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

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Dedication:

To my mother and father, source of my happiness and success in life. May Allah bless them.

To my brothers and my sisters for their unconditional support and encouragements to pursue my interests.

To my extended family and the many friends, who have been so supportive and encouraged the fulfillment of this work.

To all those who believed in me and pried for my success

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a Lot, As Well As All My Teachers.

I Dedicate This Humble Work to: My Parents, My Brothers and Sisters.

All of My Family

Without forgetting My Dearest Friends.

Abstract

The Falkland islands are considered as a British overseas territory from 1833. The Argentine government tried to occupy the islands, but it failed in each attempt. One of the Argentine attempts was the military invasion in 1982. Britain at that time witnessed a political and economic decline. Britain under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was suffering at home from social unrest which caused a strong opposition for Thatcher's policies. Despite that problems, Thatcher decided to retake the Falklands by military attack.

In this study, we have proved that the Falklands victory considered as a successful mean to achieve Thatcher's domestic 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 domestic politics. It assured her a second term in office by winning the 1983 general elections and allowed her to continue her programs. On the economic side, the victory allowed Thatcher to reform the unions and follow a new defense policy.

ملخص

تعتبر جزر الفوكلاند واحدة من أهم المقاطعات البريطانية التي استوطنت منذ 1833. في الماضي حاولت الحكومة الأرجنتينية أن تسيطر على هذه الجزر، لكن كل محاولاتها باءت بالفشل. قررت الأرجنتين أن تغزو هذه الجزر عسكرياً عام 1982. بريطانيا في تلك المدة عانت من انهيارات سياسية واقتصادية مما جعلها ضعيفة. كذلك رئيسة الوزراء مارغريت تاتشر عانت من تلك المشاكل الداخلية ومن الاضطرابات الاجتماعية. هذه المشاكل سببت معارضة شديدة للسياسات الداخلية المتبعة من طرف تاتشر. بالرغم من تلك المشاكل، قررت تاتشر أن تستعيد جزر الفوكلاند بالهجوم العسكري كأخر حل.

في هذه الدراسة أثبتنا بان حرب الفوكلاند تعتبر وسيلة ناجحة في إنجاح الأهداف الداخلية لتاتشر , وقد أحسنت تاتشر استعمال تلك الحرب في نجاحها داخليا. هذا النجاح تمثل في كسب تأييد الشعب البريطاني وتغطية فشل السياسات الداخلية لرئيسة الوزراء. انتصار حرب الفوكلاند يعتبر اكبر حدث مؤثر على السياسة الداخلية لبريطانيا في ذلك الوقت. التأثير الذي تجلى في انتصار حزب تاتشر في انتخابات عام 1983 ومنح تاتشر فرصة لإكمال مشاريعها. أما في الجانب الاقتصادي، فقد سمح الانتصار بإعادة تهيئة السوق البريطانية وإنهاء الاضطرابات الداخلية وكذلك تطوير وزارة الدفاع.

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General Introduction

The Falkland Islands are a group of barren, rocky islands in the Southwest corner of the Atlantic Ocean. These islands have been a subject of territorial dispute over their sovereignty. Spain, France, Argentina and Britain claimed their sovereignty over the Falkland Islands. These claims had caused many conflicts between the disputed countries. One of the most famous modern dispute was between Argentina and Britain.

The British government had established its first settlement in the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic 1833. The sovereignty over these Islands has made a strong conflict between Britain and Argentina; the later declared that the Islands depended on " Islas Malvinas" are an Argentine colony that inherited from Spain. Despite the distance that is about 8070 Miles, the islanders preferred to be under British control up to this day.

The Falkland War that occurred between March and June 1982 ,was a culmination of a long-standing dispute over the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands between Britain and Argentina. It was an example of the decisive and successful use of force to achieve any strategic objective. The war was caused by miscalculation and miscommunication as well as failed diplomacy and the breakdown of deterrence. The war started when the Argentine Junta under General Galtieri's leadership used the military power in invading the Falkland Islands. The islands that were considered as a British military dependency. Both countries tried diplomatically to find a peaceful settlement on the Falkland Islands, but all of negotiations were failed.

.Britain at that time was suffering from political and economic decline which made the nation too weak .The British conservative government under the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher lost popularity within both British public and the conservative party. The political environment in Great Britain witnessed many problems and crisis due to the policies that

Margaret Thatcher followed, these problems made the deteriorating situation even more complex. Many of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's economic reform policies instituted in 1980 and 1981 were unpopular. Relative British military power was weakening due to the shrinking budgets. Many riots appeared in Great Britain; they wanted to change the government. The Britons considered Thatcher's conservative government as the weakest government in Britain after the Second World War. So the British government wanted to reject the impression of being weak and irresolute in matters concerning the lives of its citizens, because a weak government could hardly be expected to convince in universal political debates.

Margaret Thatcher faced a lot of problems at home, so she turned her interests abroad especially in the Falkland War to tie up her opponents at home and also to cover her failure in some internal issues. Britain was victorious in war, and the outcome was the death of 255 British, but above all, Margaret's popularity highly raised at home due to the victory in the Falklands, that later assured her a second term in office, something which was not assured at the beginning of the war. Also she escaped an embarrassing failure following her transatlantic instincts.

The Falklands 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 resolving her political crisis. Thatcher had proved in the Falklands War that such foreign affair could be a successful mean to achieve a domestic objective. As a result of the victory in the Falklands War, the British internal situation became more stable. And Britain regain its self-confidence again as one of the greatest nations in the world.

I choose this topic because in our studies, we did not emphasize on Thatcher domestic politics, we have dealt with foreign policy in general. When I read some articles about Thatcher, I found that she was very successful in her policies, especially using such foreign affairs to achieve a domestic objective; and that is what I am going to study.

To study this topic, we are going to ask two main questions that will help us to understand Thatcher policy. We want to know whether the Falkland War proved to be a successful mean to achieve domestic political objectives or not, and what were its main impacts on the British domestic politics ?.

In addition to that, this research paper intends also to investigate some specific research questions on that subject: how did the Falkland War impacts on British domestic policy?, what were the main British responses toward the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands?, how did Margaret Thatcher manage to win the war on both sides: external and internal?, and what were the main changes in the British domestic politics after the war?

To answer these questions, the work will be divided into Three chapters. The first one will be descriptive, we are going to describe and discuss the Political history of the Falkland Islands from their first discovery to the Argentine-British conflict. Then we are going to give and discuss the background of the Falklands War, to be easier to the reader to understand, then we move to mention the reasons for fighting the war in both countries.

The second chapter deals with the British attitude toward the invasion, and its internal situation during that period. the chapter is divided into four sections: the first one deals with Thatcherism and reformations, then British responses toward the Argentine invasion of the Falklands, and how it managed to win the war. finally we will see the British public opinion toward the Falklands War.

In the last chapter, we will discuss and analyse the main reasons that helped Britain to win the war, and the positive impacts of the Falklands War on the British domestic politics. In addition to that, we are going to define the new term that appeared during the Post-Falklands period “the Falklands Factor”. Finally we are going to prove whether the war was a success for Thatcher or not.

References that are used in this research include many books, the memoir of Margaret Thatcher The Downing Street Years that includes a detailed description of her political life. We take also her speeches from her website which contains an official documents of her years in Downing Street. We used also articles from internet.

Chapter One

Background of the Falkland Islands and the Argentine Invasion

1.1. Introduction

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 that between Argentina and Britain.

This first chapter is divided into three sections. We start with the first part of the initial chapter by giving the political history of the Falkland Islands and its economic dimension. Then we move to the events that influenced Argentina to think about retaking the islands, and the beginning of the Argentine invasion. Finally we are going to discuss the reason for both countries to fight the war.

1.2 Political History of the Falklands

The Falkland Islands had witnessed many conflicts over their sovereignty since their discovery. They were discovered and settled in a long period. The settlements in the Falkland Islands had an economic background as well as their political history. In this section, we are going to mention the political history of the Falkland Islands, from their first discovery till the Argentine-British conflict.

1.2.1 First Discovery

The Falklands Islands and their dependency of South Georgia are a group of barren, rocky islands near the Antarctic Circle in the southwest corner of the South Atlantic Ocean. It never had any native inhabitants. According to Argentina, the Falklands Islands were first

discovered in 1501 by Amerigo Vespucci, an Italian explorer representing the Spanish Crown. The earliest documentations of European claim is a sketch of the islands chain by a cartographer of King Carlos 1 of Spain. Other sailors such as: Hawkins, Magellan, Alvaro De Mesquita, have also been mentioned as being the first to sight the islands. In 1690, according to Britain, a British sea-captain and navigator called John Davis was the first one who landed on the islands. He was on expedition to Chile when he had to stop on the islands due to a fierce storm at sea (Lorton 6) .

The British sailors were considered as the first people who settled the Falkland Islands in 1690. They called the channel that lies between two principle islands " Falkland Sound ". Eight years after John Davis, a Dutch captain, called Sebaleet De Viert landed in South Georgia Islands, inspiring the name " Sabaldinas". A century later another British sea-man ,John Strong landed in these islands, and called it "the Falklands" in honor of the British noble who had financed his travels. Strong was considered as the first man who landed on the Falkland Islands.(Hasting and Jenkins 1). Many names were given to these islands according to those who discovered them such as: the Sansons, Sabaldes, Hawkins land, and Malvinas (Lorton 8)

In 1764, there was also a French landing on the East Islands, and the first establishment of the British settlement on the West Falklands was in 1765. But later in 1770, the French sold their settlement to the Spanish. The latter also threw the British out of the West Falklands. The dispute between the Spanish and British governments led to a war but a diplomatic solutions ended the conflict (Lorton 11-12).

In 1771 and after intensive negotiations, Spain agreed the British return at Port Egmont but reserved the Spanish rights of sovereignty. The British garrison expelled what remained from the French heritage and controlled the islands, remaining there until 1774, but

recognizing the Spanish possession of those islands. In the same year, Britain abandoned its settlement due to problems that faced Great Britain at home (Reagan 151)

1.2.2. Early Territorial Dispute over the Islands

France was the first European power that occupy and establish a settlement on the Falkland Islands in 1754, and the Falklands became officially a French territory. Thereafter in 1767, Spain gained the islands depended on "Islas Malvinas". The Spanish abandoned their sovereignty over the islands in 1811, due to the revolution that appeared against its rule in Argentina which ended by Argentine declaration of independence (Pascoe and Pepper 8-9).

After the independence, Argentina declared its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands in 1820 as the legitimate heir of the Spanish, but the United States refused the Argentinean settlement by destroying their military defense in 1831. Britain took that opportunity to settle the islands again in 1833, the handful of remaining Argentine colonists were ejected and expelled by the British garrison who resettled the Falkland Islands again. The British settlement was considered as the official settlement and the Falkland Islands became a British dependency of the South Atlantic Ocean (Pascoe and Pepper 8-9).

Argentina's independence day in 1816, marked the beginning of 170 year territorial long-standing dispute over the Falkland Islands, between Argentina and its "Islas Malvinas" and Great Britain and its "Falkland Islands." Argentina made its first claims on the Falklands in 1820 when a captain of the united provinces of the River Plate took refuge on the islands and claimed these islands for his country (Hasting and Jenkins 6).

Great Britain returned to the islands in response to the Argentine sovereignty claims and proved its presence. In 1829, there was an attempt to recover the Falklands by the government of Buenos Aires which was easily and quickly expelled by the British garrison. Although there was some dissatisfaction from the population and a handful attempted a

rebellions, the British government was successful in maintaining its control over the Falkland Islands from 1833 until 1982. All of the early Argentine attempts to recover the Falkland Islands were failed until 1982. (Pascoe and Pepper 9-11).

The British government kept the Falkland Islands mainly as a military outpost to avoid any kind of the Argentine aggression. They also developed whaling and fishing industry on the islands. Britain managed the islands as an important territory that found agreement in governing from the islanders who were approximately two thousands on the Falklands. The majority of the residents were British, those islanders who helped Britain to end the war later by declaring that they want to be under the British control and being British citizens (Thatcher 174-175).

1.2.3. Earliest Argentine-British dispute

Argentina considered itself the legitimate heir of the Spanish. The Falkland Islands was a Spanish territory; in addition, it is located about 400 Miles of the Argentine coast. On the other hand, the distance between the Falkland Islands and Great Britain is about 8070 Miles. During the 1820's, the Argentine government took a various actions confirming their sovereignty over the Islas Malvinas, including the appointment of governors, legislations on fishing resources and granting of territorial concessions. Argentina's government refused the British presence there and especially when the British national flag raised over the islands; they never accepted the British occupation of the Falklands (Calvert 411).

Argentineans continued to call the islands "Islas Malvinas." The government decided to recapture their rights to rule and control the islands. The wounded national pride had kept the issue alive among the Argentineans. In 1964, the United Nations governed a session to get a wide array and a solution about the sovereignty over the Falklands. At the same time, an Argentine airline flight landed at Port Stanley and the Argentine national flag was raised over

the island. Four days later, Argentine nationalists attacked the British embassy in Buenos Aires (Calvert 412).

In 1972, the government called for a volunteers to form an occupation force to invade the Falklands. In 1976, an Argentine destroyer in the Falklands area attacked a British research vessel, which was not armed except some explosives that were intended to be used for the geographical studies. Buenos Aires government claimed that the incident occurred inside Argentina's territorial waters. This incident made the situation more complex because Britain became more suspicious about Argentina and its claims of the sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Calvert 413).

1.2.4. The dispute leading up to the war

The attempts to reach a negotiated settlement were too slow and demoralizing the Argentineans, especially the nationalists. General Galtieri's Government complained that it lost patience because of the slow negotiation's progress. Having reached an impasse in negotiation, the president of Argentina, General Leopoldo Galtieri seized upon a minor diplomatic dispute as a pretext for a show of a military force. Both sides; Britain and Argentina failed to reach a negotiated settlement. The Argentine government decided to regain the Falkland Islands by force (Freedman and Gamba 46-48).

In 1979, Sergio Davidoff, an Argentine businessman acquired three whaling stations in South Georgia Islands. Each time he visited his possessions, he was required to obtain a permission from the British authorities. Nineteen of Davidoff 's workers landed in San Pedro and raised the Argentine national flag. As a result, the relationship between Buenos Aires and London erupted into a confrontation, especially when General Galtieri dispatched additional naval forces to South Georgia, warning the British ambassador in Buenos Aires that Argentina was prepared to protect its citizens from being expelled by the British garrison on the islands

(Freedman and Gamba 46-48).

1.3. The Falkland War: background and invasion

The Falklands Islands had a long history with conflicts between countries. The negotiations between Argentine and Britain failed to find a peaceful settlements. The Falklands War had a historical and economic background for both disputed countries. This second section will deal with the background of the Falklands war and the Argentine invasion.

This section is divided into two sub-sections. The first one is dealing with the events that influenced Argentine to thought about retaking the Falkland Islands. In the second one, we are going to deal with the Argentine invasion of the islands ,from the beginning until the total control.

1.3.1. Events that influenced Argentina to regain the Falklands

The Argentine government under General Galtieri decided to invade the Falkland Islands in 1982.The decision was made according to some reasons which motivated and helped the Argentine Junta. In this sub-section, we want to know the events that motivated the Argentine government to regain the Falkland Islands.

1.3.1.1 The Argentine internal problems

When the celebration of 150th anniversary of the establishment of the British settlement in the Falklands took place in 1982, Argentina took the opportunity to regain and establish a settlement on the islands, hoping to destroy the British rule in there. Argentina's government wanted to unify the public opinion against one common enemy. That action was taken to mask the internal problems that Argentina witnessed and faced at home in 1982.Argentineans suffered a lot in the 1980's decade especially in the economic field, starting from the bankrupt and ending with the increase of inflation that reached 130 percent

(SOMA p7-8).

The Argentine new government started to solidify its position, using many ways. The government removed any internal rivals or opposition within the country. These event was named as "Dirty War". The Argentine government also helped to establish a group of terrorists to continue its ideological war. As a result of "Dirty War", the Argentine policies were unpopular and hateful. Furthermore, the political policies had caused an economic decline (SOMA p7-8).

On 3th March 1982, there was a rebellion against the military rule in Argentina led by the Peronist Labor Union, but it was a great failure for that union. In addition, the disappearance of 300 citizens under the military rule had caused many riots in all parts of Argentina. All these events made the situation more complicated, and resulted the movement of claims about the Falkland Islands. Argentine government saw a solution in turning its interests abroad and also due to the richness of the islands with raw materials such as Gas and Oil (Gamba 110).

1.3.1.2. The Role of the United States and Britain's decline

When the United States demanded help from Argentina to stop and fight the spread of Communism in Latin America, General Galtieri hoped that president Reagan would also help him to recapture the Falkland Islands and stop the British resistance. Argentine government decided to regain the islands and destroy the British existence there (Sked and Chris 395).

The Argentine government believed that the United States would not support Great Britain. So, without that, they would regain the Falkland Islands easily. According to the Argentinean foreign minister, who declared that Britain witnessed an intensive decline in its universal power. Argentina should take opportunity to recapture the Falkland Islands without war (Windsor 91-92).

The end of the Second World War had brought a political, social and economic radical changes in the World's order. A new bipolar world order emerged, led by the United States and the Soviet Union. The effects of Second World War on Britain were profound, both at home and abroad. Great Britain was financially exhausted and heavily in debt to the United States of America (Gamba 60-67).

The United States of America took control over reserves of Sterling, this action made Britain even weaker. As a result of this weakness, Britain could not defend its far colonies, so the United States forced Britain to abandon its empire by threat of economic collapse. So Argentina was motivated by the decline of the British empire to regain the Falkland Islands (Gamba 60-67).

1.3.1.3.The long failed negotiations

After 1945,the Argentine claims over the Falklands appeared again by the Dictator General Pern, and continued with all Argentine Dictators till 1982.Most South American countries supported Argentina's claims which resulted a constant appeal sent every year to the United Nations by all Dictators of Argentina, and each time the United Nations demanded both countries to negotiate. The negotiations continued till 1982,Argentina declared that it is impossible of being more patient toward a slow and slack negotiations (Sked and Chris 395-396).

When Argentine government decided to invade the Falklands and stop negotiations, Britain put a tiny marines in order to defend the islands if there was any kind of Argentine assault. The invasion of 1982 reflected Argentineans miss-understanding. The position of the British foreign office seemed that they wanted to transfer the sovereignty to Argentina, but this decision was faced by a great opposition from the Falklands islanders (Sked and Chris

395-396).

1.4. The Argentine invasion of the islands

When the Argentine government found some events that helped in retaking the Falkland Islands, the Junta decided to invade the islands. Britain also wanted to defend its territory against the military invasion. In this sub-section, we are going to discuss the Argentine invasion and its phases.

1.4.1 Britain's first steps

After the decision of General Leopoldo Galtieri to stop negotiations and invade the Falkland Islands under the pretext of protecting the Argentine citizens and scrap metal merchant, Britain became more suspicious and afraid of her interests. On the evening of 13th March 1982, the British government sent about 22 royal marines, landing from ships to defend South Georgia (Freedman 11).

The commander of the British royal marines decided to put his small forces on the BAS (British Antarctic Survey) base at King Edward point. The British marines were sent for many purposes: to strengthen the British presence in South Georgia, to protect the BAS at Grytviken, and also to keep control over the Argentine scrap metal at Leith Whaling Station. These Argentine workers raised their national flag on the land, in which Britain refused of being humiliated on a land under its authority (Freedman 11-12).

The Argentine government sent the group of scrap metal merchant which was landed at Leith to challenge the British sovereignty there. The commander of the British royal marines Lieutenant Mill was warned that Argentina would assault them, he was ordered to start shooting any Argentine landing on South Georgia if they were armed and without warning. The British government in the Falklands and in London wanted to have an exact

information about the Argentine personal movements (Middlebrook 10).

In the 1st April, a group of four men went to Jason Ridge to look what the Argentinians were doing there. The government of the Falklands announced that the invasion of South Georgia was imminent, that news reached the captain Mill by radio. The commander decided to attack Leith where the Argentine party occupation as well as the Bahia Paraiso. On 2nd April, there was a prevention used at King Edward Point, especially at the beach by using wire and improvised explosives to defend the BAS base. The first step that was taken by Mill's was to hit the Argentine troops and retreat to Grytviken where he could start his final attacks from the mountains (Freedman 11-12).

The struggle between Britain and Argentina started on April, 2, 1982. Britain called that conflict the "Falklands War" whereas Argentina named it as "La Guerra De La Malvinas." The war began with unexpected assault of the Argentinean troops in the Falklands and South Georgia, but at the end the Argentinean troops returned to its mainland on June, 13th 1982. The Falkland conflict witnessed the greatest naval engagement since the Second World War. The use of such new weapons ended the war for the first time. The Falkland War brought changes in both countries: the rise of Margaret Thatcher, and decline of the dictatorship in Argentina (Kaufman and Macpherson 348).

1.4.2. Deception at South Georgia

After the scrap metal salvagers' landing on South Georgia and raising the Argentine national flag, the British royal marines were ordered to dispatch them and deport them back to Argentina. The military government in Buenos Aires refused that action and sent about 100 troops by sea to defend its citizens. When the British marines saw the troops, the Endurance ship received a signal from the British Ministry of Defense that may be there was an attack on Grytviken base, and they were ordered to take care over the base (Freedman 11-12)

The Bahia Paraiso entered Cumberland Bay on South Georgia without resistance, and tried to destroy the Endurance ship. Argentine troops settled South Georgia easily due to both, the incapability of the president of the Falkland Islands and the surrender of the British royal marines who were too few. Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister ordered that the base of commander should not resist and cancel both: the ROE (rules of engagement) and FSD (fire in self-defense). The cancel of these rule facilitated the Argentine invasion. Finally South Georgia and Grytviken base were settled and fall down under the military rule of Argentina (Freedman 11-12).

The operation Rosario took place on Friday 2nd April, when Argentina continued its tactics of deception and surprise. The British royal marines tried to resist against the increasing Argentinean troops, they fought the battle bravely. The governor of the Falkland Islands: Rex Hunt ordered the marines to surrender. The unexpected news reached London which was shocked by the full Argentinean invasion (Smith 17).

1.4.3. The total invasion of the Falklands

The planning to invade the Falkland Island began when the British government sent many demands to the United Nations, including the retreat of the Argentine troops from South Georgia and demand support from the United Nations members to retake its territory. Britain was supported by the majority of nations, whereas Argentina was supported only by some Latin American nations. On 28th March, the Argentine response was more violent, in which the government sent two frigates that were on their South way. And put more ships on the sea to exercise the Uruguayan Navy, but the real reason beyond that reaction was to invade Stanley (Smith.17).

The Argentinean attack on Stanley Harbor consisted of an amphibious landing at the Port by a huge military force. The troops attacked and settled Stanley with 600 marine infantry and a helicopter airborne assault by 200 marine commandos. The hopelessly British garrison of 31 royal marines fought bravely the battle, before being ordered to surrender by the governor of the Falklands. An additional Argentinean reinforcements arrived steadily, and within 24 hours over 4000 Argentinean troops were on the island. The governor received a warning then declared that the Argentine invasion was expected on the 2nd April. The whole Falkland Islands became under the Argentine control (English 5).

1.5. Reasons for War

As regards the reasons for going to Falklands war, both countries asserted to have the right over the islands' possession. Both of Britain and Argentine believed that the Falklands formed their national territory, and rejected any kind of humiliation. Argentina always claimed that the Falklands were included in the Spanish heritage, and it was the legitimate heir of Spain since the declaration of independence in 1816. The Falklands were taken from them by the British (Linford 3).

On the other hand, Britain declared that it was obliged to defend the British overseas territory from any outside aggression. Moreover, Britain could not allow to be threatened by dictatorial government, which would make Thatcher's government weak and hardly respected in international issues. On the external side, the British government wanted to reject any impression of being a weak nation. They wanted to demonstrate a national determination, because the abandonment of the Falklands would be a sign of weakness (Linford 3).

Each of the two countries: Argentina and Britain thought that the other one could not fight the war due to the internal economic and political problems. Argentine government took the opportunity of the insufficient British presence on the Falklands and invaded it. The 150th

anniversary of the first British occupation of the islands also caused a strong feelings in Argentina concerning the territorial loss. The Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands was a decision sparked by the Argentine public who wanted to recapture the Falklands in order to decrease the economic decline (McClure 6).

1.6.Conclusion

Spain, France and Britain had established a settlements on the Falkland Islands from 1690 to 1833.All of these countries were attracted by the Falklands richness of economic raw materials. We can say that Britain succeeded in taking over its sovereignty that stated until 1982.Argentine government found causes and events that helped to put its claims and took the opportunity of British suffering at home to retake the Falkland Islands. Although the Argentine invasion took place, British conservative government under Thatcher's leadership was not silent.

The British response toward the invasion took two sides: diplomatic and military. In the second chapter, we are going to deal with the British internal situation under the Tories. Then the Falklands War managements.

Chapter Two

The British Internal Situation and the Falklands War Management

2.1 Introduction

After the Argentine invasion took place on the Falkland Islands successfully, the British government did not want to lose one of its most important colonies. Britain was suffering at home from a hard political and economic problems. British global power was declined during the 80s ,and that was a motivation to the Argentine junta to regain the islands by military force.

British government took the liberty of the islanders as its mission, it responded through two sides: diplomatic then military. The second chapter is divided into three sections. The first section is dealing with the British internal situation under the Tories and the consequences of Thatcher's policies. The second section we are going to analyze the British responses toward the Argentine invasion: diplomatic and military responses. Finally we are going to discuss the British public opinion toward the Falklands War.

2.2.The British Domestic situation under the Tories

In 1979,the British political situation was rapidly approaching to a crossroads. The government that led the nation for a long time had been replaced by a new one. The new Conservative government was totally different from the earlier Labour Party that dominated the Post-Second World War government. Margaret Thatcher, the new Prime Minister wanted to establish a strong nation and recover the British power, by adopting a strict domestic and foreign policies. This section is divided into two parts, in which we are going to discuss the British political and economic situation.

2.2.1. Political affairs

After the Second World War end, Britain witnessed a political and economic erosion led to the decline of the empire. During the period that preceded the war, Britain witnessed a severe crisis. The new conservative government was determined to reverse what it perceived as a national decline including: social unrest, high inflation and a high rates of unemployment. Thatcher attempted to present Britain as a strong nation once more by using her strict policies (Morris p2).

Thatcher and her conservative government followed many strict political policies in their attempts. At the early 1980s, Thatcher begun a conservative arrangements to end the trade unions which were dominating the British politics. Many attacks were launched on the unions political tenacity. Furthermore, the cabinet government was declined under Thatcher's conservatism. Within her conservative party, she passed many strict laws; the dissent within the party was punished hardly and loyalty to parliament became more important during Thatcher's years (Morris p2).

Thatcher's government main target was to reduce the power of Local government, a department in which Thatcher found a strong opposition to her policies. Thatcher wanted to control the Local government expenditure. All of Thatcher's domestic political policies were considered as a failure and could not recover Britain's position among the universal powers. British people believed that Margaret Thatcher was "weak leader" and they lose trust in the conservative government. Many of British politicians took opportunity to oppose Thatcher's policies, and even they demanded her resignation (Thatcher 97).

2.2.2.Economy and taxation

Great Britain's role as an economic world power changed after the Second World War. The British economy was destroyed and no longer in a position to maintain its power. When Thatcher took office in 1979, she promised to reverse the British economic decline. Thatcher's economic policies were mainly influenced by monetarist thinking, a strict economic policy. Thatcher worked together with the Chancellor of the Exchequer Geoffrey Howe, she reduced direct taxes and increased the indirect taxes. She increased interest rates to slow the money's growth and thereby lower inflation. Thatcher also introduced a cash limit on public spending and decreased the expenditure on some departments such as: housing and education (Reitan 30-Pearce and Stewart 522).

Due to Thatcher's economic policies, Great Britain began to witness many signs of economic revival. Inflation was down to 8,6% from 18%. That level was the lowest since 1970. On the other hand, unemployment rose over 3 Million, the highest level since 1930. Thatcher's domestic economic policies were considered as a strong failure of the new British government, in which it resulted in a huge amount of unemployment. That economic reformations had caused a strong opposition in Great Britain, both "wets" within the conservative party and Labour (Floud and Johnson 392).

Both British people and parties expressed their doubt over Thatcher's economic policies. That opposition resulted in many riots in Great Britain such as: the Brixton riots and 1981 riots. These riots were a result of the public rejection of the social unrest during the Tories period. As a result, Margaret Thatcher lost her position before the British people, they rallied against the government, demanding her resignation and considered her as the weakest British Prime Minister (Floud and Johnson 392).

2.2.3.Domestic consequences of Thatcher's policies

From mid-1981, the conservative government was deeply unpopular, also it came third in the opinion polls .Thatcher herself get the lowest popularity rating for any British Prime Minister since the Second World War. All of these were the consequences of following Thatcher's policies. In addition to the high unemployment, rising inflation, and the distressful social unrest, the British people were disaffected from the conservative government (Nunn 137).

After applying Thatcher's harsh policies, the public started revealing their disaffection. A racial tensions appeared in urban violence on the streets of Manchester, London, and Liverpool. These riots were organized by Thatcher's opposition including opposition's parties. It continued till 1982, when the Argentine Junta invaded the Falkland Islands in April 1982.The Argentine invasion took the British public attention abroad toward their dependency.(Nunn 137).

2.3.The British Management of the Falklands Dispute

After the Argentine invasion took place on the Falkland Islands successfully, the British government did not want to lose its important dependency. Thatcher wanted to reject any kind of impression of being a weak government. Great Britain took the liberty of the Falklands islanders as its main mission because it considered them a British citizens. So, we divided this second section into two parts. The first part will deal with the British diplomatic response toward the unexpected invasion. In the second part, we are going to discuss the military response and the Falklands victory.

2.3.1.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 were enough to end the conflict or not.

2.3.1.1.Supports for Britain

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 in 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 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).

2.3.1.2.The Efforts for a Negotiated Settlement

Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister proposed a lease-back compact. This convention granted Argentine sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, but the administration would be British. This proposal faced a strong opposition from the Falklanders that most of them were under British citizenship. Thatcher also proposed that the dispute of the sovereignty over the Falkland Islands would be stopped for 25 years, but the Argentine government refused all of these proposals (Reagan 151-152).

After the Argentine invasion, Britain took all its efforts to avoid war ,and find a peaceful settlement. The Falklands issue was the main discussion of the British parliament, and the United Nations. Alexander Haig, was the first who took efforts to end the dispute peacefully, his thoughts were discussed between Britain and Argentina. The British government decided to accept Haig's ideas as a last solution; whereas, Argentina refused that solution. After Haig's failed diplomacy, the next steps were taken by the president of Peru Blaunde. Blaunde introduced many proposals to end the conflict, but always it was refused by the Argentine side. Later on, these proposals were modified by the United States, and failed as well as Blaunde's (Anthony Parson 2-7).

The negotiations were proceeding by the United Nations and both disputed countries. As the earlier ones, Britain repeated its approval of the decisions, whereas Argentina was flexible to make an interim agreement possible. Argentina seemed that it wanted just to waste time Argentina refused all the three options: a joint administration, a lease back agreement in which Britain transferred the sovereignty to Argentina, but continued to lease the islands. The third option was Twenty Five years moratorium on the issue. Another diplomacy attempted by the United Nations to avoid war, which was representation. Argentina was represented by Peru, and Switzerland represented Britain. Both countries exerted a great diplomatic pressure to avoid war, but they were unable to end the dispute (Reisman 287-317).

2.3.2 The British military responses

When the negotiation with Buonce Aires failed, British government decided to retake the Falkland Islands by military force. Margaret Thatcher ordered the preparation of the Task Forces as a last solution. British captain of the task Forces wanted destroy the Argentine establishments on the islands as soon as possible. They followed many tactical strategies during the attacks.

2.3.2.1. The preparation of the Task Forces

After the failed negotiations, the British government stopped the diplomatic relations with Argentina. In addition, the Prime Minister declared to imposed many economic sanctions on Argentina including: freezing the Argentine assets in British banks, and embargoing the arms sales to Argentine. These sanctions made Argentine weaker than before, it would not be supported especially by arms. So, Britain took opportunity and started preparing the Task Force to attack the Falkland Islands. When Argentina heard that, the government took a precaution by reinforcement the islands with more forces (D'amor 14).

The British Minister of Defense gave the name “operation Corporate” to the Task Force that sailed from Great Britain to recapture the Falkland Islands. The decision was taken when the parliament was convened on the issue. One day before the invasion took place in the Falkland Islands, the decision was taken as Middlebrook said:

Mrs. Thatcher accepted Sir Henry Leach’s advice
and the following day (1st April) the firm
decision was taken to make the necessary
preparations for the dispatch of a force to
regain the Falklands (Gibran 75).

On 1st April 1982, the British Cabinet agreed to send an additional Naval Forces, in hope that it would help and lead to the Argentines’ surrender from the Falkland Islands. According to the foreign secretary, Peter Carrington, the Cabinet was tough that the British government might be even more weaker if the Task Forces would not be sent to the Falklands. The British believed that the Task Forces might end the dispute without entering in quarrels. Margaret Thatcher was advised by Ministry of Defense to create a war cabinet; to assist in planning. The cabinet was secured by Thatcher, and later there was an approval of parliament to send the British Task Forces (Dodds 166).

2.3.2.2. Sending the Task Forces

The British Task Force had been dispatched in a short time, but with more efficiency which astounded the world. The world was surprised by the British decision, the decision that was Thatcher's order. The British military forces sailed from Portsmouth on Monday 5 April, these forces considered as the strongest naval assault after the Second World War. The Forces contained: eleven destroyers and frigates, three submarines, amphibious assault ship HMS,

and three thousands of troops. After that, the British government decided to increase its required reinforcements by sending another 100 ships, carrying more than 25000 soldier (Thatcher 75).

2.3.2.3. The attack on South Georgia

Although the difficulties of the Falklands' climate, the British landing on South Georgia was successful on 21st April 1982. When these news reached the Argentine government, the forces started preparing for the war. The British forces wanted to take the opportunity by launching an efficient and quick attack on the Argentine forces on the islands. The Argentine garrison now was aware to the presence of the British Task Forces, who were reinforced by an additional naval forces including: submarines, frigates and other air forces (Boyce 87-88).

When the British military forces tried to retake South Georgia from Argentine control, it decided to prepare a well organized operation that called "Operation Paraquet". Admiral Woodward, the British commander of the operation considered South Georgia as the starting point of recapture of the Falkland Islands. The Argentine government now know the British military power, and started preparing for the military conflict and defend its establishments there (Boyce 87-88).

On the 25th April 1982, the British troops succeeded in recapturing South Georgia, destroying the Argentine garrison there. On the 2nd May, the Belegano was sunk by the British submarines outside the Exclusion Zone. The British commander led the Task Forces to open the campaign by a strong assault on South Georgia where the Argentine troops camping. The battles started between the two sides, using all their forces. Each time the Argentine forces withdraw from the battlefield with a heavy loss of lives (Gunson 271).

After many battles between both powers, the British troops recaptured South Georgia without losses and destroyed the Argentine forces there. The British success was considered as a minor success, but led to a political victory. Now the British troops prepared to recapture the Falkland Island (Jaques 962).

2.3.2.4. The Falklands victory

After the British success in resettling South Georgia, the British government wanted to end the Argentine presence there definitely. The British troops started moving toward the other islands, starting from Pebble islands to the main capital Stanley. The British commander of the forces was granted the New Rules of Engagement, which permitted him to open fire in the Exclusion Zone. They attacked the Argentine forces in Pebble Islands, then Goose Green and destroyed the Argentine submarines and aircrafts. The British attacks had caused a heavy losses to the Junta's troops (Foster 161).

On the morning of 27th May, it was announced through the BBC world service broadcast that: the British troops were advanced to Darwin, a settlement about a Mile from Goose Green. The battles against the British Task Force always were a disaster for the Argentine troops. They started to fed up from the war against Britain, due to the British powerful forces. On 28th May, the Argentineans begun to withdraw from their exposed positions (Boyce 129-130).

After many battles at Stanley frontlines, a ceasefire was declared on 14 June 1982. The Argentine commander surrender at the same day. After that, on 20th June, the British forces took the South Sandwich Islands, that were considered the last remote islands of the Falklands. The 74 day of conflicts ended with the Argentina's surrender, after the British amphibious and ground operational objectives for Operation Corporate had been attained except for air supremacy (Moro 317).

With the help of both: United States and Chile, the British army, navy and air forces defeated the Argentine Junta in the Falklands. Britain's victory in the war led to the loss of 255 British servicemen. Britain at that time would sacrifice with longer number of men to liberate the Falklands territory. British victory was considered not only a victory against the Argentine Junta, but also a victory against one of the dictatorial Regimes in the world (Gardiner 1).

2.3. The British public opinion

Due to Thatcher's domestic reformations, the British people refused to live under that social unrest. They had shown a strong opposition to the conservative government. Thatcher turned her interest abroad in which she was successful in turning the public attention. The Britons' opinion was depended on both, the internal problems and the war in the Falklands. In this section, we are going to discuss the British public opinion toward the Falklands War; politicians, common people and the islanders. Also, we want to know whether the Britons supported Thatcher in the war or not.

2.3.1. The British Politicians

The British politicians emphasized only on difficulties that Britain faced domestically during the conservative period. They even considered the South Atlantic non-important colony. They saw that it was not a necessity of maintaining a British presence there. So, fighting a war for keeping these islands, which were located thousands of Miles away from the United Kingdom, was fraught of difficulties (Dorman 76-77).

The British politicians seemed that they wanted to abandon that territory. They believed that they could not fight that war without at least the tactic support of the United States of America. They saw that the British internal problems are most important than the Falklands territory (Dorman 76-77).

2.3.2. 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

Analysis:

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.

2.3.3. 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).

2.4. Conclusion

At the end we can say that Britain responded first diplomatically and took the opportunity and time for preparing the Task Forces. 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 Buenos Aires. It turned its interests to another attempts which were considered more successful than the first one. This attempt was represented in the dispatching of the Task Forces. 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 positive impacts of the Falklands victory on the British domestic 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 get 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 both, foreign and domestic sides.

This final chapter is divided into three sections. The first one is dealing with the new term that appeared in Post-Falklands period which was “the Falklands Factor”. Then we are going to analyze the impacts of the media during the Falklands War, whether it helped Thatcher in domestic issues or not. The last section is dealing with the main impacts of the Falklands War on the British domestic politics, politically and economically.

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 element 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 domestic 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 (Monaghan 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).

At the end, we can say that the media played an important role in helping Margaret Thatcher to get a strong support. The media was working hard on the Falkland Islands in order to inform the British people about the war. Thatcher allowed the media to be inside the Falklands events. So the British people were influenced by the press and TV. Thatcher took the opportunity to make many meetings with journalists, who put her news step by step. As a result the British common people supported the way that the conservatives were handling policies, especially in the Falklands conflict (Haney 6-8).

3.4.The Falklands victory impacts on British politics

After the British victory in the Falklands against the Argentine Junta, Britain witnessed many events that were considered as a results or effects of the Falklands War. As we have said, the Falklands victory had impacted the British domestic politics. On the domestic side, it had two kinds of impacts: political and economic .

3.4.1 Political effects

After the victorious end of the Falklands War, Britain witnessed many changes in its internal politics. It was effected by the beginning of the war as well as its victorious end. The political effects of the Falklands War had been divided into five sub-sections: resignations,1983 elections victory, justification of Thatcher's policies, developing Thatcherism and the rise of Thatcher's popularity.

3.4.1.1.Resignations movement

When the Argentine invasion took place on South Georgia, the head of the diplomatic service was dismissed. The British government witnessed complicated resignations movement. Both of Lord Carrington and Sir Humphrey Atkins abandoned their offices. Later on, they were followed by Richard Luce. Francis Pym was appointed as a new foreign

secretary, because he was much respected in both, the conservative party and the Commons. Pym started his new missions which were about the Argentine invasion of the Falklands, Pym always tried to give the exact information to the British parliament (Blundell 115-116).

The response of Margaret Thatcher of Lord Carrington's resignation appeared in this quotation that we took from her speech:

I spent a lot of time on Saturday and on Sunday trying to persuade him [Lord Carrington] not to put in his resignation. He felt that he had been head of department responsible for the policy, the policy had failed and therefore it was a matter of honor that he should go. If a person says to me it's a matter of honor and I feel I should go, that's the one I ground on which I am not at liberty to refuse because it would make it difficult for him. It was with great regret, he's been a marvelous Foreign Secretary, I've been with him on so many occasions, he's a sturdy and bonny fighter for Britain, a very gallant officer and we shall miss him.(Thatcher 1982).

The Falklands issue was the most important diplomatic debate that would be discussed in the British parliament and the United Nations. The British government appointed Sir Anthony Parson as an ambassador of the United Nations, due to his experiences in resolving the diplomatic issues. From these actions, the British government wanted to find a peaceful settlement in the Falkland Islands, but all of that actions were failed due to the Argentine military decision . (Freedman 39-40).

3.4.1.2. Victory of 1983 elections

After the end of the Falklands War with victory, the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher called for a general elections in 1983. The Falklands War was considered as the most significant event that led to the success of the conservative government. Thatcher's party won the biggest landslide since 1945 and acquired 397 seats to Labour's 209. On the other hand, the Labour party witnessed the most electoral decline since 1918 due to both, the Falklands Factor and their opposition to Thatcher's policy toward the Falklands. The Falklands victory embed Thatcher's personal position within her party, which allowed her to call for the general election whenever she wants, she would not be obliged to accept the elections call again. Furthermore, the Falklands success made the conservatives look more particularly strong on defense (Evans 25-26).

The growing threat from the Soviet Union and the Labour's disarmament policy allowed Thatcher to resolve the South Atlantic crisis very relevant. Also Thatcher's defense policy made the Conservatives as an attractive electoral choice. In addition, the Falklands victory helped Thatcher in baffling the flow of voters from the Tories to Alliance. That shift which begun with the Argentine invasion of South Georgia, but the war made these changes more stronger and more relevant; bringing the Tories a strong and an expected level of public support (Evans 25-26).

The so-called "Falklands Factor" played an important role in the conservative government's recovery of popularity and supports. British voters had supported the conservatives because they saw in Thatcher and her government the appropriate powerful leader. British people changed their opinion when the government stood up against dictatorial foreign power. The conservative government had no contrition of rising the patriotic flag and fighting the Falklands War. The tide of public opinion begun to turn after the victory. Britons

believed in Thatcher's policies which allowed the beginning of economic recovery (Evans 26-27) .

A poll was taken just seven days before the 1983 general elections showed a great support for the conservative government. That poll also showed 44% of electorates believed that the Falklands victory or what was called the "Falklands Factor" would help the conservative party in winning the 1983 general elections. Despite that, 13% thought that the Falklands War would be an obstruction in the Tories path to win the elections. The Falklands victory was considered as only one kind of the conservative government's success. Less than 1/3 of conservative candidates mentioned the Falklands victory in their campaigns. So the general elections showed how the British people turned their opinions from opposition to support the conservatives and their policies. On the other hand it was a catastrophe for the Labour party and its policies (Campbell 203).

3.4.1.3. Justification for Thatcher's policies

The way that the Falklands victory was significant for the conservatives' success was how it was used as a justification for Thatcher's domestic policies and principles. In Thatcher's major speech after the total recapture of the Falkland Islands, she proclaimed that "We have to see that the spirit of the South Atlantic- the real spirit of Britain- is kindled not only by war but can be now fired by peace". Thatcher had linked the Falklands War to everything else that the British conservative government was suffering at home, "We have ceased to be a nation in retreat, we have instead a new found confidence, born in the economic battles at home and found true 8000 Miles away" (Vinen 150).

Margaret Thatcher took opportunity of the Falklands victory in which she lionized the Task Forces and denounce strikes that were appeared in Britain at that time. Thatcher also called for a national economic revival by using her conservative economic policies. The

conservative government was successful in using the Falklands victory as a shield, in which they could justify their political and economic actions (Vinen 150).

For instance, Thatcher condemned striking railway workers by suggesting that their actions were not belonging to the new victorious nation. Another example was the parallel that Thatcher created between the Task Forces who fought the Falklands War and the Security Forces that Fighting terrorism in Northern Ireland. Thatcher was successful to courage the military forces and unify the United Kingdom (Vinen 150).

3.4.1.4.Developing Thatcherism

After the victorious Falklands War, Thatcher remained as a Prime Minister for a second term. She begun the project of Thatcherite Britain with the Falklands factor contribution. So the Falklands success was mainly exploited as an emotional blackmail to develop Thatcherism and advance Thatcher's programs which included the attacks on unions (Wyatt p3).

For the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the Falklands victory was considered as a proof that the government was working for the nation, or more specifically Thatcherism begun its successful actions. Thatcher believed that the Falklands war showed what could be achieved by conventions and persistence. The government also used the victory as an evidence on foreign trade that Britain had been transformed into one of the greatest powers in the world again (Wyatt p3).

3.4.1.5.Rise of Thatcher popularity

Great Britain had emerged from the Falklands War as a global power again, so did Thatcher herself. Despite Thatcher's little political experience, she ended the war with victory. The Falklands dispute had ended through her managements inside and outside Britain. It was

through the Falklands and its military end she earned the title "the iron lady". Before the Falklands dispute started, many members within the conservative party believed that Thatcher was atomic. They always criticized her: she was a woman, not from the ruling class, she had no political experience and she was out of step with the traditional conservative policy (Nunn 137).

As a result of the victorious end of the Falklands war, Thatcher became the powerful leader of the conservative party, and she was glorified as "warrior queen". The Falklands victory allowed Thatcher to get a great respect of British public. She was closely associated with the military victories rather than her unpopular budgets or the Brixton riots in 1981. Margaret Thatcher was considered as the responsible for the Falklands victory, not the government. Furthermore, the victory secured Thatcher's position within the conservative party, allowing her to prepare the procedures of her second term's radical policies (Nunn 136-138).

3.4.2. Economic effects

After the Falklands victory, Thatcher became a powerful and respected Prime Minister. She was allowed to change many policies and continue her programs. One of these programs were the economic policies. We have divided this section into two sub-sections: beating the miners and reforming the unions.

3.4.2.1. Beating the miners

When Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister, she promised to revive the British industry. Many departments and offices were suffering from Thatcher's policies. One of these departments was the National Coal Board, it was scaling down the British industry; as well as, the miners union, the National Union Miners, they were turning into a militant associations. Thatcher followed a strict policies to end these strikes, she was supported by the British

public especially after the Falklands victory. The victory was used as a shield to end the miners' strike (Heyck 300).

Arthur Scargill, a strong socialist who was devoted to keeping miners at work and mining communities intact. Arthur was assembling the miners and preparing for the revolution. It appeared that not all of the mining region would support the strike. The others believed that Thatcher was doing the rights. The British people was convinced that Thatcher would save the country as she did when the Argentine invasion took place on the Falkland Islands. During the summer of 1984, there were many serious combats between the miners and police. The miners were led by Thatcher's opposition. We can say that the strike was an expected long fight between the militant unions and Thatcherites (Heyck 300).

The miners revolution was not considered as an industrial dispute between the Tory government and the miner unions. It was nearly an insurrection. Thatcher was successful in crushing that strike, due to the strong public support especially after the Falklands victory. The victory that gave Thatcher the opportunity to convince the Britons of her policies and how she was handling the issues. Without Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Great Britain could still be under the grip of the unions, holding the government and industry. Thatcher was successful to end the miners' strikes and liberating the her conservative government from the impression of being a controlled government (Blundell 121-125).

3.4.2.2. Reforming the unions

Before 1970s, Labours had strengthened the rights of the unions, they made them an obligatory member in the Labour government. When Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister, she decided to weaken that arrangements. Her policies intended to give more power and rights to individual workers. Thatcher's aims were focused on the unions reformation. She faced many difficulties in her way, especially from those who opposed her way in

handling the matters. After the Falklands victory and 1983 general elections, Thatcher was able to do what she programmed in the previous years about reforming and decreasing the power of the unions (Blundell 127-128).

Now, Thatcher decided to reform the unions, because she was fed up of their strikes. Her strategy was to break down the closed shop and apply democracy on the unions, and giving the rights to the individual workers. Thatcher passed many laws and acts in which she strengthen the power of the individual workers.. Without both ,British public and individual workers supports, Thatcher would not be successful in reforming the unions. The overall consequences of Thatcher's reformation of the unions was the total reformation of Great Britain's labor market (Blundell 128-130).

3.4.3.Military effects

3.4.3.1. New Defense Policy

The Falklands War was considered as the biggest series of naval assaults after the Second World War in the Pacific Ocean. Britain demonstrated a powerful military forces in that war against Argentina. As a result, the conservative government followed a new defense policy especially after the victorious war (Campbell 160-189).

The Falklands military victory allowed the British government to be a great militarized country, following a new military Defense policy. Britain under Thatcher's umbrella acquired a new developed defense issues, such as the placing of the Cruise missiles and the acquisition of Trident nuclear deterrent. The Tories after the Falklands War had an authority on defense that Labours or Alliance could not match (Campbell 160-189).

During and after the Falklands War, the British Defense spending was increased by 29%. Yet in Thatcher's second term in office, the Defense budget fell by 12%. After the Falklands War, the demands for British manufactured materials of Defense exports increased. These demands allowed the Conservative government to develop its Defense policy (Campbell 160-189).

The Falklands War had a strong impact on the British Defense Policy. Thatcher in her speech to the United Nations presented the British Nuclear strategy. After the victory in the Falklands War, Britain started developing the nuclear deterrent. British public opinion was with the conservative government, however; the Labour and Alliance parties opposed the government's choice. Those parties presented Thatcher's opposition at home and supported the disarmament strategy (Thatcher 100).

3.5. 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 Defense policy and both: reforming the unions and striking the miners.

Also the Falklands victory had many other political and economic effects. These effects made British public supported Thatcher and her way of handling the issues. So Thatcher was successful in using the Falklands War to gain the public support again.

General Conclusion

The dispute over the Falkland Islands goes back to the first sighting by Europeans during the 16th century. Even then, Englishmen, Spaniards, and Dutchmen claimed their discovery first. These claims became very important issue between the countries that landed in the Falkland Islands. One of these countries is Argentina. Argentina inherited Spanish claims over the islands. It was expelled by both United States and then Great Britain. Argentine dictator government had never giving up their claims.

When the Argentine invasion took place, the British government under the Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher did not keep quite. Firstly, the British government tried to diplomatically to resolve the issue of the Falklands. Thatcher was successful to get the world sympathy, it appeared in imposing sanctions and boycotting any Argentine exports. When the diplomatic attempts failed, British government started preparing the Task Forces as a military solution to recapture the Falkland Islands.

Britain before the Falklands war was suffering from an erosion of its political and economic powers. The British empire was declined, especially after the Second World War. When Margaret Thatcher took office as a Prime Minister, she promised to reverse the British decline. Following many strict policies, especially the economic ones had caused a strong opposition of her. Thatcher's economic policies had resulted a social unrest within the nation. The opposition was supported by most of British people.

At the 14th June 1982, Great Britain officially retook the Falkland Islands after many naval and air battles against Argentine garrison. The Argentine establishment on the islands was destroyed. The entire world accepted the result and encouraged to develop the Falkland Islands. Great Britain was victorious in the war due to Thatcher's managements of the conflict, from negotiations till the military victory.

Although Margaret Thatcher had a little political experience, she was successful in handling the issue of the Falklands. First, she tried the diplomatic solution while the government was preparing the Task forces. Then, organized the military attack. Thatcher's policies had secured the victory in the Falkland War and then getting the British public support.

The Falklands war had many effects on both countries Britain and Argentina. We can say that it had a strong positive impacts on Britain. Great Britain won the war which allowed it to gain its real position among the universal powers and its self-confidence. On the domestic side, the changes that appeared after the victorious war was considered very important in the British history. Before the Falklands War, Margaret Thatcher suffered a lot from raising opposition at home. All British public demanded her resignation. Whereas, after the victory, the Britons supported her way in handling the conflict, they begun to believe in her policies.

The Falklands War was considered as a hugely significant event for the conservative government and also Thatcher herself. The victory contributed particularly in the 1983 general elections. It provided a secured platform for another Four years of Thatcherism. Thatcher had the landslide majority of seats in that elections and defeated the opposition which were both the Labour party and Alliance. Margaret Thatcher was helped by what the politicians calls «the Falklands Factor». Thatcher took the opportunity of the political victory to continue her programs.

The Falklands victory was also integrated in the government's discourse. It became a successful means to justify Thatcher's policies and principles. The victory also gave Thatcher herself a strong position and reputation within the conservative party and the government. The position that Thatcher gained allowed her to be more conservative. The Falklands victory was

the main factor that gave success to Thatcher's conservative government. It was an important event in the way that it both created the conditions of the success and empowered the Tories to continue its path of success.

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