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OD(SA)(82)3

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6 April 1982

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CABINET

DEFENCE AND OVERSEA POLICY COMMITTEE

Sub Committee on the South Atlantic and the
Falkland Islands

MILITARY ACTION FOLLOWING THE INVASION OF THE
FALKLAND ISLANDS

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Defence

Critical Dates

1. Our Forces can be operational as follows:-

	<u>At Latitude</u> <u>35° South</u>	<u>In Falklands</u> <u>Area</u>
1st SSN	Saturday 10 Apr	Sunday 11/Monday 12 Apr
2nd SSN	Monday 12 Apr	Thursday 15 Apr
3rd SSN	Saturday 17 Apr	Wednesday 21 Apr
2 Frigates with RM company group embarked		21-24 Apr at South Georgia
Carrier Battle Group	23/25 Apr (Depending on speed of passage)	25/27 Apr
Landing Force		1/7 May

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Possible Sequence of Action

2. Operations could be undertaken as follows:-

Phase I

SSN(s) sink one or more Argentinian warship(s), claiming action in self defence:

- i. After arrival of first SSN or after arrival of second and/or third SSN.
- ii. With or without declaring their presence and readiness to use force if necessary.

Phase II

We declare an Exclusion Zone within 200 nm of the Falkland Islands within which SSNs sink:

- i. Argentine warships or
- ii. Argentine warships and support vessels supplying the Falkland Islands.

Phase III

On arrival of Carrier Task Group intensive operations to sink Argentine warships, shoot down Argentine military aircraft, and turn back or sink supply vessels, within the Exclusion Zone. Aim to establish maritime and air superiority around the Falkland Islands, and to cut off completely the reinforcement and resupply of the Argentine garrison on the Falklands.

Phase IV

Before or concurrent with Phase III, landing on South Georgia to expel or capture Argentine force, and to re-establish British presence. Would require two frigates, HMS ENDURANCE and embarked force of Royal Marines.

Phase V

After arrival of Landing Force:

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- i. Landing to re-establish British presence on some part of the Falkland Islands.
 - ii. Major landing to expel Argentine garrison.
3. A variant of Phases II and III would be unrestricted operations against Argentine warships wherever they are found, but respecting Argentine 12 mile territorial waters.

JN

Ministry of Defence
6 April 1982

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