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## THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

DDI #3656-82/1  
30 April 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: See Distribution

FROM : National Intelligence Officer for Latin America

SUBJECT : Monthly Warning Assessment: Latin America

1. Attached is a copy of the Latin America Warning Assessment based upon our discussion of 21 April 1982.

2. The next warning meeting will be held on 19 May 1982 at 1015 hours in room 7D64 CIA Headquarters with the following tentative agenda and requested brief oral presentations (2-3 minutes) by department/agency or individual as indicated:

Argentina/UK/Falklands

- Current military balance and losses on both sides (DIA)
- Possible next military and political steps (DIA/military; INR/political)
- Any possibilities of Argentine action against Chile (CIA)
- Actions of Latin American countries (CIA)
  - pro-Argentina
  - other territorial conflicts
- Soviet/Cuban actions and possible next steps (CIA)
- Impact on the Argentine economy of war costs and economic sanctions -- likely effects in next weeks (CIA)

Central AmericaEl Salvador (DIA)

- Coalition politics; implications for reforms, potential negotiations etc. 25X1
- Guerrilla/military balance; guerrilla plans and intentions

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Guatemala (INR)

- Chances for another coup; political realignments; implications for insurgency

Nicaragua (CIA)

- Military actions at the borders--attacks from Nicaragua; attacks into Nicaragua; export of subversion; military buildup; MIGs

Venezuela/Guyana

- Evidence of possible military conflict over the disputed territory

A brief look at countries with recent elections

- Dominican Republic (CIA [redacted]) 25X1

- Colombia (CIA [redacted]) 25X1

3. Please call [redacted] with names and clearances of individuals attending the next warning meeting by noon, 18 May 1982. 25X1

*Constantine C. Menges*

Constantine C. Menges

Atts: (1)

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**THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE**

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

National Intelligence Officers

DDI-3656-82  
30 April 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence  
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH : National Intelligence Officer for Warning

FROM : National Intelligence Officer for Latin America

SUBJECT : Monthly Warning Assessment: Latin America

1. Argentina/UK/Falklands

Either side might initiate preemptive military attacks on the naval or air forces of the opponent. A separate NIO/LA memo of 26 April 1982, has suggested four or five possible tactical surprises which each might attempt under the assumption that salient military losses (aircraft carrier, cruiser, other large ships) might unravel the internal political support in either country for a continuation of the military conflict. The facts of geography and climate which will reduce the operational capabilities of the British fleet two weeks to three weeks from now also reinforce the political argument for preemption against Argentinian naval and air forces. Decisive Argentinian naval defeats might also leave less opportunity for other Latin American states to send military help as Peru and Venezuela seem to be promising.

Soviet/Cuban moves to take advantage of this situation will probably focus on covert political action to stir up anti-Anglo-US feeling in Latin America and perhaps deceptive terrorism--rather than direct military involvement. It should be assumed that both Cuba and the USSR will be using their covert assets to establish contacts with military officers who might play a "Nasserite" role after the Argentinian defeat. We should be alert for signs of Cuban or Soviet military aid which might range from communications/electronic warfare equipment to weapons systems (sent openly or secretly). The announcement of a Soviet military aid mission going to Argentina for "consultations", for example, could add to uncertainties in a large way.

The likely defeat of Argentina by the UK could bring great confusion in Argentine internal politics and foreign policy. Galtieri could be replaced by a highly nationalistic military regime which establishes military ties with the USSR, or a civilian government, or a military-civilian technocrat regime anxious to rebuild the economic damage.

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The actions of Latin American countries could become a major complicating factor--and this is more probable the longer the military actions continue. Venezuela has offered to send aircraft to help Argentina, and there are reports that the military there are thinking of taking action against Guyana to obtain territory that is in dispute. Guyana obtained independence from the UK and London was a part of the diplomatic process which in 1970 led to a 12-year "cooling off" period during which Venezuela agreed not to exert pressure.

Peru has also offered Argentina military assistance. It has a long history of disputes with Chile (dating from the loss of Peruvian territory in the 19th century), and there are unconfirmed reports that Argentina might use its southern military buildup against Chile as a way of settling the Beagle Channel dispute. To illustrate the uncertainties and potential dangers of these intra-Latin American disputes, one report suggested that the Argentine military might invade the Chilean territory in dispute using the claim that Chile and the UK were cooperating. The Argentine military might assume that Chile would not get international help and therefore settle rather than fight both Peru and Argentina--that would then give Argentina one victory to make up for the impending loss in the Falklands [redacted] 25X1

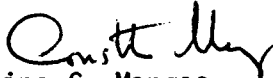
## 2. Central America

There is consensus that the Cuba/Nicaraguan strategy will continue to combine the use of negotiations and propoganda to make political gains and reduce the level of military pressure on the guerrillas while continuing to build up their military and political strength.

In El Salvador there was agreement that the guerrillas suffered major military and political defeats in March due to a combination of better government intelligence and military actions. However, some analysts noted that guerrilla casualties were very low while government losses remained high--that raises some still unanswered questions. Nevertheless, the return of the 1,400 US-trained Salvadorans in May is viewed as offering the government a major opportunity to increase the military offensive.

Most analysts were optimistic about the new government in Guatemala due to the end of its connection to extreme rightist violence while conceding that the available information made its base of support unclear and quite shaky. A few analysts were far more concerned about future cohesion because of the sharp divisions among the younger officers, the still ambiguous evidence about the personality of junta leader Rios Montt and the reports of additional Cuban support through Mexico for the strong though not completely united extreme left guerrilla groups.

Cuban/Nicaraguan efforts to intimidate and persuade the governments of Honduras and Costa Rica into a posture of neutrality continue and could in time threaten their cooperation in the regional struggle against the extreme left. However, the removal of two senior Honduran military officers who had visited Cuba and then urged neutralism was a positive event [redacted] 25X1

  
Constantine C. Menges

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