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FALKLANDS STRATEGY ON EVE OF BRITISH INVASION

U.S. Strategy:

To choose the right moment for another full-strength mediation initiative.

Timing for Peace Initiative:

Before an invasion; after the initial invasion; but before there is a military decision on the islands; after there is a military decision on the islands, or a stalemate occurs.

Judgments: Before the invasion, there is little to no chance for a diplomatic solution; after there is a military decision on the islands, it will dictate the shape of a solution. If the British win, as is probable, they will dictate terms. If they lose, the Thatcher government will fall, and Labor will sue for peace.

After the invasion but before the final military decision is the only opportunity with any chance of success, but that chance remains small. Once fighting has started, the logic of combat will probably overcome hopes for a compromise solution. However, even if the chances are small, the United States cannot afford not to try for a solution.

Method: The only remaining level at which the United States could mount a peace effort will be the President's personal intervention.

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Other Aspects:

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Military Support to the U.K. U.S. has very little capability in short term to enhance U.K. chances for a successful invasion. However, a DoD judgment should be made: would intelligence support, or any specific pieces of hardware assist the British invasion? Could provision of this assistance be kept secret?

For the longer term, the U.S. should provide all assistance short of combat support. That is, U.S. forces should not be giving information or material directly to British combat forces. No aerial refueling, for example.

Publicly, we should continue to decline comment on specific aspects of assistance.

Actions at the UN, public policy. Once the British invade, there will be strong pressures at the UN, and publicly, for a disengagement, or ceasefire. The British will undoubtedly resist this pressure. Our posture both at UN and publicly, should be that a ceasefire can only be part of a total settlement of the dispute.

Congressional Briefings. With Hill sentiment primarily pro-British, we should have no difficulty briefing key members on the strategy outlined in this paper.

UK - ARGENTINE WAR

1. The war between Great Britain and Argentina may escalate into a full-fledged bloody confrontation any time now.
2. The U. N. mediation seems to have stalled primarily because of the lack of practical guarantee that the international agency can back up the solution.
3. The United States' original mediation effort provided for a degree of softening of the positions on both sides, but did not succeed in removing all obstacles to a peaceful solution.
4. There is now an immediate and urgent need for a dramatic new effort on the part of the United States in order to prevent huge losses on both sides with grave consequences for the entire free world (weakening of NATO, disruption of international financial systems, etc).
5. The new initiative should pass by the regular channels of the State Department in the United States and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Argentina in order to provide for direct and instant communication between the decision-making centers in both countries.
6. Judge William C. Clark as Director of the National Security Council and personal friend of the President is a natural choice to head the mission.
7. Judge Clark does not have to travel to Buenos Aires. For the initial low profile contact, it would be even better for the person and/or persons representing him, but who personally know the decision-making group in Argentina (Galtieri, Lami Doso, Anaya), to make the trip as soon as possible.
8. The fundamental positions in the initial contact should be defined in advance in a way acceptable to both sides: a) The long-range transfer of sovereignty over the islands to Argentina which should not be a precondition for negotiation, but considered the main subject for settlement discussions to be resumed immediately after the gradual mutual withdrawal of military presence; b) a strong qualification must be stated that the interests of the islanders will be fully safeguarded and protected under guarantees from the United Nations and the United States.
9. The details of the agreements already reached in the United Nations should be fully utilized and accepted by the Clark mission.
10. The grounds for such a mission has been somewhat tested by private exploratory contacts and conversations.

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