

# **A Fulcrum in the Falklands: The Role of Intelligence in the 1982 Falkland Islands Campaign**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This article investigates the role of the intelligence process in the Falkland Islands Campaign of 1982. Analysis draws from declassified assessments, sworn statements, and memoirs that reveal new details about assumptions and the intelligence process for each belligerent. Refinements in Argentina's execution of the intelligence process probably would have led Argentina to deploy additional forces to the Falklands, wage more destructive air raids, occupy key terrain, target aircraft carriers with Exocet missiles, and inflict more British casualties, which might have altered the conflict's outcome.

**Keywords:** Falkland Islands, military intelligence, campaign, strategy, Argentina, Great Britain, Exocet, intelligence cycle, terrain analysis

## **Un fulcro en las Malvinas: el papel de la inteligencia en la campaña de las Islas Malvinas de 1982**

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## RESUMEN

Este artículo investiga el papel del proceso de inteligencia en la Campaña de las Islas Malvinas de 1982. El análisis se basa en evaluaciones desclasificadas, declaraciones juradas y memorias que revelan nuevos detalles sobre las suposiciones y el proceso de inteligencia para cada beligerante. Los refinamientos en la ejecución del proceso de inteligencia por parte de Argentina probablemente habrían llevado a Argentina a desplegar fuerzas adicionales en las Malvinas, realizar ataques aéreos más destructivos, ocupar terreno clave, apuntar a los portaaviones con misiles Exocet e infligir más bajas británicas, lo que podría haber alterado el resultado del conflicto.

**Palabras clave:** Islas Malvinas, inteligencia militar, campaña, estrategia, Argentina, Gran Bretaña, Exocet, ciclo de inteligencia, análisis del terreno

## 福克兰群岛战役的一个重要部分：情报在1982年福克兰群岛战役中的作用

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### 摘要

本文研究了情报过程在1982年福克兰群岛战役中的作用。分析来自解密评估、宣誓声明和回忆录，它们揭示了关于“每个交战方的假设和情报过程”的新细节。阿根廷情报过程执行的改进可能会导致阿根廷向福克兰群岛部署更多部队，发动更具破坏性的空袭，占领关键地形，用飞鱼反舰导弹瞄准航空母舰，并造成更多英国人伤亡，进而可能会改变冲突的结果。

关键词：福克兰群岛，军事情报，战役，战略，阿根廷，英国，飞鱼反舰导弹，情报周期，地形分析

## Responding to the Unexpected

Referring to Argentina's unexpected invasion of the Falkland Islands on April 2, 1982, one British commander declared after the ensuing conflict that the "motto of the Falklands war is: 'You never know.'"<sup>1</sup> Perhaps this motto, however, is equally applicable from Argentina's perspective with regard to Great Britain's counter-offensive that began on April 5, when a task force launched from Portsmouth, England to reclaim this territory in the South Atlantic. This response signaled escalation to a military resolution—taking Argentina, which had anticipated a diplomatic resolution in its favor, by surprise. Each side's strategic miscalculations about the other's intentions warned of further intelligence failures unless these belligerents could address challenges throughout the intelligence cycle<sup>2</sup> concerning collection, analysis, and dissemination. Over the course of the 74-day conflict, each belligerent experienced successes and failures on the battlefield that directly or indirectly involved the intelligence cycle. What role did intelligence play in the Falkland Islands Campaign of 1982?

As the Argentinian invasion force hoisted their national flag over Fort Stanley on the Falkland Islands on April 2, 1982, the military junta leading Argentina anticipated the beginning of diplomatic negotiations for the transfer of the islands' sovereignty with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, rather than a counterattack. Leaders believed the British had 'little interest in the Falkland Islands' because

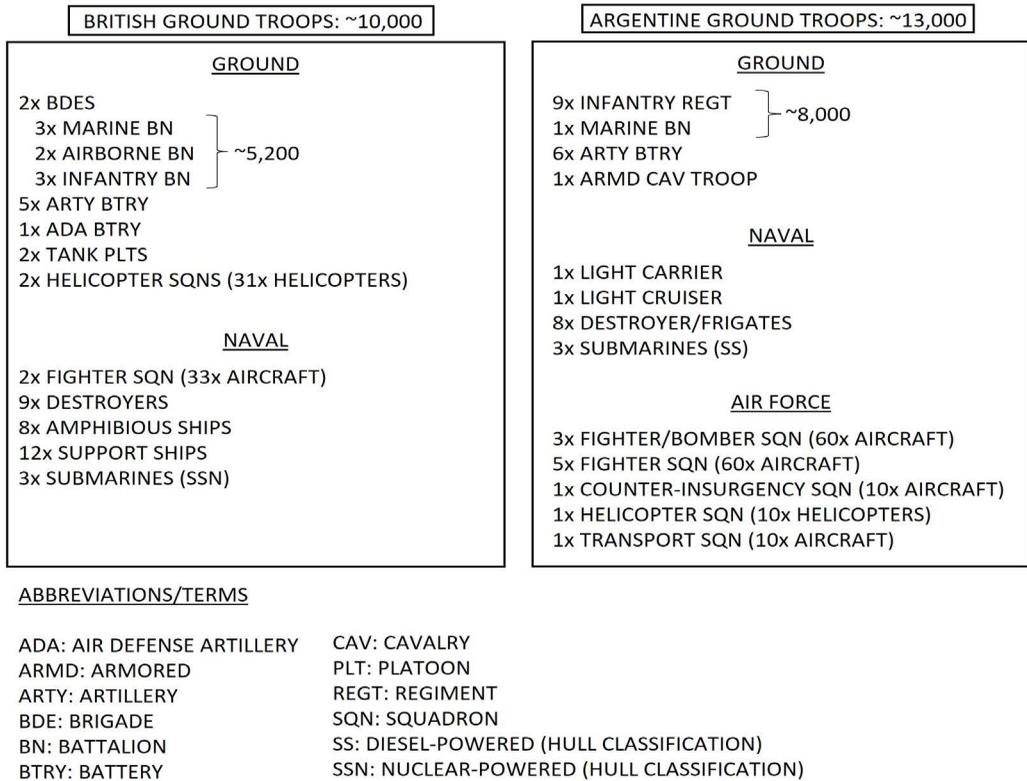
of previous sovereignty negotiations, implementation of the 1981 British Nationality Act, and a Defense White Paper calling for the withdrawal of British forces from the islands, like *HMS Endurance*.<sup>3</sup> Argentinian forces established an area defense for the possible scenario of a lengthy British blockade. They fortified Stanley and prioritized logistics to ensure forces on the island could endure a blockade.

The Argentinian invasion of the Falklands shocked the British, whose military training and deployment had been focused on Soviet threats. Despite Argentinian saber-rattling over the years, the British relegated intelligence collection on Argentinian intentions to the lowest category,<sup>4</sup> leading them to miss indications and warnings.<sup>5</sup> This neglect resulted in significant intelligence gaps that the British would need to address to understand Argentinian military capabilities, orders of battle, and defenses in order to wage a successful war.

The Falkland Islands Campaign involved approximately 10,000 British and 13,000 Argentinian ground forces, including 5,200 British and 8,000 Argentinians who were infantry or marines<sup>6</sup> (see Figure 1 for a more detailed force comparison). Physical distance from the area of operations constrained British deployments, as troops had to cross nearly 13,000 kilometers of ocean to reach the area of operations, but favored Argentinian logistics and granted flexibility with the mainland only 480 kilometers away. Distance also factored into the fight for aerial superiority as British

bombers needed to deploy from Ascension Island (about 6,100 kilometers from the Falklands) and fighters flew off of two aircraft carriers in the British task force (see Figure 1 for details on the number of aircraft involved). Meanwhile, Argentinian aircraft launched from bases along Argentina's coast (Figure 2), pro-

viding an air bridge to enhance logistics and air raids targeting British ships and land forces. Also, conscription characterized most of the Argentinian force, compared to the professional military of Great Britain, which affected morale, discipline, and the training and quality of personnel.



**Figure 1.** Force Comparison by Belligerent (Major Forces). This force comparison reveals relative strengths and weaknesses of each belligerent. Compiled by the author. [Strategy, Concepts, and Plans Directorate, *Falklands Wargame (Falklands)*, 10] Licensed under the Creative Commons

Broad discrepancies existed between Argentinian and British intelligence assets, yielding significant advantages to the British when weather conditions did not interfere (see Appendix B/Figure B-1 for key intelligence assets for each belligerent). British subma-

rines equipped with measurement and signature intelligence systems provided early warning of Argentinian aircraft sorties shortly after launch, whereas Argentinian radar detection was sparse, with systems only near Fort Stanley and at a few select locations along the coast.

Poor weather in June affecting aerial reconnaissance forced both sides to increasingly rely on signals intercepts<sup>7</sup> and small unit patrols for current intelligence. Reconnaissance by the British Special Air Service (SAS), Special Boat Service (SBS), and maneuver units enhanced mission planning, but the Argentines reaped little from patrols, as most units remained stationary in their defensive positions under leadership guidance. While other countries officially maintained neutrality, Chile and the United States bolstered British collection efforts (despite disagreements between Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, as Reagan's advisers supported negotiations and shared Argentine-British rule over the islands rather than a war to retain sovereignty), while the Soviet Union provided little intelligence to Argentina (see Figure B-1). These factors led intelligence to directly or indirectly influence important events in each phase of the Falkland Islands Campaign.

## **Phase 0: British Task Force Moves into Position**

### *Generating Estimates*

**T**he British task force set sail from Portsmouth, England on 5 April, just three days after the Argentinian invasion of the Falklands. At this point, Great Britain possessed minimal information regarding the Argentinian order of battle or even the islands' geography, using ungridded maps, news photos and stories, and defense almanacs to determine characteristics of the enemy's defense.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, Argentin-

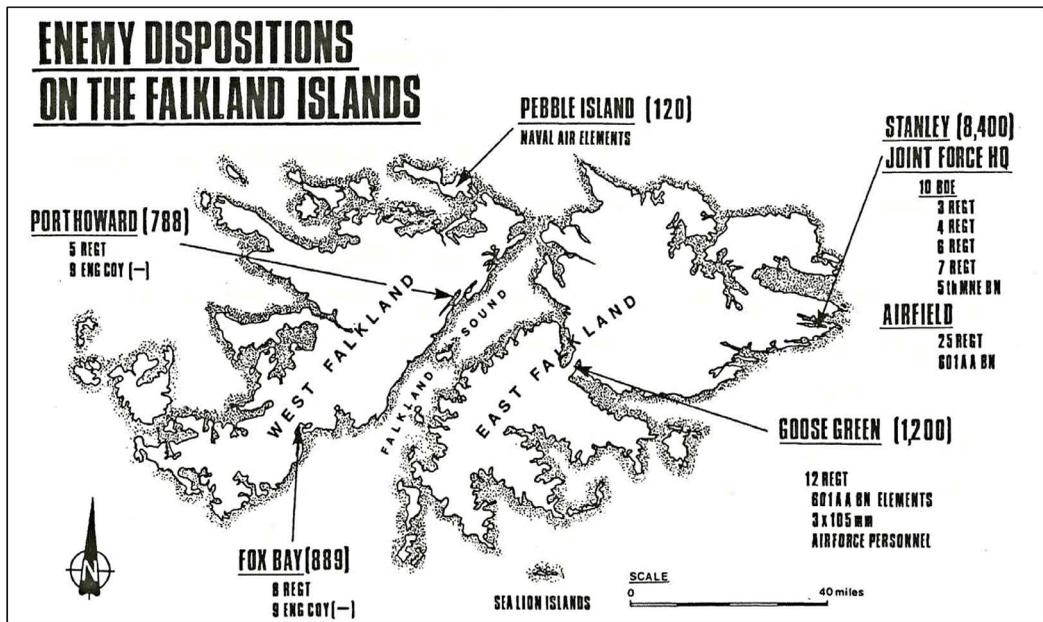
ian forces knew little about the British military, as they had not anticipated a military response and possessed few collection platforms to ascertain the approaching task force's composition, location, and plans. Intelligence collection quickly became the priority for belligerents, leading to unconventional collection methods, risk-taking, and deception.

The British discovered and intercepted the cable and telephone welfare link used by Argentinian troops to communicate with their families on the mainland, which included useful details about the names of servicemen and their units.<sup>9</sup> Other signals collection and imagery served to further improve the operational picture before landfall. These initial collection and analysis efforts rendered a fairly accurate and comprehensive estimate for the size, locations, and equipment of Argentinian forces (closely mirroring the later estimate in Figure 3). This accurate analysis enhanced targeting and reduced risk in operations. Resourcefulness in collection from open sources and records of those previously stationed in the Falklands, as well as reconnaissance conducted by the SAS and SBS, guided British decision-making regarding the amphibious landing and how to traverse East Falkland on foot towards Stanley.

Few intelligence collection platforms on hand and a lack of intelligence regarding the British task force after its arrival to the British maritime exclusion zone around the Falklands on 29 April (Appendix A) led the Argentinian Navy



**Figure 2.** Map illustrating the Falklands Campaign (Distances to Bases). This provides context for how physical distances affected logistics support, unit response times to intelligence reporting, and the physical separation between Argentina's infantry marine forces in the Falklands and in Rio Grande, Argentina. ['Falklands, Campaign, (Distances to bases) 1982,' Conflicts Since 1958, United States Military Academy, accessed 28 October 2020, [https://www.westpoint.edu/sites/default/files/inline-images/academics/academic\\_departments/history/Since%201958/falklands-map-a.gif](https://www.westpoint.edu/sites/default/files/inline-images/academics/academic_departments/history/Since%201958/falklands-map-a.gif)] Licensed under the Creative Commons.



*Figure 3.* British Estimate of Argentinian Forces, dated 15 May 1982. The accuracy of this estimate compared to actual force disposition reflects the strong reliability of intelligence collection methods among British forces. [van der Bijl, *My Friends the Enemy*, 101] Licensed under the Creative Commons.

and Air Force to task civilian vessels and aircraft with intelligence collection. For instance, the Navy charged the *Usurbil* fishing vessel crew of 27 Argentines and 22 Spaniards with detecting and reporting on British task force movements.<sup>10</sup> Limited reporting reduced confidence about British intentions and made the Argentinian intelligence apparatus vulnerable to deception, especially regarding any signals intercepts of British plans that corresponded with their assessments for amphibious landing points.

### *The Chilean Factor*

Argentina considered Chile a key variable from the earliest intelligence assessment for a Falklands invasion, as it feared that Chile might take ad-

vantage of an Argentinian war with Great Britain to attack the Argentinian mainland.<sup>11</sup> Tensions with Chile had been high since a boundary dispute in 1978 over contested islands, which almost led to war.<sup>12</sup> In the absence of evidence suggesting Chile would attack, the junta accepted risk and moved forward with the invasion because of their belief that the British would not respond militarily (upon which their assessments predicated conditions for a Chilean attack) and due to mounting domestic political pressures, which might subside if they were to capture the islands. Argentinian assessments on Chilean intentions later changed, however, shaping the force Argentina maintained in the Falklands.

The British capitalized on these fears and collaborated with Chile in a quid pro quo agreement involving arms transfers in exchange for intelligence gathering and a deception operation to convince Argentines that Chile would attack.<sup>13</sup> Later Argentinian intelligence reinforced fears of Chilean aggression and influenced decision-making. Chilean Army units along the border increased radio traffic and the navy “put to sea under radio silence,”<sup>14</sup> a tactic typically indicative of an imminent attack. Around 15 April, when Argentinian intelligence already anticipated a military response based on the approaching British task force, Argentinian naval intelligence reported that Chile would attack Argentina based on statements of Admiral José Merino, the Chilean Navy’s Commander-in-Chief and second-in-command in the military *junta*.<sup>15</sup> Argentina was forced to split its forces to hedge against a Chilean invasion of southern Argentina, and thus sent only ten per cent of the Argentinian armed forces to the Falklands.<sup>16</sup> Hence, Argentinian analysis regarding Chilean intentions, mainly based on signals intelligence, rendered a local ground force deficit throughout the war.

## Phase 1: Air Superiority and Naval Power

### *The Exocet Dilemma*

British intelligence collection and analysis regarding Argentina’s Super Étendard fighters and their Exocet anti-shiping missiles kept decision-makers responsible for risk man-

agement well-informed. Exocets posed a severe threat to the British task force because if one were to disable or destroy one of the two aircraft carriers in the British fleet, an amphibious landing would be impossible and the British would probably lose the war.<sup>17</sup> In the words of one Argentinian senior military leader, the Exocet was “*maná del cielo* [manna from heaven],” more so for symbolizing the full capability of the Argentinian armed forces than for the belief that it could have destroyed the English fleet.<sup>18</sup> The British knew that Argentina possessed five Exocets,<sup>19</sup> which factored into their risk management.

The British Government considered a variety of ways to eliminate or mitigate the Exocet threat.<sup>20</sup> In the end, Margaret Thatcher persuaded French President François Mitterrand to cease Exocet sales to Argentina, which broke original contract terms and came at a great financial cost to the French since the Argentines were willing to pay over one million dollars per Exocet missile, far beyond the market price of \$450,000.<sup>21</sup> The British set out to either purchase or sabotage all remaining Exocet missiles in the international market to eliminate resupply options.<sup>22</sup> These efforts frustrated planned shipments<sup>23</sup> and disrupted Argentinian war plans, leading Argentina to seek Exocets from Libya, Iran, and Peru.<sup>24</sup>

Intelligence about Exocet supply and usage influenced risk-taking. Early in the campaign, British troops perceived hesitation among task force leaders to make aggressive gambles because of the threat, a condition they called,

“Exocet Syndrome.”<sup>25</sup> Argentines also recognized this aversion to risk, observing that the British never risked their aircraft carriers.<sup>26</sup> This changed as the campaign progressed and the British successfully prevented Exocet resupply, most notably during the Pebble Island raid on 15 May when an aircraft carrier moved beyond the air defense protection of its escort for adequate proximity to support the raid.<sup>27</sup>

### ***Argentinian Bombing of British Ships***

Challenges with ascertaining the location of British ships<sup>28</sup> led the Argentinian air force to divert planes from combat missions to conduct 37 exploration and reconnaissance missions, not including organic taskings for reconnaissance flights necessary for Air Force collection requirements.<sup>29</sup> Once Argentines refined their estimate of the British task force and began to conduct air raids, Chilean radar assisted Great Britain by providing early warning of Argentinian sorties leaving the mainland toward the British fleet, enabling the British to optimize the employment of finite air defense resources for high threat windows.<sup>30</sup> Intelligence played a more direct role in these air raids on the Argentinian side, however, as the result of ineffective pilot debriefings and poor dissemination of intelligence gleaned from anti-air missions.

Pilot debriefings augmented intelligence collection of both belligerents as pilots provided information about enemy locations, feedback regarding the effectiveness of friendly and enemy tactics, and battle damage assessments.

As the operational picture became clearer and planes bombed the British fleet in May, however, few bombs detonated because the planes, flying low to reduce their signatures and increase their survivability, dropped the bombs at too low of an altitude for the fuses to burn for detonation. The Argentinian navy aviators adapted, developing the technique of lobbing bombs to provide sufficient time for fuses to burn, but pilots failed to share this technique with their air force counterparts.<sup>31</sup> The air force practice of bringing returning pilots to geographically dispersed bases to hide the scale of losses from the adversary also impeded effective debriefing and information-sharing.<sup>32</sup> As a result, even though Argentinian aircraft hit about 75 per cent of British surface ships with bombs, up to 50 per cent failed to detonate, sinking or severely damaging only one destroyer, two frigates, and two landing ships.<sup>33</sup> Failures to disseminate intelligence about tactics and battle damage gleaned through pilot debriefings directly contributed to this lack of effectiveness for bombing missions. These failures, in part, enabled the British to gain air and naval superiority, a key development in the war which the British learned the Argentinian naval commander acknowledged through a signal intercept toward the end of May.<sup>34</sup>

## **Phase 2: Landings**

### ***Initial Reports of the British Landing***

**A**s part of the Argentinian defense plan, the navy distributed forces along the mainland on

orders to deploy upon reports of massive British amphibious landings and helicopter disembarkations in northern East Falkland, indicating the anticipated location of British landings.<sup>35</sup> On 1 May, the British conducted the first Vulcan bombing raid on Port Stanley, Sea Harrier raids and naval bombardments, and initial SAS and SBS landings on the Falklands. Argentinian defenders reported to the mainland that “*se vienen los ingleses* [the English are coming],” describing helicopter and ship disembarkations in northern East Falkland, as well as planes and helicopters shot down by Argentinian forces.<sup>36</sup>

Argentinian intelligence initially interpreted these events as an invasion attempt, as they nested with assessments about a British invasion taking place in northern East Falkland near the end of April.<sup>37</sup> As a result, Argentina’s navy deployed to interdict the British task force around the Falklands. Ships departed from the Argentinian coast slightly after 2300 hours with guidance to launch a “massive attack” on 2 May.<sup>38</sup> The British intercepted the radio signal with this directive.<sup>39</sup> Around 0400 or 0500 hours on 2 May, Vice Admiral Lombardo ordered ships to return to their original staging areas, assessing the reported invasion of the Falklands as untrue and labelling it a false report, as he had received no further communications with situation updates or indications of hostilities.<sup>40</sup> During its return voyage, however, the British submarine *Conqueror* sunk the Argentinian light cruiser *General Belgrano*, killing 368 of its 1,042 crewmen.<sup>41</sup> The British intercept led leaders to take political risks

by altering the rules of engagement and attacking the *Belgrano* outside of the exclusion zone.<sup>42</sup>

This Argentinian intelligence failure of misinterpreting British intentions through events on 1 May led to the Argentinian navy’s premature deployment and exposure to British submarines, which resulted in *Belgrano*’s sinking, accounting for about half of Argentina’s personnel loss during the conflict. The failure also fostered decision-making that ended major naval surface engagement as the Argentinian navy remained within 22 kilometers of the continental coast throughout the remainder of the conflict to preserve ships.<sup>43</sup> This excluded naval forces from combat during the actual British amphibious landing at San Carlos weeks later.

### *Pebble Island Raid*

British SAS sifted through intelligence reports to identify high-value targets and found a single report indicating the suspected presence of a sea-facing radar at Pebble Island.<sup>44</sup> British analysts warned that this radar, covering approaches to San Carlos, might provide Argentines with early warning of the British amphibious landing, giving time to Argentinian pilots to launch sorties against the British fleet.<sup>45</sup> Based on this single source reporting, and the Exocet missile threat, the task force risked one of its two aircraft carriers by moving it beyond the protective bubble of its escorts to be within range to support an SAS raid at Pebble Island.<sup>46</sup> During the raid on 15 May, the SAS found no radar

system, but successfully neutralized or destroyed ten Pucará aircraft.<sup>47</sup> Argentinian intelligence failed to identify this as a shaping operation for the amphibious landing at San Carlos, near Pebble Island. This operation also weakened the Argentinian air-based counterattack at San Carlos days later.

### *San Carlos Amphibious Landing*

The successful British landing at San Carlos resulted in part from a series of Argentinian intelligence failures and resourceful British collection efforts. Argentinian and British intelligence preparation of the battlefield yielded opposing assessments regarding San Carlos's suitability for an amphibious landing. Before the war, an Argentinian naval study assessed the site as 'impossible' for a successful amphibious landing.<sup>48</sup> Argentines assessed a British landing would either involve an amphibious assault against Stanley (mimicking their amphibious assault on 2 April),<sup>49</sup> or an amphibious landing northeast of East Falkland.<sup>50</sup>

The British, on the other hand, determined the site to be suitable thanks to the initiative of Major Ewen Southby-Tailyour of the Royal Marines. While stationed in the Falklands 1978-1979, the yachtsman conducted a detailed survey of the coastline, making copious records on topography and hydrographical features in a pilotage notebook.<sup>51</sup> The Argentinian assessment led to their disregard for the bay in defense planning. Instead, they focused efforts on seven to ten potential landing sites, prioritizing efforts there. Defending

each site with a force would require "two or three Argentinian armies,"<sup>52</sup> so Argentines established observation posts for early warning and emplaced land and naval mines near likely landing sites. The British ship *Alacrity* reconnoitered the northern access to San Carlos on 9 May and found it free of naval mines.<sup>53</sup>

The Argentinian assessment on the unsuitability of San Carlos fostered Argentinian misinterpretation of indications and warnings that a British landing was forthcoming, and exposed Argentina to British deception efforts. On 16 May, *HMS Glamorgan* began an operation intended to convince Argentines that a British landing would take place south of Stanley, utilizing naval bombardment of positions at and around Stanley and sending false message traffic intended for Argentinian intercept.<sup>54</sup> The operation proved successful, as land force commander General Mario Menéndez's staff dismissed reports of British ship movements towards San Carlos through 20 May as 'a diversion' from Stanley.<sup>55</sup> On the morning of 21 May, an Argentinian lieutenant witnessed British troops disembarking from ships at San Carlos (Figure 4) and reported the sighting, but Argentinian staff remained skeptical.<sup>56</sup> A senior navy captain assessed that the landing was likely a diversionary tactic and stated that the bay would not permit the entry of ships for a large-scale landing under any circumstances, on account of its shallowness.<sup>57</sup> The British anticipated the possibility of heavy resistance,<sup>58</sup> but 3 Commando Brigade enjoyed an initially uncontested landing during

this, the “last moment at which the entire campaign might have foundered.”<sup>59</sup> Had General Menéndez not hesitated in sending troops due to intelligence

assessments that the landing was a diversion, he might have “prolonged the campaign considerably”<sup>60</sup> and tilted the scale in favor of Argentina.

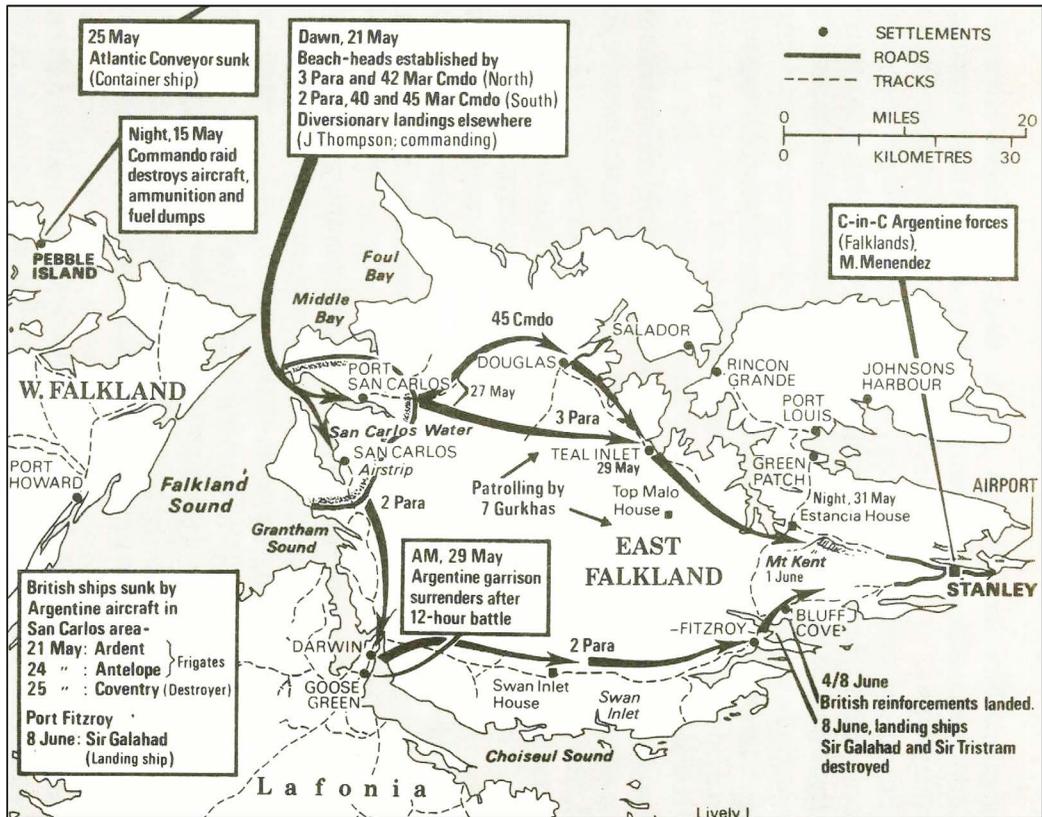


Figure 4. Significant Actions, 15 May – 8 June 1982. The locations of key events reveal the vital role of joint operations and intelligence planning (e.g., anticipated coastal debarkation points versus the location chosen by British forces). [Hastings and Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*, 201] Licensed under the Creative Commons.

### Phase 3: Ground Campaign and Argentinian Surrender

As units disembarked at San Carlos 21–25 May, land forces split and conducted a foot march in excess of 80 kilometers along northern and southern approaches (Figure 4). Their advance benefitted from intelli-

gence provided by civilian residents of the islands regarding Argentinian units near their settlements, as poor weather limited aerial collection and increased British reliance on these updates from residents, signals intelligence, and patrols with organic assets. British forces along the northern route captured Douglas and Teal Inlet by the end of

May, while 2nd Battalion, Parachute Regiment (2 Para) achieved a costly victory at Goose Green in the south (Appendix A).

### ***Port Pleasant***<sup>61</sup>

As 2 Para progressed along the southern avenue of approach toward Stanley in early June, the British task force coordinated for reinforcements to land near Fitzroy to bolster this force before it attacked the Argentinian stronghold at Stanley (Figure 4).<sup>62</sup> Argentinian intelligence first became aware of a planned reinforcement in the vicinity of Fitzroy and Port Pleasant on 6 June,<sup>63</sup> which it later confirmed on 8 June after coastal observation posts reported the anticipated British landing vessels.<sup>64</sup> This triggered the Argentines to launch four Mirage III fighters from the Argentinian mainland, flying toward San Carlos as a decoy to draw away the British Sea Harriers on Combat Air Patrol (CAP) while their main flight of eight Skyhawk fighters and six Dagger fighters headed toward Fitzroy.<sup>65</sup>

Challenges with the dissemination of intelligence contributed to Britain's delayed and inadequate response to this well-coordinated Argentinian air attack. The nuclear-powered submarine *HMS Valiant*, stationed directly under the Argentinian Air Force's flight path from the mainland to the Falklands, detected Argentinian aircraft departing on 8 June.<sup>66</sup> The *Valiant* sent a satellite communication to Northwood Headquarters near London so they could issue a warning of the pending air raid to the task force, but "communica-

tion problems" prevented the *Valiant's* warnings from reaching the task force in time.<sup>67</sup> As a result, the CAP first became aware of an attack when the four Mirages had already reached northern East Falkland, near San Carlos.<sup>68</sup> The CAP deployed to engage the attackers, and then returned to their carriers to refuel<sup>69</sup> while the Argentinian main flight appeared over Port Pleasant and bombed Welsh and Scottish units as they disembarked from transport vessels. With no aerial protection,<sup>70</sup> the British suffered their greatest loss of forces in a single incident during the war with 50 killed and 54 injured.<sup>71</sup> This surprise attack delayed the British advance to Fort Stanley by two days.<sup>72</sup>

Following an investigation, British forces officially blamed the incident on a lack of joint and amphibious training, as opposed to issues stemming from communications associated with the intelligence process.<sup>73</sup> This discrepancy may be due to the classified nature of these collection platforms and their communications, as one source notes that in "the inevitable postmortems that followed" the incident at Port Pleasant, "no mention was made of the secret role played by Britain's nuclear submarines because their movements, apart from very rare exceptions, are considered highly classified."<sup>74</sup> Early warning of the pending attack would not have prevented a raid, but likely would have reduced casualties by alerting the CAP of a pending attack and leading forces at Port Pleasant to hasten their disembarkation.<sup>75</sup> This suggests that the "central tragedy" of this incident was not a lack of joint or amphibious training, but

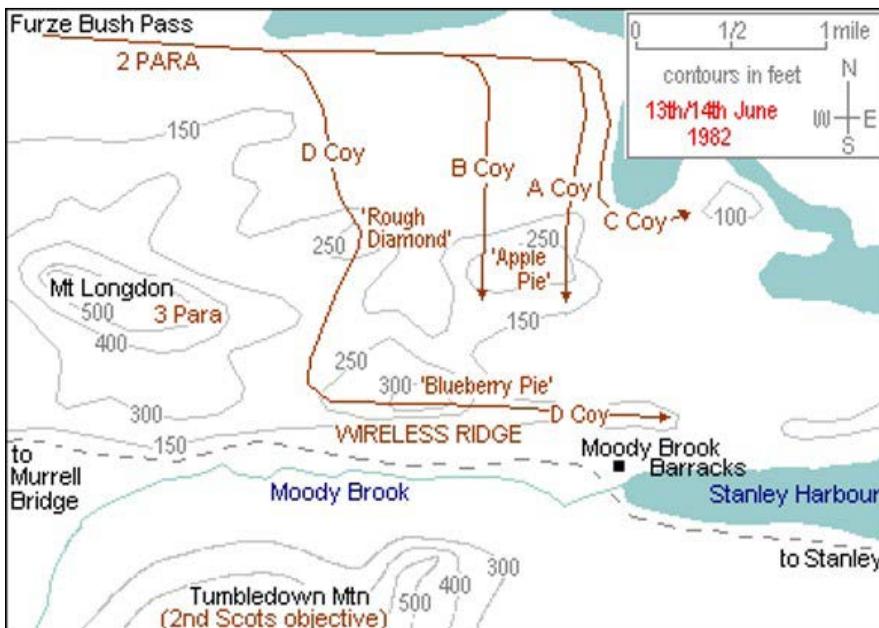
rather, that “the warning transmitted by *Valiant* on the morning of the raid never reached the Welsh Guards at Port Pleasant, who were completely unaware of the urgent need to disembark quickly.”<sup>76</sup>

### ***Battle for Wireless Ridge and Argentinian Surrender***

British forces along northern and southern approaches captured key terrain west of Stanley by 11 June. Throughout this advance, poor weather hindered aerial reconnaissance, leading each side to become reliant upon signals intelligence and reports from patrols and observation posts. Poor information flow from SAS and SBS patrols forced British maneuver units to rely on intelligence collected through their own small unit

patrols.<sup>77</sup> This included 2 Para’s intelligence process in preparation for the Battle for Wireless Ridge, immediately west of Stanley.

On the afternoon of 12 June, the 2 Para commander received orders to attack Wireless Ridge that evening, but his unit possessed “very scanty intelligence” because they had not had an opportunity to patrol the ridge or find a vantage point to study the terrain and enemy forces.<sup>78</sup> After their higher headquarters postponed the operation for 24 hours, the 2 Para commander and company commanders climbed the nearby Mount Longdon to overlook Wireless Ridge, and “it is largely from what [they] saw that [they] were able to make [their] subsequent plan.”<sup>79</sup> This tacti-



**Figure 5.** Battle for Wireless Ridge, 13-14 June 1982. British forces relied on organic collection from direct observation (patrolling) due to limitations on other forms of collection. [‘Part 47: 2 Para’s Approach to and Battle for Wireless Ridge: 13th/14th June 1982,’ *Naval History Homepage*, 31 May 2013, <https://www.naval-history.net/F57wireless.htm>] Licensed under the Creative Commons.

cal-level intelligence collection performed by unit leaders, as well as other intelligence gleaned during the 24-hour delay, revealed that the enemy force was larger than originally assessed,<sup>80</sup> which led to planning revisions and the attack outlined in Figure 5. In this final battle, 2 Para's force of around 600 suffered three dead and 11 wounded, while the Argentinian force of about 500 had as many as 100 killed and 17 captured before the remainder of the force fled.<sup>81</sup> The defeat devastated morale in Stanley and convinced the Argentines to surrender on 14 June, ending the conflict.

## **The Fulcrum of Intelligence**

**A**rgentinian and British successes and failures in the intelligence cycle directly or indirectly influenced key events of the Falkland Islands Campaign. Gradual declassification of government records and permission granted to servicemen to publish memoirs has rendered a more complete picture of the role of intelligence than was available in the immediate aftermath of the war. Revelations include contributions made by partner

countries and how the intelligence process factored into decision-making on both sides.

Resourceful collection enabled the British to develop an accurate estimate of the Argentinian defenders and exploit their vulnerabilities. Even so, constraints on manning and equipment limited the task force's operational flexibility. Instances of Argentinian forces' flawed assumptions about British intentions, weak collection efforts, faulty analysis, and poor dissemination of intelligence culminated in missed opportunities to interdict British forces at their amphibious landings and to delay their advance on land. Refinements in Argentina's execution of the intelligence process probably would have led Argentina to deploy additional forces to the Falklands, wage more destructive air raids, occupy key terrain, target aircraft carriers with Exocets, and inflict more British casualties, which might have altered the conflict's outcome. In other words, success largely balanced on the fulcrum of intelligence, and greater performance by Argentina could have tipped the scale in its favor.

## **About the Author**

Matthew A. Hughes is a U.S. Army Foreign Area Officer. He holds a Master of International Public Policy from Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies (2021), an M.A. in Intelligence Studies from American Military University (2016), and a B.S. in Arabic/Spanish and a Terrorism Studies Minor from the United States Military Academy (2011). Over his 12-year career, he has served in command and staff capacities. He has published one book and several articles on terrorism, intelligence disciplines, international security, Latin American political economy, and related topics.

## **APPENDIX A: Timeline**

- 2 April 1982 Argentinian forces invade the Falkland Islands.
- 5 April British task force deploys from Portsmouth, England.
- 12 April British institute maritime exclusion zone surrounding Falklands.
- 21–25 April South Georgia Campaign (separate campaign during the war, located nearly 1,400 kilometers east-southeast of Falklands).
- 29 April British task force arrives at exclusion zone.
- 1 May Initial SAS and SBS landings on the Falklands, along with Sea Harrier raids and naval bombardments. Argentinian Navy deploys from staging area along mainland coast in response (cancelled movement after 6 hours).
- 2 May British sink *General Belgrano*.
- 9 May Argentinian trawler *Narwal* attacked. British complete plans for San Carlos landing site.
- 15 May SAS forces conduct raid on Pebble Island.
- 21 May British amphibious landing at San Carlos begins.
- 25 May *Coventry* and *Atlantic Conveyor* sunk. The *Atlantic Conveyor* had been transporting the majority of the task force's helicopters.
- 27 May 3 Para and 45 Commando begin 'yomp' (foot march) toward Teal Inlet. SAS land on Mount Kent. 2 Para sets out for Goose Green.
- 29 May Battle of Darwin/Goose Green. British capture Douglas and Teal Inlets.
- 31 May 42 Commando land on Mount Kent (19 kilometers from Stanley).
- 1 June 5 Brigade disembarks at San Carlos.
- 8 June Argentinian air raid against British reinforcements at Port Pleasant.
- 13–14 June Battle for Wireless Ridge.
- 14 June Argentines surrender at Port Stanley, ending the conflict.

## APPENDIX B: Intelligence Assets

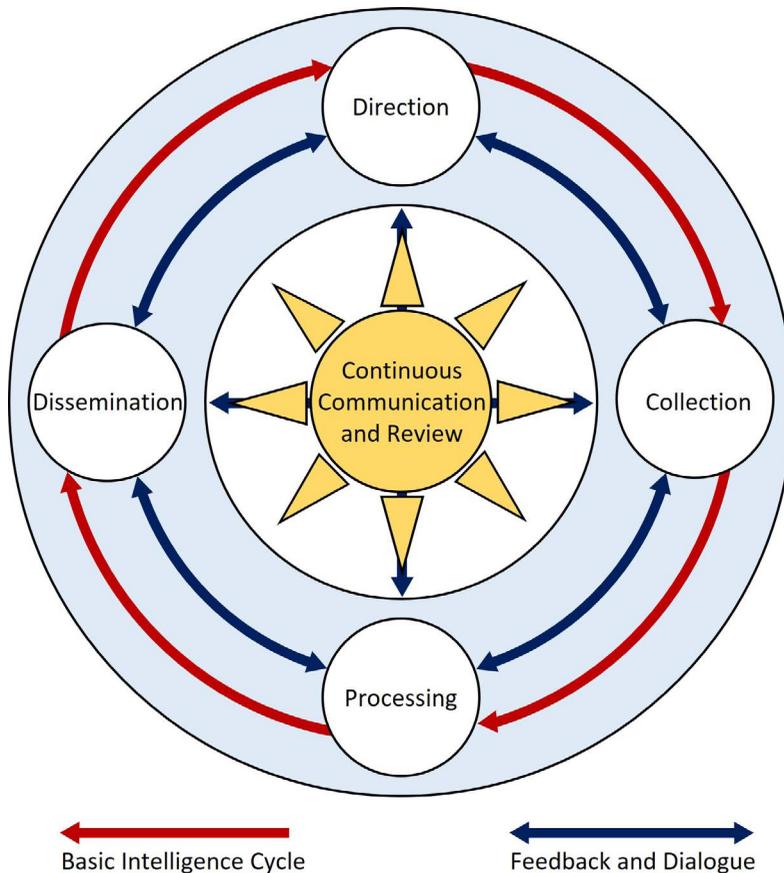
**Figure B-1:** Key Intelligence Assets in Falkland Islands Campaign

	Discipline	Argentina		Great Britain	
		Forces	Notes	Forces	Notes
Collection(Raw Intelligence)	Human Intelligence (HUMINT)	15x civilians (Falkland Islanders)	Resident Argentine population on islands of 15 people served as sources. <sup>82</sup>	Falkland Islanders	Reported on Argentinian forces through Citizen Band radio. <sup>83</sup>  (Severe limitations for HUMINT and Spanish speakers. With the exception of a few intelligence analysts, the land forces commander's interpreter was one of the only Spanish speakers in the force.) <sup>84</sup>
	Signals Intelligence (SIGINT)	fishing trawlers ( <i>Narwal</i> )	Possessed ELINT capabilities; noted for good intelligence production. <sup>85</sup>	Nimrod surveillance aircraft	
		Submarine ( <i>ARA San Luis</i> )	Placed close to British task force; provided limited intelligence <sup>86</sup>	Listening station on Ascension Island	This was more than 6,400 kilometers from the Falklands, but intercepted Argentinian traffic. <sup>87</sup>
		(Falkland Islanders)	Argentines monitored Citizen's Band radio, a necessity for Islanders spread out over the islands and used to pass information to British forces. Argentines had a tactical advantage (had a good number of English speakers to analyze open channel comms on island). <sup>88</sup>	Linguists at Cheltenham, UK	Specialists worked 24 hours a day, "to monitor, analyze and decode thousands of Argentinian operational and other messages." <sup>89</sup>
	Measurement and Signature Intelligence (MASINT)	Coastal radars	Detected British ships and aircraft along coast.	Submarines along Argentinian mainland (incl. <i>HMS Valiant</i> )	Radar detected sorties; alerted task force of pending air raids. <sup>90</sup>
Imagery Intelligence (IMINT)	Various aircraft	(Poor weather and cloud cover decreased collection in June.)	Various aircraft/ satellites	(Poor weather and cloud cover decreased collection in June)	
			Satellites	Limited satellite imagery. <sup>91</sup>	
Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT)	British Broadcasting Service	Daily review of BBC World Service news and broadcasts revealed information about British forces and plans, but intelligence value varied as Argentines often mistakenly assessed coverage as deception. <sup>92</sup>	Intelligence analysts	Collected information from various sources, such as <i>Military Balance 1978/79</i> , <i>Jane's</i> , <i>International Defense Reviews</i> , <i>Recognition Journals</i> , media photographs, and television broadcasts. <sup>93</sup>	

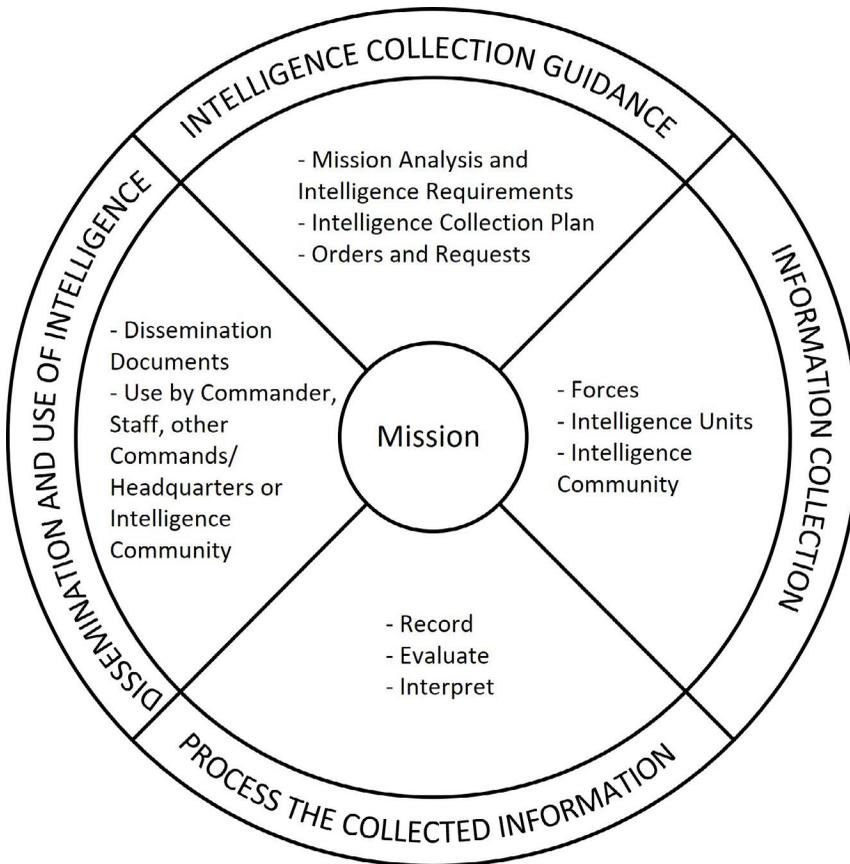
*Military History Chronicles*

	Discipline	Argentina		Great Britain	
		Forces	Notes	Forces	Notes
Collection(RawIntelligence)	Counter-intelligence		(Poorly controlled/ conducted. Tried to censor press, but struggled to work with the Public Information Secretariat.) <sup>94</sup>		(Constant struggle with press to limit information on operations.)
	Special Forces	Commando units	Utilized to take contact and collect intelligence. <sup>95</sup>	SAS, SBS	Conducted reconnaissance of amphibious landing sites and Argentinian defenses; conducted raid at Pebble Island. <sup>96</sup>
	Maneuver Units	Observation posts	Reported on British task force movements, mainly along the coast.	Patrol forces/ observation posts	Provided bulk of reporting in June, as conflict approached end.
	Psychological Warfare*		Operations poorly conducted/controlled on islands. <sup>97</sup>		(Ministry of Defense did not have a psychological warfare unit at its disposal for the campaign.) <sup>98</sup>
	Foreign Enablers	Soviet Union	Launched Kosmos 1365 satellite and positioned over South Atlantic; used satellites to locate <i>HMS Sheffield</i> . <sup>99</sup>  Used TU-95 aircraft to collect on British task force near Equator. <sup>101</sup>	Chile  United States	Provided early warning, aided/executed deception operations. <sup>100</sup>  Supported British with SIGINT satellite VORTEX <sup>102</sup> and SR-71 long-range recon aircraft. <sup>103</sup>
Analysis (Finished Intelligence)	All-Source Analysis	Intelligence cell/ staff in maneuver units and Services	Services would normally process their own raw intelligence collection, but not distribute it to other Services. <sup>104</sup>	Intelligence cell at battalion and higher echelons	Conducted analysis from raw reports to produce finished intelligence. SBS, nor Mountain or Arctic Warfare Cadre had intelligence support. <sup>105</sup>
				Air Intelligence Cell	Created over the course of the conflict. Assessed air threats. <sup>106</sup>

## APPENDIX C: The Intelligence Process



*Figure C-1.* The Intelligence Cycle (British Ministry of Defence). [Ministry of Defence, *Understanding and Intelligence Support to Joint Operations*, JDP 2-00 (London: Ministry of Defence, 2011), [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/311572/20110830\\_jdp2\\_00\\_ed3\\_with\\_change1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/311572/20110830_jdp2_00_ed3_with_change1.pdf), 3-5] Licensed under the Creative Commons.



**Figure C-2.** The Intelligence Production Cycle (Argentinian Army). Translated by the author [Ejército Argentino [Argentinian Army], *Inteligencia Táctica [Tactical Intelligence]*, RC-16-1 (Buenos Aires: Instituto Geográfico Militar, 1977), <https://www.mpf.gob.ar/plan-condor/files/2018/12/Documento-1-2.pdf>, 190 (Annex 6)] Much Argentinian military doctrine at the time of the Falkland Islands War was based on U.S. doctrine due to close security cooperation ties in preceding years. Licensed under the Creative Commons.

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2 PARA. *Operation Corporate: Post Operational Report of the Second Battalion the Parachute Regiment in Operation Corporate – Post Operational Report of the Second Battalion the Parachute Regiment*. St-Hubert, Quebec: Mobile Command Headquarters, 16 July 1984). Quoted in Pullan, Andrew M. “The British Infantry in the Falklands Conflict: Lessons of the Light Infantry in 1982 and their Relevance to the British Army at the Turn of the Century.” Master’s thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. 1999.

3 PARA. *Operation Corporate: Post Operational Report of the Third Battalion the Parachute Regiment in Lessons of the Falklands Campaign: Post Operational Report of the Third Battalion The Parachute Regiment*. Ottawa, Ontario: National Defence Headquarters. 11 January 1983. Quoted in Pullan, Andrew M. “The British Infantry in the Falklands Conflict: Lessons of the Light Infantry in 1982 and their Relevance to the British Army at the Turn of the Century.” Master’s thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. 1999.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins. *The Battle for the Falklands*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1983, 322.
- 2 Great Britain and Argentina shared similar doctrinal foundations regarding the intelligence cycle, or process. This campaign analysis investigates how each aspect of the intelligence cycle contributed to key events or developments in the conflict. Refer to this paper's 'Appendix C: The Intelligence Process' for diagrams depicting this cycle for the British (Figure C-1) and Argentinian (Figure C-2) forces.
- 3 Nick van der Bijl, *My Friends the Enemy: Life in Military Intelligence during the Falklands War* (Gloucestershire, UK: Amerley Publishing, 2020), 28. The 1981 British Nationality Act categorized Falkland Islands residents as a citizen of British Dependent Territories unless they had a direct connection to the United Kingdom through blood relatives born in the United Kingdom. After the Falkland Islands War, The British Nationality (Falkland Islands) Act of 1983 revised this to grant full British citizenship to island residents. *HMS Endurance* was an ice patrol vessel operating in the vicinity of the Falklands. Some politicians felt the ship's presence reflected Great Britain's commitment to the Falkland Islands and served to reduce the likelihood of hostilities with Argentina.
- 4 *Falkland Islands Review*, UK State Paper, London: House of Commons, 18 January 1983, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/109481>, paragraph 304. This document, which was the official post-war British investigation about to what extent the British should have anticipated the invasion, is more commonly known as *The Franks Report*.
- 5 *The Falkland Islands Review*, paragraph 318 states that the British Joint Intelligence machinery was, "too passive in operation." Indeed, as explained by Hastings and Jenkins in *The Battle for the Falklands*, 322, British military attachés stationed in Latin America and the Secret Intelligence Service provided little information regarding Argentinian leaders or military composition, disposition, strength, or capabilities. They missed hints of an Argentinian invasion in the near future. On page 24 of *My Friends the Enemy*, van der Bijl explained that Argentina "purchased several thousand maps of the Falklands in 1982 for a 'training paper exercise,' but, it seemed, the intelligence clue of the country's intentions was missed." In Lawrence Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 1* (London: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2005), 150, the author notes that in early March 1982, Argentinian aircraft increased their flight frequency over the Falkland Islands as they conducted reconnaissance. In addition, Brigadier General D. Jose Maria Insua, in a sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Declaraciones (Tomo I) [Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Statements (Volume I)]*, 23 December 1982, 139, explained that a week before the invasion, media outlets *Siete Días* and *Gente* published a photo of Fort Stanley and an Argentinian flag with the caption: "This is going to happen in a week."
- 6 Strategy, Concepts, and Plans Directorate, "Falklands Wargame (Falklands)," *U.S. Army Concepts Analysis Agency*, Bethesda, MD, September 1986, 11; Lawrence Freedman,

“The War of the Falkland Islands, 1982,” *Council on Foreign Relations* 61, no. 1 (1982), 202.

- 7 D. Carlos Alberto Martinez, in a sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Declaraciones (Tomo II) [Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Statements (Volume II)]*, 19 January 1983, 217-218, explained that most Argentinian raw intelligence in the conflict was signals intelligence.
- 8 van der Bijl, *My Friends the Enemy*, 24-25.
- 9 van der Bijl, *My Friends the Enemy*, 13 and 64.
- 10 Cristina Terceiro, “La deuda argentina con 22 españoles que participaron en la Guerra de Malvinas” [The Argentine debt with 22 Spaniards who participated in the Malvinas War], *EFE News Service*, Madrid, 2 April 2019, ProQuest.
- 11 D. Juan José Lombardo, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Declaraciones (Tomo I) [Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Statements (Volume I)]*, 21 December 1982, 79.
- 12 Daniel Drosdoff, “Argentina feared attack from Chile during Falklands war,” *UPI*, 28 July 1988, <https://www.upi.com/Archives/1988/07/28/Argentina-feared-attack-from-Chile-during-Falklands-war/8059586065600/>.
- 13 Lawrence Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 2* (revised and updated edition) [Kindle version] (London: Routledge, 2007), location no. 7795; Herbert A. Friedman, “PSYOP of the Falkland Islands War,” *PsyWar.org*, 1 October 2005, <https://www.psywar.org/content/falklands>.
- 14 Friedman, “PSYOP of the Falkland Islands War.”
- 15 Lombardo, *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación*, 79. Lombardo served as Chief of Naval Operations during the conflict. In this sworn statement, Lombardo explained that naval intelligence reported Admiral Merino said, *Esta es la oportunidad. Ha llegado la ocasión. La Armada chilena va a atacar*. [This is the opportunity. The time has come. The Chilean navy will attack.] The collection method is unspecified, but Lombardo indicates he believed the report to be true, suggesting he ruled out deception. Argentinian analysis frequently (and often incorrectly) assessed information from open sources as deception, so the collection method was probably not open-source intelligence.
- 16 Drosdoff, “Argentina feared attack from Chile.” Figures 2-5 display maps providing context for Argentina’s array of forces and geographic distribution. Argentina left elite ground forces in the mainland, sending, for instance, only one of five infantry marine battalions while the other four remained in Rio Grande, Argentina (see Figure 2) throughout the conflict to repel the anticipated Chilean invasion. Despite their geographic proximity to the Falklands, these four expeditionary units remained in Rio Grande throughout the conflict because, as Lombardo explained in his sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación*, 79, Argentinian leaders believed with *casi*

*la certeza* [near certainty] that Chile would attack the southern coast and that *la cosa iba a andar muy mal* [things were going to be very bad].

- 17 *The Falklands Campaign, in Greatest Raids*, directed by Jonathan Martin. 2002. ProQuest.
- 18 D. Juan Carlos Moeremans, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Declaraciones (Tomo II)* [Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Statements (Volume II)], 2 February 1983, 394.
- 19 Kenneth G. Weiss, “The War for the Falklands: A Chronology” (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, 1982), ProQuest, 22.
- 20 As explained in *The Falklands Campaign, in Greatest Raids*, directed by Jonathan Martin, one course of action considered by the British Government was Operation Mikado, which involved a raid of the Argentinian air base suspected of hosting Super Étendards during which SAS operators would destroy all the Exocets and Super Étendards stationed there and ‘eliminate the pilots inside the officers’ mess,’ but the British government called off the operation due to possible political and military implications.
- 21 *The Falklands Campaign, in Greatest Raids*, directed by Jonathan Martin.
- 22 *The Falklands Campaign, in Greatest Raids*. This source explains that the British government granted its secret service \$50 million to purchase Exocets on the international arms market.
- 23 Exocet materials were left at the Marseilles docks in France due to an embargo on arms exports on the part of France, slightly before their journey to Argentina, as explained in paragraph 786a of *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Informe Final* [Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Final Report], 2 December 1982, 239.
- 24 D. Carlos Alfredo Garcia Boll, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Declaraciones (Tomo II)* [Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Statements (Volume II)], 25 January 1983, 302. Of note, in Walter Pincus, “British Got Crucial Data In Falklands, Diary Says,” *The Washington Post*, 23 December 1984, ProQuest, the author described a diary account of a British naval officer (identified as Lieutenant Nyrena Sethia), which indicates that the Chilean military supplied the British with an intelligence report on 28 May 1982, stating that, “Argentina had approached Venezuela and Paraguay for air-launched Exocet missiles,” but the journal author adds the opinion that this was “unreliable intelligence.”
- 25 van der Bijl, *My Friends the Enemy*, 123.
- 26 D. Ernesto Horacio Crespo, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Declaraciones (Tomo I)* [Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Statements (Volume I)], 29 December 1982, 174-175. Crespo explained that British leaders

never exposed aircraft carriers to Argentinian air raids.

- 27 Cedric Delves, *Across an Angry Sea: The SAS in the Falklands War* (London: Hurst & Company, 2018), 138-139, 143, and 155.
- 28 Regarding the degree of intelligence for aircraft to target British ships, D. Ernesto Horacio Crespo explained in the *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación*, 183, that *la inteligencia fue cero* [the intelligence was zero], extremely poor and completely negative.
- 29 D. Ernesto Horacio Crespo, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación*, 187.
- 30 James Jinks and Peter Hennessy, *The Silent Deep: The Royal Navy Submarine Service Since 1945* (London: Penguin UK, 2015), 339-340.
- 31 Hastings and Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*, 323. By 8 June, just six days before the end of the conflict, the Argentinian Air Force still struggled with fusing, as reflected by a finding that the unexploded bombs in the attack at Port Pleasant did not support theories that the “unexploded bombs in other ships had enabled the Argentines to improve their fusing arrangements before this attack,” as stated by Alistair Robert Morton Jaffray in “Memorandum to the Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Ref: 14/2/35 (51),” 8 February 1983, [http://www.rna-10-area.co.uk/files/boi\\_rfas\\_tristram\\_galahad.pdf](http://www.rna-10-area.co.uk/files/boi_rfas_tristram_galahad.pdf), para. 4d.
- 32 Hastings and Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*, 323.
- 33 “The Falklands: The Air War and Missile Conflict,” *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, 8 September 1982, 36; Adrian English, *Battle for the Falklands: Naval Forces* (London: Osprey, 1983), 26-34; Bruce W. Watson and Peter M. Dunn, *Military Lessons of the Falkland Islands War* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), 37-47. These sources explain that Exocet missiles were responsible for the only other British ships sunk, one destroyer and one supply ship.
- 34 Pincus, “British Got Crucial Data In Falklands.”
- 35 Lombardo, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación*, 80. As van der Bijl explained on pages 81-82 in *My Friends the Enemy*, the Argentinian military anticipated a British landing on East Falkland on either 18 April or 25 April.
- 36 Lombardo, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación*, 80.
- 37 D. Juan José Lombardo, “OBJETO: E/apreciación,” 15 May 1982, para. 1.3, as recorded in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Declaraciones (Tomo I)* [*Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Statements (Volume I)*], 103; Lombardo, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación*, 80. It is also noteworthy that circular reporting, or the recycling of information between agencies, was endemic of Argentinian intelligence analysis throughout the war, as explained in paragraphs 718e and 719 of *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Informe Final* [*Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Final Report*], 2 December 1982. Circular reporting likely

made reports of hostilities or enemy actions on 1 May seem greater in number, lending credibility to reporting and fostering confirmation in their analysis.

- 38 Lombardo, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación*, 81; Michael Evans and Alan Hamilton, "Thatcher in the dark on sinking of Belgrano," *The Times*, London, 27 June 2005, 8, ProQuest. Lombardo explained that a deployment from the Argentinian coast to the Falklands entailed a ten-hour voyage across 320 kilometres.
- 39 Evans and Hamilton, "Thatcher in the dark on sinking of Belgrano," 8.
- 40 Lombardo, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación*, 21 December 1982, 80. The timing of this reporting of a British invasion most closely corresponds with initial SAS and SBS landings on the Falklands, the first Vulcan raid on Port Stanley, and Sea Harrier raids and naval bombardments, recorded by British historians as having taken place on 1 May. These reconnaissance actions and bombardments served as preparatory measures for the British landings weeks later, but the Argentines interpreted these actions as the beginning of a massive amphibious and helicopter landing unfolding. In addition, circular reporting, or the recycling of information between agencies, was endemic of Argentinian intelligence analysis throughout the war, as noted in paragraphs 718e and 719 of *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Informe Final [Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Final Report]*, 2 December 1982. Circular reporting likely made the number of reports of hostilities on 30 April and 1 May seem greater, lending credibility to reporting and fostering confirmation in analysis.
- 41 Edward B. Zellem, "Clausewitz and Seapower: Lessons of the Falkland Islands War," (Master's thesis, Air Command and Staff College, 1999), 19.
- 42 Evans and Hamilton, "Thatcher in the dark on sinking of Belgrano," 8.
- 43 Zellem, "Clausewitz and Seapower," 20; Rosana Guber, "Bautismo de Fuego y Gracia de Dios. Las Bellas Memorias Aeronáuticas de la Guerra de Malvinas," *Tabula Rasa*, no. 6 (2007), ProQuest, 234.
- 44 Delves, *Across an Angry Sea*, 117 and 128.
- 45 Delves, 139.
- 46 Delves, 138-139, 143, and 155. Delves explained that the raid required four to five helicopters for personnel movements, requiring the large flight deck of the carrier and that these heavy loads would exhaust fuel and limit the helicopters' flight time, necessitating geographic proximity.
- 47 Delves, 172-173.
- 48 Harry D. Train II, "An Analysis of the Falkland/Malvinas Islands Campaign," *Naval War College Review* 41, no. 1 (1988), 43; Hastings and Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*, 200.
- 49 van der Bijl, *My Friends the Enemy*, 81.
- 50 van der Bijl, 82.

- 51 Ewen Southby-Tailyour, *Falkland Island Shores* (London: Conway Maritime, 1985), viii-ix; Chris McNab, *Falklands War Operations Manual: April to June 1982* (Sparkford, England: Haynes Publishing UK, 2018), 14. As Southby-Tailyour explained, after Argentina invaded on 2 April, he presented these files to the commander of 3 Commando Brigade at Plymouth, England and thenceforth played a crucial role in amphibious assault planning that led to the selection of San Carlos.
- 52 D. Américo Daher, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Declaraciones (Tomo II) [Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Statements (Volume II)]*, 1 February 1983, 375.
- 53 Gabriel Alejandro Esbry, “Inteligencia Británica durante la Guerra de Malvinas,” *Visión Conjunta*, no. 14 (September 2016), <http://cefadigital.edu.ar/handle/1847939/422>, 12.
- 54 Ian Inskip, *Ordeal by Exocet: HMS Glamorgan and the Falklands War 1982* (Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Books Limited, 2012), 100. Belief in this deception operation exploited bias in Argentinian intelligence analysis, as the operation mimicked the Argentinian amphibious landing weeks prior and matched one of the Argentines’ two anticipated courses of action for a British landing, as noted by van der Bijl in *My Friends the Enemy*, 81.
- 55 Hastings and Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*, 200.
- 56 Hastings and Jenkins, 200.
- 57 D. Luís Guillermo Castellano, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Declaraciones (Tomo II) [Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Statements (Volume II)]*, 3 February 1983, 410.
- 58 As noted in Strategy, Concepts, and Plans Directorate, *Falklands Wargame (Falklands)*, 13, the British estimate of the Argentinian infantry array included 70 per cent around Stanley, ten percent near Darwin/Goose Green, and 20 per cent in West Falkland. Due to Argentina’s lack of transportation hindering the movement of troops from West Falkland, the British assessed 80 per cent of the Argentinian infantry could move to confront 3 Commando Brigade at an amphibious landing, rendering an attacker/defender ratio of 1:2. Avoiding this unfavourable ratio contributed to the British selection of San Carlos for its geographic distance from known Argentinian positions.
- 59 Hastings and Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*, 228.
- 60 Hastings and Jenkins, 323.
- 61 Some accounts of the 8 June air raid discussed here mistakenly list the site as Bluff Cove, the next inlet north, as the air raid actually occurred at Port Pleasant, as explained in Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 2*, location no. 11893 and Gregory Fremont-Barnes, *A Companion to the Falklands War* (Cheltenham, UK: The History Press, 2017), 66.

- 62 These reinforcements had to arrive by sea instead of helicopter lifts, since most of the task force's helicopters had been destroyed when the *Atlantic Conveyor* sunk on 25 May (see 'Appendix A: Timeline').
- 63 Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 2*, location no. 11893; *Board of Inquiry into the Loss of RFAs Sir Tristram & Sir Galahad in June 1982*, 23 September 1982, [http://www.rna-10-area.co.uk/files/boi\\_rfas\\_tristram\\_galahad.pdf](http://www.rna-10-area.co.uk/files/boi_rfas_tristram_galahad.pdf), B1-1-6. While no sources expressly mention the intelligence collection method yielding this information, the Board of Inquiry states, "Information derived from insecure VHF circuits used in the control of logistics was a significant contributor to a raid being mounted on the LSLs in Fitzroy" (B1-1-6). As this is the only reference to intelligence collection other than Argentinian observation posts along the cove on 8 June, it seems likely that Argentinian signals intelligence collection of British communications in the very high-frequency band triggered Argentines to designate Port Pleasant as an area of interest for pending British logistics operations.
- 64 *Board of Inquiry into the Loss of RFAs Sir Tristram & Sir Galahad*, 5; Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 2*, location 11885.
- 65 Lawrence Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 2*, location no. 11893; Jinks and Hennessy, *The Silent Deep*, 340. D. Pablo Marcos Carballo explained in a sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación de las Responsabilidades del Conflicto del Atlántico Sur: Declaraciones (Tomo V) [Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of Responsibilities for the South Atlantic Conflict: Statements (Volume V)]*, 13 May 1983, 1039, that of the eight Skyhawks, three returned to base before the raid due to technical implications related to the weather.
- 66 Jinks and Hennessy, *The Silent Deep*, 339-340.
- 67 Jinks and Hennessy, 339-340.
- 68 Jinks and Hennessy, 340.
- 69 Jinks and Hennessy, 340.
- 70 Castellano, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación*, 3 February 1983, 409; Robert S. Bolia, "The Falklands War: The Bluff Cove Disaster," *Military Review* 84, no. 6 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, 2004), <https://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p124201coll1/id/231>, 70.
- 71 Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 2*, location no. 11972.
- 72 Castellano, sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación*, 409.
- 73 Jaffray, "Memorandum to the Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Ref: 14/2/35 (51)," paragraph 4b. The *Board of Inquiry into the Loss of RFAs Sir Tristram & Sir Galahad*, B1-1-10, mentions communication problems as a contributing factor, but specific references to communications refer to high frequency and very high-frequency communications, rather than mentioning submarine satellite communications. Findings note that com-

munication equipment that was “outdated” or “only just adequate for essential comms with no redundancy,” which seems to be closely associated with situation reports among forces at Port Pleasant and their higher headquarters, as opposed to early warning from collection platforms along the Argentinian mainland. Findings on page B1-1-3 also state that deployment of the CAP to San Carlos was “justified,” even though this decision followed the Argentines’ deception plan to divert air defence assets away from Port Pleasant.

74 Nigel West, *Historical Dictionary of Naval Intelligence* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2010), 39.

75 On this, Jinks and Hennessy explain in *The Silent Deep*, 339-340, that new technology-enhanced the early warning process since the *HMS Valiant* could detect Argentinian aircraft and notify Northwood via satellite for Northwood to then circulate a warning to the Task Force, which could be accomplished “in around two minutes,” leaving ample time to react while the aircraft travelled 700 kilometres to East Falkland.

76 West, *Historical Dictionary of Naval Intelligence*, 39. West comments on the discrepancy that investigations Also of note, Castellano, in a sworn statement in *Comisión de Análisis y Evaluación*, 409, claimed that according to information later given by British naval commanders where he was detained, the British blamed their intelligence and general staff and that this operation—its failure and the Argentinian success—was due to misinformation from them. They had been certain that the Argentinian Air Force, on 8 June, had no more capacity to send any aircraft.

77 2 PARA, *Operation Corporate: Post Operational Report of the Second Battalion the Parachute Regiment*, p. 2, paragraph 8, in *Operation Corporate – Post Operational Report of the Second Battalion the Parachute Regiment* (St-Hubert, Quebec: Mobile Command Headquarters, 16 July 1984), quoted in Andrew M. Pullan, “The British Infantry in the Falklands Conflict: Lessons of the Light Infantry in 1982 and their Relevance to the British Army at the Turn of the Century,” (Master’s thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1999), 39; 3 PARA, *Operation Corporate: Post Operational Report of the Third Battalion the Parachute Regiment*, Annex C, paragraph 23 in *Lessons of the Falklands Campaign: Post Operational Report of the Third Battalion The Parachute Regiment* (Ottawa, Ontario: National Defence Headquarters, 11 January 1983), quoted in Andrew M. Pullan, “The British Infantry in the Falklands Conflict: Lessons of the Light Infantry in 1982 and their Relevance to the British Army at the Turn of the Century,” (Master’s thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1999), 39.

78 The Parachute Regiment, HM Forces, “The Falklands War: 38 Years Ago. 2 PARA, Wireless Ridge” (Video), Facebook, 12 June 2020, <https://fb.watch/1VtxP5SoBq/>.

79 The Parachute Regiment, HM Forces.

80 Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 2*, location no. 12534.

81 Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign, Volume 2*, location no. 12614.