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Falkland Islands

file paper. You have in hand a copy of the paper. B. Bureau of F. Falkland Islands

The absence of a reinforcement (or evacuation) plan for the Falklands reflects a conscious decision. Previous exercises to the one we did last year all reached the same conclusion: that any response would have to be an Argentine military threat or initiative would have to be naval, would therefore take a long time (14 days sailing time from the UK) and would be unlikely to be very effective. The impardonable in the equation combined with the long response time led to the conclusion that 'hot-planning' (over, at most, a day) was the most sensible way of proceeding. There is a further consideration in that the existence of a formal 'plan' gives some credence to its working under some circumstances.

You mentioned one option of a naval deployment. I attach the version of the paper we last produced and approved by the COS. In this you will see that to maintain one frigate on station would require a deployment of two frigates and two RFA's. I don't need to tell you how politically unpalatable this would be in the wake of Endurance.

PTO

Also attached (for your info) is the text of the New York  
communiqué and commentary on the talks. In summary not  
quite as discouraging as they might have been but the  
Argentine delegation clearly had little flexibility. I gather a new  
SIC assessment is to be produced soon.

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