

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL UK COMMS ONLY CYPHER CAT ALFA  
FROM GIBRALTAR 231205Z MAR 83  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO TEL NO 28 OF 23 MAR 83  
INFO IMMEDIATE MADRID  
INFO ROUTINE MODUK

SPANISH NAVAL INCURSIONS

1. AT ABOUT 23.1000Z, THE GIBRALTAR PORT OFFICE INTERCEPTED RADIO MESSAGES FROM SPANISH NAVAL PATROL BOAT PC16 TO THREE FOREIGN MERCHANT SHIPS AT ANCHOR IN THE GIBRALTAR EASTERN ANCHORAGE TELLING THEM THAT THEY WERE IN SPANISH TERRITORIAL WATERS AND MUST LEAVE. THE CAPTAIN OF THE PORT CONTACTED EACH OF THE VESSELS AND HAVING VERIFIED THAT THEY WERE IN GIBRALTAR WATERS, ADVISED THEM BY RADIO THAT THEY WERE CORRECTLY IN BRITISH WATERS AND SHOULD TAKE NO ACTION IN RESPONSE TO THE SPANISH DEMAND. GBC HAVE REPORTED THE INCIDENT IN THESE TERMS THOUGH WE DID NOT SAY HOW THE SPANISH DEMAND WAS PICKED UP THE THE PORT OFFICE.

2. THE VESSELS AND THEIR POSITION (TAKEN BY DISTANCE AND BEARING FROM EUROPA POINT) WERE

MT MEGA TRADER (LIBERIA) 2.4 NAUTICAL MILES 031 DEGREES

MT JONNY (FINLAND) 1.2 NM 054 DEGREES

MV OCEAN FRESH (KOREA) 2.5 NM 040 DEGREES.

DESPITE THE PORT CAPTAIN'S ASSURANCES, MV OCEAN FRESH HAS LEFT. MT JONNY IS ABOUT TO DO SO BUT WAS IN ANY EVENT LEAVING ON OWNERS ORDERS RECEIVED EARLIER TODAY

3. THE GIBRALTAR POLICE LAUNCH WAS DESPATCHED TO FURTHER REASURE THE MERCHANTMEN. THERE WAS NO CONFRONTATION WITH PC 16 WHICH WAS BY THEN RETURNING TO ALGECIRAS. I AM POSITIONING THE GUARDSHIP HMS TARTAR, WHICH WAS AT SEA AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT, IN THE EASTERN ANCHORAGE LATER TODAY AND OVERNIGHT.

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E-11 4. THE ACTION OF PC 16 WAS HIGHLY PROVOCATIVE. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER IT IS PART OF RENEWED AUTHORISED ACTIVITY OR WHETHER IT REPRESENTS LOCAL INITIATIVES. EITHER WAY, WE SHOULD NOT LET THE INCIDENT PASS WITHOUT PROTEST. GRATEFUL IF HM AMBASSADOR MADRID COULD BE ASKED TO ACT AT WHATEVER LEVEL HE CONSIDERS MOST EFFECTIVE AND APPROPRIATE.

5. TO COMPLETE THE PICTURE, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT ON 20/21 MARCH FIVE SPANISH FISHING BOATS HAD FOLLOWED AN ATTRACTIVE SHOAL OF FISH THROUGH TERRITORIAL WATERS INTO THE ADMIRALTY HARBOUR AND WERE ORDERED OUT. THE GIBRALTAR POLICE HANDLED THE MATTER CALMLY, BUT ANY FURTHER SUCH BLATANT INCIDENTS MAY LEAD TO ARRESTS BEING NECESSARY.

WILLIAMS

GIBRALTAR

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