

O P 131555Z APR 83
FM GIBRALTAR
TO RBDW DFA/FCO LONDON
RBDWC/MODUK
INFO RBDW DFA/MADR:ID
BT
R E S T R I C T E D
SIC A3A

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ENCLAIR
R E S T R I C T E D
FROM GIBRALTAR

TO IMMEDIATE FCO LONDON TEL NO 45 OF 13 APR 83
AND IMMEDIATE MODUK
INFO PRIORITY MADRID

MIPT: FLEET VISIT TO GIBRALTAR

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF CHIEF MINISTER'S STATEMENT ISSUED AT 1530Z
BEGINS

THE GIBRALTAR TRADES COUNCIL ANNOUNCED EARLIER TODAY THAT IT IS
'BLACKING' THE ROYAL NAVY SHIPS IN HARBOUR.

2. MY COLLEAGUES AND I WISH TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT, IN OUR VIEW,
THIS ILL-TIMED ACTION IS BOUND TO MILITATE AGAINST GIBRALTAR'S
INTERESTS.

3. THE ROYAL NAVY HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH GIBRALTAR FOR 280
YEARS. IT IS THE VERY SYMBOL OF OUR BRITISHNESS. TO TAKE ACTION
AGAINST THE ROYAL NAVY IN EXERCISE SPRINGTRAIN AS PROPOSED WILL
INEVITABLY HAVE THE FOLLOWING CONSEQUENCES:

(1) IT WILL RAISE THE QUESTION IN PEOPLE'S MINDS, IN THE UNITED
KINGDOM AND ELSEWHERE, WHETHER WE REALLY WANT TO BE AS BRITISH AS
WE SAY WE DO,

(2) IT WILL CAUSE SERIOUS DISMAY TO OUR FRIENDS IN BRITAIN—THE
BRITISH PUBLIC, THE BRITISH PRESS AND, ABOVE ALL, OUR FRIENDS
IN PARLIAMENT, AND

(3) IT WILL PLAY INTO THE HANDS OF OUR ENEMIES.

4. THERE HAS BEEN NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FACT THAT BLACKING
ACTION IS ALSO BEING TAKEN - SINCE 9 APR - AGAINST RFA OLMEDA
NOW IN DOCK. THAT ACTION COULD LEAD TO FUTURE RFA WORK FOR GIBRALTAR
BEING DIVERTED TO DOCKYARDS IN BRITAIN WHICH BADLY WANT THE WORK.

5. WE CALL ON THE GIBRALTAR TRADES COUNCIL TO RECONSIDER, AS A
PAGE 3 RBTJC 127 R E S T R I C T E D

MATTER OF THE UTMOST URGENCY, THE DECISION IT HAS TAKEN.

6. THE CLOSURE OF THE DOCKYARD IS A MATTER ON WHICH THE GIBRALTAR
GOVERNMENT, ONCE IT RECEIVES THE REPORT OF THE STUDY TEAM WHICH IS
CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITIES OF COMMERCIALISATION, WILL TAKE ITS
OWN DECISION NEXT MONTH. INDUSTRIAL ACTION OF THIS NATURE CAN ONLY
ACCELERATE THE CLOSURE.

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7. THE GIBRALTAR TRADES COUNCIL STATES THAT IT IS IN 'FUNDAMENTAL
OPPOSITION TO THE SPANISH VIEW THAT BRITISH NAVAL SHIPS SHOULD STOP
CALLING AT GIBRALTAR' WE RESPECT AND AGREE WITH THAT STATEMENT BUT
FEEL IT NECESSARY TO POINT OUT THAT THE INDUSTRIAL ACTION TAKEN,
PARTICULARLY AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THE VIOLENT SPANISH REACTION
TO THE FLEET'S VISIT, MAY WELL HAVE THE EFFECT WHICH THE SPANIARDS
WANT TO ACHIEVE - NOT ONLY IN RESPECT OF CALLS AT GIBRALTAR BY SHIPS
OF THE ROYAL NAVY BUT ALSO IN RESPECT OF OUR CONTINUING CLOSE TIES
WITH BRITAIN.

ENDS

WILLIAMS

BT

GIBRALTAR

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MR HANNAY
MR WRIGHT

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GIBRALTAR

- 2 -
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CYPHER CAT ALFA
CONFIDENTIAL UK COMMS ONLY
FROM GIBRALTAR 130940Z APR 83
TO FLASH FCO TEL NO PERSONAL 51 OF 13 APR 83
INFO FLASH MODUK (DS5)
AND FLASH MADRID

YOUR TELNO 122 TO MADRID: GIBRALTAR: VISIT OF RN SHIPS

1. SPANISH DESTROYER LANGARA AND FRIGATE INFANTA ELENA AND CATALUNA ENTERED GIBRALTAR BAY IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THIS MORNING. THEIR TRACK LAY OUTSIDE GIBRALTAR WATERS AND THEY HAVE TAKEN UP POSITION AT ANCHOR NEAR TO THE RUNWAY BUT HAVE KEPT JUST WITHIN SPANISH WATERS, EXCEPT FOR THE CATALUNA WHICH, ON OCCASIONS, HAS ENTERED THE LOOP. IN VIEW OF SENSITIVITIES WE HAVE NOT, REPEAT NOT, CARRIED OUT ROUTINE LAST USED ON 9 APR 1981 OF CALLING CATALUNA'S ATTENTION TO THESE INCURSIONS. LATEST INFORMATION IS THAT SHE NOW APPEARS TO BE JUST IN SPANISH WATERS. SPANISH PATROL CRAFT HAVE BEEN MUCH IN EVIDENCE BUT THEIR OPERATIONS HAVE NOT, REPEAT NOT, IMPEDED THE ARRIVAL OF THE FLEET, WHICH IS NOW, FOR THE MOST PART, SECURED IN GIBRALTAR HARBOUR. THE FLEET TOOK CARE TO AVOID ANY INFRINGEMENTS OF SPANISH WATERS.

2. THE PRESENCE OF A SPANISH FORCE SO CLOSE TO GIBRALTAR IS UNUSUAL AND WILL NO DOUBT BE REGARDED LOCALLY AS SOMETHING OF A PROVOCATION. AT THE MOMENT THERE SEEM TO BE NO GROUNDS FOR PROTESTS ON EITHER SIDE BUT THE SITUATION IS ONE WHICH WILL CONTINUE TO REQUIRE PRUDENCE BY ALL CONCERNED, AND WILL BE WATCHED AND REPORTED

WILLIAMS

GIBRALTAR

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