

415. Information Memorandum From the Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Montgomery) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Eagleburger)¹

Washington, November 24, 1982

SUBJECT

Argentine Secret Report Criticizes the Army's Conduct of Falklands War

Former President Leopoldo Galtieri and his general staff led Argentina into a war it could not win, according to an internal army appraisal of the army's role in the Falklands war. Details of the formal report, which was sent to Army CINC Maj. Gen. Nicolaides on November 16, have been provided [*less than 1 line not declassified*]. Implicit in the document is the conclusion that no further military attempts should be made to capture the islands.

The US is cited as providing key "tactical" advantages to the UK. The report contains no hint, however, of the refrain that Argentina might have won had it not been for the US.

The fundamental mistake of invading the islands is attributed to faulty intelligence and reasoning. The Argentine army, the report concluded, is structured and trained to fight a neighboring South American adversary and thus, had no chance against the UK. The estimate that the UK would not fight was a very serious miscalculation. As a result, senior officers sent to the islands were chosen for their administrative and technical capabilities and knowledge of English rather than for their ability to command combat troops.

The report has been in preparation since June by a team under the direction of Army Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Calvi. Only Calvi and Nicolaides received copies, and the drafters strongly recommended the report not be made public.

INR Comment: Most Argentines believe that the Calvi Commission's work has not been made public because it is a whitewash. On the contrary, the report is unlikely to be published because it is an embarrassingly frank and accurate appraisal. Any soldier or journalist who lent himself to unauthorized publication of the document probably would be risking his life.

¹ Source: Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, P820172-0851. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. A stamped notation at the top of the memorandum indicates that Eagleburger saw it on November 29.