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FALKLAND ISLANDS: US ASSISTANCE

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Attachment:

Falkland Islands: US Assistance (6 pages).

Note:

1. COS 31 Mtg/82 Item 6.

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30 April 1982

OPERATION CORPORATE: US ASSISTANCEINTRODUCTION

1. Following rejection by the Argentine Junta of the latest US proposals for a settlement of the Falkland Islands crisis, the US has announced a number of measures in support of the United Kingdom, including an undertaking to respond positively to requests for materiel support for British forces.

AIM

2. The aim of this paper is to identify specific areas in which HMG might request increased US military assistance in support of OPERATION CORPORATE.

ASSUMPTIONS

3. It is assumed that:

a. The US would not be prepared to participate with the UK in operations against the Argentine:

(1) To guard against the possibility of Soviet involvement.

(2) To preserve the US position in the OAS.

b. HMG would not wish to embarrass the US Administration by requesting measures of support for which Congressional approval could not be achieved. Lend/lease of ships and aircraft might fall into this category.

c. The terms of the Presidential undertaking would not exclude some measures of indirect operational support.

POTENTIAL AREAS OF US MILITARY ASSISTANCE

4. The lend/lease of a US attack carrier for Harrier GR3 operations would add significantly to the overall capability of the UK Task Force and to its sustainability, despite the practical difficulties involved. It would, however, have a high political profile and it might be prudent to exclude it from an initial UK approach, confining requests to:

- a. Intelligence.
- b. Communications.
- c. Indirect Operational Support.
- d. Logistic Support.
- e. Weapons, equipment and materiel supply.

5. There would be advantage in processing requests for assistance through normal channels, to avoid duplication and, in the case of weapons and equipment, to ensure that compatibility problems were minimised and full support services were included. The importance of this co-operation could be underlined by a right level approach to the US authorities, stressing the value we would attach to prompt handling of requests relating to the Falkland Islands operation.

#### INTELLIGENCE

6. Under existing arrangements the US is providing substantial intelligence support for OPERATION CORPORATE. Strategic, tactical and technical intelligence cover of Argentine strengths, dispositions, intentions and deficiencies is greatly enhancing the prospects for a successful operation, and we welcome its continuance. Real-time tactical intelligence is a deficiency at present, and any assistance here would be very valuable, as would be any increase in surveillance and information on the South Atlantic surface and sub-surface plots.

#### COMMUNICATIONS

7. The most pressing communications requirement is the provision of secure speech equipment. This includes:
- a. Motorola Satellite Communications System (URC101) plus encryption equipment (KY57 and KOI18) for special forces.
  - b. Loan of KY8 and KY28 UHF secure speech equipment. A request has been submitted and agreed. An additional requirement for 6 x KY8 and support spares has been identified.
  - c. KY75 (VINSON) crypto equipment for Harrier and support helicopter tasking.

There would be no compatibility problems. The timely provision of these items would offer substantial improvements in communications security and increase the prospects for surprise.

8. Strategic communications via the US Defence Satellite Communications System is adequate and priority of access satisfactory in practice. Increased access and priority might have to be sought and the loan of two transportable satellite ground terminals requested.

#### INDIRECT OPERATION SUPPORT

9. The US might be prepared to offer operational support, short of direct participation in operations. Most valuable would be:

- a. Long range Maritime Reconnaissance.
- b. Air to Air Refuelling.

US assistance in both areas would relieve the pressure on UK resources and extend coverage. The level of support offered would be constrained by the capacity of Ascension Island. It is probable that the US would be reluctant to offer air to air refuelling support for offensive air operations.

10. The Air Transport Force supplemented by civil charter is at present able to meet airlift requirements. At a later date, US air transport support, especially C5A, might need to be sought.

11. The availability of US Amphibious Shipping would greatly assist the transport of any subsequent reinforcements to Ascension Island. Disembarkation would be simplified and the need to requisition QUEEN ELIZABETH II and SEA PRINCESS (the only passenger ships suitable for a Brigade lift) would be avoided. UK sea freighting capacity is adequate.

12. US assistance with replenishment at sea for RN forces not assigned to OPERATION CORPORATE would improve the overall RN level of readiness, particularly for ships deployed in the Indian Ocean.

13. US medical support would back-up UK resources, which could be under extreme pressure during intensive operations.

14. Increased US satellite and other meteorological coverage would be of considerable value in operational planning.

#### LOGISTIC SUPPORT

15. Continuing US Logistic Support at Ascension Island will be crucial to OPERATION CORPORATE, especially access to US aviation fuel stocks.

16. Where political constraints have allowed, US assistance from Government, military and civilian agencies under Cooperative Logistics Support and other arrangements has been prompt and generous.

17. As the Chileans have requested the replenishment of fuel stocks uplifted by TIDEPOOL, the US might be approached to allow access to stocks at RODMAN Naval Base, Panama, for this purpose.

WEAPONS, EQUIPMENT AND MATERIEL

18. There is a wide range of weapons, equipment and materiel which would add substantially to the Op CORPORATE forces capability. Some compatibility problems may need to be reserved. Provision on loan or sale or return basis from US stocks would be financially advantageous. While the procurement of these items could be processed through normal channels, a Government to Government agreement would be necessary to cover exceptional supply procedures.

19. Weapons.a. Immediate Requirements.

- (i) AIM 9L Sidewinder missiles for Harrier. (100+)
- (ii) Vulcan/Phalanx Guns for ILLUSTRIOUS. (2)
- (iii) Limpet mines for SBS. (20)
- (iv) Precision Guided Munitions, including Harpoon for Nimrod and anti-ship missile for Harrier.

b. Short/Medium Term Requirements.

- (i) 76 mm Guns for CASTLE class ships.
- (ii) Additional supplies of:
  - (a) AIM 9G Sidewinder missiles.
  - (b) Sub Harpoon.
  - (c) MK 46 Torpedo.
  - (d) CAPTOR mines.
  - (e) Sonobuoys (Jezebel and/or Difar)

20. Equipment.a. Immediate Requirements.

- (i) IR Flare/Chaff dispenser for Harrier.
- (ii) Electronic Warfare equipment (Jammers) for Harrier and helicopters (50).
- (iii) UHF Satellite Aerials (and system racking) for ILLUSTRIOUS.

- (iv) Passive Night Goggles.
  - (v) Gyro-stabilised Binoculars.
  - b. Short/Medium Term Requirements.
    - (1) Probe Alert call-up system for SSNs.
    - (11) Extended loan of US FLTSATCOM Channel 5.
21. Materiel.
- a. Temporary accommodation - medical, technical and domestic including portable aircraft shelters for use ashore.
  - b. US metallic planking. Early availability would be essential if Stanley airfield runway and hardstanding extensions were to be completed expeditiously. Materiel for re-construction would also be of value.
  - c. Moorings for South Georgia/Falklands Islands.

#### CONCLUSIONS

22. It is concluded that there are a number of areas in which the US offer of material support might profitably be pursued:

- a. Supply/loan of secure speech equipment.
  - b. Increased access/priority to US Defense Satellite Communications System.
  - c. The supply of weapons, equipment and materiel on loan, sale or return pre-payment, including the urgent provision of AIM 9L Sidewinder missiles and Electronic Warfare equipment.
  - d. Medical support.
  - e. Meteorological cover.
  - f. Continued access for US stocks/facilities at Ascension Island is crucial to the support of Op CORPORATE.
23. It is further concluded that:
- a. The lend/lease of a US attack carrier would add significantly to the Task Force capability/sustainability, but may have too high a political profile to include in an initial approach.

b. US intelligence support for Op CORPORATE is already substantial. Real-time tactical intelligence would fill an existing deficiency and increased surveillance and information on the South Atlantic surface and sub-surface plot would be of great value.

c. Indirect operational support could be sought in:

(i) Maritime Reconnaissance.

(ii) Air to Air refuelling for aircraft in transit.

(iii) Air and sea lift for deployments from UK to Ascension Island.

24. It is finally concluded that procurement of weapons and equipment should be processed through normal channels; Government to Government agreements would be necessary to cover loan or sale or return supply arrangements. A high level approach to the US authorities would stress the value HMG would attach to the prompt handling of requests relating to Op CORPORATE.