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DIRECTORATE OF
- 1 MAY 1982
NAVAL PLANS

For JN Plans
am. Mon 3rd

MILITARY OPTIONS FOR REPOSSESSION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

ENCL No.
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BACKGROUND

1. This paper is a straightforward and largely uncontroversial catalogue of the pros and cons of the various options. It makes no conclusions or recommendations but nevertheless is a good mind clearing exercise. It clearly highlights the attractiveness of the Special Operations Option.

COMMENT

2. a. Page 4. The political 'PRO' that blockade maintains the political objective with the minimum use of force infers that this is a low risk option. This is only valid if the Argentines make no serious effort to contest the blockade. You may feel that the attrition to own forces in maintaining a blockade and thus the effect on our subsequent ability to land is insufficiently highlighted in the Military "CONS".
- b. Page 5. Too much weight is given to the Lease/Lend option. There is a definite military "PRO" for ILLUSTRIOUS in that the ship exists, belongs to us, and is entirely feasible. The timescale of "a few months" for Lease/Lend is equivalent to early August for ILLUSTRIOUS. You may wish to stress that ILLUSTRIOUS may not be fully worked up but that she would certainly have an adequate operational capability. The C3 facilities are likely to be better and more compatible than in any LPH the USN might be prepared to release.
- c. Page 10.
- (1) The Military "PRO" that control of major part of Falklands could be established is not valid when set against limited aim of the Option.

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(2) The remark about siege providing easier support is not agreed.

(3) Enhancing an ability to soften up the Argentine positions is not a reason for taking the option but a consequence of it.

(4) To the Military "CONS" should be added:

Little or no military advantage

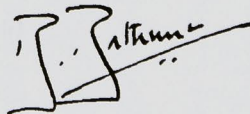
Force could become bogged down metaphorically and literally

d. Page 11. The contrast between the limited Military "CONS" for the Bridgehead option on Page 10 and the lengthy list on Page 11 is too stark. Many of the Military "CONS" for a full landing are equally applicable to a Bridgehead particularly the 3rd, 5th, 7th and 8th sub paras.

e. Page 14. The 3rd Military "CON" fails to mention that operations on the Falkland Islands is our primary aim.

LINE TO TAKE

3. First Sea Lord is invited to draw on this brief as necessary.



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