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OO MADRID

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FM FCO 201639Z APR 83

TO IMMEDIATE MADRID

TELEGRAM NUMBER 138 OF 20 APRIL

INFO PRIORITY GOVERNOR GIBRALTAR (PERSONAL), MODUK (DS5, DS12, DS8), UKDEL NATO, RABAT, WASHINGTON

YOUR TELNO 258 AND GIBRALTAR PERSONAL 52: NAVAL VISITS TO GIBRALTAR.

1. SPANISH MOD REPRESENTATIVES ATTENDED CINCSOUTH'S PLANNING CONFERENCE IN JANUARY AT WHICH EXERCISE LOCKED GATE AND OTHER NATO EXERCISES WERE DISCUSSED. THEY WERE SUBSEQUENTLY SENT COPIES OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 31 JANUARY. UNITS FROM 8 NATO COUNTRIES (UK, ITALY, FRG, NETHERLANDS, CANADA, USA, PORTUGAL AND FRANCE) WILL TAKE PART.
2. UP TO 7 BRITISH WARSHIPS AND 1 RFA INVOLVED IN LOCKED GATE WILL CALL IN AT GIBRALTAR BEFORE AND AFTER THE EXERCISE BETWEEN 26 APRIL AND 12 MAY. NONE OF THESE WILL BE IN HARBOUR DURING THE EXERCISE ITSELF WHICH TAKES PLACE BETWEEN 3-10 MAY. FIVE OTHER BRITISH WARSHIPS ON ROUTINE PASSAGE UNCONNECTED WITH LOCKED GATE WILL ALSO BE AT GIBRALTAR FROM 29 APRIL TO 2 MAY. IN ADDITION FOUR AMERICAN WARSHIPS (INCLUDING USS ARKANSAS) ARE DUE TO VISIT GIBRALTAR IN MAY. THREE OF THOSE ARRIVE FOR SHORT VISIT ON 8 MAY.
3. YOUR NAVAL ATTACHE SHOULD TELL THE SPANISH NAVY THAT, AS A MATTER OF COURTESY, WE WISH TO REMIND THEM THAT BRITISH SHIPS WILL BE TAKING PART IN EXERCISE LOCKED GATE AND TO TELL THEM THAT THEY AND OTHER NATO SHIPS WILL CALL IN AT GIBRALTAR. HE SHOULD AVOID BEING DRAWN INTO DETAILS AND SHOULD NOT GIVE THE NATIONALITY OF OTHER SHIPS INVOLVED. IF ASKED SPECIFICALLY IF ANY OF THE SHIPS TAKING PART IN LOCKED GATE WERE INVOLVED IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC CAMPAIGN HE MAY SAY THAT NATO EXERCISES INVOLVING CONCENTRATIONS OF BRITISH SHIPS ALMOST INEVITABLY INCLUDE SUCH VESSELS. FOR YOUR OWN INFORMATION, ON THIS OCCASION ONLY ONE SUCH SHIP IS INCLUDED, HMS ALACRITY.

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4. IF THE SPANIARDS REFER AGAIN TO EXERCISE SPRINGTRAIN, THE NAVAL ATTACHE SHOULD RAISE THE USE OF FIRE-CONTROL RADAR REPORTED IN GIBRALTAR TUR. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS SORT OF ACTION IS REGARDED IN NAVAL CIRCLES AS AT BEST IMPOLITE AND MOST FREQUENTLY FOUND IN ENCOUNTERS WITH WARSAW PACT WARSHIPS. IT SEEMS INCONSISTENT WITH THE EXPRESSED WISH OF BOTH SIDES TO AVOID INCIDENTS.

5. YOU HAVE DISCRETION TO SPEAK IN A LOW KEY TO THE MFA ALONG THE LINES OF PARAS 3 AND 4 IF A SUITABLE OCCASION ARISES.

PYM

GIBRALTAR

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DEF D  
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PUSD  
ECD (E)  
PLANNING STAFF  
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PS/PUS  
SIR J BULLARD  
MR GOODISON  
MR GILLMORE  
MR HANNAY  
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