Universiteit Leiden

# Ripples From the South Atlantic: Examining the Wider Significance of the Falklands War for the British Overseas Territories

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# List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| BIOT | British Indian Ocean Territory |
| CBDT | Citizen of the British Dependent Territories |
| CUKC | Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies |
| FIC | Falkland Islands Company |
| FIDC | Falkland Islands Development Corporation |
| FIG | Falkland Islands Government |
| HC | House of Commons |
| HL | House of Lords |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| UN | United Nations |
| US | United States |

# The British Overseas Territories

| *Name* | *Population* | *Area* |
|---|---|---|
| Akrotiri and Dhekelia | 8,000 non-permanent military | 255 km² |
| Anguilla | 13,500 | 91 km² |
| Bermuda | 64,000 | 54 km² |
| British Antarctic Territory | 0 (Seasonal scientific expeditions) | 1.7m km² |
| British Indian Ocean Territory | 3,000 non-permanent military US & UK | 46 km² |
| British Virgin Islands | 28,054 | 153 km² |
| Cayman Islands | 60,765 | 264 km² |
| Falkland Islands | 3,398 | 12,173 km² |
| Gibraltar | 32,194 | 6.7 km² |
| Montserrat | 4,900 | 101 km² |
| Pitcairn | 49 | 47 km² |
| St. Helena, Ascension Island & Tristan da Cunha | 5,530 | 420 km² |
| South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands | 0 (99 non-permanent officials and researchers) | 4066 km² |
| Turks and Caicos Islands | 32,000 | 430 km² |

# Maps


**Figure 1:** Timeline Map of the 1982 Falklands War
Source: Wikimedia Commons

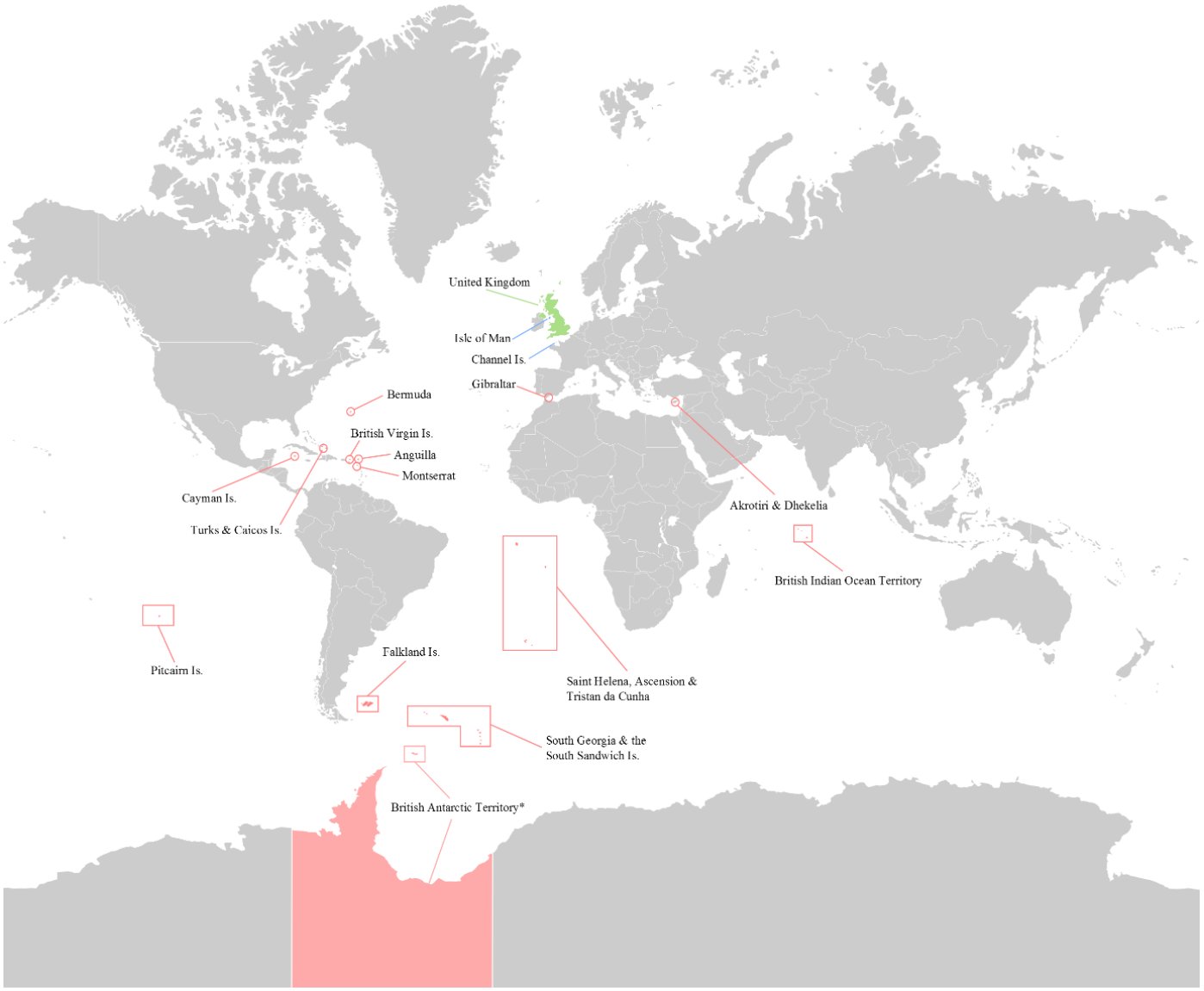


**Figure 2:** Map of the British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies
Source: Wikimedia Commons

# Introduction

*"The Falkland Islands' misfortune has always to be wanted more than they are loved." – Max Hastings & Simon Jenkins*

The telescope of many a historical seafarer on voyages across the Atlantic will have observed the rugged coastline of the Falkland Islands arising out of the mist. Most had nothing pleasant to say about their experience. Dr Samuel Johnson, noted essayist and lexicographer, whose damning indictment of the islands as bleak and barren; "which not even southern savages have dignified with habitation" (Johnson 1771, 24) questioned the value of the territory and why Britain would ever expend energy going to war over such a place. Johnson's rather harsh assessment was included in files produced by the office of the Chiefs of Staff as Great Britain was preparing to do just that in 1982 (Freedman 2005a, 1). Windswept, with few trees, the Falkland Islands, or the Malvinas as they are known in Argentina, are an archipelago of some 780 islands covering over 4,700 square miles, yet inhabited by a population that had fallen as low as 1,813 in 1980 and peaked at 3,200 in 2016. The islands are very sparsely populated, the majority of whom are the descendants of British sailors who voyaged there during the 18th and 19th centuries. The Falkland Islands, and their continued British administration are a relic of a bygone colonialist era. One simply has to look at a map to see the geographical disparity in the competing territorial claims between Great Britain, which is some 8,000 miles away and Argentina, just 250 miles to the West (see fig.1 and fig.2). The origins of the sovereignty dispute date back to the late 17th century when British sailors first landed on the islands officially. However, it was not until 1833, after more than a century of the islands changing hands between European colonial powers and briefly the newly independent Argentina, that Britain established continuous, de facto sovereignty and began to develop a permanent colony. However, the history of the sovereignty dispute is long and complex and not the subject of this paper. Instead, the focus is on the war that took place over the islands between Britain and Argentina in 1982, and particularly its wider significance in several key domains.

The fact that a colonial war took place as recently as 1982 is frankly bizarre, rendering it a historical anachronism. Despite its seemingly unique historical position, the war has suffered from a lack of academic attention. Perhaps this is due to the comparatively small scale of the war, which lasted only ten weeks between April and June of 1982 and claimed the lives

of less than a thousand. It could also be due to the small focal point of the conflict, a territory which has little bearing on the day to day life of British people and is of limited strategic and economic value. Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, Oxford educated journalists and historians, who at the time of the war itself agreed to write a book about it no matter the outcome, have even gone so far as to suggest that the Falklands campaign was of "no wider significance for British interests and taught no lessons" (Hastings and Jenkins 2010, xvi). Interests in this context refers to Britain's Overseas Territories, or as they were known at the time of the Falklands War, Britain's Dependent Territories. We know this because Hastings and Jenkins qualify their argument with reference to other dependent territories. The idea that a war fought for one of these dependent territories would not have any knock-on effects for the others is difficult to believe at best. This thesis questions Hastings and Jenkins' conclusion, seeking to prove the existence of a wider significance of the Falklands War, either for the other British territories directly, or for British government policy, that in turn had some impact on the other dependent/overseas territories.

In this paper, I have sought to ascertain whether this idea holds up under closer examination by analysing the impacts of the war through lenses relevant to all British Overseas Territories, rather than simply those relevant to the Falkland Islands alone. The aim has been to establish whether or not the Falklands War can truly be considered a conflict "of no wider significance for British interests" as Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins claim (2010, xvi). To that end, the guiding research question of this thesis is:

*To what extent can the Falklands War be considered a conflict of wider significance for the British Overseas Territories?*

To answer this question, this paper first outlines the key arguments of selected works on topics relevant to the Falklands War and its impacts. This takes the form of a literature review that gives a snapshot of the historiographical debate and discussion that has taken place on the conflict, and any wider significance that has previously been inferred. Analysis will then come in the form of topic based chapters, that will assess the significance of the Falklands War to wider colonial interests in several key areas, namely; self-determination, citizenship and economic commitment. These areas have been chosen because they have a direct impact on life in, and the status of, all Britain's Overseas Territories. Self-determination was used as a major point of justification in Britain's decision to reconquer the Falkland Islands and has become the basis of Britain's ongoing relationship with the territories. Citizenship, and

specifically the British Nationality Acts, which have defined the status of citizens in the dependent/overseas territories have undergone several major changes. These have seen the rights and status of these citizens reduced and/or improved, the Falklands War being directly responsible for an amendment to a major piece of legislation in this respect. Economically, Britain has allocated economic aid to the poorest territories and is committed to the defence of all its territories overseas. The Falklands War led to an intensive economic overhaul of the Falklands and an ongoing military commitment.

The thesis will also have a timeframe of investigation. This will be the thirty years after the war in 1982. The reason for this is that the 30th anniversary of the war prompted some renewed academic and government interest in the war and the territory, with a slew of articles and government works published in 2012. Developments since 2012 have been limited and contribute little of value to the discussion. For the purposes of historical context and comparison, there will be some reference to events that took place before 1982, this will seek to illustrate the changes that took place in this thirty year period following the conflict. A range of primary and secondary sources will be consulted, with the primary sources focusing on parliamentary records and government publications while secondary sources are predominantly pertinent journal articles and books covering the subject of the Falklands War and decolonisation.

This thesis will ultimately come to the conclusion that Hastings and Jenkins' assessment that the war was of no wider significance to other British Overseas Territories is both inaccurate and reductive. Admittedly, the Falklands War may not have had an immediate impact on other British Overseas Territories, but it had some significant effect on British government policy in several areas, which itself would have a direct impact on other overseas territories. Thus, the wider significance of the Falklands War on other British Overseas Territories may have been limited, but was certainly not non-existent. This would therefore mean that the war can be considered a conflict of wider significance for the British Overseas Territories to a considerable extent.

# Methodology

This section details the process by which research was conducted through the use of primary and secondary sources to track evidence of change post-war, and the limitations faced in this respect. It will also consider the impact these limitations may have had on the overall scope of the thesis.

As was mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, the focus of the Falklands War's effects has been on the thirty years between 1982 and 2012. The overwhelming majority of sources consulted and used have been written, uttered or published within this time frame, with only a handful of exceptions typically for illustrative or contextual purposes.

The use of primary sources focussed on parliamentary records, digitised government publications such as White Papers, legislation and research briefings commissioned by parliament. Comparison of these sources can identify the outline of government policy and changes in its evolution across time, this is vital in answering the research question.

- Complete historical parliamentary records are available through the British government's Hansard platform. Relevant records were located through the use of Hansard's search function to identify topics of debate, by looking at debates that took place on significant historical dates, and by searching through the records of individual members of parliament
- Government publications are not as simple to access. Indeed, most documents originating from before the late 1990s have not been digitised and are only accessible by visiting the National Archives in Kew or are not accessible at all. Visiting the National Archives in Kew was logistically impossible during the composition of this project. Therefore, government publications such as official policy documents and white papers used are typically from the late 1990s and beyond
- Legislation such as the Nationality Acts referenced are digitised and freely available from the British government's legislation portal, a service provided by the National Archives. Legislation can be viewed in its current operating format with all amendments in place or in its original print
- Research briefings commissioned by parliament are available from the publications and records section of parliament's website. As with other government publications, older

documents have not been digitised, and only those from 2007 and after have been made available online

- Economic records, such as those relating to development aid given to certain overseas territories per annum are not easily accessible or have not been made available for public consumption. Data is often grouped into large subsections of spending, rather than broken down by individual recipient country or territory. The same applies for numerous government departments, such as defence, where the cost of the Falklands garrison is part of a larger figure budgeting for all overseas deployments. Figures used are those which have been published by the government or are the product of government researchers or authors of secondary source material

Secondary sources have been used in conjunction with primary sources and have served to fill the gaps left by the unavailability or inaccessibility of the latter. These secondary sources range from journal publications analysing a specific aspect of the Falklands War, the islands themselves, or British Overseas Territories, to entire publications with an in-depth research remit. Secondary sources were selected based on a process of searching the Leiden University Library Catalogue for peer-reviewed journal articles or publications with topics and themes pertinent to the field of study in this thesis. The secondary sources procured by means other than the library catalogue were selected again by theme but with the added dimension of some simple research into the background of the writer or writers in question and their perceived level of expertise in the field of study.

The issues of accessibility and availability presented by particularly the primary sources in question have imposed certain limitations on the approach of this project. In some instances, this has meant that it is difficult to conclude with absolute certainty whether certain effects were the direct result of the Falklands War which has been reflected in the corresponding argument. However, through personal inference and comparison of the multitude of primary and secondary sources consulted, one can say with some confidence that the conclusions reached here are accurate, confirming the wider significance of the Falklands War for the British Overseas Territories.

# Literature Review

This section details the historiographical debate surrounding the Falklands War and provides a snapshot of the literature on the war and other British Overseas Territories. It will conclude with a statement on how this thesis fits into the wider discussion and the niche it seeks to fill.

In the opening gambit of their book on the conflict, Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins argue that "the (Falklands) war was of no wider significance for British interests and taught no lessons" (Hastings and Jenkins 2010, xvi). This is undoubtedly a bold statement and one that is certainly open to challenge. Now I am not suggesting that the Falklands War, a bilateral territorial dispute in the South Atlantic, could be classed as having the same significance with regards to British interests, or indeed, world politics, as much larger conflicts like the two world wars certainly did. But to dismiss the Falklands conflict out of hand, without any deeper analysis feels short-sighted. To consider the extent to which the Falklands War can be considered a conflict of no wider significance to British interests, we must first detail the theory itself and the arguments which have been used in support of it.

Hastings and Jenkins cite the examples of Diego Garcia and Hong Kong in supporting their argument. In Diego Garcia, the largest of seven atolls that form the British Indian Ocean Territory, the small population was forcibly relocated by the British government in order to establish an air base between 1968 and 1973. Hong Kong, a much larger territory than Diego Garcia or the Falkland Islands in terms of population was famously handed over to the People's Republic of China at the end of the territory's lease in 1997. The intention here is to imply that the British government did not maintain a steadfast policy across its remaining colonial interests and would act in whichever way would benefit the government of the day most, rather than in defence of self-determination or some other cause (Hastings and Jenkins 2010, xvi). This contradiction regarding the British position in using self-determination as a justification for defending the Falkland Islands and completely ignoring it in the case of Diego Garcia has been noted by more than one observer in the past (Aldrich and Connell 1998, 181). John Madeley believes that the reason for such a stark contrast in the British treatment of Falkland Islanders and the Chagossians or Ilois people as they are otherwise known, who inhabited Diego Garcia is rooted in the colour of their skin (Madeley 1985, 3). However, what Madeley's interpretation does not consider is the idea that the Falklands War may have been a precedent-

setting moment, that self-determination had become the prime concern in all matters related to the surviving colonies. That is not to say that what the British government did to the people of Diego Garcia was not utterly wrong, but that the experience and the ongoing legal battle it spawned may have had some effect on shaping future British policy towards its overseas citizens.

This close temporal proximity between the Falklands War and the beginning of negotiations over Hong Kong, as well as the significance of Hong Kong as one of the last major British colonies merits at least some discussion. Comparisons with the Falklands situation have arisen by virtue of the fact that negotiations between Britain and China on the status of the territory began in 1984, in the wake of the Falklands War. Indeed, mention of the Falklands success is frequent in literature on the decolonisation of Hong Kong. Margaret Thatcher, said to have been buoyed by the success of the campaign in the South Atlantic was, according to Roger Buckley, initially unwilling to consider surrendering British sovereignty over Hong Kong at all (Buckley 1997, 110). When Thatcher failed to offer any viable counter-strategy to the relinquishing of British control of Hong Kong, the realisation that conceding sovereignty was inevitable became a fixed prospect (Buckley 1997, 110). The relevance of Hong Kong to the debate is questionable as it differed from other British colonial possessions in one crucial respect, i.e. a significant part of the territory that made up Hong Kong was subject to a ninety-nine year lease signed in 1898 (Buckley 1997, 3). The rapid growth and urban spread of Hong Kong had rendered the different territories of Hong Kong inseparable, closing the door on any strategy that could allow for negotiation with China for continued British sovereignty over Hong Kong Island and Kowloon (Buckley 1997, 110).

Ultimately, the British government considered a war against Argentina to be winnable, otherwise they would never have embarked on such an endeavour in the first place. As John Flowerdew and Roger Buckley both point out, in China, Britain had a much more formidable opponent than Argentina, one armed with nuclear weapons and a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (Flowerdew 1998, 37 and Buckley 1997, 105). It was no secret that China could roll its tanks into Hong Kong and capture the territory with relative ease, Britain had little in the way of deterrents to prevent such an eventuality (Buckley 1997, 104). Resigned to the fact that a military intervention, or indeed, continued British sovereignty or administration of Hong Kong in any way, were not viable options, the negotiating position shifted in the fifth round of talks mid-way through 1983. The objective became winning as much autonomy and preservation of the contemporary political system in Hong Kong as

possible (Flowerdew 1998, 37). Fundamentally, it is difficult to compare the wider significance of the Falklands War with regards to Hong Kong as the two disputes differ so greatly, with the lease being the key to unlocking Hastings and Jenkins' use of it as support for their claim.

The success of the Falklands campaign is widely credited with winning the 1983 general election as the British public were carried along on a wave of state sponsored nationalism which Thatcher herself referred to as the 'Falklands spirit' (Hastings and Jenkins 2010, 396-397 and Hewer 2013, 148 and Begley 2012, 232-233 and Fourches 2013, 101). However, this discourse has been challenged by Sanders et al whose comprehensive study, including polling data, came to the conclusion that the real reason behind Conservative electoral success was intelligent or fortuitous macroeconomic management (Sanders et al. 1987, 281-283). Therefore, the so called 'Falklands effect' was likely the result of empirical coincidence as opposed to an accurate theoretical interpretation of the effects of events on politics.

Another way of framing the wider significance of the Falklands War that is common in the literature on the subject, pertains to the legal dimension, particularly with regards to the right to self-determination. As Hastings and Jenkins outline, the strongest argument the British have in asserting their sovereignty over the islands is through this principle. The Islanders have made it clear in several referendums that they wish to remain British and this right to determine one's leaders is enshrined in the UN Charter (Hastings and Jenkins 2010, 9). Argentina, and indeed most writers on the subject have noted the main issue in the British use of this line of argument in defending their sovereignty claim. This is that the islanders are not an indigenous people but rather, a population, transplanted from the mother country over time (Fourches 2013, 106-107). Marc Fourches highlights the complexity of the situation and the emphasis placed on certain vocabulary in dialogue, charter and resolutions on the islands. UN resolution 1514 from 1960 specifies that "all peoples have a right to self-determination" but in a 1965 resolution inviting the governments of Argentina and Great Britain to negotiate over the Falklands, the UN urges both parties to take into account the interests of the 'population' of the islands as opposed to people. Fourches lauds the importance of this choice of vocabulary, implying that because the Falklanders are considered a population and not a people, that the right to self-determination does not necessarily apply to them (Fourches 2013, 107-109).

In contrast, Hastings and Jenkins insist that the population of the islands *is* two-thirds indigenous and that they are covered under the UN Charter (Hastings and Jenkins 2010, 9).

This raises an interesting quandary, as many of the Falkland Islanders have been born and raised on the territory and lived there for several generations. At what point, if any, does a population become an indigenous people, especially if in the territory in question there is little or no evidence of an ancient indigenous people. The argument has been used in reverse, with claims that Argentines themselves are transplanted Europeans and not an indigenous people (Chehabi 1985, 218). Britain has certainly picked and chosen its moments to invoke this right in defence of its claims and territory, the people of Diego Garcia and Hong Kong being famous examples when Britain turned the other cheek, either for its own interests or because it wasn't feasible (Fourches 2013, 110-111). However, Hong Kong was as previously explained, a difficult situation and other examples of ignoring the right to self-determination post-Falklands War are hard to come by. The wider significance for British interests here is that the situation is very similar to another British overseas territory with a majority non-indigenous population, Gibraltar.

Negotiations over both the Falkland Islands and Gibraltar had taken place before the 1982 war with their respective bilateral parties. Gibraltar is a small peninsula dominated by a rocky promontory in southern Spain, ceded in perpetuity to Britain under the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht. Tacit Spanish support for Argentina's cause in the Falklands dispute and the war had a dampening effect on British willingness to negotiate over the status of Gibraltar (Aldrich and Connell 1998, 215). Lawrence Freedman argues that despite Spain supporting Argentina in their offensive against the British, the former almost unanimously opposed taking the same kind of military action over Gibraltar. Any hostility towards Britain could have jeopardised Spain's attempt to join NATO and the European Community (Freedman 2005b, sec. 7, ch. 34). Despite this, Peter Gold argues that the Spanish maintained a fervent interest in the conflict and considered their options much more carefully than Argentina. This was due in part to the risk of Morocco imitating Argentina in trying to reclaim the Spanish territories of Ceuta and Melilla militarily (Gold 1994, 51). Gibraltar, it was surmised popularly, was not worth the life of a single Spanish soldier and rather than building tensions, Spain should be building good relations with Gibraltarians so that one day they would be convinced that autonomous status within the Spanish Kingdom was their preferred option (Gold 1994, 51-53). The Falklands War served as a stark warning to competing interests that Britain was prepared to defend its overseas concerns militarily. Spain had the opportunity of seeing how a potential conflict over Gibraltar may have played out whilst maintaining a position that condemned the use of force in resolving

international disputes (Gold 1994, 51). Had the war not happened, perhaps the Spanish may have taken a different position, it is difficult to say.

However, the Falklands War did happen and it cost the British government a great deal. In the 1960s and 1970s, Britain could not confirm the future status of the islands, the economy of which was dominated by sheep farming and thus highly dependent on the price of wool and British imports (Freedman 2005a, 40). As Hastings and Jenkins argue, the declining population of the Falklands and its status as a notoriously wealthy recipient of Overseas Development Ministry funds had to be weighed against the economic possibilities provided by a continent of 240 million people (Hastings and Jenkins 2010, 16). Freedman points out that for years, the British government avoided making a definitive decision over the islands. The cost of implementing new defences was too high but the political risk of making a deal with Argentina against the islander's wishes was also too great. The war had the effect of settling this choice (Freedman 2005b, sec. 9, ch. 44). Britain was obliged to spend some £2bn fortifying the islands, including an air base and garrison that would defend the islands from any future attack (Hastings and Jenkins 2010, xi-xii). A system of economic reforms and developments was also implemented and according to Klaus Dodd's 2012 assessment has reinvigorated a once declining territory. This is judged to be worth the £70m pound per annum defence bill (Dodds 2012, 698). The effect of this increased economic development of the Falkland Islands as a result of the war on other British Overseas Territories is a topic seemingly unexplored by literature on the subject.

This thesis does not focus on the specifics of the sovereignty dispute or the war itself as many articles and other works do. Instead, this thesis seeks to explore the wider significance of the Falklands War on other British Overseas Territories in the thirty years since it occurred. There were numerous articles published on the thirtieth anniversary of the conflict which go into detail on the war's transformative effect on the Falkland Islands themselves, but often little to no mention of how this war may have affected other territories. This is the gap in the literature that this thesis addresses.

# 1. Self-Determination

This section focuses on self-determination, a legal concept that was used by Britain as a justification for going to war to reclaim the Falkland Islands. A concept which has become the basis of Britain's ongoing relationship with its remaining overseas territories.

## 1.1 Context and Concept

The principle of self-determination purportedly gives the people of a specific territory the right to choose their own sovereignty and international political status. It is however, one of the most widely disputed tenets of international law and is frequently employed as an argument in territorial disputes. Indeed, while the principle itself has become an accepted norm, its content, particularly the wording of UN resolutions on the subject, and how this applies to certain scenarios remains an issue of great contention (Kattan 2009, 118). A number of nations challenged the wording of various points in the UN Charter, including Britain. In the case of self-determination, a position was taken that this 'right' must be subordinate to the maintenance of world peace. This stance takes the view that self-determination is a principle as opposed to an absolute right but this view has not been supported by the UN (Dunnett 1983, 420, 426). There is also this distinction between the terms 'people' and 'population', a people being a group indigenous to a certain territory and a population being a group that has settled there. Argentina has argued that the Falkland Islanders are not an indigenous population because they are not native to the territory. Under closer inspection this argument unravels, the islands have no indigenous human population and Argentines themselves are predominantly the descendants of European settlers who themselves arrived long after the ancestors of the Falkland Islanders. There is also the legal and moral objection of discriminating against a modern population by the 'sins' of its forefathers (Chehabi 1985, 217-218).

Similarly, the idea of population size has been a common issue in questions of self-determination and independence. In the Falklands case, Argentina has argued that the population of the Falkland Islands is too small to constitute a 'people' with full rights to self-determination. That said, international practice has shown population size to be a factor of questionable relevance with numerous small nations taking their place at the UN or declaring sovereign independence (Chehabi 1985, 217). It is however, difficult to deny the vulnerability of small populations when it comes to the preservation of rights. The Falkland Islanders had

the benefit of an influential group of lobbyists in Westminster making a strong case to the government on their behalf (Aldrich and Connell 1998, 203). Other territories have not had the benefit of this kind of political pressure being applied on their behalf. This is likely due to the non-British ethnicity of the denizens in question, a fact which limits the political traction that can be achieved in domestic British politics.

## 1.2 The Anguilla Crisis and Diego Garcia

There are numerous historical examples of the British government flaunting the right to self-determination in its dependent territories. This is significant as the government would go on to use self-determination as a major argument in defending its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and in justification for going to war over the territory.

In Britain's retreat from the Caribbean, self-determination was a casualty of centripetalism, whereby a form of anglophone federalisation was the preferred option for the British government. In theory, this federalisation would ensure an orderly transfer of powers into efficient groupings of territories that would be more financially stable and less reliant on Britain in the post-colonial world (Mawby 2012, 251). In practice, British policy makers were convinced that small-island politicians were 'feckless' and would not be able to function independently (Mawby 2012, 252-254). However, as with colonial policies of old, local populations were not widely consulted on these constitutional changes and certain territories were displeased with their territorial groupings. Anguilla was one such territory that fell victim to this unwanted federalisation. Despite having been settled by refugees from St Kitts in the 17$^{th}$ century, the fortunes of the two territories, seventy miles apart, had diverged greatly over centuries and little in common remained, aside from a colonially instituted political link (Mawby 2012, 251-252). Crisis arose when Britain changed the nature of the political relationship St Kitts, and therefore Anguilla, had with Britain, elevating them from dependencies to the status of associated statehood. This allowed St Kitts more power over their northern neighbour and Anguillans believed they would be subject to despotic rule from the larger islands without the protection of direct British administration (Mawby 2012, 257).

Despite popular opposition to associated statehood in Anguilla, this change in status still came to pass in February 1967. A referendum was held and Anguilla declared itself an independent republic and seceded from the union with St Kitts and Nevis in July of the same year (Mawby 2012, 257-258). After hearing repeated pleas from the Kittitian government for

British assistance in restoring control over Anguilla, condescending analyses in Whitehall that Anguillans were akin to children and prone to falling under the spell of foreign influences, and a disastrous visit by British minister, William Whitlock, in which he was forced from the island at gunpoint, the decision was made to intervene by force and restore Anguilla to its associated statehood with St Kitts and Nevis (Mawby 2012, 263, 267). It was surmised that gangster elements had taken over Anguilla and this fact could cause a loss of international prestige and inspire movements in other British territories with Michael Stewart, then Foreign Secretary, making specific reference to the Falkland Islands and Gibraltar (Mawby 2012, 266). The British government sanctioned the use of a small invasion force to oust the territory's secessionist leadership and bring Anguilla back under Kittitian control. The whole episode was farcical. Journalists accompanying the invasion force noted that Ronald Webster, the island's secessionist leader was not a gangster and clearly represented the self-determination of his people in opposing the association with St Kitts and Nevis (Mawby 2012, 267).

What the British government had failed to consider in all this was the Anguillan people's right to self-determination. Britain could argue that they were forced to subordinate this right for the preservation of world peace but it would be difficult to make this argument stick. Anguilla is poor and underdeveloped, and the British were ironically more worried about an American takeover than any move by the Soviet Union (Mawby 2012, 249, 256). The Anguillan people had clearly expressed a will to be treated independently, not necessarily desiring full independence, but reverting to British dependency with no political affiliation to St Kitts and Nevis. This had been ignored.

At the same time as the Anguilla crisis, another violation of self-determination was taking place in a British territory in the Indian Ocean. Diego Garcia is the largest atoll in the BIOT, which itself was once part of Mauritius. That is, until the British government made the sale of the islands to Britain part of Mauritius' independence process (Madeley 1985, 3). Diego Garcia was home to some 2,000 Chagossians, the descendants of lepers and fisherman that had been sent to colonise the islands which had had no indigenous population in the 18$^{th}$ century (Madeley 1985, 3-4). After the territory had been officially seceded from Mauritius, Britain negotiated with the United States about leasing the territory for an airbase. Military planners concluded that the airbase and the islanders could not mix and with little to no media attention or advocacy on their behalf, the Chagossians were quietly expelled from their homes in Diego Garcia and the surrounding islands and never allowed to return (Madeley 1985, 4-5). This expulsion took place over a number of years and in the early 1970s began to overlap with

British assurances that the Falkland Islanders, a population of almost exactly the same size as the Chagossians, would be consulted at every stage of negotiations over that territory. Meanwhile, said Chagossians were unceremoniously dumped in the slums of the Mauritian capital, Port Louis, illustrating the existence of an outrageous double standard over Britain's implementation of self-determination (Madeley 1985, 5).

The actions of the British government in Anguilla and Diego Garcia clearly demonstrate that the archetypes and racial prejudices that had historically sustained the empire, were still at the heart of decision making well into the era of decolonisation. The threat of the Cold War, which had spread to all four corners of the globe and Britain's international prestige were prioritised over any notion of self-determination or other human rights that these small populations should have been afforded by law. The preservation of world peace argument could be made in response to Diego Garcia as the territory was used to establish a US air base during the expulsion. However, it seems like an unnecessarily extreme measure to expel these people from their homeland for this sole purpose. Indeed, the islands besides Diego Garcia that make up the BIOT have remained relatively untouched, with no real reason why they could not be populated by displaced Chagossians (Madeley 1985, 10). If Britain had treated the Chagossians with the same level of respect they would afford the Falklanders just over a decade later, establishing an air base around an existing human settlement or amicably relocating the Chagossians within the BIOT would not have been such an unreasonable proposition.

The fallout from both these scenarios was surprisingly limited. The Anguillan crisis was undoubtedly an embarrassing debacle for the British government which drew international backlash and humiliation in the press as a result of the invasion. It was even referred to as 'Wilson's Suez', after the then Prime Minister Harold Wilson (Mawby 2012, 268), but such a comparison has not held true. The Anguillan crisis has not been remembered or written about to anywhere near the extent as the Suez crisis has been (Mawby 2012, 272). Likewise, the plight of the Chagossian people has largely been forgotten, adding more credence to the conclusion that self-determination is a right only upheld universally to those overseas peoples with the correct skin colour or ethnicity.

## 1.3 Self-Determination and the Falklands

There is an irony in Britain, that old colonial power, using self-determination as a justification for defending the Falkland Islands militarily. This was a nation that had built an empire on

ignoring that right, now using it to its own advantage in sustaining a small piece of that diminishing empire (Chehabi 1985, 216). As previously discussed, the British government had been ignoring that right as recently as the previous decade, indeed it was not until 1980 that the Anguillans finally attained what they had democratically chosen in the late 1960s and the political association with St Kitts and Nevis was officially terminated, returning the territory to the status of overseas dependency (Mawby 2012, 270).

But was it the case that the British government had learned from these past mistakes when dealing with other territories and now accepted self-determination as a truly universal right? Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher extolled the loyalty of the Falklanders in an interview at the height of the crisis, declaring her government's support for their right to self-determination but also not failing to mention their British heritage in elucidating her argument (Dunnett 1983, 415). Yet Thatcher's enthusiastic approach to the Falklands and their islanders' right to self-determination was not in line with British policy up until the point of the Argentine invasion, which was to solve the issues of small territories by ignoring them altogether. Successive British governments had allowed the territory's infrastructure and economy to deteriorate to the point where the population would begin to rely on Argentina to fulfil its basic needs and supplies instead of Britain (Chehabi 1985, 220). In addressing a gathering of some five hundred islanders on a visit to the Falklands in 1968, Lord Chalfont, the Minister of State at the Foreign Office, could offer no assurances on the future of the territory. Indeed, he warned the islanders that Britain was no longer the great imperialist power of the 19th century and hoped they would acknowledge that keeping the Falklands British "means something different to what it meant in 1900" (Beck 1985, 657). Indeed at the same point in the late 1960s, Britain was negotiating with Argentina on the future status of the territory and according to Foreign Office papers had accepted in principle the renunciation of British sovereignty over the islands under certain conditions (Aldrich and Connell 1998, 203).

Lobbying efforts eventually put paid to any suggestion that the British government would relinquish sovereignty but the fact that they had been prepared to do so shows that the self-determination of the islanders was not as important as the domestic political significance the issue held for the party in power (Aldrich and Connell 1998, 204, 211). Despite various setbacks, negotiations continued in one form or another right through the 1970s and into the early 1980s and Margaret Thatcher's tenure (Aldrich and Connell 1998, 204-205). This in itself shows that there was really no change in British views on self-determination influenced by the past mistakes of Anguilla, Diego Garcia and other instances. The government, like any other,

would pursue whatever course of action it felt benefitted its own political position the most. Fortunately for the Falkland Islanders, the Argentine invasion played right into the hands of this decision making position.

There had been some evolution in the British position on the Falklands dispute in line with a general shift in decolonisation discourse that took place in the second half of the 20th century. This has been evidenced by a move away from traditional arguments of territorial integrity towards a greater emphasis on self-determination which had become the rallying cry for the anti-colonial movement (Freedman 2005a, 2-3). The Falklands War helped cement this evolution towards a wider acceptance of self-determination as a universal right. However, the British government clearly did not consider self-determination a universal right in the years before the war and had been proposing numerous options to the Argentinians including leaseback and joint administration in an attempt to solve the dispute (Aldrich and Connell 1998, 204-205). The Falkland Islanders had no desire for any kind of sovereignty transfer or Argentine governance and talks reached an impasse after it became clear that the islander's possessed a kind of veto on any deal made between the two governments. However, the British government attempted to circumvent this by suggesting the Argentinians enact a hearts and minds campaign aimed at winning the approval of the Islanders, which over time could have seen a softening in the Islander's hard-line opposition to Argentina (Freedman 2005a, 17-19). Self-determination then, was both Britain's main argument in defending its sovereignty over the islands and its greatest obstacle in resolving the dispute that hindered international relations and trade in South America once and for all. The invasion and subsequent conflict would change this contradictory stance held by the British and bring them down firmly on one side of the fence.

The invasion was a shock and an embarrassing affront to Britain. Britain's power was seriously waning and Argentina had gambled that Britain would simply relinquish the territory rather than attempt a risky reconquest for such a small population (Arquilla and Rasmussen 2001, 739, 742). That gamble backfired and Britain went to war, determined that it would not be bested by what even opposition politicians were referring to as the "tinpot fascist junta that rules Argentina" (Silkin, HC Deb 02 April 1982). In addressing the House of Commons the day after the invasion, Margaret Thatcher stated unequivocally "We cannot allow the democratic rights of the islanders to be denied by the territorial ambitions of Argentina" (Thatcher, HC Deb Apr 3 1982). The tone was set, and self-determination, along with the Islanders' cultural identity and the fact that Britain had been attacked without provocation

became the chief arguments in justifying the use of force to the British public, the majority of whom were seen to be receptive and supportive despite the absurdity in sending 20,000 men to reclaim a relic of colonialism 8,000 miles away (Aldrich and Connell 1998, 207 and Hastings and Jenkins 2010, xi).

## 1.4 Significance of the 1982 War

Self-determination, simplified as the 'wishes' of the islanders had become a rallying cry in stirring up public support for the campaign, but by going to war for it, had Britain in some way committed itself to upholding it in the future? It is certainly the case that modern British government policy is almost entirely based on the right to self-determination, which it makes reference to repeatedly, especially in conjunction with assurances that this right will be defended. Any territory can choose to maintain its constitutional link with Britain or pursue a different future as long as the people have been consulted. Specific reference is made to the Falkland Islands and Gibraltar as territories in which Britain's support is steadfast, though it reiterates that it is prepared to defend all of the territories from external threats (FCO 2010-2015 Policy). The frequent reiterations that Britain will defend these territories from external threats certainly stems from the Falklands War, the only instance where such a territory has faced a real external threat in recent times. Indeed, it is difficult to conjure up any rival explanation as to what event since the Falklands War could have shaped Britain's policy towards its overseas territories in such a way. If another territory where the population had democratically chosen to remain British faced the same kind of attack from a foreign power, the expectation, at the very least in the territory concerned, would be that Britain defend it militarily.

Britain's use of self-determination as a legal justification in defence of the Falklands was probed by members of parliament during the crisis, who wondered whether the government would actually uphold the principle universally. Tony Marlow, a Conservative MP asked Margaret Thatcher whether she would remind the Israeli government that "self-determination is as important for 4½ million Palestinians as it is for the Falkland Islanders", forcing the Prime Minister to reiterate several times that "we believe in it as a principle" and that it is "equally important to uphold the right of self-determination" in this case and in all others (HC Deb 08 Jun 1982). Similarly, Tony Benn, the former Labour cabinet minister questioned the wisdom of using self-determination as a means for military action, declaring it

a "gross act of self-deception to pretend to the British people that we have the power, the means or the will to defend outposts of empire" (Benn, HC Deb 29 April 1982).

Mrs Thatcher, on record committing herself and the government to self-determination as a principle, would face their first real test just a year after the conclusion of the war. For it to be said that the 1982 war had the effect of solidifying Britain's commitment to the principle of self-determination there would have to be no evidence that they would attempt to subvert it in other scenarios, as they had done before the war in Anguilla and Diego Garcia among others. Coincidentally, the territory involved in this 'test' was one that had been a major part of Britain's Anguilla crisis. The island nation of St Kitts and Nevis declared independence in 1983, terminating its associated statehood with Britain and ending the latter's responsibilities towards this new nation. Lord Skelmersdale, a Conservative peer summed up the government action in response to the Kittitian declaration in a session at the House of Lords where final approval of the motion would take place. In his summary, he stated that he was satisfied that the criteria for self-determination had been met and that there was no reason for the British government not to accede to the request of the Kittitian government for independence (Skelmersdale, HL Deb 09 May 1983). Even without mention of the Falklands War, this would seem to suggest that self-determination had been confirmed as an operating principle in Britain's dealings with its overseas territories. Thatcher had gone on record in defence of the principle repeatedly just the year before, to renege on it would have dire political consequences. Britain had nothing to gain from standing in the way of Kittitian independence and unlike the Falklands scenario, had no leg to stand on legally.

Aside from Hong Kong, in which the British really had no option but to relinquish sovereignty to China, there have been no other clear violations of self-determination vis-a-vis British territories overseas. Referendums have been held in most territories on continuing their existing constitutional links with Britain and as yet there have been no changes to the status quo. Crucially there does not seem to be any evidence that Britain is interfering in these democratic processes as most territories have a high degree of self-government, with Britain only being responsible for matters of defence and foreign policy. Therefore it could be said that the Falklands War and its high profile use of self-determination had the effect of committing Britain to this principle which it had so flagrantly abused in instances before the conflict. Any attempt to subvert it after the conflict, which had been a world event, would undermine its position vis-a-vis the Falklands dispute going forward and potentially draw the ire and criticism of the press and opposition politicians alike. In this sense then it can be argued that the

Falklands War, at least in the realm of self-determination was of great significance to the other British overseas territories. The war helped cement the change in discourse relating to Britain's ongoing relationship with its overseas territories from one based in territorial integrity to a relationship based on the self-determination of the territory's citizens and their choice of whether to remain constitutionally linked to Britain or not. The Falklands War was thus of wider significance for the other British Overseas Territories in this crucial respect.

# 2. Citizenship

This section focuses on the impact of the Falklands War on British citizenship policy. The British government introduced a new classification of British citizenship in 1981 which greatly reduced the rights of most citizens in dependent territories. The Falklands War directly led to an amendment to this legislation that accentuated racial bias in British citizenship policy.

## 2.1 Historical Context

In the early decolonisation period after the Second World War the British Nationality Act of 1948 conferred British citizenship on the population of the remaining colonies and the Commonwealth (Nationality Act 1948, Part 2, Sec 4). The perhaps unsurprising effect of this legislation, given the size of the Commonwealth was a wave of immigration into Britain, on which subsequent governments between 1962 and 1981 attempted to impose limitations (Moore 2000, 1). These limitations, which came in the form of immigration and citizenship legislation that reacted to contemporary political pressures made for a muddled and confused body of rules and regulations. The Nationality Act of 1981 sought to rationalise and standardise this area of law-making, whilst also ensuring the rights of 2.6 million British citizens in Hong Kong were neutralised before the territory's return to China. The populations of the other dependencies and how this legislation would affect them was a footnote in government decision making as the potential influx of 2.6 million from Hong Kong far outweighed the 400,000 living in the other dependent territories (Moore 2000, 20). Under the 1948 act, the majority of people concerned were 'Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies', meaning those born in the colonies often enjoyed the same rights and privileges as those born in Britain itself.

After the 1971 Immigration Act reduced the status of Commonwealth citizens without a patrial link to Britain to that of foreigners with no right of abode, the 1981 Act shifted its attention to preventing potential immigration as opposed to actual immigration. The Act created a new form of British citizenship that would distinguish between those with a 'close' connection to Britain and the rest (Moore 2000, 3). Thus the title 'Citizen of the British Dependent Territories' was born. This status solidified an applicable persons' connection to their dependent territory whilst distancing their connection to Britain (Nationality Act 1981, Part 2, Sec 15-23). Becoming a CBDT denied that person any right of abode in Britain and limited this right to their own territory. This essentially rendered the recipients of this classification second-class citizens, making the rights and freedoms they had once enjoyed as

CUKCs now exclusive to full British citizens. The intention was that CBDTs would eventually become citizens of their respective territories once they became independent or part of an existing state (Moore 2000, 3). The main issue with this line of thinking is that it was, and still is the case, that many of these dependent territories were unlikely to ever become independent states, given the unrealistic practicalities of such a political status for islands and territories with very small populations.

## 2.2 Racial Bias

The greater importance placed on a patrial link to Britain by the 1981 Nationality Act created a racial bias in its application to Britain's territorial interests overseas. Gibraltarians were big winners from the 1981 Act. This is perhaps unsurprising given the territory's relative geographical proximity to Britain, making patrial links easier to establish, but it is also largely the result of the ethnic makeup of the territory, which despite mixed origins in Genoa, Malta and North Africa is predominantly white British. Unsurprisingly, the 'transplanted' population of the Falkland Islands of which almost the entirety is descended from British sailors and settlers were also recipients of full British citizenship after the 1981 Act. That is, however, apart from some 400 islanders whose antecedents had all been born on the Falkland Islands themselves or in some other country (Moore 2000, 4). Essentially, 400 islanders lacked a grandparent with the appropriate birth place to claim full British citizenship under the new rules.

The legislation simultaneously deprived black and Asian populations of rights and freedoms associated with entering and remaining in Britain whilst leaving "routes home" for white Britons born within the boundaries of the empire (Tyler 2010, 63). The 1981 Act was therefore quite clearly a racist measure that transformed discriminatory immigration policy into actual forms of British citizenship (Moore 2000, 3). Much of the opposition to the 1981 Nationality Act in parliament was focused on protecting these small white populations who stood to lose their right of abode in Britain under the new legislation (Moore 2000, 4). In the House of Lords, peers such as the Conservative; Viscount Massereene and Ferrard criticised the government for "making a mountain out of a molehill" and disregarding British blood and British descent in the case of the 400 Falkland Islanders. Interestingly, the Viscount is fully aware that the Bill can be interpreted as racist, but argues that protecting the rights of British stock does not amount to racial bias, "it is not racist to me; it is common sense" (Massereene and Ferrard, HL Deb 07 Oct 1981). Politicians from across the political spectrum came together

to denounce the government's treatment of the Falklanders. Labour MP Frank Hooley, who had campaigned for Britain to relinquish its colonial possessions noted the irony of the government's position in championing the self-determination of the islanders whilst simultaneously making them second class British citizens (Hooley, HC Deb 07 Apr 1982). Meanwhile, in the governing Conservative party, notorious anti-immigration politicians Enoch Powell and Ivor Stanbrook stressed the history of the people in the Falkland Islands and how these 400, who had been demoted by the new legislation did not differ from the rest in any way other than the misfortune of having a great-grandparent born in Britain as opposed to a grandparent (Moore 2000, 4-5). However, on the issue of rendering the non-white peoples of the dependent territories as second class citizens, there was no such uproar. It is clear that the racial prejudice on which the empire was first built was still very much in the thinking of British politics at the time of the Falklands War.

## 2.3 The Falklands Effect

Until the invasion, and even during the war itself, the government maintained that there would be no amendment to the Nationality Act, with Margaret Thatcher arguing that it was unnecessary as in practice these 400 CBDT Falkland Islanders would be treated with the same courtesy and afforded the same rights as their neighbours and family members who were full British citizens should they choose come to Britain (Thatcher, HC Deb 20 Apr 1982). The government did not want to make any amendments to the Act which might undermine the integrity of the 'flood-gates' holding back the population of Hong Kong, especially when the issue at hand concerned just 400 people (Moore 2000, 5).

Nevertheless, an amendment was made in 1983 after the conclusion of the war. Leaving this portion of the Falklands' population as CBDTs after they had been invaded by a foreign power and after Margaret Thatcher had been publicly extolling their virtues as a people in drumming up domestic British public support for the reconquest of the islands would have been politically toxic and challenged her commitment to the islands which had been massively increased by the conflict. After the war, the government vehemently denied that their exclusionary policy regarding the islands and their distancing themselves from the situation had encouraged the Argentinians to believe that Britain's commitment to the Falkland Islands was wavering (Waddington, HC Deb 03 Feb 1983). Despite the denial, it is a logical line of argument that the British government's apathetic response to the case of these 400 islanders could have been interpreted in Argentina as a sign that the British would not defend the islands

if attacked. It is possible then that had Thatcher's government taken a more hard-line racial stance in the first place, the Argentinians may have thought twice about attacking territory populated by British citizens. Thus in terms of nationality and citizenship, the most direct consequence of the Falklands War was an amendment to the 1981 act introduced in 1983 that granted full British Citizenship on the 400 or so remaining Falkland Islanders who had been rendered the lesser status of CBDT (Nationality Act FLK 1983, Sec 1-3). The effect of this was to elevate the entirety of the Falklands population to the same level as Gibraltarians, full British citizens with greater rights and freedoms than citizens of the other dependent territories who were predominantly CBDTs and, crucially, not white.

## 2.4 Overseas Territories

The CBDT citizens of the remaining dependent territories would not be granted access to full British Citizenship until the Overseas Territories Act of 2002 which also implemented a change in the title given to these territories from 'dependent' to 'overseas'. This was certainly an effort to modernise their image and status in a new century, and indeed a new millennium, but also to begin redressing the imbalance caused by the frankly racist nationality and immigration legislation of the past. The government White Paper on Britain and its overseas territories does not explicitly mention or detail this racial imbalance, but through the frequent mention of the historical provisions made for Gibraltarians and Falkland Islanders and how these people enjoyed more rights and freedoms than citizens of the other overseas territories and the latter's grievance about this state of affairs, this racial bias is heavily implied (Partnership for Progress and Prosperity 1999, 16-18). The Overseas Territories Act itself was framed by then Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, John Battle, as "amending" the 1981 Nationality Act while "building" on the provisions made in 1983 Falkland Islands amendment (Battle, HC Deb 05 Jun 2000). This in turn frames the 1983 amendment as not having compounded the racial inequality of the 1981 Act but as having reduced it, which could be interpreted as accurate in a legal sense, but in practice was not the case.

Another example that showcases the 2002 Act's modernising and positive intentions is the section granting full British citizenship to the majority of the Chagossian people (Overseas Territories Act 2002, Sec 6). However, in a series of written answers to questions posed by the then fringe Labour MP, Jeremy Corbyn, on the subject of the Chagossians, the government confirmed there were no plans for any potential return of the Chagossians to the BIOT (HC Deb 10 Apr 2002). This was despite a British High Court ruling in 2000 that the British

government position was in contravention of the constitution of the BIOT and that excluding the Chagossians from their homes was unlawful. This ruling would be overturned by the government through Orders of Council using Royal Prerogative in 2004 (Snoxell 2008, 127). This particularly underhanded way of maintaining the status quo and continuing to prevent the Chagossians from returning to their homeland from which they were forced by the British government demonstrates the persistence of this racial prejudice in decision making vis-a-vis the overseas territories. The dispute remains unresolved to this day and the Chagossians have not been permitted to return to their homeland.

## 2.5 Significance of the 1982 War

It is difficult to say just how much of a role the Falklands War and its subsequent amendment to the 1981 Nationality Act played in the decision making process behind the 2002 Overseas Territories act, but the racial imbalance created by the 1981 Act and compounded by the 1983 Falklands amendment were plain to see and patently embarrassing in a 21st century context. Given then that it was the Argentine invasion of the Falklands that led to the sudden reversal of the British government policy of distancing itself from the Falkland Islanders and the subsequent change in citizenship status (Moore 2000, 7), it is logical to conclude that the Falklands War certainly had some wider significance for British territorial interests overseas. The apathy the government demonstrated in the case of the 400 CBDT Islanders before the war could have been used to combat any accusations of racial bias as the rules were simply applying to everyone. However, by amending the 1981 Act specifically for the Falklands the British government had bent these rules and acted in a biased fashion in favour of ethnic British persons. It has been theorised repeatedly that the main purpose of the 1981 Nationality Act was to exclude Hong Kongers from being able to emigrate to Britain. However, if an amendment could be made to restore citizenship to these Falklanders, then an amendment could be made to specifically exclude Hong Kongers from claiming full British citizenship on political grounds as opposed to racial ones, whilst restoring this status for the citizens of all other dependent territories regardless of ethnicity.

A Hong Kong amendment was not made and thus the Falklands War had helped create the unequal citizenship landscape that the British government would attempt to rectify with the Overseas Territories Act in 2002. These factors were and are of direct relevance to life in the British Overseas Territories and demonstrate the wider significance of the Falklands War on the lives of the people that live in them.

# 3. Economic Commitment

This section focuses on the economic commitment made to the Falkland Islands in the wake of the 1982 war and what wider effect, if any, this had on Britain's economic commitment to the other overseas territories.

## 3.1 The Falklands Economy

The islands are difficult to access, the terrain is rugged, with few trees, vegetation is hardy and there are many cliffs and rocky outcrops, while the climate is cooler than Britain in summer but slightly warmer in winter. The Falklands constitute a greater land area than many small countries, but have always maintained a miniscule population. The land itself is of poor quality and the generally cool climate renders it unsuitable for many agricultural activities (Williams 1983, 14 and Royle 1995, 307, 315). Given the geographical limitations present, it is perhaps unsurprising that by the time of the Falklands War, the economy of the islands had long been dominated by sheep farming and the production of wool for export. The international market price of wool was thus the single most important economic variable for the population of the islands (Freedman 2005a, 40). This trade was itself dominated by a single entity, the Falkland Islands Company, which owned 46% of the total area of the islands and through its ownership of many of the big farms, accounted for 44% of the total wool production. The company also provided internal shipping, operated vessels that exported wool internationally and ran the islands' banking services. Many islanders held some level of resentment at the FIC's colonial style domination of the economy and repatriation of profits to its British parent company, as opposed to investment in the Falklands themselves (Freedman 2005a, 40 and Aldrich & Connell 1998, 203).

The 1970s was a decade of steady economic and demographic decline for the Falkland Islands. The population fell to new lows due to emigration and the Labour government of the time was negotiating with Argentina over the territory (Freedman 2005a, 40). The geographer and politician, Lord Shackleton, was sent to the Falkland Islands in 1976 to conduct a study into the economic status and future of the territory, it is surmised with the intention of strengthening the case for greater association with Argentina and even the transfer of sovereignty, in line with Labour's wider policy of decolonisation (Royle 1995, 315). However, Shackleton judged the Islands to be economically viable, noting how the Falklands had established a trade surplus, returned more funds to Britain than had been given to the territory

in aid and investment and had a profitable local government (Freedman 2005a, 40-41). Shackleton also made a number of suggestions and recommendations that would revitalise the Falklands' stagnating economy and improve quality of life for the islanders, chief among which was an extension to the rudimentary runway that served as the only point of access to aircraft on the islands (Freedman 2005a, 41). While Shackleton convinced the then Prime Minister James Callaghan of the importance of the runway investment, the Ministry of Overseas Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the former of which controlled the funding, remained unconvinced. The FCO feared that such a large investment in the islands would be interpreted as a pledge to the islanders and the British people of the government's commitment to the territory, a commitment it did not want to make in light of its ongoing negotiations with Argentina. Indeed, there was little in the way of an economic case for prioritising the economy of the Falklands over trade with Argentina and South America at large (Freedman 2005a, 41-42). Shackleton's report had been too positive for the government's purposes, and little action was taken in implementing his recommendations, the economy and population of the Falklands thus continued to decline (Royle 1995, 315).

## 3.2 The Direct Effect of the War

The British government's non-committal approach to the Falkland Islands continued under the Premiership of Margaret Thatcher that began in 1979. A census carried out in 1980 showed that the population of the Falklands had fallen to an all-time low of 1,813 people (FIG Census 2016, 14-15). It is not ridiculous to suggest that had Argentina not invaded, population decline would have continued through migration, which in turn would have furthered the decline of the local economy and given enough time, led to the collapse and end of the colony as a British overseas territory. But, Argentina did invade, and after a war that made global headlines and cost the lives of some 255 British servicemen, the government initiated a stunning reversal of this non-committal approach. The 'Fortress Falklands' plan to increase the military presence on the islands and in the surrounding ocean, had existed before the war, but had not been a politically viable option. The war changed everything, particularly the domestic political landscape regarding the territory. To restart negotiations now would have been political suicide, especially after the economic and human cost of reconquering the islands. In the eyes of Margaret Thatcher, the war had solved the sovereignty question once and for all (Aldrich & Connell 1998, 209), and she now felt obliged to invest in fortifying and developing the islands, so as to prevent anything like the invasion from happening again, and because the future status

of the territory was now clear and assured. Lord Shackleton was asked to revise and update his 1976 economic survey, and this time, action was taken (Royle 1995, 315).

By far the greatest economic commitment Britain has made to the Falklands has been in the realm of defence. The first major investments were the construction of the Mount Pleasant airbase and the establishment of a much larger military garrison on the islands. A garrison that would actually be able to mount a staunch defence of the territory should Argentina decide to invade again. Despite a proposal recommending around 3,100 personnel, defence chiefs based their budgeting on an assumption that the garrison would consist of no more than 2,000 personnel (Freedman 2005b, Sec. 9, Ch. 44). Meanwhile, the airbase would serve as both a civilian airport and a military base, improving accessibility and air freight to the islands, with the establishment of a regular air service for civilian passengers (Freedman 2005b, Sec. 9, Ch. 44). The estimated cost of the airbase was somewhere between £200m and £300m, already a significant addition to Britain's defence budget. The Falklands' defence precipitated a 3% annual increase in military spending to cover the costs, the highest point being 1983-1984, in which some £624m was allocated to help establish a stronger presence on the islands. The 3% increases ended in 1986, at the same time as the Mount Pleasant base was entering the final stages of construction (Grove 2002, 311). However, the cost of maintaining the garrison with associated hardware, including; fast-jet aircraft, surface-to-air missiles and several Royal Navy vessels is an ongoing, annual commitment. Between 2006 and 2011 the yearly cost of the garrison and its maintenance increased from £65m to £75m (Brooke-Holland, HC Lib 2012, 3-6). This expenditure is a direct result of the 1982 war, and is certain to have wider significance for Britain and its ability to defend the other overseas territories as successive governments have promised repeatedly in official statements and publications.

In terms of the general economy, efforts focused on using the wool industry as a springboard for diversification. The large farms were divided and taken out of private ownership and the majority became the property of local families, giving them a direct stake in the economy and a greater incentive to stay on the islands. The most successful form of diversification would turn out to be a fishing licensing scheme, which would prove to be the salvation of the economy and an extremely lucrative venture (Freedman 2005b, Sec.9 Ch.44). At its height, the scheme was generating £30m per year and in more recent years still generates between £12m and £15m annually. Much of this revenue has been invested in the Falklands, rather than repatriated to Britain and internal communications, education, health and other infrastructure have improved dramatically as a result (Dodds 2012, 697). It is important to note that apart from the military commitment, the British government directly provided just two

financial aid packages after the war, £15m for the reconstruction of infrastructure damaged and destroyed in the fighting, and £31m for development. The islands have become economically self-sufficient and development beyond this initial £31m was derived from the territory's own profits and the work of the self-funding FIDC (Taylor & Miller, HC Lib 2007, 47-49). Greater accessibility and improved infrastructure have also allowed for the creation of a burgeoning tourism industry. The benefits of this economic turnaround are illustrated by the dramatic change in the population of the Falklands, which has almost doubled since the war. From its 1980 low of just 1,813 people, the population has grown steadily reaching a new height of 3,398 in 2016 (FIG Census 2016, 14-15). This growth is the direct result of new economic opportunities and jobs created by investment and development, as well as much easier access provided by the Mount Pleasant airport which are in turn the result of the Falklands War.

## 3.3 The Wider Picture

As government White Papers are eager to point out, many of the overseas territories are economically independent of Britain, each with their own distinct strengths, weaknesses and challenges (White Papers - 1999, 30-34, 2012, 31-36). The fourteen territories can be divided into smaller groups that share certain characteristics that explain a lot about their economic and development status. Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and Gibraltar have all carved out important positions for themselves in international financial markets and are economically self-sufficient with high GDP and levels of development, these territories do not receive economic aid from the British government (Clegg & Gold 2011, 127 and White Paper 2012, 32-33). There are the uninhabited territories that are the subject of scientific and missions, like the British Antarctic Territory and South Georgia, and territories that serve only as military outposts like the BIOT and Akrotiri and Dhekelia, economic development and commitment is less of a concern in these places. The group to which the Falklands belonged, along with Montserrat, St Helena and others, were those with the greatest level of dependence on Britain, typically due to geographic and demographic limitations; for these territories independence was and is an unrealistic prospect (Royle 1995, 320). It is difficult to identify any broad conclusions regarding the economic commitment made by Britain to its territories, but lessons from the Falklands experience including the war and the economic transformation it inspired can be applied to other locales within its group, such as St Helena.

Aside from the fishing licensing scheme, perhaps the most important investment in the Falklands was the Mount Pleasant airport. Improving the ease of access for people allows for

the possibility of tourism, a truly lucrative industry. St Helena, with its sub-tropical climate, dramatic coastline and attractive wildlife is a territory that has always had far greater tourism potential than the Falklands, and a larger population to boot (Royle 1995, 319). However, its economic situation has been similar to the Falklands pre-war, with limited industry, poor access and a massively declining population (Aldrich & Connell 1998, 61, 67 and SHGSDP 2012, 3). The crucial difference is that St Helena is not the subject of a sovereignty dispute, and therefore not at risk from invasion by a foreign power, "had it been invaded by Argentina as the Falkland Islands were in 1982, presumably it too would have […] benefitted from massive sums of British government aid" (Russell, HC Deb 21 Oct 1998). An airport has been the wish of the people for many years, viewed as the salvation of the economy and the key to reducing its dependence on British economic aid and becoming self-sufficient (White Paper 2012, 33).

The Falklands War created some discussion in parliament as to the economic future of other territories. It had served as a reminder to the British government and people that these remote territories still exist and rely on Britain. The case of an airfield/airport for St Helena was raised in relation to Mount Pleasant on the Falklands but was met with the same reaction that plagued the proposal for many years. Successive British governments balked at the cost and justification for building an airport on St Helena delaying the proposal for decades (HC Deb 04 Dec 1984, 22 Jan 1997, 19 Nov 2003). After years of lobbying and promises made in the Labour government's 1999 White Paper on the overseas territories promising to explore the feasibility of an airport, the Department for International Development finally agreed in 2005 that St Helena should have an airport within five years (White Paper 1999, 33 and Clegg & Gold 2011, 131). The airport was not opened until 2016, 33 years after the issue was revived in a 1984 parliamentary session discussing the prospects of other territories in light of the Falklands War.

Militarily, the economic commitment of fortifying and garrisoning the Falklands has not reduced the status of other overseas territories that serve as military outposts. Indeed, in the case of Ascension Island, it has increased the importance and use of the airbase there, which continues to serve as a staging post to the Falklands (White Paper 2012, 111). However, whereas the BIOT and Akrotiri & Dhekelia serve an important strategic function in the modern world, less so is true of the Falklands itself. The strategic importance argument is of limited value in relation to the Falklands, which may have been useful in policing Cape Horn in the colonial era but with the fall of the Empire became decreasingly useful or important in modern times. The military commitment and its associated economic cost is entirely a deterrent measure, aimed purely at Argentina. However, this cost did not have such a major effect on the general defence plans laid out in the government's 1981 defence white paper *The Way Forward*.

Indeed by the late 1980s the size and formation of Britain's armed forces was very much as had been planned before Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands (Grove 2002, 307). This would counteract any argument that the Falklands War had reduced Britain's ability to defend the other overseas territories. What the war did do, was to greatly enhance the reputation of Britain's armed forces domestically, allowing defence planners greater leeway and budgetary freedom in how they structured Britain's defence commitments overseas, in part guaranteeing their maintenance after the end of the Cold War (Grove 2002, 316). If anything then, the Falklands War and the military commitment it created could be said to have had a positive impact on other British territories, maintaining or indeed increasing Britain's commitment to those that serve as strategic military outposts and acting as a justification for the continued international reach of Britain's armed forces.

## 3.4 Significance of the 1982 War

The significance of the 1982 War for the Falkland Islands cannot be exaggerated. The war paved the way for sustainable economic development that would soon render the territory self-sufficient, ending the need for economic aid from Britain. It also created an ongoing military commitment for the British government in the South Atlantic, which brought with it much needed infrastructure and an all-important air link to the islands. These were the direct effects of the war on Britain's economic commitment to the Falkland Islands, but were the economic effects of the war felt in other territories? The answer is not straightforward. The war and the revitalising effect it would have on the Falklands economy did not inspire the British government to repeat their investment and development strategies in other overseas territories in the short term. Indeed, the high cost of the war and the fortifications implemented thereafter had an impact on the economic landscape that delayed further investment and development in other territories. Besides, Hong Kong was the headline issue during this post-war period and given that the other territories did not face the same kind of existential threat, it is unsurprising that attention turned away from the economic issues of a small number of British territories with diminutive populations, for many years.

It could be argued that the economic development of the Falklands brought about by the war has had wider significance for other overseas territories due to this development allowing the territory to graduate from receiving British aid, in turn freeing up that money to be used in developing other territories. However, the cost of maintaining the military presence on the Falklands is so large it dwarfs any amount of money that was spent annually on assisting

the Falklands economically. Indeed, had the war not happened and the economy not transformed as a result, the Falklands may well have become Argentinian through diplomacy and depopulation, reducing Britain's economic commitment entirely.

In the same vein, the economic development of the Falklands brought about by the war could be seen as having elevated it above other territories of a similar geographical and demographic status. This creates an imbalance, especially when one considers the amount of money that was and is spent on the Falklands, a territory with a population much smaller than St Helena, Montserrat or other comparable territories. As with the citizenship case, accusations of racial bias could be made. In any case, the sudden reversal of the Falkland Islands' fortunes at least provided some small spark in reigniting the case for developing these other declining territories like St Helena. That is not to say that the British government would act quickly on these cases. St Helena would have to wait decades for an airport that the Falkland Islands would receive in just four years.

By 1999, six territories were still receiving development aid from the British government. Between 1999 and 2012, this number had dropped to three. Clearly progress was made in the first decade of the 21st century, but this is already a long time after the Falklands War in 1982. In my view the Falklands War can be considered part of the historical economic landscape that has shaped the development and commitment Britain has made to its other territories but in terms of direct effects, the war's wider significance is limited. Yet, to argue that it was of absolutely no wider significance in this respect, would be in my view, inaccurate and reductive. This was the only such incident in the modern era where Britain went to war over a dependent territory. How the aftermath of this war was managed economically taught numerous lessons, especially in calculating how much capital is necessary upfront to revitalise the economy of one of these small territories and what kind of military commitment is necessary to deter a looming belligerent. Indeed, without the war it seems unlikely that the Falklands would ever have been developed at all, and the fact that they were developed so suddenly surely put the territory ahead of others perhaps more deserving and more in need of the same investment. There is thus some wider significance for the other British overseas territories, stemming directly from the Falklands War.

# Conclusion

Analysing the effects of the Falklands War through three disparate thematic lenses that apply to other British overseas territories, I found that the Falklands War had at least some wider significance in all three. Admittedly, it had more provable significance in some themes than in others, but the key is that this wider significance exists, where some have argued there is none at all. Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins made a sweeping statement when they declared that the Falklands War was of "no wider significance to British interests and taught no lessons", one open to challenge. However they have not been alone in dismissing or making light of the significance of this conflict. On the surface it would appear to be an open and shut case, Argentina had coveted the territory for many years, decided to take the territory by force and were soundly beaten in this endeavour. The war was short and decisive, with a comparatively low number of overall casualties for an inter-state conflict. Since this defeat, there has been no attempt by Argentina to conquer the islands militarily.

On the theme of self-determination, the Falklands War is significant for other British overseas territories in that this was a conflict that openly used the will of the people living in the territory in question as a major justification for going to war to defend it. Whether Falkland Islanders are legally entitled to the right to self-determination under international law is a point of contention, but by going to war with it as justification, Britain has committed itself to making that case for the Falkland Islanders, and indeed the citizens of all other British overseas territories. Furthermore, if another territory were to be attacked, there would be an expectation that Britain defend it. Assurances to this end have been made in successive government publications on the subject of Britain's relationship to its overseas territories, one could say self-determination has become a foundational pillar of this relationship. One could also argue that this is the result of an international shift in discourse within decolonisation, from arguments of territorial integrity to self-determination. However, the government could make no assurances on the future status of the Falklands in the years before the invasion, but were more than willing to make these assurances after, stressing the importance of the right to self-determination.

It is hard to imagine that the government would be so willing to make self-determination such a fundamental part of its overseas territories policy, had it never had to go to war to defend one of these territories. The Falklands War changed the political landscape in Britain vis-a-vis its remaining colonial possessions. Before the conflict, Britain had wilfully

ignored the wishes of territorial citizens on numerous occasions, invading one territory and forcibly deporting the native citizens of another. After the conflict, in which British lives had been given to defend the islanders' choice to remain an overseas territory, such a blatant violation as had taken place in Anguilla or the BIOT would weaken the government's position in the future regarding the Falklands dispute or any others that may arise. It would also likely lead to political furore domestically and a great deal of unnecessary pressure on the head of government. The Falklands War made headlines internationally, and brought a magnifying glass to small, forgotten overseas territories across the globe.

On the subject of citizenship, racial prejudice that has plagued British government policy and decision making for many years comes to the fore. Citizens of the then dependent territories once enjoyed the same rights and freedoms as British people born in Britain itself. After many years of immigration Acts and other measures aimed at curbing the rights and freedoms citizens of dependent territories along with citizens of the commonwealth and other colonies enjoyed, the Thatcher government introduced the 1981 Nationality Act. This Act created a new form of British citizenship that denied citizens of the dependent territories the rights of full British citizenship they had previously enjoyed, including the right of abode in Britain. However, special provision was made to offer 'routes home' for those ethnic British people in other territories, who could claim citizenship through a patrial link. This legislation threatened to leave several hundred Falkland Islanders, at this point in time a significant proportion of the small population, without full British citizenship, as they did not have the correct patrial link to the British mainland. Their case was made in parliament, but the government was prepared to ignore their plight. There was no such uproar for the different ethnic groups populating other territories that were negatively impacted by this act. Despite denials from the government that the act would be amended, it was, in the aftermath of the Falklands War, giving these 400 or so islanders full British citizenship, in line with the rest of the Falklands' population.

Without the war, there would have been no amendment. What it did, was to make the British government's citizenship policy vis-a-vis its overseas territories, blatantly biased on racial grounds. Falkland Islanders and Gibraltarians were elevated above citizens of other dependent territories by virtue of their ethnicity alone. Whether this racial bias was intentional, or the act was simply a way of preventing non-British citizens of Hong Kong from emigrating to Britain before the handover of the territory, does not change the fact of the matter that the legislation was fundamentally biased, and on racial grounds. This injustice would not be rectified until the Overseas Territories Act of 2002, which restored the rights lost by all citizens

of overseas territories in 1981, conveniently after Hong Kong had been handed back to China and in a period where scrutiny of racial bias was intensifying. Had the war not happened and thus the amendment not been made, the government could have argued that this citizenship policy was balanced in its implementation, with the same rules applying to persons of all ethnic backgrounds. The war did happen, and the amendment it spawned showed that the rules could be changed and the goalposts shifted on the government's whim. The Falklands War was therefore directly responsible for accentuating and cementing the racial bias of British citizenship policy, which unquestionably held wider significance for other British Overseas Territories and their people.

The picture is less clear on the theme of Britain's economic commitment to its overseas territories. Before the war, the Falklands were a dying economy, dominated by companies that did not invest their profits in the decaying local infrastructure. Industry was concentrated in one principle area, which itself was vulnerable to a volatile international market. The Falklands were annual recipients of British economic aid, but the British government did not want to commit to developing a territory with a small population it may well decide to hand over to Argentina. The invasion and subsequent war ended the British government's delaying tactics over making a decision. Real investment followed and the economy was salvaged, with diversification leading to real and sustainable growth and improved accessibility, reversing the territory's population decline. Self-sufficiency became a reality. The British government was however obliged to spend billions fortifying the Falklands and maintaining a garrison there to deter Argentina from attacking again. This is an ongoing economic cost that far outweighs the economic aid the Falklands used to receive.

The war and its positive economic effect raised the case of comparable territories struggling economically, notably St Helena, which with a population over double that of the Falklands had wanted an airport for many years but never received one. It would be very difficult to argue that the Falklands War led to the decision to build an airport on St Helena that would be made many years later in 2005. However, as with the citizenship case, the Falklands' rapid economic development post-war created an imbalance, where a territory with a small population and more limited economic prospects had been prioritised over territories with larger populations and greater economic prospects. This imbalance has still not been fully rectified but progress has been made. It is difficult to say whether the expensive economic commitment of maintaining the Falklands garrison has adversely affected the development aid received by other territories. Seeing as they are the respective responsibilities of different governmental departments with individual budgets, the answer is probably no. However, the

war shifted the government's overseas development priorities, forcing the long deferred decision to develop the Falklands. The effect of this was to move the territory to the top of the list, in place of arguably more deserving territories, subsequently delaying their development. On the other hand, one could argue that despite the Falklands War being an expensive venture, it has undoubtedly saved money in the long run by revitalising a once decaying economy. Drawing conclusions on the wider significance of the Falklands War in this theme is extremely difficult. In all likelihood this is the arena in which the assumption that the Falklands War was of no wider significance to other British overseas territories is most accurate.

In the historiographical debate surrounding the Falklands War the aftermath and effects have focused on its domestic political effect for Margaret Thatcher's re-election campaign, and the revitalisation of the Falklands themselves. Little to nothing has been written on the wider impacts of the war for the other British overseas territories which share the same constitutional link with Britain as the Falkland Islands. This thesis has demonstrated the existence of some of these wider effects and shown how this historical anachronism was more than simply a flash in the pan in the final days of British colonialism. The waters disturbed by the sinking of Argentine and British ships sent ripples across the globe that have washed up on the shores of the far flung reaches of the remaining British territories. There are many more potential avenues of research on this line of thought, but the Falklands War was thirty-six years ago now and its shadow grows smaller both in the minds of the average layman and that of the academic with an interest.

As wars go, the Falklands War could hardly be described as the most objectively significant or important conflict of the 1980s, let alone the 20$^{th}$ century. That said, to deny it any wider significance at all is inaccurate and reductive, especially when that wider significance concerns the effect of the war on other territories which share the same political status as the Falkland Islands. These are remnants of the colonial era, either too small to become independent or harbouring no desire to become independent that maintain a constitutional link with Britain by democratic choice. This is the only example of one of these territories being attacked by a foreign power in the modern era and hopefully the last, yet if it were to happen again the citizens of the territory in question would expect to be defended by Britain, the same way the Falkland Islanders were defended in 1982. The extent to which the Falklands War could be considered a conflict of wider significance for the other British overseas territories is thus in my view, considerable.

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(fig. 1) Falklands, Campaign, (Distances to bases). 1982. Westpoint. US Federal Government. Published by Wikimedia Commons. Available at: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Falklands,_Campaign,_(Distances_to_bases)_1982.jpg

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