

**The Falklands War (1982) - Part III**

**Lead: In 1982 Margaret Thatcher and the Military Leadership of Argentina were both very unpopular at home. The Falklands War saved one politically and destroyed the other.**

**Intro.: A Moment in Time with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: After three years in power, Margaret Thatcher, leading a nation in the depths of recession, committed to a program of free market economics that had targeted many of England's popular social programs, and bearing a hectoring**

**leadership style that bordered on the school-marmish was not a popular lady. As the first female Prime Minister of Great Britain she had to overcome doubts about her leadership in times of crisis and her toughness in the defense of England's dwindling place of importance in the world.**

**General Leopoldo Galtieri and his fellow officers presided over the seventh military government in Argentina since 1930. This particular regime was in its sixth year of rule and the economy of Argentina was in shambles. Paying the service on international debts alone took up a large part of the budget, industrial output was down, real wages were falling, unemployment was up and**

**inflation was over 100% a year. Any social and political stability Argentina enjoyed was purchased at the price of brutal repression and torture by the military.**

**When the talks over the Falklands, known in Argentina as the Malvinas, broke down in early 1982, the Generals decided to take them by force. They reasoned that Britain did not have the strength to re-take the islands and that the rest of the world, including the United States, would remain neutral. They failed to reckon with an Iron Lady in political trouble. With the breakdown of talks, Thatcher moved towards a minor re-enforcement of the Islands as a symbolic gesture but Argentina saw**

**this as a major threat and invaded.  
Next time: Confrontation in the South  
Atlantic.**

**At the University of Richmond, this  
is Dan Roberts.**

### Resources

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