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FROM GIBRALTAR 151040Z DEC 82
DESKBY 151200Z DEC 82
TO IMMEDIATE FCO TEL NO PERSONAL 166 OF 15/12/82
AND INFO IMMEDIATE MADRID

MY TELNO PERSONAL 165: GIBRALTAR FRONTIER

1. HASSAN SENT FOR NEILSON SUBSEQUENT TO OUR CONVERSATION AND NEILSON FOUND HIM VISIBLY DISTRESSED AND IN TEARS. HE FELT HE HAD BEEN 'SOLD OUT' TO THE SPANIARDS. NEILSON WAS ABLE TO COMFORT HIM AND HIS RESILIENCE IS SHOWN BY THE FACT THAT AFTER A DIFFICULT MEETING WITH HIS COLLEAGUES HE WAS ABLE TO PRODUCE SO HELPFUL A STATEMENT AS THAT RECORDED IN MY TELNO 114. THIS DID MUCH TO STEADY OPINION LOCALLY. I HAVE WRITTEN A PERSONAL NOTE TO HASSAN THIS MORNING THANKING HIM FOR WHAT IN LOCAL TERMS WAS A COURAGEOUS INTERVENTION.

2. THE BORDER OPENING PASSED OFF SMOOTHLY WITH GOOD SPIRITS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE FRONTIER. AS OF 8.00 AM THIS MORNING 760 PEOPLE HAD ENTERED GIBRALTAR AND 497 HAD LEFT. 15 PEOPLE WERE TURNED BACK BY THE SPANISH AUTHORITIES FOR LACK OF PROOF OF RESIDENCE IN GIBRALTAR. THERE WERE NO UNPLEASANT INCIDENTS BUT WE SHALL NEED TO CONSIDER CAREFULLY THE WAY IN WHICH SERVICE PERSONNEL (WHO I HAVE DIRECTED SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO CROSS FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS UNTIL THINGS SETTLE DOWN) SHOULD BE DOCUMENTED. MY REASON FOR THIS DECISION WAS THAT IN ADDITION TO AVOIDING ANY POSSIBLE INCIDENTS I WISHED TO PROVIDE EVERY OPPORTUNITY FOR ESTABLISHING WITH THE SPANIARDS THE APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL SO THAT WHOLE CATEGORIES OF THEM WOULD NOT FIND THEIR CHANCES JEOPARDISED BY THE REJECTION OF THE FIRST APPLICATIONS IN THEIR GROUP.

3. THE MOOD IN TOWN TODAY IS ONE OF SOME EXCITEMENT BUT AS YET THERE ARE NO REPEAT NO SIGNS OF ANY HOSTILITY - THANKS LARGELY I FEEL TO HASSAN'S STATEMENT OF LAST NIGHT

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