

368. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Clark) to Secretary of Defense Weinberger¹

Washington, June 29, 1982

SUBJECT

Military Lessons of the Falklands and Israeli Actions

The Falklands conflict and the Israeli military actions against Syria and the PLO could have important lessons for U.S. defense planning. This issue has already received a great deal of coverage and analysis by the media. Moreover, the military lessons of these conflicts could become topics of discussion during Congressional consideration of the Administration's defense request and ultimately influence public attitudes towards U.S. defense policy.

Therefore, it would be helpful if DOD would conduct an in-depth analysis of the military lessons to be learned from these two conflicts and their implications for current and future U.S. defense programs. It would be appreciated if you would provide the results of this analysis by September 15. It would also be helpful if you would provide suggested interim public affairs guidance by July 7.²

It may also prove useful to brief the results of the in-depth analysis at a future meeting of the National Security Council.

FOR THE PRESIDENT:

William P. Clark³

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, OSD Files, FRC 330-84-0003, Argentina (June-Sept) 1982. Secret. A stamped notation in the top right-hand corner of the memorandum indicates that it was received in Weinberger's office on June 30.

² Weinberger responded to Clark's memorandum on July 8, stating that the Department of Defense "has started to conduct in-depth analyses of combat experience both in the Falklands and Lebanon conflicts. [See Document 354.] In the case of the Falklands, I already have promised the President to have preliminary findings of lessons learned to him by the beginning of August. A longer-term, in-depth effort also is underway that may require at least six months. Our suggested Public Affairs announcement of the Falklands effort is attached." Helm forwarded the memorandum, along with the draft announcement, under a July 13 covering memorandum, in which Helm summarized Weinberger's response and indicated that the NSC Staff would monitor the study. All of the memoranda and attachments are in the Reagan Library, Latin American Affairs Directorate, NSC, Falklands/Malvinas: NSC & State Memos, 1982. On this "longer-term, in-depth" study of the South Atlantic conflict, see Document 378.

³ Clark signed "Bill" above his typed signature.