

DEFENCE OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS - AN "ARGENTINE" APPRECIATION

1. At today's Chiefs of Staff Meeting (1) DCDS(I) presented an appreciation of the Defence of the Falkland Islands from the Argentine point of view.
2. A copy of this appreciation is attached for your information.

Attachment:

Defence of the Falkland Islands - An Appreciation

Note:

1. COS 19th Meeting/82, Item 5.

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14 April 1982

39/2

DEFENCE OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS - AN APPRECIATIONINTRODUCTION

1. I am now speaking to you in the guise of General MENENDEZ, the Argentine Military Governor of the Falklands.
2. Let me start by reviewing the position; as I see it:
 - a. I hold the Islands. My soldiers are elated by victory. Morale is high but for how long?
 - b. The Garrison is now (force majeure) all but complete.
 - c. Although my sea L of C has been cut, my air L of C is reasonably secure (for the present).
 - d. I have the Port Stanley airfield, capable soon of taking combat aircraft.
 - e. The British TF is some 2 weeks away. I will through our Soviet friends, obtain adequate warning of its approach and its composition.

MY AIM

3. My aim is to hold the Falklands Islands against any attack mounted by British Military Forces.
4. The loss of the Islands would be a national disaster, without parallel since 1828 when we lost what is now Uruguay. It would bring down the Galtieri Government. I would be disgraced (or worse). Therefore we must not fail and I cannot afford to be too fastidious in my methods.

FACTORS

5. Weather
 - a. Wet, windy and very cold.
 - b. Therefore I must keep my force under cover. This will draw me off the open ground into Stanley and the settlements.
6. Ground
 - a. The going is appalling, particularly at this time of the year. There is little scope for vehicle movement away from Port Stanley. There is no natural cover. Digging-in is difficult - peat bog or rock.

b. Stanley, with its airfield and its port, holds some 1,000 Falklanders. It is the prize. The remaining 800 inhabitants are scattered in about 60 settlements throughout the island - of which the largest and hence the most important are Darwin, Port Howard and Fox Bay.

c. Beaches. There are probably some 20 suitable for a major assault landing. But the kelp is a problem for the attacker. Beaches facing E-SE will be protected from the prevailing westerlies.

d. Therefore.

(1) In principle, I must hold Stanley in strength. This must include the high ground dominating it, from which indirect fire could be controlled. I should also hold the larger settlements - at least as a gesture.

(2) I cannot defend all the beaches. But they should, at least, be covered by OPs (to give early warning).

(3) In both Stanley and the settlements, I can prepare strong defensive positions amid the houses.

(4) The size of my reserve, outside Stanley, is dictated by my Puma helicopter lift ie approximately one company.

7. Other Vital Points

a. In their different ways, and in descending priority, the following are critical to the defence:

above all - the airport - the aircraft on it;
its fuel, maintenance facilities etc

my headquarters - its critical communications

the port itself - its fuel storage tanks

the pump house which provides all the water for Stanley

the electricity generating station

the radio station

b. therefore - all must have their own self-supporting defence, particularly the last 3 which are comparatively isolated.

c. Sea. Before considering the Air factor let me briefly look seawards. Our navy may attempt to harrass the Task Force. This will probably absorb all their resources. Therefore I cannot plan on any direct support from them.

8. Air

a. Local air superiority is critical if we are to interdict the British assault. I can expect some offensive air support (A4s) from the mainland by day, none by night and little in poor weather. But I cannot rely on any effective air defence cover from the mainland. I must therefore deploy AD aircraft - probably the Mirage 3 - to Port Stanley airfield.

b. The STOL Pucara, with its 4 machine guns, its cannons and its ability to carry 2,000 lbs, will be invaluable - in both the anti-helicopter and close support roles. Therefore some, say 10, aircraft should be put at Stanley and then dispersed to the other airstrips when an assault is imminent.

c. It follows that the defence of Stanley airfield is vital. I must concentrate all my air defences - Tiger Cat, 40 mm Bofors and Blowpipe - around it. Its improvement, to take the Mirages and possibly A4s, is of over-riding importance.

9. The Civil Population

a. The safety of the, mainly British, civil population will loom large in British minds. They will also need to avoid damage, if they are not to have a pyrrhic victory.

b. Therefore

(1) As long as the civilians remain in Stanley (and to a lesser extent the settlements) the British will be loath to bombard or to directly assault the town. I must not permit the civilians to be withdrawn, under the Red Cross or any other pretext.

(2) We must inter weave our defensive positions among the people. And I must also relocate some families, in tents, near the airfields - perhaps on the pretext of "removing them from the primary danger area".

10. Logistics

a. Accommodation - this is not a limiting factor. If I commandeer ruthlessly I can house my whole force. On the other hand, if we can hold out - as I believe we can - the British will be forced to live in the open with all the attendant problems.

b. Munitions. My holdings are adequate and I will be able to build them up further, by air resupply, during the next few weeks. Therefore I can probably use intense rates from the outset of any assault.

c. Supplies. I have stocks of rations etc to last say, 3 months and I can slaughter sheep. But although my men will not starve, they may - especially if the air L of C is cut - deteriorate (physically and mentally) the longer the British blockade runs.

d. Meanwhile I must disperse stocks to ensure all positions are self sufficient before the arrival of the Task Force, because resupply thereafter can only be done by helicopter.

11. Morale

a. My force will feel increasingly isolated the longer the L of C is cut. Ships sunk or the loss of South Georgia would be further blows. Many troops will be occupying partially isolated positions (with little chance of casevac) thereby enhancing the feeling of loneliness.

b. Therefore the earlier the UK assault the better for me. And I will have to deploy only seasoned troops to the critical positions and outlying locations.

12. Comparison of Forces

a. The key features are:

(1) My numerical superiority will be partly dissipated by the need to disperse.

(2) Stanley may later become untenable as an operational airfield.

(3) The British have greater helicopter mobility than I.

(4) They have a better night fighting capability.

(5) British fire support, including that from ships and aircraft, is superior but they will be inhibited in its use.

b. Therefore I must weld together a tight-knit well prepared defence especially in Stanley where my armoured vehicles will be invaluable. Any assault will be vulnerable to my artillery and mortars. My light air defence should account for many of their helicopters.

COURSES OPEN TO BRITISH

13. When the time comes for the British to assault the Islands, I believe they have 3 options:

- a. To go direct for Stanley, with perhaps a diversion elsewhere.
- b. To go for Lafonia or the Northern part of East Falkland.
- c. To go for West Falkland. I discount this because it will not influence the main battle.

14. He will achieve little, apart from some specious propaganda, if he goes for Lafonia or for the Northern part of East Falkland. Because Stanley is inaccessible to both except by sea or air - and neither therefore represents a useful mounting base. Although my main position would be within range of his artillery on casualties. Most of his force would be deployed in the open and re-supply would be tricky - he would be fighting the battle for survival. I can sit tight. A stalemate, perhaps in my favour, will have been created.

15. Therefore I must encourage him to adopt this course by persuading him, both in the reality and in the fiction (by disinformation), that Stanley is too hard a nut to crack.

COURSES OPEN TO MENENDEZ

16. The lynch pin of my plan is to defend Stanley - I judge this will take about a brigade, such armoured vehicles that I have and most of my artillery. My options lie in how to deploy the balance of my force, say, 3 battalions.

17. I have two alternatives:

COURSE A to disperse them in small company packets to hold all the larger settlements and to cover some of the assault beaches.

COURSE B to deploy a battalion sized force to each of the three major settlements - Darwin on East Island and Port Howard and Fox Bay on West Island.

18. Because I must be seen to be imposing my stamp on the Islands between now and the assault and because it may lure the British away from Stanley, I decide to adopt Course A.

PLAN

19. It follows that my Plan is:

- a. To deploy 3 battalions to the settlements.

b. To hold the remainder of the Force for Stanley including:

(1) 3 - 4 battalions covering the critical ground and the VPs.

(2) The 105mm Regt (can cover whole area).

(3) The little armour I have, split between Stanley and airport.

c. To base my one company heli-borne reserve at Moody Brook Camp.

d. To concentrate air defence assets around the airport.

e. Most positions will be sited among the civilian population some of whom I will move out to the airport.

20. I will also, with the help of Buenos Aires, mount a carefully orchestrated disinformation campaign to persuade world opinion how foolish the British would be to assault so well defended a position.

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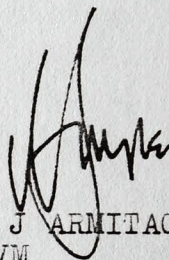
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AN APPRECIATION BY THE DIS ON THE DEFENCE OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS
BY THE ARGENTINE MILITARY COMMANDER

1. Attached is a copy of an Intelligence Appreciation prepared by the DIS on the defence of the Falkland Islands.
2. The validation of the Courses Open will form part of the future basis of our intelligence collection on ground and air forces on the Falkland Islands.
3. The following have been identified as the critical gaps in our information:
 - a. Accurate figures on Argentine force level, deployments, and ground defences on the Falkland Islands.
 - b. Constant assessment on improvements to Port Stanley airport.
 - c. Composition of Argentine artillery and ground to air defence elements reported to be on the Islands.
 - d. Argentine Commander's concept of operations for the defensive battle.
 - e. Nos and types of aircraft deployed to Stanley Airport and the minor landing strips.

4. Although some of these gaps may be closed by intelligence gathered from external agencies, a good deal of the tactical intelligence will have to be acquired by the Task Force's own resources, once they reach the area of operations.



M J ARMITAGE
AVM
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16th April 1982

Internal

DCDS(I)
Air Cdre(Int)
DI 4
DI 3(Navy)
DI 3(Army)
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DIS

AN APPRECIATION OF THE DEFENCE OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS BY THE ARGENTINE
MILITARY COMMANDER *

For: COS

By: Military Commander Port Stanley

At: Port Stanley

On: First Prepared on 5 April 1982 and
Updated on 13 April 1982

Time Zone used throughout the
Appreciation: Local

REVIEW OF THE SITUATION

1. The Falkland Islands were firmly in Argentine hands by 2 April 1982. By 3 April the British Government had declared that they intended to recapture the Islands and return them to British administration. On 5 April a British Naval Task Force which included assault ships and marine commandos set sail from the UK for the South Atlantic with an ETA off the Falkland Islands of about 3 weeks (26 April). Earlier reports indicated that a number of SSN submarines had been deployed before the Task Force and could be expected to arrive between 10-15 April.
2. Press reports indicate that Britain will take a firm line and is prepared to use Military force if diplomatic efforts to achieve a withdrawal of Argentine forces fail. This action would almost certainly involve a naval blockade of the Islands and/or an assault on them by sea and air.

AIM

3. To hold the Falkland Islands against an attack by British military forces.

FACTORS

4. Weather. The summer season ends during April and winter then falls quickly. In winter the weather, although wetter, is often calmer, but the Falklands are renowned for being able to produce four seasons in one day; the unpredictability factor remains constant. The prevailing winds are from the West (N-SW) and for 60-70% of the time blow at a wind speed of over 21 knots. Gale force winds are experienced 10-15% of the time. Normally visibility is very good but during the day it is cloudy (ceiling 1500-2000ft); there are some breaks in the cloud at night. Light rain falls on most days turning to snow from mid-April. Snowfalls are not heavy and ground only lightly covered, but as winter progresses the ground becomes increasingly water-logged. Daytime temperature in the low 40°F falling to mid 30°F at night but combined with high wind speed results in high chill factor. About 9 hours of daylight from 0700-1630.

* Prepared by DIS, MOD London.

5. Deductions:

- a. High wind speeds make an airborne assault unlikely but good visibility will allow heliborne assault on most days.
- b. Cold, wind, rain and snow will cause problems for men deployed in the open for long periods; we should therefore keep troops under cover until required, relying on OPs and air recce to maintain surveillance. The bulk of my force will have to be deployed/kept in the Stanley area.
- c. Cloud haze will inhibit satellite and air recce flights across island by day but some recce possible by night. Close air support (CAS) is practical on most days. If we hold local air superiority assaulting troops will be vulnerable to CAS. If the enemy holds it he will be able to move troops about by helicopter and also inflict casualties with his CAS.

GROUND

6. General. Although there are many small islands, the bulk of the land mass is accounted for by the two largest, East and West Falkland. East Falkland is itself divided in two, the South part (La Fonia) being narrowly connected to East Falkland by an isthmus on which the settlement of Darwin (population 60) is situated. La Fonia provides better cross country going (4-5 mph) than elsewhere in either of the two main islands. Generally the going becomes progressively worse towards the north. The terrain throughout the Falkland Islands is generally rugged and inhospitable and most areas are impassable to vehicles. The rock rivers and the low lying peat bogs make even movement on foot very difficult. The capital, Stanley, lies in the NE of East Falkland on the Southern side of a large, almost totally enclosed bay. It houses about 1,000 Falkland islanders, the remaining 800 being scattered in about 60 settlements throughout the Islands, some as small as 2-3 families. There are virtually no trees and little cover from view. The construction of defensive positions anywhere would be difficult, either because of the level of the water table or because of the rock formation on the high ground.

7. Ground of Critical Importance. Although most of the three main portions of the land mass are uninhabited, the occupation of any part of them could have some political significance. Nevertheless Stanley town with its harbour, population centre and its airport remains the prize - it must be held. Darwin settlement also has some importance as the second largest settlement and because it dominates movement between the two parts off the East Island. Some presence on West Falkland would also be needed to exercise sovereignty and control over the settlements there. Port Howard is the largest settlement on the NE side of the island and offers good shelter and facilities. However, Fox Bay is the nodal point for all activity in the Western Island and is at least as important at Port Howard. Both should be defended.

8. Ground of Tactical Significance:

- a. General. During winter, movement around the Islands by land is hazardous, slow and local guides will be needed. The only made up roads are in and around Stanley.

b. Stanley Town. The town lies in low ground beside the harbour and is overlooked by high ground to the SW, W and NW. This high ground is of local tactical importance. Sapper Hill to the SW, and Mt William, Tumbledown Mt, Mt Harriet, Two Sisters, Mt Longdon and Wireless Ridge to the W and NW all provide observation over parts of the town and the airport from which indirect fire could be controlled and movement around the town and between the town and the airport dominated.

c. Airport. The airport lies some 4 miles to the East of the town on an exposed peninsula which is joined to the mainland by a narrow causeway. The airfields' runway is only 4100 ft long and aircraft parking is very limited. Because of its exposed position, the airfield is vulnerable to both air and seaborne attack. The causeway must be kept open to move fuel and ammunition to the airport unless bulk storage facilities are constructed at the latter.

9. Beach Landing Sites. The coastline is heavily indented and offers numerous amphibious landing sites although many are overgrown with kelp seaweed which would inhibit the use of propeller driven landing craft. As the prevailing winds are from the W-NW beaches that face E-SE will be more sheltered than those on the W side of the island.

10. Deductions:

a. Port Stanley, its airport and harbour are both strategic and tactical importance and must be held strongly. It will be vital to hold high ground overlooking to prevent enemy gaining observation over it.

b. The airport is particularly vulnerable to attack. It will require very strong ground and ground to air defences which will need to be independent of the main force in the town because of the danger of the causeway being cut.

c. Darwin is also important and should be held. Occupation of many of the smaller settlements, however, will only weaken the defending forces in and around Stanley and will have little tactical or strategic value.

d. We should also hold at least two settlements in W Falkland. Fox Bay and Port Howard are the largest and most suitable.

e. Ground is impassable to armour except on the few roads around Stanley. Enemy are unable and unlikely to use armour except to assault the town. We should hold our armour there.

f. Airport facilities are barely adequate even for minimum operations and improvement to runway length, fuel storage and aircraft parking should be given high priority.

g. Whilst there are strong emotional reasons to deny the enemy and foothold on the islands, the large number of suitable assault beaches precludes this. However, because cross country movement is virtually impossible, the enemy will probably select beaches close to our defended locations. These would be covered by OPs or airborne recce to give early warning. Candidates in the Stanley area are Bluff Cove, Port Harriet, Harriet Point, Bertha's Beach and Port Louis.

AIR

11. If we hold air superiority we will be able to prevent enemy troop movements by helicopter; prevent Harrier attacks on our troops and installations; and allow our own helicopters and COIN attack aircraft to destroy any enemy bridgeheads. Enemy efforts to seize air superiority will depend on his Harriers and we will therefore need a counter to them. The ideal solution would be to sink the enemy's aircraft carriers. Failing that, we need an effective air defence. This might be provided by a CAP based on the mainland, but it would be very difficult to sustain and the tanker force could not maintain many aircraft over Port Stanley. Nevertheless such a CAP would compound the enemy's problems, and if the resources are available a CAP should be mounted. The airfield at Stanley is at present too small to permit effective operations by locally based interceptors, and it must be extended with all urgency. Because of the limited facilities however, interceptor operations are very unlikely to be possible at night even when the airfield has been extended, and even in daylight it will not be possible to guarantee that our aircraft can get off in time to intercept an incoming raid because of delays in reaction caused by the geometry of the airfield, and because of possible weaknesses in our radar cover. Furthermore, because the enemy would have the initiative in these air attacks he could, perhaps by means of feint attacks and other tactics, try to exhaust our modest resources and bring superior numbers to bear. But since we need the airfield and the enemy does not, he can be expected to try to destroy it and to do that he must penetrate our defences. By concentrating all or most of our AA defences around the airfield we should therefore be able to destroy enough of his attacking Harriers to start to shift the air balance in our favour. We have far greater reserves of aircraft in the theatre of operations than does the enemy, and provided we can keep Stanley airfield open we can expect to gain air superiority as the enemy numbers exhaust themselves against our defences.

DEDUCTIONS

12. We must extend the airfield at Port Stanley as a priority task. Meanwhile all helicopter and COIN attack aircraft should operate from the grass airfields so as to leave Stanley free for whatever air defence aircraft we can deploy there.

CIVIL POPULATION

13. The safety of the civilian population is likely to be as important to the British as the recapture of the Islands. They will also take account of the need to avoid damage. An assault which left the town in ruins and many of the population dead would not be seen as a victory by the British or world public opinion. Most of the houses are wooden buildings and would not survive either an artillery battle or house to house fighting.

14. Deductions. As long as the civilian population remains in Stanley the British are unlikely to heavily bombard or directly to assault the town. Therefore the population must be kept in the town and other defended settlements interwoven amongst our positions. The civilian houses are also needed as accommodation. We should attempt to place some civilians (in tents) on the airfield to deter air attack, perhaps on the pretext of "removing them from the danger zone in Stanley".

ACCOMMODATION

15. Accommodation on the Islands is limited to the private houses of the settlers. If these are used to accommodate troops, we believe about 3 - 4,000 could be billeted in Stanley, 600 - 1000 in Darwin and Port Howard and up to Company or Platoon strength in the smaller settlements. As there are no trees on the islands any building materials required will have to be brought in. Tents can be used for short periods but cold and wind in late April and May will sap morale and strength of troops if they are forced to live in tents for long periods.

16. Deductions. As winter approaches we must base troops on existing covered accommodation. The defence will have to be built around existing settlements such as Stanley and Darwin which are large enough to take at least a battalion. If we can hold out, the British will be forced to live in the open with all the problems this will bring.

VULNERABLE POINTS

17. The water supply in Stanley is obtained via a pump house and water purification system situated at the Western end of Stanley harbour. It works well within its pumping capacity to meet the requirements of the 1,000 usual inhabitants of the town. Although there is plenty of water elsewhere much of it is brackish and unpalatable.

18. The sanitation system in Stanley is likely to be incapable of meeting the needs of a greatly increase force level.

19. Deduction. By increasing the work load on the water pump house the present output of fresh water could probably be increased to meet the needs of up to 4,000 personnel, but strict rationing will have to be enforced. Sabotage of the water system would not only be a severe attack on the morale of our forces but might render the retention of Stanley untenable. The water pumping facilities together with the electricity generating station at the western end of the town and the radio station are all critical facilities. They must be strongly defended. There is a high risk of disease from poor sanitation and perhaps inferior water purification.

COMPARISON OF FORCES20. Enemy Forces.

a. Ground. Press and intelligence reports indicate that the British task force includes at least a Marine Commando Brigade of 3 battalions which is likely to be supported by artillery and light armour. Parachute troops were also seen embarking and these could be part of a second brigade which is normally earmarked for out of area operations. Commando troops are trained for arctive warfare and are equipped with oversnow vehicles (Volvo BV 202) which will give them some mobility across country. Ground forces are also likely to include Air Defence. The enemy is well equipped with night vision devices.

b. Air. Task force includes at least 16 Sea Harriers. Main role is for air defence (AD) and up to 10 may be engaged in this task if the force comes within range of our attack aircraft. If the force can stay outside that range, then the enemy could devote virtually all his air effort to CAS. Sea King helicopters are used for troop lift and sufficient are embarked for at least a two-company (+) lift in one sortie, light recce helicopters also available.

21. Deductions:

a. Total strength of enemy forces likely to be up to two brigades. Their mobility (both air and sea) gives them the flexibility to assault a number of different locations the same time.

b. Enemy's capability to operate at night will give him opportunity to make landings before first light. Dawn recce will be essential to locate landings or movement of forces.

c. Although enemy Harriers are very effective only a limited number are available and, if they can be destroyed, the enemy will find it very difficult either to conduct land operations or to protect his surface fleet. Therefore high priority must be given to destruction of Harriers. Air defence weapons (Roland, Blowpipe, and 35m AA guns) should restrict Harrier operations.

d. Loss of Stanley airport would almost certainly lead to loss of even air parity over the islands so its defence is vital.

e. Enemy helicopters are vulnerable to anti-aircraft weapons so we should position these within defended locations. This will force enemy to dismount some distance from objectives and leave him vulnerable to indirect fire.

22. Own Forces.

a. Ground Forces. Assuming the enemy has maximum of two brigades we will require at least parity on the islands to hold Stanley and other major settlements. Stanley will require at least a brigade, and to present the enemy with a major task, other defended locations will need to be of battalion strength. Platoon/Company strength locations will not survive unless we can maintain local air superiority to reinforce them by helicopter if threatened. Isolated locations will require our better trained troops with their support weapons.

b. Air. Problems of cross country movement make the use of helicopters essential to move troops around the Islands, for air recce. CAS aircraft required to attack the enemy beach-heads and heliborne assaults. Response time will be reduced if these aircraft are stationed at Stanley. PUCARA aircraft can operate from isolated grass airstrips. Stanley airport will require lengthening to allow the MIRAGE to operate.

23. Deductions:

- a. We will require at least a reinforced brigade to hold the critical ground on the islands. Four battalions are needed to hold Port Stanley and at least one battalion to hold Darwin and another split between Fox Bay and Port Howard. The total force needed is six battalions.
- b. Because of the weather and the state of training of new troops, defences should be constructed around the settlements where shelter is available and where the proximity of civilian population will inhibit attack. However, high ground around Stanley must be held strongly in order to deny enemy observation of the town and airport.
- c. We should retain armour in Stanley. Mortars or artillery are needed at all defended locations. Mortars are more suitable at positions in the settlements because they are easier to re-supply by air.
- d. Air defence weapons are required to deal with enemy helicopters which are unarmed.
- e. We will require capability to lift a company in one sortie so will require minimum of 6 PUMA stationed at Stanley. PUCARA aircraft needed at Stanley, Darwin and Fox Bay (10 ideal requirement). Stationing AD and CAS jet fighters at Stanley will reduce response time but will present enemy with an attractive target. It may be more effective to restrict the use of Stanley to refuelling and re-arming by day only jet fighters based on the mainland.

TIME AND SPACE

24. Task Force sailed from UK on 5 April. SSNS sailed early and may be in position off Falklands by now. Sea blockade was imposed on 12 April. Task Force ETA 26 April and can expect first attempt to assault Islands by the end of April.

25. Deductions:

- a. Improve Port Stanley airport to enable jet fighters to re-fuel and re-arm by day.
- b. Build-up of troop level to 6 battalions' strength.
- c. Move of fuel, ammunition and stores to enable force to sustain lengthy blockade of at least 3 months.
- d. Move of fuel, oil and ammunition for aircraft at Stanley to operate as a forward base. Helicopters more important than AD or CAS fighters which can provide some cover from mainland.
- e. Complete defensive preparations by the time the task forces arrives.
- f. Increase air defence at airfield.

LOGISTICS ASPECTS

26. Once Naval blockade has been imposed all resupply of defended locations will have to be by helicopter. To withstand up to 3 months blockade large amounts of ammunitions and general stores will have to be stockpiled. Fuel and ammunition for aircraft should be held at the airport, but will be vulnerable to attack. All defended positions should be as self sufficient as possible.

27. Deductions. Corrrct siting of stores important. If held too centrally they could be destroyed easily. Must attempt to disperse fuel and ammunition around Stanley and not leave all aircraft fuel at airport. There is a problem with helicopter resupply if enemy has air superiority, so must attempt to make all positions self sufficient by the time task force arrives at the end of April.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

28. Successful reaction to and defeat of enemy assaults will depend on good communications between defended locations and between Naval, Air and Army forces. Stanley holds the good communication back to MOD. Regular reconaissance of Islands essential to give early warning of enemy assaults and landings.

29. Deductions:

a. Joint HQ to be located at Stanley Town to integrate naval, air and ground operations. HQ needs strong defence as it is critical to our defence.

b. Defended locations will require good reliable communications by day and night to HQ at Stanley. Civilian 'ham' radios useful as backup. Security important because of enemy's good intercept capability.

MORALE

30. Maintenance of high morale in the very harsh weather conditions will be difficult particularly with our one year conscripts. Isolated positions will require well trained troops to overcome the problems associated with positions that are effectively cut off from resupply or casevac.

31. Deductions. Must put maximum effort into building up supplies at outstations and in providing garrison with reasonable living conditions. Construction of extra accommodation will help morale problem; we must also attempt to provide good casevac system. Marines and airborne troops should be used for defence of settlements outside Stanley because of their higher state of training. Army units should be strengthened by recently released conscripts to replace recently joined men who must be suspect in action.

ENEMY COURSES

32. Assumptions. We must assume that Naval blockade of the Islands will be imposed and will be effective. All other courses open to the enemy will be combined with this blockade.

a. Course A. To make a token landing on part of the Islands (or South Georgia), gain local air superiority to prevent resupply by air and movement of reinforcements around the islands and to impose a sea and air blockade until we are forced to withdraw through lack of food and supplies.

(1) Advantages. This course minimises the loss of life to both his own forces and the civilian population and undue damage to buildings. The occupation of a small part of the Islands may have some political significance in the diplomatic exchanges.

(2) Disadvantages. The course of (largely) inaction by a sizeable Task Force is unlikely to satisfy public opinion in Britain where speedy results will be expected and demanded; nor will it do much to sustain the morale of the Task Force itself. If we can manage to accumulate adequate supplies of fuel, ammunition and food this course will not defeat us and the longer we can hold our positions the more likely it will be that the enemy's line of communications will fail. For these reasons Course A is not likely to be adopted.

b. Course B. To mount a major sea and heliborne assault on our major defended locations (either simultaneously or in phases). Smaller locations will be initially by-passed to be dealt with when the major objectives have been captured.

(1) Advantages. This course could achieve a quick result to the conflict as without Stanley our position on the Islands would be untenable.

(2) Disadvantages. This course is not very likely because of the danger of casualties to the civilian population and buildings. Also with the forces available to him there is a serious risk that an assault on Stanley would fail and this would have a disastrous effect on his bargaining position.

c. Course C. To mount a series of assaults (by sea and heliborne) to capture the smaller settlements and provide a number of small successes. Main defended locations would then be encircled leaving us with little of the island but with the majority of the population. Blockade and diplomatic activity would then attempt to make our position untenable.

(1) Advantages. This is the most likely course because if successful it would restore this islands to UK rule without too much risk of casualties to his forces or the civilians. He will also be able to claim control of the major part of the islands and this could have some political impact as we could be portrayed as the jailors of the population.

(2) Disadvantages. This course would isolate our main defended locations but provided we have built up sufficient stockpiles of ammunition and food would should be able to resist a siege for some months. His forces will be exposed to the weather for long periods and his morale will suffer. If we can defend some of the settlements

with battalions strength garrison it will be difficult for him to defeat them with the likely forces available to him. If we can hold out for some time his resolve must weaken as his capability to sustain his forces so far from the UK must be suspect.

ENEMY'S MOST PROBABLE COURSE

33. Course C is the enemy's most likely course but it does depend on his ability to achieve and then maintain air superiority for long periods so that his besieging forces are not destroyed by our CAS. He will be attempting a quick result and the longer we can hold out the better chance we have of wearing down his resolve.

OWN COURSES

34. Course I. To deny the enemy any foothold on the islands by occupying and holding all worthwhile settlements and by dominating likely landing beaches. To hold Port Stanley in strength and to maintain in readiness there a strong helicopter force able to react to attacks on outlying settlements.

a. Advantages. Visible defence of large areas of both islands and overall control demonstrated. Provided forces in all locations large enough to defeat up to battalion attack, enemy will have barely sufficient forces to take more than one location at a time, and after a number of attacks his forces will be badly depleted. Enemy will have to concentrate to attack these defended locations and will be vulnerable to CAS attack.

b. Disadvantages. Large forces required to hold each position in sufficient strength to present enemy with attack problems. If all settlements with more than 4 - 5 houses held at least 12 battalions needed and this would create severe logistic and accommodation problems. If we lose air superiority the defended location will become isolated and will run out of supplies.

35. Course II. To accept that majority of the smaller settlements have little strategic or tactical value and to concentrate defence on Stanley and Darwin in E Island and Port Howard and Fox Bay in W Island. Each of these four locations would be held in some strength of at least a battalion at Darwin and another split between Port Howard and Fox Bay and 4 battalions at Port Stanley. Each location would have adequate stockpiles of ammunition and food delivered before the Task Force arrives.

a. Advantages. Restricting our defended locations to a small number of well defended and supplied bases will reduce our resupply problems and will allow us to continue to operate effectively for some time even if we lose air superiority and are cut off. Enemy will be forced to deploy in the open ground and this will present him with severe problems as winter approaches. Concentrating our forces on the locations where there are significant numbers of civilians will inhibit the enemy in his assault on them and provided each location is at least a battalion strong it will take the better part of his force to defeat it. Any attack will involve civilian casualties which may not be acceptable to public opinion in the UK. This course requires fewer troops than Course I with a maximum of six battalions.

b. Disadvantages. We will have to surrender large parts of both Islands to the enemy without a fight and this may have some strategic impact. If we only hold four locations the loss of even one to the enemy may be seen as a significant victory by him.

SELECTION OF THE BEST-COURSE

36. Course I requires a large number of troops. Because of the naval blockade it will be very difficult to both move this number to the Islands and then maintain them there.

37. Course II will achieve our overall aim with fewer troops and present the enemy with serious problems to overcome. Provided we can build up sufficient stores at our main bases before the Task Force arrives we have a good chance of outlasting the enemy in a siege situation which will require him to deploy large forces in very exposed positions.

38. It is therefore proposed to adopt Course II ie. to defend Port Stanley and the three other major settlements in strength leaving the remainder of the islands unoccupied, but under observation, holding an IRF in reservation to be deployed by helicopter to counter enemy landing.

PLAN

39. Mission. To defeat enemy forces occupying the Falkland Islands.

40. General Outline. To hold the Falkland Islands with a force consisting of a reinforced Brigade Group concentrated in four main locations with OP's located at other key points to provide observation and early warning. Major portion of force consisting of four battalions will hold Port Stanley and the airport, one battalion will hold Darwin and one battalion will be divided between Port Howard and Fox Bay on W Island. Reserves of Company strength with helicopters held at Stanley to reinforce outstations is required and repel initial landing.

41. Proposal Deployment

a. Port Stanley:

Force HQ
 4 X Inf Bn
 1 X Armd Recce Coy
 1 X Bty Fd Arty
 1 X Engr Coy
 1 X Anti Air Coy

b. Airport:

4 X Pucara
 6 Puma
 3 LOH
 (Airport capable of taking Mirage for refuelling and re-arming in daylight)

c. Port Darwin:

1 X Inf Bn (incl Mov)
1 X Engr Tp
4 X Pucara
1 X LOH

d. Port Howard:

Elms of:
1 X Inf Bn
1 X Engr Tp
1 X LOH

e. Fox Bay:

Elms of:
1 X Inf Bn
1 X Engr Tp
2 X Pucara
1 X LOH

Equal distribution of resources of (d) and (e).