

3. ARGENTINA: FALKLAND FALLOUT

Argentina's drubbing on the April 4 UNSC resolution probably surprised Buenos Aires. The extensive planning for the occupation of the Falkland Islands does not appear to have adequately addressed the international aspects. Calculations of short-term domestic benefits undoubtedly outweighed all else in Argentina's decision.

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Until the April 2 invasion, it appeared that Argentina was exploiting an unanticipated incident on South Georgia Island to pressure the UK. In retrospect, the incident may have been manufactured to legitimize an invasion for which considerable preparations already had been made.

The remarkably smooth and efficient execution of the occupation argues for a period of preparation far longer than the 15 days between the beginning of the South Georgia affair and the invasion.

Argentina's UNSC defeat indicates diplomatic efforts did not keep pace with military planning. In New York, the Soviets abstained.

[REDACTED] Given the level of Argentine grain sales to the Soviets and a recent Soviet request for credits, Argentina had probably hoped for more.

Five of the six NAM members of the Security Council also voted against Argentina--Jordan, Togo, Uganda, Guyana, andaire. Only Panama stayed with Buenos Aires. Defenders of Argentina's membership in the NAM had always cited the valuable support Argentina received on the Falkland issue.

President and Army Commander Galtieri had a personal as well as an institutional interest in exploiting the Falkland Island situation. He wants to hold on to the army's top slot through 1984 and perhaps the presidency through 1987. The Argentine leader may have been excessively shortsighted, however. The popular emotion that welcomed the invasion will subside, and Argentina's economic problems may have been made more difficult by the costs of a mini-war.

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