
2012	2,563	0.28	8	98.05	0.24

2011	2,855	-0.04	-1	97.97	0.23
2010	2,856	-0.38	-11	97.90	0.23
2005	2,942	2.12	61	97.74	0.24
2000	2,881	18.12	442	97.36	0.24
1995	2,439	22.38	446	96.78	0.20
1990	1,993	7.38	137	96.21	0.16
1985	1,856	0.00	0	96.14	0.15
1980	1,856	-3.18	-61	96.10	0.15

Table 1: Falkland Islands Population (1980 - 2016)

1-3-Historical Background of the Falkland Islands:

The dispute over the Falkland Islands certainly has a long and complicated history. The controversy, which has been going on for almost two centuries now, goes back to the discovery of the Islands themselves. The dispute was originally settled by the French forces in 1766 during the period of colonization, and the ownership of the islands fell into the hands of the British shortly afterwards. Later in 1780s though, the ownership then fell into the hands of the Spanish and became Argentine in December 1832. After a period of brief control, the islands fell into the British hands in January 1833, and have been in British control until now.

In 1690, Captain John Strong was on an expedition to Chile when he had to stop on the islands due to a fierce storm at sea. On landing, he named the islands after the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Falkland (Hastings and Jenkins 1983: 1; Freedman 2007: 3-8).

The Argentines are convinced that the Malvinas belong to their nation, but they were taken by force by the British colonialists in 1833. In the same way, many Britons are assertive about their sovereignty. This argument is combined with the principle of self-determination: the majority of the islanders are of British descent and they passionately desire to remain British.

As Margaret Thatcher declared during the war:

Argentina has, of course, long disputed British sovereignty over the islands. We have absolutely no doubt about our sovereignty, which has been continuous since 1833. Nor have we any doubt about the unequivocal wishes of the Falkland Islanders, who are British in stock and tradition, and they wish to remain British in allegiance. We cannot allow the democratic rights of the islanders to be denied by the territorial ambitions of Argentina (quoted in Barnett 1982: 28).

Great Britain, the former colonial power, engages in war in order to defend the self-determination of the islanders. Those critical of the Prime Minister, such as Anthony Barnett, claim that Margaret Thatcher was demagogically using the wishes of the islanders for her own benefit (Ibid.) The argument of self-determination is rejected by the Argentines who consider that, if their territory is colonised by a foreign power, the citizens who are colonizers cannot legally justify their possession of that land.

The Falklands War, as far as wars go, was small and unimpressive compared to the wars at the time such as the 1980's Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, the Iraq-Iran War and the Gulf War. The war only lasted for two months from 2 April 1982 when the Argentine forces landed on the islands to 14 June 1982 when the Argentine forces surrendered and retreated back to Argentina. As a result of the war, the British strengthened their military presence on the islands with one soldier to two civilians. Britain liberalized the economy of the Falklands and allowed more freedom of trade, becoming fully responsible for the foreign affairs and the military affairs of the Falklands under their new constitution in 1985. Currently the most recent event regarding the Falklands was in 2013 when the British held a referendum on the Falklands on the issue of sovereignty. It turned out that the Flatlanders voted unanimously to stay British rather than secede to the Argentines.

1-4-The Dispute Leading Up to the War:

The dispute over the Falkland Islands simmered in Argentina from 1833 on, becoming an integral part of the national image. The issue reemerged on an international scale in 1964 when the United Nations Committee on Decolonization added the islands to its list of "territories that ought to be decolonized." Additionally, the committee agreed to the Argentine demand that 'Malvinas' be added to the official description of the islands. The long-standing dispute over the islands received official recognition with the passing of Resolution 2065 in the United Nations' General Assembly, by a vote of 45 to zero, with 14 abstentions, on December 16, 1965.²⁸ The resolution invited:

The Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to proceed without delay with the negotiations recommended by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples with a view to finding a peaceful solution to the problem, bearing in the mind the provisions and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations and of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the interests of the population of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

The sovereignty dispute intensified during the 1960's when the Argentine government made several attempts to regain the islands. In 1964, a light plane landed at Port Stanley and the Argentine national flag was raised there. Four days later, Argentine nationalist carried out an attack on the British embassy in Buenos Aires. The same year, Buenos Aires demanded that the Falkland Islands should be decolonized. Consequently, the United Nation Committee on Decolonization added the Falklands to the list of territories that ought to be decolonized). Furthermore, the committee agreed to add 'Malvinas' to the official description of the islands.

The key point for the British was the question of self-determination. They claimed that first and foremost it was the islanders' wishes that had to be acknowledged. For most of them the situation was content and they did not seek any change in status (Freedman, 2005, p. 21).

The British position regarding self-determination has been based on the following statements.

- ✓ Firstly, self-determination is universally approved as a priority.
- ✓ Secondly, self-determination means "Let the people decide their destiny."
- ✓ Thirdly, "the people" means the inhabitants.
- ✓ Fourthly, the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands have affirmed their strong wish to remain under British sovereignty.
- ✓ Lastly, the maintenance of British jurisdiction over the Islands should be widely acknowledged (Dunnett, 1983, pp. 416-418).

Moreover, and following the same line of thought, Geoffrey Regan believes that the war could have been avoided if the British government had sent clear signals of a commitment with the Islands. Instead, it sent ambiguous messages giving the impression that it did not care about the fate of the Falklands (Regan 1987: 172-177; Cardoso et al. 1983: 37).

The following quote summarizes the thought of the Argentine politicians:

The problem has no political importance for the United Kingdom. England does not know what to do with the Falklands. They find them expensive and far away. Those 1,800 inhabitants give them endless trouble. [Consequently,] there will be no British counterattack if the [Argentine] military action is carried out 'cleanly' (Cardoso et al. 1983: 31-32; 54).

This is a key point since the UN has always considered the Falklands' case as a colonial situation, which needs to be solved with the participation of the local population. However, this has never been accepted by Argentina which wants government-level discussions with a commission formed by international members. Further debate took place in the 1960s and 1970s between the foreign missions of the two nations, but again this failed to come to any meaningful conclusion.

1-5-Reasons for War :

The conflict between Argentina and Great Britain over the Falkland Islands had a long history and the Falkland war had both historical and economic reason. As regards the reasons for going to war, the official version given by both nations was that it was a “just cause”. That is to say, both countries affirmed to have right over the possession of the islands since they believed the islands formed part of their national territory.

This section is divided in two parts. The first is deals with events that affected Argentine to invade the Falkland Islands. The second section examines British justifications for retaking the Falklands. Argentina calls Falkland Islands as Las Malvinas, and still holds a grudge over the loss in the war despite the fact that they were the invaders in 1982 and their defeat of the war eventually led to the fall of the military dictatorship in Argentina. Argentina believes that such remnants of colonialism should not exist in the 21st century. Another issue to look at is the issue of self-determination. Self-determination is the right to rule oneself and has been the driving force behind decolonization in the 20th century after the fall of the empires. As seen with the results in the 2013 referendum on the Falkland Islands sovereignty, ‘self-determination’ would have it that the islanders want to remain British rather than be Argentine. They have used their ‘self-determination’ to rule themselves. Currently the relationship between both countries is strained because of the situation on the Falkland Islands. Both countries are unwilling to give up their territory and both have claims to the islands although relations between both countries have improved ever since the end of the war. The situation right now is that Argentina’s president in 1998, Carlos Menem, said that Argentina would only use peaceful methods for the recovery of those islands even though their claim is as strong as ever. According to the United Nations Convention on Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS) there is an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) which is 370km from the coast out to sea in which the respective nation or territory is allowed to have full exploitation rights over all the natural resources in the area such as oil and fishing. In 2006 Argentina renewed their claim over the islands on fishing rights. The United Kingdom’s Prime Minister in 2009 responded with ‘nothing to discuss’ in regards to the issue. In 2010 the United Kingdom drilled for oil 100km to the north of the Islands, and though it did not break any laws regarding the UNCLOS and the EEZ, it created further tension. Currently the British forces have armed the Falkland Islands with one soldier to two civilians in ratio. This can be seen as militarily aggressive by the Argentines. So far, there have been no military operations carried out by these forces that have illegally entered the waters of Argentina, but as with any military presence, there is an increase in tension in the area.

1-5-1-Argentine Claims:

Argentine claims are made mostly upon the ruling of the United Nations Committee on Decolonization. However there are other claims to this all:

- ✓ It is a remnant of colonialism and should not be tolerated in the modern world.
- ✓ The British acquisition of the islands in 1833 was an act of force and illegal under international law.
- ✓ The geographic location of the islands.

1-5-2-British claims:

British Claims are mostly based on that of self-determination but there are other claims as well:

- ✓ Britain has effectively administered the islands ever since 1833
- ✓ Argentine maps printed between 1850 and 1884 did not show the islands as part of Argentina
- ✓ It is a democracy and the people have chosen to remain British
- ✓ The victory of the British over the Argentine invasion in 1982

1-6-THE WAR:

On 2nd April 1982 a BBC morning news bulletin announced:

The Falkland Islands – the British colony in the South Atlantic – has fallen. That’s what Argentina says. They claim its marines went to shore early this morning to capture key targets including the capital Port Stanley. (Chapman, 2007)

At about 11 p.m. on the night of April 1, 1982, the first Argentine military forces, 92 marines from the Amphibious Commando Company, landed on East Falkland near Lake Point. The next morning, the invasion elements began to land in force. At 930 a.m. on the morning of April 2, faced with an overwhelming Argentine force, the Governor of the Falklands, Rex Hunt, surrendered. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had received last minute intelligence reports of the impending invasion and “shortly after midnight on 1/2 April, orders began pouring out of the Ministry of Defence to warships, the Royal Marines and to squadrons of the Royal Air Force;” a task force was dispatched to the South Atlantic with all possible haste.

Later the day it became clear that a conflict was close. Margaret Thatcher summoned the Parliament and made a speech in which she not only denied the attitude of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, stated that Great Britain would not leave Falkland Islands under Argentine possession but also announced that British troops would sail towards the Falkland Islands. (Regan, 1996) In her speech she proclaimed that a foreign country has invaded a British sovereign territory for the first time in many years and revealed details about the British answer. She also compared the Argentine attack to the Falkland Islands to an army aggression in London. (Thatcher, 1993) Margaret Thatcher, once again, correctly assessed the mood of the British people and raised a wave of support among the population. Great Britain consolidated its position as a strong independent and proud country by having decided to defend their territory and Margaret Thatcher demonstrated why she was often nicknamed the Iron Lady. It was obvious that the Argentine junta had tried to distract attention from their domestic issues by this military conflict.



Figure 3. HMS Sheffield on fire after being hit by Exocet missile.

Fire between the two forces was first exchanged on April 25. British helicopters forced the Argentine submarine Santa Fe to beach on South Georgia.⁴⁹ Later, Royal Marines landed on the island and the Argentine defenders surrendered. The next dramatic moment in the conflict came during the afternoon of May 2. The British nuclear powered submarine HMS Conqueror torpedoed and sank the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano; this proud ship had been commissioned into the United States Navy as the USS Phoenix on October 3, 1938. Less than two and half months after the Argentine invasion, the Falkland Islands had been retaken by British forces.

Falklands War Timeline:

Timeline Description: The Falklands War (April-June 1982) was a short war between Argentina and Britain. Argentina invaded the British-controlled Falkland Islands, located off the coast of Argentina. Britain defended the islands and won the war.

1828 First recorded Argentine settlement in Malvinas.

1829 Argentinians arrest American ship 'Harriet' for illegal sealing. Ship sails to Buenos Aires. Encouraged by British, American consul refuses to accept Argentinian authority over Islands and dispatches warship USS Lexington to restore confiscated skins. Captain of Lexington, Silas Duncan, sacks Puerto Soledad, destroys Argentine guns and arrests inhabitants; declares Islands 'free of all governments' and leaves.

1833 British take Islands to prevent possible American seizure, and send Argentines back to mainland.

1964 Falkland position is debated at the UN committee on Decolonization.

1965 A UN General Assembly resolution calls for talks about the future of the Islands.

1966 Raid by Armed Peronist commandos who capture Port Stanley, only to later surrender.

1977 In November, Argentine naval manoeuvres provoke British naval response.

1979 Margaret Thatcher becomes Prime Minister in Britain.

1981 In December, Leopoldo Galtieri takes power in Argentina in a military coup.

1982 19 Mars Argentines land at Leith Harbour, South Georgia, and raise an Argentine flag.

2 Apr Beginning of operation Rosario, Argentina forces invaded Falklands.

3 Apr UN Security Council Resolution 502 demands cessation of hostilities and withdrawal of all Argentine forces from Falklands. Britain announced Task Force to be sent to retake islands.

7 Apr Britain declared Maritime Exclusion Zone(MEZ).

19 Apr Argentina rejects US Secretary of State Alexander Haig's peace proposal.

28 Apr Britain established a Total Exclusion Zone (TEZ) around the Falkland Islands.

2 May Submarine HMS Conqueror sinks battlecruiser General Belgano, killing 323 Argentines.

4 May British destroy HMS Sheffield is sunk by an exocet missile, with loss of 20 crew.

7 May TEZ extended to within 19 km of Argentine coastline. UN Secretary General announces peace initiative.

20 May UN peace initiative breaks down, ending real hope of diplomatic resolution.

21 May British troops land at San Carlos on East Falkland.

23 May British frigate Antelope hit by Argentina bounds and later sinks.

23-24 May Air attack lead to heavy losses for Argentines.

25 May HMS Coventry and Atlantic Conveyor sunk, the latter by an Exocet missile.

28 May Battles for Darwing and Goose Green.

8 Jun British landing craft Sir Galahad and Sir Tristan bombed.

11 Jun Naval bombardment of Stanley, three islanders killed.

13-14Jun Second phase of attack on port Stanley.

14 Jun Bridadier-General Mario Mérendez surrenders all Argentine forces in East and West Falklands.

20 Jun British forces declare end to hostilities.

12 Jul Britain announced hostilities over the Falklands are regarded as ended. Argentina makes no statement.

22 Jul TEZ lifted.

1-7-Conclusion:

All of these countries France, Spain and Britain were attracted by the Falklands richness of economic raw materials. Britain succeeded in taking over its sovereignty that state until 1982.

This chapter is an attempt to contextualise the Malvinas/Falklands conflict. It begins by providing a geographical socio-cultural description of the Islands; which is followed by a detailed history of the war, the events that led to it, as well as the possible reasons and main consequences. The chapter ends by timeline. All in all, the main aim of this chapter is to offer a thorough chronological as well as historical framework regarding the dispute, which hopefully will prove useful for a better understanding.

Chapter Two: The Falkland War

2-1- Introduction:

This chapter is divided into six subchapters. The first subchapter provides details of the British diplomatic responses that subsequently led to the invasion of the Falklands. The second subchapter deals with the invasion of the Falkland Islands explaining the British reaction to an imminent threat of war and who support Britain during that era. The third subchapter deals with the full British public opinion and the fall of Port Staley and the. The last subchapter, provides a detailed account of the Falkland Victory.

2-2- The British Diplomatic Responses:

When the Argentine invasion took place on the Falkland Islands, the British conservative government wanted to find a negotiated settlement with Argentina. Due to British problems at home, British public believed that the nation could not fight the war. Britain asked for supports from the United Nations and the United States. Britain had got supports from all countries in the issue of the Falklands. We want to know whether the British diplomatic responses was enough to end the conflict or not.

Until the day before the invasion the British did not expect a military aggression on the Falkland Islands and therefore there were virtually no preparations. They assumed that the whole South Georgia incident was just an attempt to test British sovereignty. The British did not want to escalate the situation, however, on 31 March they realised that the situation had gone beyond the point of peaceful solutions. The news caused a panic. The Prime Minister was advised by John Nott, the Minister of Defence, that any attempt to recover the Falklands would be impossible due to little military capability the British had after three years of cuts and it would therefore be hugely expensive. The Foreign Office suggested that London should negotiate with Buenos Aires and try to share the expensive responsibility for the Islands (Thatcher, 1983, p. 179).

In opposition to this view Sir Henry Leach, First Sea Lord, addressed Margaret Thatcher in the House of Commons, who was uncertain what to do about the invasion, had no doubts about a counter-invasion. He told her that the Falklands had to be recaptured: "Because if we do not, or if we pussyfoot in our actions and do not achieve complete success, in another few months we shall be living in a different country whose word counts for little" (Badsey, Havers & Grove, 2005, p. 70). He also explained that it would take three days to prepare a Task Force but three weeks to reach the South Atlantic. However, even with only two small carriers to provide air cover, HMS Hermes and HMS Invincible, the Falklands could be recaptured.

Mrs Thatcher called President Ronald Reagan requesting his immediate intervention with General Galtieri. She explained that an Argentine invasion might be inevitable and said that Britain could not acquiesce in any Argentine occupation (Thatcher, 1996, p. 130). They were friends who had cultivated a "special relationship" between Britain and the United States.

The British Ambassador in Washington Sir Nicholas Henderson met the Secretary of State Alexander Haig to ensure quick response from the White House (Thatcher, 1996, p. 130).

After President Galtieri refused to negotiate and was determined to continue with his actions, the British government ceased the diplomatic relations with Argentina and imposed economic sanctions. The Prime Minister created a War Cabinet to assist in planning and ordered the Chief of Naval Staff to form the Task Force named "Operation Corporate" regardless of whether it should sail or not (Figure 1).



Figure 4: Operation Corporate.

2-3- The Invasion of the Falkland Islands:

The aim of this subchapter is to provide a contextualization of the historical and political situation of the invasion shortly before and after the military assault.

The Governor Rex Hunt did not receive the message about impending attack until 1 April at 3 pm local time. The Falkland garrison of Royal Marines, known as Naval Party 8901, consisted of just 68 Marines and 11 sailors from HMS Endurance. Nine members of the old detachment had been sent with Lieutenant Keith Mills on board HMS Endurance to South Georgia to observe Argentine soldiers based on the island. Major Mike Norman, senior commander of the British garrison, had had little time to organize an effective defence of Port Stanley with a small number of Marines at his disposal. He knew that he would be hopelessly outnumbered. However, they had done the best they could to give the Argentines ‘a bloody nose’ (Eddy et al., pp. 8-9). According to instruction from London he expected the Argentines to land at Pembroke beach which proved to be a wrong decision.

The Argentines arrived before midnight on 1 April. The destroyer ARA Santísima Trinidad anchored three miles south of Port Stanley near Mullet Creek and disembarked special naval forces. Their task was to capture the British Marine Barracks and the Government House. Early in the morning, the submarine Santa Fe landed close to York Point disembarking the tactical divers group. They marked Orange beach for main landing of an amphibious force. At about 4.30 a.m. on 2 April 1982, Buzo Tactico, the Argentine Special Forces, landed at Mullet Creek. Operation Rosario (Figure 2), the Argentine code name for the invasion of the Falkland Islands, started (RAF – The Falkland Islands Campaign, n.d.).

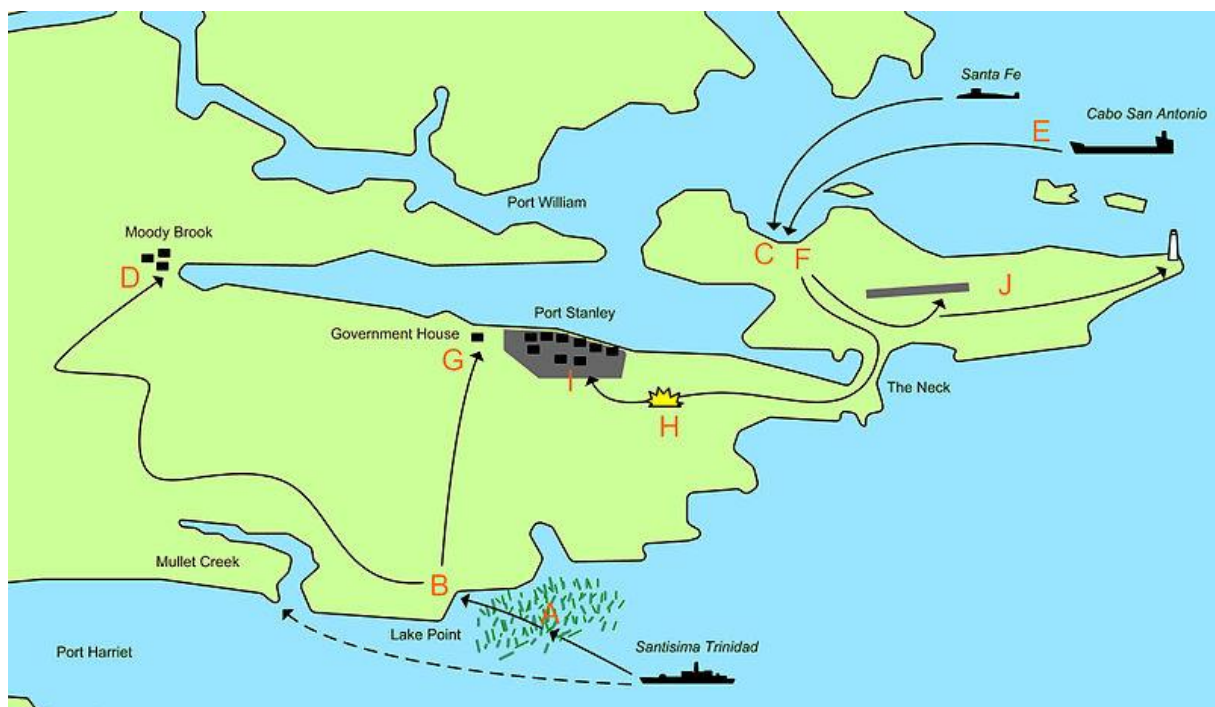


Figure 5. Operation Rosario.

By 6am the Argentine Special Forces team attacked the Marine Barracks at Moody Creek, but the Royal Marines had already left. Another Special Force team went directly to Government House. Around 6.30am, the first some of 20 armoured amphibious landing vehicles LVTP-7 ‘Amtrack’ landed from Carbo San Antonio at York Bay and advanced towards Port Stanley. Norman ordered his troops to retreat to help the small team defending the headquarters at government House where was the Governor and his military advisor Major Gary Noott. They managed to repulse the initial Argentine attack. The Buzo Tactico repeatedly attempted to storm the building. During one attack three Argentinians were wounded and other three captured (RAF – The Falkland Islands Campaign, n.d.). By 8.30am the Argentines seized the airstrip and cleared it of vehicles that had been deliberately parked there by the British to obstruct the runway. Soon afterwards, Lockheed C-130 Hercules transport aircrafts loaded with reinforcement started arriving (Watson & Dunn, 1984, p. 138).

When Rex Hunt was informed that the armoured force was advancing and would be soon at the Government House it was suggested that Hunt negotiate with the Argentines. Governor Hunt met Admiral Busser, the Argentine commander, to discuss the situation. Admiral Busser warned that civilians might be hurt if the fighting continued. Therefore, Governor Hunt ordered a surrender. Shortly after, the Argentine flag flew over the Islands for the first time since 1833. There was no loss of British life (Freedman, 2007, pp. 8-9). Rex Hunt, civil servants and the Royal Marines were flown first to Montevideo, Uruguay, and then to Great Britain. The members of the NP 8901 were invited to join 42 Commando and later be able to fly back to the Islands.



Figure 6: Map of the South Atlantic Theatre of Operations

2-3-1- The British Reaction to the Invasion:

Back in London, after Margaret Thatcher received a telegram from Port Stanley that confirmed the Argentine invasion, an emergency meeting of the cabinet gave approval to form a Task Force to recover the Falklands. Leach, responsible for forming the Task Force, gave direct control of the fleet to Admiral John Fieldhouse (Thatcher, 1993, p. 179).

Meanwhile in Buenos Aires, President Galtieri informed the Argentine nation of the success of the invasion in a short broadcast. Later in the day, he was greeted by a crowd of more than 200 000 in the Plaza de Mayo. The next day, the United Nation's Security Council adopted Resolution 502 demanded by Sir Anthony Parsons, the British Ambassador to the UN. The Resolution demanded immediate withdrawal of all Argentine forces from the Falkland Islands, immediate cessation of hostilities and required both the Argentine and British governments to seek a diplomatic solution (Security Council Resolution, 1982, n.d.).

On 10 of April, Great Britain also received political support from the Commonwealth of Nations and the European Economic Community. Although it was a significant victory it did very little to rectify the situation. In the week that followed both governments started to deploy large military forces to the area of the Falkland Islands.

On 5 April, both aircraft carriers HMS Hermes and HMS Invincible left Portsmouth in the company of escort vessels. On 9 April the ocean liner SS Canberra left Southampton with 3 Commando Brigade aboard and on 12 April the ocean liner Queen Elizabeth 2 with 5th Infantry Brigade on board headed for the Falkland Islands. By the end of April, the whole Task Force consisted of more than 4,000 ground troops, 3 nuclear powered submarines and 65 ships: 43 Royal Navy vessels, 22 Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships and 62 merchant ships (Hrbek, 1999, p.75). The first Argentine troops to join the invasion forces on the Islands were 8 Regiment that flew to Port Stanley on 6 April. By the end of the month, three brigades of front-line army troops and significant marine forces were deployed (Middlebrook, 2003, pp. 47-56).

Admiral of the Fleet Sir John Fieldhouse was the Royal Navy Commander-in-Chief Fleet who was technically responsible for planning and direction of Operation 'Corporate' but in actuality the Flag Officer 1st Flotilla, Rear Admiral John 'Sandy' Woodward was the Task Group Commander at sea who led the Operation to recover the Falkland Islands. The Argentine forces were commanded by Brigadier General Mario Méndez (Anderson, 2002, pp. 27, 29). Due to bad Britain's preparations and plans to decommission HMS Endurance, the head of the diplomatic service was under pressure. On 5 April, the Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington and two junior Foreign Office ministers resigned. Francis Pym was appointed as a new Foreign Secretary.

Max Hasting and Simon Jerkins mention that Mrs Thatcher was not happy about the choice as she had already fired him during her first year in office for his "indefinite point of view". However, he was the only candidate without a major reshuffle.

2-3-2-Supports for Britain:

First, Margaret Thatcher consolidated power within her cabinet and braced it for war and next, she focused on the international supporters. There she addressed the United Nations and the United States. When the Argentine invasion took place in South Georgia, Britain reacted toward this incident through talks and discussions in both London and Buenos Aires. The invasion developed the Argentine threat to Britain, and resulted a strong supports from the United Nations, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), EEC (European Economic Community) and many other countries. By contrast Argentina was supported only by some Latin American countries, and faced obstacles to get the OAS support (Organization of American States) (Smith 20).

On 31st March 1982, Britain started getting a diplomatic solutions. The British ambassador Sir Nicholas Henderson met Haig in Washington, and Thatcher called the president Reagan in order to end the dispute diplomatically. President Galtieri of Argentina totally refused the British offer and continued his actions. So, Reagan failed in his role. Over the next month, the United States of America was in trouble, because it was difficult to choose between Britain, which was considered as a European Ally and Argentina which was a Latin American Ally (Smith 20). On 3rd April, the United Nations Security Council passed "Resolution 502", which called for an immediate withdrawal of the Argentine forces from the Falklands. Also that Resolution ordered both sides to get a peaceful solution through negotiations. On 10th April, Britain had gained another strong support from the EEC (European Economic Community), this latter declared an economic sanctions against Argentina. By the end of the month, the United States made its decision in which it preferred to support the United Kingdom in this issue, and it was followed by many countries (Chant 14).

2-4- The British Public Opinion:

After the recapture of South Georgia, the British could focus attention on the Falkland Islands. Diplomatic negotiations and attempts to reach a peaceful solution failed. Margaret Thatcher had committed to war and she needed to make it a popular one. Nonetheless, the public did not feel that Thatcher had handled the crisis well and seemed hesitant to support military action. According to polling conducted on 14 April, 34% Britons were satisfied with the government and 58% dissatisfied. Thatcher's personal poll numbers were not satisfactory either, since she was supported by only 40% of voters. On 24 April, only 33% of Britons would have supported decision to: "Bomb Argentinian military and naval bases" (The Falkland War –Panel Survey, n.d.). In order to win support for war she sent the Governor Rex Hunt and Royal Marines, who had been on the Falklands, on tour around Great Britain while she offered interviews to the BBC and the press that favoured her. All to convince the British public that the war was important and inevitable.

2-4-1- The British Common People:

The levels of public support for the Falklands War were consistently high. It was in contrast with other wars that Britain fought. When the Argentine invasion took place on the Falklands, the British people did not accept to send the Task Forces, that was due to the internal economic and social situation. Whereas, when the war begun and the Argentine Junta was destroyed, a Seventy-Six percent of those questioned people believed that even the high financial costs and the death of 255 British serviceman, it was correct to send the Task Forces (Denning 14).

The table below from Ipsos MORI poll demonstrates the level of the war support:

	14 Apr 1982	20-21 Apr 1982	23-24 Apr 1982	3-5 May 1982	25-26 May 1982
	%	%	%	%	%
YES	67	65	65	72	89
NO	24	25	26	22	10
DON'T KNOW	09	10	09	06	01

Table 2: the Level of the War Support

Analyses: The table above from Ipsos MORI demonstrates the British public supports of the Falklands War. It is clear that the British public supported the war against Argentina. The percentage reached 89% for Yes in May 1982, in opposite it was 10% for No. We can say that the British public support was increasing between April and May 1982. So they believed that sending the Task Forces was a correct decision.

2-4-2- Self-Determination (the Falklanders):

Self-determination became the internationally accepted way of decolonization. The Falklands islanders always considered themselves British citizens. They were the second largest ethnicity within the Falkland Islands, making about 30% of population. The Islanders refused to be under the dictatorial Argentine control. They made their choice because the British government granted all of them a full British citizenship, as a citizens of the overseas territory (Dunnet). The Argentine Nation ratifies its legitimate and imprescriptible sovereignty over the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich islands and the corresponding maritime and insular areas, as being an integral part of the national territory. The recovery of those territories and the full exercise of sovereignty, respecting the way of life of their inhabitants, and in conformity with the principles of International Law, constitute a permanent and unrenounceable objective of the Argentine people. The ratification of the Argentinian Constitution means that the only acceptable outcome of the dispute is the return of the Islands as well as South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands to Argentina.¹³⁶ Thus, in 2009, Argentina requested talks concerning sovereignty but the UK rephrased their statement that the sovereignty issue had closed with British victory in 1982. As a reaction to the UK's refusal, Argentina passed a law reclaiming the Falkland Islands, which the UK immediately protested.

2-5- The Fall of Port Stanley:

Meanwhile, the British forces started to move inland towards Port Stanley in three parts.

- ✓ First, 42 Commando were to fly by helicopter to Mount Kent. Mount Kent, the highest peak around Port Stanley, was a strategically important position. After a short firefight they defeated the Argentine force on 31 May.
- ✓ Second, 45 Commando and 3 Para yomped northwards across the island to Douglas and Teal Inlet areas.
- ✓ Third, 5 Commando Brigade by ships, RFA Galahad and RFA Sir Tristram, to Fitzroy. Unfortunately, both ships were bombed by the Argentinians killing over 50 soldiers and many more injured (Hrbek, 1999, p. 171; Luscombe, 2016).

On 11 June, the assaults on Port Stanley began. 3 Commando Brigade supported by several Royal Navy ships launched attacks on Mount Harriet, Two Sisters and Mount Longdon. The attacks lasted three nights and were some of the fiercest battles of the war. On 14 July, the British forces reached the outskirts of Port Stanley. Despite the Argentines forces still had nearly 8,000 troops and supplies their morale was low. Consequently, the Argentinians flew white flags from buildings in town and a ceasefire was declared. General Menendez formally surrendered to General Moore at the evening the same day (Regan & Grasa, 1989, pp. 172-173; Hastings & Jenkins, 1983, pp. 342-343).

Margaret Thatcher made a speech to the House of Commons that Argentina had formally surrendered and that the Governor, Rex Hunt, would return to the Falklands as soon as was practicable (Hrbek, 1999, p. 200).

2-6- Falkland Victory:

The main operation to retake the Falkland Islands was completed on 14 June after 74 days of fighting. The British forces lost thirty-five aircraft, nine vessels, 225 British personnel were killed and 777 injured. The Argentine forces lost 117 aircraft, four ships, 649 personnel were killed and 1068 injured. Also, three Falkland Islanders died during the hostilities. (Moro, 1989, p. 323).

On 14 June, the British Task Force began returning to Great Britain. As Hasting and Jenkins describe, this was an endless celebration of the welcoming of ships bringing the new heroes back home, with enthusiastic capacity crowds gathering in naval bases of Portsmouth, Southampton and Plymouth (1983, p. 315).

The victory was a triumph for Margaret Thatcher. In the following days she was receiving congratulations from around the world. Her popularity rose to become one of the most popular British Prime Ministers and the Conservative Party won the following year's general elections. The impact of the Falklands war on the domestic politics of Margaret Thatcher will be discussed in the next chapter. In 1983, Margaret Thatcher visited the Falkland Islands. Furthermore, the Falkland islanders had their full British Citizenship restored.

The situation was different in Argentina. General Galtieri resigned as the president of Argentina on 17 June and was later, along with other members of the junta, arrested. After the 1983 general election, Argentina return to a democratic government.



Figure 7: A Famous Picture of a Soldier Bringing the Union Back

7- Conclusion:

At the end we can say that Britain responded first diplomatically and took the opportunity. Britain got supports from the United Nations and many other countries, but the Argentine government refused the United Nations' decisions. Although Britain was suffering from a strong decline of its powers, the British government decided to retake the Falklands. Britain found that diplomatic responses did not work with Buones Aires. It turned its interests to another attempts which were considered more successful than the first one. Thatcher believed that things that are taken by force could not be retaken without force. Also Thatcher and her decision was successful in turning the British public attention abroad. They forget about their internal problems and supported Thatcher in recovering their national pride.

Chapter Three: The Impact of the Falklands War on Margaret Thatcher's Politics

3-1- Introduction:

When the Falklands War ended with a victory for Britain, it became the greatest achievement for Margaret Thatcher. The victory led to a new era in the British history. Britain got its self-confidence again after many decades of post-colonial decline. The Falklands victory also considered as a most significant event during the leadership of Margaret Thatcher. There were many changes appeared during the Post-Falklands period. The Falklands War had a strong impact on Britain, especially on Margaret Thatcher's politics.

The aim of the last chapter is to discuss a process of bilateral negotiations and the impact of the Falklands war on the politics of Margaret Thatcher. The chapter is composed of three subchapters.

The first subchapter deals with the new term that appeared in Post-Falklands period which was "the Falklands Factor". Then we are going to analyse the impacts of the media during the Falklands War, whether it helped Thatcher or not.

The second subchapter is dealing with the main impacts of the Falklands War on the British politics, analysing the political situation of Great Britain in late 1970's and Margaret Thatcher becoming Prime Minister to the outbreak of the Falkland war. The last section provides political context throughout the war and the last subchapter explains the aftermath of the Falkland war.

3-2- What is "the Falklands Factor" ?

The Falklands Factor was defined in the British history as the most decisive factor in why the unpopular British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher went on to get the landslide majority of 1983 general elections. The polls showed that the strong public support had begun to shift decisively for the conservatives, especially when the British Naval Forces sailed to recapture the Falkland Islands (Burns p16).

"The Falklands Factor" was considered as the most elements that broke the Alliance during the 1983 general elections. According to Thatcher : the Falklands Factor helped the conservative government to get back the supporters who had defected their party and beliefs. "The Falklands factor" was the main reason that caused the strong shift of joining the conservative party again. Due to the so-called "Falklands Factor", the conservative government and her leader Thatcher became more powerful and allowed them to continue their programs (Thatcher 100).

3-3- Did the media help Thatcher in her politics ?

Margaret Thatcher had a good relationship with the media, due to her handling with it. The media was demonstrated that it was the strongest helper of Thatcher and the conservative government. For instance, on 23th April, The SUN was published the opinion of Margaret Thatcher about the Falklands War. Then, an article about bombing Argentina. After that, it published another article which was used by the Labour pacifist Wedgwood Benn, who requested the return of the Task Forces (Monagham 19). Despite that there was a great support of the media, there were other who were against Margaret Thatcher and the government policies. That view could be found in the GUARDIAN, which accused the conservative government of pursuing gun-boat diplomacy in the cause of politics of the national pride. There was an attack by Benn and his supporters on the media. Also the Irish were strongly opposed the war. The Irish Defense Minister accused Thatcher's government as the aggressor. Despite that, the polls showed that there was a strong public support of the government's position. The rate of approval was reached Seventy to Eighty percent throughout the entire conflict. The people preferred to use the force, because they believed that only military force could gain them victory (Haney 6-8).



Figure 8: Nicknamed the “Iron Lady,” Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013) served longer than any other UK prime minister in the 20th century.

3-4- The Falklands Impact on British Politics:

3-4-1- Before the War:

Margaret Thatcher, leader of the Conservative Party and known as the "Iron Lady", became Prime Minister after winning the 1979 general election was the first woman to hold office. The former Labour Party government led by James Callaghan had been extremely unpopular leading to the 1978 ‘Winter of Discontent’⁶ and causing union strikes due to high unemployment and the ongoing recession. As a new minister, she demanded greater independence of the individual form of state, a reduction in the government’s interference in the economy, flexible labour market, privatization of the state-owned companies, reductions in expenditures on social services, health care, education and housing and limited the power

of trade unions. Within the government, she planned to cut nearly 100,000 civil-service jobs within five years (Campbell, 2003, p. 173) All these measures caused a severe recession of the economy. As Pearce and Stewart claim “the tight fiscal policies and very high interest rates were maintained through the period 1979-82 and Britain experienced its fiercest recession since 1931” (1992, p. 523). She later noted that in 1979 “the forces of error, doubt and despair were so firmly entrenched in British society ...that overcoming them would not be possible without some measure of discord” (Thatcher, 1993, p. 19). The conservative policies, political philosophy, and leadership style of Margaret Thatcher later became known as Thatcherism.

Thatcher’s government experienced hard times. Unemployment rose by 4% from 6% to 10% within the first year, reaching 11% at the beginning of the Falklands war, and inflation hitting 13% leading to even higher unemployment (Rogers, 2013). At the beginning of the term Thatcher's opinion poll showed that she had support from almost 50% of the British public. This figure was continuously falling. By the end of 1980, Thatcher's approval rating fell to 23% (Margaret Thatcher: Poll Rating Trends – SlideShare, n.d.) As Thatcher commented herself "to turn from the euphoria of election victory to the problems of the British economy was to confront the morning after the night before" (Thatcher, 1993, p. 38). As the matter of fact, the morning lasted for three years.

In order to reduce expenditure a major review of the United Kingdom's defence policy was introduced by Secretary of State for Defence, John Nott. The 1981 Defence White Paper proposed extensive cuts to the British Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Navy. At the 1980 Conservative Party conference Thatcher had to face criticism from the so-called "wets"⁷ who were openly conspiring against her. By 1982, the public was losing faith in the Tory party and its leader. Many polls found Conservatives well behind the new Social Democratic Party and the Labour Party (Jenkins, 2013). It was believed that Margaret Thatcher might be a one-term prime minister.

Lengthy negotiations over the Falkland Islands between Argentina and Great Britain continued and became more intensive after General Galtieri succeeded to the Presidency of Argentina in December 1981. The possibility of a potential sale-and-leaseback of the Falklands to Argentina was led by Nicolas Ridley, one of Thatcher’s most trusted ministers. For Britain, aiming to reduce country's expenses, leaseback was an acceptable solution. Argentina would be given nominal sovereignty but the British would maintain administration of the Island for 99 years until the final handover. Both sides agreed to it, however, some members of Parliament and a majority of the Islanders categorically refused. They considered themselves British and they wished to remain so. The Prime Minister reiterated that the wishes of the Islanders were paramount (Freedman, 2005, pp. 113-123).

As it was mentioned in the first and second chapter, before 1982, hardly anyone in Great Britain knew or was concerned about the archipelago in the South Atlantic. Ironically, Great Britain, the former colonial power was willing to engage in war in order to maintain the self-determination of the Islanders. Anthony Barnett is convinced that Margaret Thatcher intentionally used the wishes of the Islanders for her own benefit (Barnett, 1982, p. 280)

Thatcher could hardly be found solely responsible for the invasion but according to Simon Jenkins it was unquestionably the consequence of her style of rule and one-track approach to policy. She had failed to defend the Falklands when she ignored pleas from the Foreign Office to reinforce the defence of the Islands. In fact, HMS Endurance, the Royal Navy's icebreaker ship and only permanent presence in the South Atlantic, was to be withdrawn due to the White Paper (2013).

In addition, negotiation process faltered, the British Nationality Act 1981 depriving many Islanders of their rights to full British citizenship was announced along with the intended closure of the British Antarctic Survey base on South Georgia. All these steps assured Argentina that Britain lost interest in the Islands. Geoffrey Regan claims that the war could have been avoided if Thatcher's government had clearly demonstrated its commitment to the Falklands. Instead, it sent contradictory signals to Argentines (Regan, 1987, pp. 172-177). The summary from the Argentine point of view

The problem has no political importance for the United Kingdom. England does not know what to do with the Falklands. They find them expensive and far away. Those 1,800 inhabitants give them endless trouble. [Consequently,] there will be no British counterattack if the [Argentine] military action is carried out 'cleanly' (Cardoso, Kirschbaum & Kooy, 1987, pp. 31-32, 54)

When the Argentine invasion seemed inevitable, Margaret Thatcher relied on her most significant international relationship, with the President of the United States, Ronald Reagan. They had a close personal relationship for several years. They both agreed on the philosophy of free market, low taxes, limited government, distrust of Communism and determination to win the Cold War with the Soviet Union (Smith, 1991, p. 68).

On 31 March Mrs. Thatcher called President Reagan in order to find a diplomatic solution to end the dispute. Surprisingly, Regan's administration hesitated to actively support Britain in the conflict. Firstly, it was due to British colonial aspirations and secondly, President Reagan maintained a good relationship with Argentina due to Galtieri's strong anti-communist stand and principle of stemming the expansion of Communism in South America. Secretary of State Alexander Haig attempted to mediate the dispute between London and Buenos Aires peacefully but failed (Smith, 2009, p. 20).

On the other hand, the American Secretary of Defence, Caspar Weinberger, confirmed "We did provide assistance. To my mind it was a very, very clear and simple case.... You had a corrupt military dictatorship from Argentina on one side. You had our oldest and strongest ally and a member of NATO on the other side (Miller Center, 2005). Furthermore, John F. Lehman, the Secretary of Navy in Reagan's administration, interprets it as "a textbook case of the special relationship in action. It was an example of Britain and America working side-by-side, epitomized by the close bond between Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher" (Lehman, 2012). However, Alexander Haig, Francis Pym and Ronald Reagan firmly deny any support existing before 31 April (Freedman, 2005, p. 71; Nott, Leach, Pym & Eagleburger, 1997).

Regarding to UN Resolution 2065 both countries were urged to proceed with negotiations bearing in mind the interest of Islanders (Rauschnig et al., 1997, p. 180). The British government attached paramount importance to the wishes of the Islanders, however, the Argentine government explicitly stated that they placed no importance to the wishes since they considered the Falkland Islands an integral part of Argentina and therefore their wish was to remain Argentines. Besides, they claimed that minority groups in Argentina had enjoyed excellent conditions and assured the Islanders they had nothing to fear as their interests would be fully protected by the Argentine government. From the beginning, Argentines spoke about defending 'interests' while the British spoke about defending 'wishes' (Calvert, 1982, p.38) President Galtieri categorically refused the British offers The long-standing sovereignty talks had begun back in the 1960's considering wishes of the Islanders.

3-4-2- During the War:

From the moment the invasion was imminent, Margaret Thatcher was fully aware that she might face humiliation and potential resignation if she failed. By coincidence, the cautious Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Terence Lewin, was out of the country and the first to assist the Prime Minister was First Sea Lord, Sir Henry Leach, who was able to convince Mrs. Thatcher about the possibility and need to launch a counterattack. Henry Leach was critical of Nott's navy cuts and he saw the war as an opportunity to regain the credibility of the Royal Navy. The next day, the Prime Minister announced her intentions in the Commons and the Royal Navy started preparation "to make ready to sail in 48 hours" (Hastings & Jenkins, 1983, pp. 11, 106).

The Prime Minister created a War Cabinet to assist in planning. She found herself in a difficult situation. President Reagan hesitated to support Britain militarily due to US interests in Latin America. One day before the invasion, on 1 April, he urged Margaret Thatcher to reconsider any decision provoking war (Saltoun-Ebin & Chaipman, 2011). He explained, "It's a very difficult situation for the United States because we are friends with both of the countries engaged in this dispute" (Smith, 1991, p.86). In order to avoid an armed conflict Alexander Haig began shuttle diplomacy between London and Buenos Aires. At the beginning of talks the British government firmly stated that any negotiations about the future of the Falklands could be entered only after the Argentine troops had been withdrawn but it was resolutely opposed by the junta (Henderson, 1987, p. 88; Haig, 1984, p. 272). After Haig's shuttle diplomacy failed, Peruvian President Fernando Belaunde Terry submitted a five-point plan for a peaceful solution at the beginning of May (Freedman, 2007, pp. 272-273). Unfortunately, the sinking of the Belgrano caused the peace proposal to fail.

Margaret Thatcher was convinced that only complete victory could protect her reputation. Paul Rogers explains that not only did Thatcher needed to win the war but also did the British army as they could not afford another failure like one in the Suez Crisis in 1956. To achieve this, she needed a war and it needed to be a popular one. As the crisis progressed poll numbers showed that the British public opinion of the Prime Minister went down by 27% and only 12% of Britons replied that their opinion went up (The Falklands War - Panel Survey, n.d.).

Regan's administration realised that Haig's shuttle diplomacy failed and eventually, on 30 April, decided to support Britain and stop arms sales to Argentina remaining open to further negotiations. Nonetheless, the British sinking of Argentine warship, General Belgrano, on 2 May ceased any further possibility for peaceful discussion as war began. The sinking of Belgrano outside of the Total Exclusion Zone with the loss of 368 soldiers was the most controversial decision of the Falklands war. Not only did the international community see it as unnecessary use of force but also the British public. Poll numbers from the end of April showed that 76% of Britons were satisfied with the way of the government was handling the situation in the Falkland Islands but after sinking of the Belgrano the number decreased to 71% (The Falklands War - Panel Survey, n.d.).

As Paul Rogers explains, "Thatcher's government had sought a military victory rather than a diplomatic settlement after Argentina had occupied the Falklands Islands" (20007, p. 25) and Anthony Barnett is convinced that the Belgrano was attacked "quite illegally" (1982, p. 24). At a news conference held on 4 May, John Nott defended the attack, "Our first duty is to protect our men, the General Belgrano was a threat to our men, and therefore it was quite correct that it was attacked". However, he did not specify the threat (Apple, 1982). On the other hand, after the loss of Belgrano the Argentine Navy withdrew to the safety of Argentina's territorial waters and relied entirely on its Air Force (Brown, 1987, p. 139).

Two days later, HMS Sheffield was struck by an Argentine Exocet missile killing 20 men. The sinking of HMS Sheffield was the first major loss for the British during the Falkland war and the first British warship to be lost in 37 years. As a result, the British public support began to raise from 59% up to 80% on 23 May (Worcester, 1991, p. 87).



Figure 9: HMS Sheffield

The landing of the British Amphibious Task Group on the Falkland Islands began on 21 May advancing to Port Stanley. Regan's administration wanted to avoid humiliation of the junta. On 31 May, President Reagan called the Prime Minister to Downing Street at 11.30 pm London time. According to John Coles, Thatcher's private secretary, he told her, "The best chance for peace was before complete Argentine humiliation" and he added, "As the UK now had the upper hand militarily, it should strike a deal now." Thatcher interrupted the president, "Britain had not lost precious lives in battle and sent an enormous task force to hand over the Queen's islands to a contact group" (Biles, n.d.). On 14 June the Argentines 74 days after the Falkland Islands were invaded leaving 255 British, 649 Argentines and 3 civilian Islanders dead.

3-4-3- The Aftermath:

The British victory in the Falklands war represented the most significant achievement for Margaret Thatcher. After decades of decline caused by crumbling of the British Empire, Great Britain regained its self-confidence, restored a national pride and earned respect. Nevertheless, Britain was still facing persistent problems. As Thatcher announced in her speech: Britain had been in war, "but it is not yet at peace" (Speech to Conservative Rally at Cheltenham, n.d.).

The impact of the war on Mrs Thatcher was enormous. Previously, she was unpopular and close to resignation. Afterwards, she became a global celebrity and a changed leader receiving messages of congratulations from around the world. As noted in the previous chapter, the polls from June showed rising public support of the British government which continued after the war ended. Opinion polls from 21-23 June revealed that the opinion of 45% Britons of Margaret Thatcher during the conflict had "gone up" (The Falklands War - Panel Survey, n.d.). Margaret Thatcher was able to use the victorious war to establish her public persona as well as secured her position within the Conservative Party and eventually win the 1983 general election. The Tories won the biggest landslide since 1945 with 397 seats to Labour's 209 (1983 General election result summary, n.d.). Margaret Thatcher was confident to use "the Falklands spirit" to continue with her political and economic measures.

When in 1984 the National Union of Mineworkers began a nationwide strike to preclude the closing of allegedly unproductive coal mines. She adamantly refused to satisfy the union's demands. Many British believed that Thatcher was to save the country as she did with the Argentine invasion. Eventually, the miners returned to work without reaching a single compromise (Lehmberg & Heyck, 2002, p. 300; Blundell, 2008, pp. 121-125).

After the war, Secretary Nott's White Paper review reducing the Royal Navy's expenditures was abandoned and replacements for many of the ships and helicopters were ordered. Margaret Thatcher presented the British Nuclear strategy to the United Nation and began developing the nuclear deterrent. The plans of conservative government were widely supported despite Labour's opposition (Thatcher, 1993, p. 100).

The victory also strengthened the relationship Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. Their alliance remained strong throughout the 1980s and played a key role in opposition to the USSR in the Cold War and contributed to 'the warming of relations' and eventually led to the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. On the other hand, a British defeat would have had a dramatic effect on the 'special relationship' between the Powers. (Till et al., 2005, 86).

In Argentina, the dictatorship of the military junta was overthrown, Leopoldo Galtieri was arrested and a democratically elected government was restored in 1983 which also contributed to the popularity of Margaret Thatcher. In 1982 the British Nationality (Falkland Islands) Amendment Act was passed which enabled all Falkland Islanders to acquire full British citizenship and in 1985 a new constitution guaranteeing self-government was agreed by the British (Watts, 2003, p. 10)

3-5- RESEARCH:

A survey was created as a part of this undergraduate thesis in order to discover knowledge and opinions of British people about the Falklands war. The survey was made as an online questionnaire. An online survey creator was used as a tool. A link with the questionnaire was sent to the participants and their answers were visible for me.

The questionnaire consisted of five questions with one correct answer, two opinion question about war as such and the Falklands War, one question about their political preferences and an optional open question. Insufficient funds to secure both a high number of participants and their random selection basically determined it as a qualitative research. Nevertheless, if the number of participants had been considerably higher the first 8 questions could have been applied even for a quantitative research. The 9th question was optional and it was an open question.

Participants were recruited from several sources. Seven of them were from “conversation exchange” sites. Four people were living in the Czech Republic but they had the British origin. The rest was their friends or people from a social site. 13 women and 7 men participated in the survey. Ages of the respondents were between 22 and 46 but there were only two respondents older than 28 years and four respondents older than 25 years. I assured all the respondents that they would be anonymous unless they did not want to. I chose this precaution to make them feel free in their answer and to worry about the results. This was mainly important for the part dealing with their knowledge but it was also important for sections of the questionnaire. Before seeing the results I created an assumption of the research.

The hypotheses of the assumption were that younger generation would have difficulties with history question. I also expected that those who had voted in the last general elections would have better knowledge about the Falklands War.

Results:

In question number one I asked the respondents “When did the Falklands War take place?”. The options were a) in 1982, b) in 1984 and c) in 1986. The majority of respondents either knew or guessed the correct answer, 12 of them, 60%, chose a). 5 respondents, 25%, chose the second option and the rest 15%, 3 respondents, chose the last option, in 1986.

This question was followed by an easier one in which the questionnaire required an answer for the following question: “What function did Margaret Thatcher have during the conflict?”. The options were General, Defence Secretary and Prime Minister. The order of the options was randomized there. The answers show that the British know their recent history well at least in terms of their Prime Ministers. All the answers, 100%, were correct and said that Margaret Thatcher had been the Prime Minister during the conflict.

The next question asked the respondents about the country which had fought against Great Britain in the conflict. The expectations before seeing the results were that the percentage of correct answers in this question would be slightly higher than the percentage of the correct answers in the previous question, which obviously was not possible due to perfection of the respondents in question number 2. However, it was considered the easiest question of all in this questionnaire and 15% of wrong answers might be regarded as a slight surprise. Three respondents regarded Iraq as the country which Great Britain had fought against in the Falklands War. All of the wrong answers were collected from students of age 23 or younger and none of them answered the first question right.

The question number 4 was “What was the location of the Falklands War?”. It did not appear to the respondents until they finished the first three questions so they could not guess the answer for the previous question from the offered locations which were North Atlantic, South Atlantic and North Pacific. The order of the answers was randomized. 5 participants of the survey, 25%, thought that the correct answer was North Atlantic. 3 people, 15%, marked North Pacific as the correct answer and 60% of examined respondents rightly stated that the location of the Falklands War was South Pacific, one of them, however, regarded Iraq the country Great Britain was in war with in the South Pacific, which indicates a lucky guess in this case.

The question number 5, “How did the conflict affect the following general elections?”, was the last in the part of questionnaire examining knowledge of the British people about the Falklands War. The respondents were to choose among the following answer in randomized order: It helped the Conservative Party, it helped the Labour Party, and it did not have a significant effect on the elections. 70% chose the first option which was considered as to correct, 20% voted for the second option, and 10% thought that the war had not had a significant effect. 70% chose the correct answer but the 10% of respondents thinking that the war did affected the general elections much cannot be regarded as being purely wrong. The options were bordering with opinions at this point, therefore the only wrong answer was the one considering the Labour Party taking profit from the Falklands War.

The following part of the questionnaire was focused on opinions of the respondents. It consisted of two statements in which the respondents were to answer to which extent they agree or disagree with it. The given scale consisted of five options; strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, strongly disagree. The first statement was “A war could be a useable instrument to improve sentiment in a country.”. One person strongly agreed with that, three other people, 15%, agreed, 40% of the respondents, 8 individuals, answered that they were not sure, 5 of the 20 respondents disagreed with the statement, and 3 individuals strongly disagreed. 29 The next statement “Great Britain had right to take the Falkland Islands back.” had different distribution of votes. 45% strongly agreed, 20% agreed, 25% of the respondents chose the answer “not sure” but two of them, 10%, were those who regarded Iraq as the opponent of the Great Britain in the South Atlantic. One person disagreed with the right of Great Britain to retake the area and one respondent strongly disagreed. The two participants of the survey who either disagreed or strongly disagreed had good knowledge about the conflict because they correctly answered majority of the first five questions.

In the last closed question I wanted to know which political party did the respondents vote in the last general elections. 15% voted the Conservative Party, 20% voted the Labour Party, 10% gave their vote to Liberal Democrats, and the rest, 55%, did not vote. Nobody claimed voting “an other party”. All of the Conservative Party voters strongly agreed with Great Britain’s response to Argentine invasion to the Falkland Islands.

This creates the hypothesis that the voters of the conservative party agree with the military response more than the rest of population. The very last question was an open one, optional, and appeared only to those respondents who either agreed or disagreed with British retaking the Falkland Island. Three of them decided to develop their answers and answered the question “Why do you think so?”. Two of them agreed with the re-taking and the last strongly agreed with the same.

They submitted the following answers:

Well, the more I think about it. The more I realise that they really shouldn't give it back. Honestly no Argentinian settlement has ever existed on the Falklands, so why should Britain give it back? Britain owned it. They were a part of the British empire in the first place. Also they didn't wish to be a part of Argentina so Argentina really had no right to do what they did I guess because it's an agreed overseas English territory and like many other countries around the world, protected by the monarchy and British rule. I understand that Argentina was closer than the UK but geographical location isn't a right of passage or power. In any case there was needless bloodshed over this "claiming". At the last vote I think close to 98% of residents on the island consider themselves part of the UK.

The outcome of the research is the following hypothesis; the voters of the conservative party agree with the military response in the South Pacific more than the rest of British population. The assumption that younger generation would have considerable difficulties with history questions was not; their knowledge was satisfactory. The other assumption that the

non-voters would have worse knowledge proved. 3 of the 11 non voters chose “Iraq” as the country Great Britain had fought against in the Falklands War, which creates second and the final hypothesis of the research; people who do not vote in general elections have worse knowledge of the Falklands War.

3-6- Conclusion:

The Falklands War was considered as the most significant event during the 1980 s in which it gave Britain its real position among the universal powers. It turned Margaret Thatcher from the most unpopular Prime Minister into a world celebrity. The victory had a great impact on the British domestic politics in which it assured Thatcher a second term in office, something was not expected at the beginning of the war.

It is clear that the Falklands war victory was the major event that effected Thatcher’s government. In the early 1980s, the conservative government was in a difficult situation. The Falklands victory was significant for Thatcher’s government for many reasons: political and economic. It enabled the victory of 1983 elections and raised Thatcher and the conservative public support. Economically, the victory allowed Thatcher to apply a new Defence policy and both: reforming the unions and striking the miners.

General Conclusion

The Falklands War was considered as the most significant event during the 1980s. A long-standing dispute over the Falkland Islands between two great countries Argentina and Britain.

When Argentina achieved independence from Spain, the new government declared sovereignty over the Islands as its inheritance of the territorial right from Spain. The sovereignty dispute intensified during the 1960's as a consequence of colonial politics and eventually put them into a war conflict between Great Britain and Argentina. On 2 April 1982, Argentina launched an invasion of the Falkland Island in order to capture them by force. For Argentina, the recovery of the Malvinas Islands was a good opportunity to restore junta's credibility and, in case of victory, it would help divert attention from the country's economic problems.

When Margaret Thatcher took office as a Prime Minister in 1979, she wanted to restore Britain's position in the world. She introduced radical reforms to reduce inflation, reduce unemployment and privatize the state-own-businesses. However, her strict polices had an adverse effect. In other words, she was deeply unpopular even within the Conservative Party and faced possible resignation. After attempts to reach a peaceful solution failed the US government confirmed their support for Britain.

By 14 June the war ended after 74 days when the Argentine troops surrendered at Port Stanley. Despite the fact the Falkland war was relatively short it was considered to be the most remarkable event of the 1980's and had many effects on both participating countries. For Margaret Thatcher was the Falklands war a turning point in her carrier. She received overwhelming support from a majority of the British public which enabled her to win the 1983 general election and continue with her reforms. Great Britain gained its real position among the universal powers and Britain's relationship with the US strengthened. Argentina had a democratic government restored and the Falkland Islanders benefited from full British Citizenship.

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APPENDIX

When did the Falkland War take place?			
	In 1982	In 1984	In 1986
REALITY	12(60%)	5(25%)	3(15%)
PREDICTION	8(40%)	6(30%)	6(30%)

Table2:

What function did Margaret Thatcher have during the conflict?			
	Prime Minster	General	Secretary of Defence
REALITY	20(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
PREDICTION	16(80%)	1(5%)	3(15%)

Table 3:

What country did Great Britain fight against in the Falklands War?			
	Iraq	Peru	Argentina
REALITY	3(15%)	0(0%)	17(85%)
PREDICTION	1(5%)	0(0%)	19(95%)

Table 4:

What was the location of the Falklands War?			
	South Atlantic	North Atlantic	North Pacific
REALITY	12(60%)	5(25%)	3(15%)
PREDICTION	8(40%)	6(30%)	6(30%)

Table 5:

How did the conflict affect the following general elections?			
	It helped the Conservative Party	It helped the Labour Party	It did not have a significant effect on the elections
REALITY	12(60%)	12(60%)	12(60%)
PREDICTION	12(60%)	12(60%)	12(60%)

Table 6:

A war could be a useable instrument to improve sentiment in a country.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
REALITY	1(5%)	3(15%)	8(40%)	5(25%)	3(15%)

Table 7:

Great Britain had right to take the Falkland Islands back					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
REALITY	9(45%)	4(20%)	5(25%)	1(5%)	1(5%)

Table 8:

What party did you vote in the last general elections?					
	Conservative Party	Labour Party	Liberal Democrats	Another Party	Did not vote
REALITY	3(15%)	4(20%)	2(10%)	0(0%)	11(55%)

Table 9: