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ENCL No.
50

NAVAL OPTIONS FOR ACTION AGAINST THE ARGENTINE

The options fall into 3 categories:

- a. Category 1. Actions before an invasion^{/ultimatum}, but OD directive on low-visibility remains effective
- b. Category 2. Actions before an invasion^{/ultimatum}, but OD allows high visibility measures
- c. Category 3. After an invasion/ultimatum and high visibility measures are permitted.

Within each category, options are further classified as being:

- (i) Local action. Action that can be taken in the vicinity of the FALKLAND ISLANDS.
- (ii) Quick Reaction. Action to be taken before the arrival of HMS SPARTAN
- (iii) Long Term

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Arrival of Naval Forces already assigned

The ETA of naval forces in the vicinity of Port Stanley are:

- a. ENDURANCE : 04 1200Z
- b. SPARTAN : 12 Apr
- c. FORT AUSTIN : 13 Apr (assuming no delay due to hdo consideration)
- d. SPLENDID : 15 Apr
- e. CONQUEROR : 21 Apr

Capabilities of Naval Forces Already Assigned

The capabilities of naval forces are:

- a. ENDURANCE . 2x Wasp armed with AS12 missiles
2x 20mm guns
Platoon of IS trained ratings
- b. SPARTAN . 10 MK8 Torpedo (ASV)
8 MK24 Torpedo (AS/M)
- c. FORT AUSTIN Nil
- d. SPLENDID 12 MK8 (ASV)
9 MK24 (AS/M)
- e. CONQUEROR 15 MK8 (ASV) -
10 MK24 Mk 1 (ASV and AS/M)

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OPTIONS

Category 1

There are no naval options that can be taken whilst constrained by the low-visibility directive.

Category 2

Option A ENDURANCE land small platoon of IS trained ratings as limited reinforcement for NP 8901

Classification Local action

Constraint Not possible before 041200Z (ENDURANCE ETA PORT STANLEY)

Advantages:

Enhances defensive capabilities of ground forces to limited degree

Disadvantage

Reduces ENDURANCE'S capabilities at sea

Recommendation

Should not be taken

Option B RAs detain Argentinians on SOUTH GEORGIA

Classified Local action / Quick Reaction

Constraint Nil

Advantages:

(1) Displays resolution

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Disadvantages

- (i) Could provoke reprisal hostage taking by Argentines
- (ii) BAHIA PARAISO, who has capability to carry marines, could effect rescue of Argentines and capture of RAN detachment

Recommendation

should not be taken

Option C Fly 90 man RAN Company group to PORT STANLEY by 3 RAF Hercules

Classification Quick Reaction

Constraints

- (i) Reaction time ^{minimum} hours from high visibility approval to troops arrival PORT STANLEY
- (ii) Aircraft would be forced to remain at PORT STANLEY until suitable fuel becomes available
- (iii) Runway surface condition is suspect
- (iv) Unpredictable weather combined with limited landing aids.

Advantages

- (i) Doubles present garrison at PORT STANLEY
- (ii) Provides some military demonstration

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Disadvantages

- (i) Reinforcements have limited military capability
- (ii) Aircraft on ground awaiting fuel remain vulnerable
- (iii) If aircraft are forced to divert, political embarrassment could ensue
- (iv) Could escalate situation

Recommendation

Should not be taken (AFD likely to endorse this recommendation)

Option D Repossess HMS NORFOLK

Classification Quick Reaction / Long Term

Constraints (i) NORFOLK is due to be handed over to Chilean Navy

Wed 7 Apr. thereafter use by RN would be by negotiation

(ii) NORFOLK has no Exocet, no seacat, reduced software for computers, no Link capability

(iii) NORFOLK is 45 days from last stowing

(iv) NORFOLK has 2/3 of her normal RN ships company.

Advantages (if use can be negotiated)

- (i) Would provide surface warship presence earlier than vessels from GIBRALTAR or UK

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Disadvantages

- (i) With limited weapon capability, of doubtful benefit as a deterrent or combatant
- (ii) Ship's company would require augmenting from UK by SLG qualified personnel
- (iii) Ship would require logistic support, both fuel (tanker) and stores

Recommendation

Should not be taken

Option E Re-possess RFA TIDEPOOL

Classification Quick reaction/longterm

Constraints

- (i) TIDEPOOL is due to be handed over to Chilean Navy Wed 7 Apr. Thereafter use by RFA would be by negotiation.
- (ii) TIDEPOOL fuel belongs to CHILEANS and would have to be purchased
- (iii) Ship is fully RFA manned

Advantage

- (i) Would provide a tanker or station at the FALKLAND islands more quickly than ships from GIB and allow faster speed of advance for deploying surface units

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Disadvantage:

Nil

Recommendation

Option should be taken if further surface forces are despatched.

Option F Deploy company group R07 by air to ASCENSION
for onward passage by FORT AUSTIN

Constraint

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CATEGORY 3

Option G Take action against Argentinian in UK ports

Classification Quick reaction

Constraints (i) No legal implications if in a state of war

(ii) If not in a state of war, highly inadvisable as contrary to international maritime law

Advantages

(i) Hostage advantage lies with UK (nil vessels in ARGENTINA, 2 due in next 3 days but could be diverted - 1 Argentinian vessel in UK, 2 due 4/5 Apr)

Disadvantage

(i) Could lead to reprisals

(ii) Could impact on trade relations - import/export

Recommendation

Should not be taken

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Option H Military action by SSN against Argentinian Naval Units

Classification Long Term

Constraints

- (i) First SSN arrives 12 Apr, second 15 Apr, third 21 Apr.

Advantages

- (i) SSNs reasonably invulnerable to counter action
- (ii) Allows step by step attacks that can be coupled to demands/ conditions
- (iii) Displays resolve

Disadvantages

- (i) Highly visible hostile act
- (ii) Escalation of military damage
- (iii) Could encourage retaliation against hostages

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Option I ENDURANCE Wasp AS12 engagement of Argentinian

surface units

Classification Local

Constraints Dependant upon ENDURANCE encountering Argentinian units

Advantages

(i) Displays resolve

Disadvantages

(ii) Places ENDURANCE at grave risk

Recommendation

Should not be taken