The White House's sabre-rattling on behalf of the Argentine government is ridiculous and laughable.

The Obama Administration's recent statements regarding the future of the Falkland Islands have been deeply troubling for those of us in Washington who cherish the Special Relationship and the close ties that bind Great Britain and the United States. The State Department's declaration of support for Argentina's calls for negotiations over the Falklands was indeed disconcerting, and is but the latest in a series of diplomatic gaffes by this administration, undermining key U.S. allies.

This 'special relationship' has spanned an ocean and survived times of economic upheaval, civil unrest, world war, and now today's challenges presented by violent extremism. Deeply rooted in the shared values of their peoples, this relationship has served to promote the interests of these two great nations in their endeavours across the globe. It is one of America's most important strategic alliances as illustrated by the military, economic, and cultural ties that unite the two countries across the Atlantic.

Among the international community, with the notable exception of Argentina and some of its regional allies, there is no argument that these islands are possessions of the U.K. The Falklands are British by choice, and have been since 1833, and of the roughly 3,000 inhabitants, nearly all are British by birth or descent. They are self-governing and largely self-financing, that is of course except for defence costs which paradoxically, are essential in order to protect the population from its bellicose neighbour on the South American mainland.

The sabre-rattling on behalf of the Argentine government is ridiculous and laughable, to say nothing of being factually dishonest, and economically expedient. But perhaps the most telling barometer of international opinion and precedence is that the United Nations does not accept the legitimacy of the sovereignty claims made by the Argentine government.

The American people understand the importance that the British people attach to maintaining British sovereignty over the Falklands. Great Britain sacrificed over 250 servicemen in retaking the Islands after the Argentinean Junta invaded the Falklands in April 1982. At the time, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher showed great leadership in deploying the Task Force, which ultimately defeated the Argentine aggressors, with the support of President Ronald Reagan and

the United States.

The ad hoc policy reversal by the Obama Administration, will only serve to undercut the support among the British people for future Anglo-American cooperation, to say nothing of America's other global allies who are watching these developments closely.

The White House's misguided approach to the Falklands issue is part of a broader foreign policy strategy which involves "engagement" with America's enemies, while ignoring or even undercutting key alliances. Alongside Britain, other important allies including Israel, Poland and the Czech Republic have all been given short shrift. In the face of growing concern over uncertainty in Afghanistan, the on-going battle against Al-Qaeda, and the spectre of a nuclear armed Iran, now is hardly the time for political or diplomatic gamesmanship.

Rest assured however, despite the recent strain between Washington and London, the American people remain dedicated to supporting our strongest ally and preserving our 'special relationship.' Despite the rancour emanating from the White House, there are those of us in the United States and in the United States Congress who do and will continue to value our relationship.

Congressman John Campbell is a Member of United States House of Representatives, representing much of Coastal Orange County, California. He is the Co-Chair of the United States/United Kingdom Caucus.

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/southamerica/falklandislands/7521205/Barack-Obamas-approach-to-the-Falklands-was-misguided.html