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FM MADRID 301630Z JAN 84

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 56 OF 30 JANUARY

INFO WASHINGTON UKDEL NATO BONN GOVERNOR GIBRALTAR (PERSONAL)

SPAIN AND NATO

1. MY AMERICAN COLLEAGUE (ENDERS) HAS GIVEN ME THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT IN STRICT CONFIDENCE OF RECENT TALKS WITH THE SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTER AND THEN THE PRIME MINISTER.

2. MORAN SAID THAT, WHATEVER HIS PERSONAL PREFERENCES, HE NOW ACCEPTED AS FOREIGN MINISTER THAT SPANISH NATIONAL INTERESTS WOULD BEST BE SERVED BY REMAINING IN NATO. THIS SEEMED ESSENTIAL IF SPAIN WERE TO BE A MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND TO RETAIN ACCESS TO WESTERN INVESTMENT. BUT, GIVEN THE STATE OF SPANISH PUBLIC OPINION, MORAN THOUGHT THAT SPAIN WOULD NEED SOME FORM OF SPECIAL STATUS. HE ACCEPTED THAT THE FRENCH POSITION WITHIN THE ALLIANCE MIGHT HAVE TO REMAIN UNIQUE BUT SOME NEW STATUS WOULD HAVE TO BE DESIGNED TO ACCOMMODATE SPAIN.

3. GONZALEZ HAD PURSUED THE SAME THEME SUBSEQUENTLY WITH ENDERS. HE HAD REVEALED THAT HE WAS NOW THINKING IN TERMS OF A REFERENDUM EARLY NEXT YEAR. THIS WOULD KEEP THE NATO ISSUE SEPARATE FROM AN ELECTION AND SO, IN THE VIEW OF GONZALEZ, INCREASE THE CHANCES OF THE REFERENDUM COMING OUT RIGHT FOR NATO. IN THE EVENT OF AN ADVERSE RESULT, GONZALEZ WOULD GO TO THE COUNTRY IN AN ELECTION BEFORE 1986. MEANWHILE HE WOULD HAVE TO PURSUE A VERY CAUTIOUS POLICY UNTIL AFTER THE SOCIALIST PARTY CONGRESS IN NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER. MORAN, THOUGHT GONZALEZ, COULD BE HELPFUL IN KEEPING TOUCH WITH THE LEFT WING OF THE PARTY. GONZALEZ WOULD MAKE A POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION TO THE ELECTORATE IN THE REFERENDUM TO APPROVE ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP. BUT FIRST HE WOULD HAVE TO BE ASSURED OF MOVEMENT IN THE EC ENLARGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS AND OVER GIBRALTAR. IN THE LATTER CASE HE REALISED THAT MOVEMENT COULD ONLY BE SLOW. IT WAS NOT SO MUCH A QUESTION OF POSITIVE RESULTS NOW BUT OF ESTABLISHING A FAVOURABLE MOOD. GONZALEZ EMPHASISED THAT SPANISH PARTICIPATION IN THE NATO INTEGRATED COMMAND STRUCTURE WAS NOT YET POLITICALLY POSSIBLE. HE WOULD NOT WISH, HOWEVER, TO RULE IT OUT FOR THE FUTURE. MEANWHILE HE WOULD HOPE TO ALIGN SPANISH FORCES WITH ALLIANCE FORCES IN SOME SPECIAL WAY. IT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY HELPFUL POLITICALLY IF A SPANISH ADMIRAL COULD BE INTRODUCED INTO THE STRUCTURE INVOLVING THE NATO COMMAND IN GIBRALTAR. IN RESPONSE TO ENDERS' OBVIOUS OBJECTION THAT THIS WAS DIFFICULT TO SQUARE WITH SPANISH ABSENCE FROM THE INTEGRATED COMMAND STRUCTURE, GONZALEZ HAD NEVERTHELESS EXPRESSED THE VAGUE HOPE THAT THERE COULD BE SOME FORM OF ASSOCIATION.

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4. ENDERS ADDED THAT HE HAD TOLD BOTH THE PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER THAT THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT WOULD NO DOUBT VIEW THESE IDEAS SYMPATHETICALLY AND WOULD CONTINUE TO TRY TO AVOID MAKING DIFFICULTIES FOR THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT IN THIS IMPORTANT FIELD. HE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT A SPECIAL STATUS WITHIN THE ALLIANCE FOR SPAIN MIGHT BE PARTICULARLY AWKWARD FOR SOME GOVERNMENT SUCH AS THE DANES AND DUTCH WHO HAD THEIR OWN PUBLIC OPINION TO CONSIDER. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD NO DOUBT SHARE THE AMERICAN VIEW ABOUT MANAGING THINGS IN SUCH A WAY AS TO INCREASE THE PROSPECTS FOR THE CONTINUATION OF SPAIN IN NATO.

5. ENDERS COMMENTED TO ME THAT THE POINTS MADE BY GONZALEZ AND MORAN WERE ALREADY KNOWN TO OUR GOVERNMENTS. BUT IT DID SEEM TO BE A NEW DEVELOPMENT THAT GONZALEZ WAS NOW THINKING IN TERMS OF TRYING TO GET NATO MEMBERSHIP APPROVED BY REFERENDUM EARLY NEXT YEAR AND THAT MORAN WAS PREPARED TO SWALLOW HIS IDEOLOGICAL SCRUPLES AND COOPERATE. AMONG COLLEAGUES HERE HE WAS ONLY INFORMING THE GERMAN (BRUNNER). HE WOULD NOT WISH HIS OWN NAME TO BE DIRECTLY QUOTED TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT IN THIS CONNECTION.

6. I SAID I WOULD REPORT DISCREETLY. I ADDED THAT OF COURSE YOU RECOGNISED THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING SPAIN WITHIN NATO. BUT HMG HAD THEIR OWN PARTICULAR PROBLEMS OVER GIBRALTAR TO WHOSE PEOPLE WE HAD GIVEN FIRM COMMITMENTS. OUR ROOM FOR MANOEUVRE WOULD NOT (NOT) HAVE BEEN IMPROVED BY THE OUTCOME OF LAST WEEK'S ELECTION THERE (GOVERNOR GIBRALTAR TELNO PERSONAL 5). THE FIRST ESSENTIAL STEP WAS FOR THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT TO NERVE THEMSELVES TO REMOVE ALL RESTRICTIONS ON COMMUNICATION WITH GIBRALTAR.

7. COMMENT. ENDERS (ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE BEFORE AND DURING THE FALKLANDS CONFLICT) MAY NOT BE THE AMERICAN DIPLOMAT WHOM YOU WOULD WISH TO SELECT AGAIN AS HONEST BROKER. NEVERTHELESS IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH HIM AND I HOPE HIS CONFIDENCE CAN BE RESPECTED. THE SPANISH PRIME MINISTER'S REASON FOR MENTALLY MOVING THE REFERENDUM FORWARD MAY WELL BE THE ASSURANCES RECENTLY RECEIVED FROM THE FRENCH THAT THE ENLARGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS CAN BE VIRTUALLY FINISHED BY THIS SEPTEMBER. THIS OF COURSE REMAINS TO BE SEEN. THE AMERICANS, BOTH IN WASHINGTON

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AND MADRID, SEEM TO BE UNDER NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT OUR LIBERTY OF MANOEUVRE OVER GIBRALTAR. BUT IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO KEEP EMPHASISING TO THEM THAT, IF FELIPE GONZALEZ WANTS OUR HELP FOR HIS WIDER PURPOSES, AN ESSENTIAL FIRST STEP IS THE COMPLETE OPENING OF THE GIBRALTAR FRONTIER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

8. PLEASE SEE MIFT.

PARSONS

GIBRALTAR

LIMITED
SED
DEF D
NEWS D
PUSD
ECD(E)
PLANNING STAFF
MAED
PS

PS/LADY YOUNG
PS/MR WHITNEY
PS/PUS
SIR J BULLARD
MR WRIGHT
SIR C TICKELL
MR CARTLEDGE
MR HANNAY
MR JENKINS

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