

CAPE



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1  
Telephone 01-~~2307022~~ 218 2111/3

MO 5/16/1

13th February 1985

Prime Minister  
CDP  
13/2.

*[Handwritten mark]*

Dear Mr Powell,

As you requested in your letter of 23rd January, I now enclose briefing for the call by the Spanish Minister of Defence on the Prime Minister at 0900 hours on 15th February. A Personality Note on Sr Serra is also enclosed. Sr Serra will be accompanied by my Secretary of State, the Spanish Ambassador - HE Don Jose J Puig De La Bellacasa, and an interpreter from the Government Linguistic Service, Group Captain Melrose.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Colin Budd (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely  
James Calvert  
*[Signature]*  
(R C MOTTRAM)

C Powell Esq  
No 10 Downing Street

BRIEF FOR THE CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY THE SPANISH DEFENCE MINISTER, SENOR NARCIS SERRA, 15 FEBRUARY 1985

Objective

- to build on the recent improvement in Anglo-Spanish relations following the opening of the border with Gibraltar;
- to stress the importance that the UK attaches to continued Spanish membership of NATO, and closer association with the integrated military structure.

Line to Take

- Welcome the agreement reached with Spain on Gibraltar. Geneva meeting on 5 February went well. This, and forthcoming Spanish membership of the EC, will lead to even closer contacts between our two countries.
- (If necessary) Understand Spanish desire to pursue sovereignty claim. But Gibraltarian wishes must be respected. Should concentrate on establishing practical cooperation between Gibraltar and hinterland.
- Encouraged by recent Government statements of support for continued Spanish membership of NATO. Hope prospect of full military integration will be kept open. Important for credibility of Alliance that members share responsibilities as well as benefits.
- Pleased to note increasing bilateral defence contacts. HMG ready to collaborate wherever possible on equipment projects.
- Welcome progress on promotion of increased co-operation on defence equipment. [If appropriate] Welcome exchange of letters.

Essential Facts

1. Foreign Ministers met in Geneva on 5 February, after the Spanish restrictions had been lifted, to begin negotiations on Gibraltar. These covered both sovereignty, on which we reaffirmed HMG's commitments to Gibraltar as in the 1969 Gibraltar Constitution, and areas

for cooperation. Both sides agreed there were good opportunities for economic growth in the region. Officials will meet to consider some aspects further (eg. civil aviation, tourism, transport).

2. Spain acceded to NATO in May 82 but Spanish integration into the military structure of NATO has been frozen at the point where it stood when the Socialists (PSOE) took office in December 82.

In their election campaign the PSOE pledged to hold a referendum on NATO membership, and this is due to take place in February 86.

Prime Minister Gonzalez has indicated that he supports continued membership although, as at present, without full integration into the military structure. At the PSOE Congress in December he pushed through support for continued membership. Senor Serra himself is firmly pro-NATO. Much PR work needs to be done to convince Spanish public opinion which remains strongly anti-NATO.

3. Bilateral defence contacts in 1984 included an inaugural round of official level politico/military talks, the first squadron exchange of PHANTOM aircraft, Spanish participation in the UK's annual submarine exercise and an agreement on army training exchanges. The UK is anxious to promote increased co-operation on defence equipment with Spain. Agreement has been reached at official level on arrangements to effect this, including a Joint Committee to identify and pursue collaborative possibilities. We hope that Senor Serra will be able to sign an exchange of letters during his visit recording these arrangements. As yet however we are uncertain that he will be able to do so.

SERRA SERRA, NARCIS

Minister of Defence since December 1982.

Born Barcelona 30 May 1943. Studied Economic Sciences at Barcelona University and LSE. Professor of Economics Theory at Barcelona University. Founded the Convergencia Socialista de Catalunya party. Member of the National Council of the Partit Socialista de Catalunya. From 1977-79 he was Councillor for Urban Planning in Barcelona. Elected Mayor in 1979, he served with efficiency and firmness until he was appointed Minister of Defence for the PSOE Government in December 1982. While Mayor of Barcelona he had shown his ability to get on well with the Military Captains General during the period of the 23 February 1981 coup and preparations for the National Armed Forces celebration in that city. As Minister, he has built on these important, but tenuous, links with the military who seem to genuinely like and respect him. He has made a good start in modernising and reducing the size of the Armed Forces.

Narcis Serra has been one of the hits of the PSOE Government. Starting from the handicap of being a short Socialist with a big beard who had not done military service and had difficulty in standing to attention, he has won the respect of the military leaders by tough Catalan good sense. In private he is unabashedly pro-NATO and deeply concerned by the Gibraltar dimension.

Married. Speaks English. Likes classical music.



YES  
phoned. 12.2

10 DOWNING STREET

Charles

Meeting with Spanish Defence  
Minister on 15/2/85 @ 9.00

As the Spanish Ambassador  
is also attending, FCO wish  
to know if our Ambassador  
from Madrid can attend  
along with Mr Heseltine?

could they please  
have an early reply

Margo

12/2/85

FILE

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cc: PC  
CL



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

23 January, 1985

Thank you for your letter of 22 January about the visit of the Spanish Minister of Defence to Britain on 14/15 February.

BS

The Prime Minister would be ready to see Senor Serra at 0900 hrs on 15 February. I suggest that the Defence Secretary should accompany him. The Prime Minister will not want to see a large accompanying suite. We should, therefore, limit it to the Spanish Ambassador.

I should be grateful if briefing could reach me by the afternoon of 13 February.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Colin Budd (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

(C.D. Powell)

R. Mottram, Esq.,  
Ministry of Defence

CST.

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0900/15

CONFIDENTIAL

cc/c (1)



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1  
Telephone 01-230-7022 218 2111/3

MO 5/16/1

22nd January 1985

*Prime Minister  
Agree to see him?  
Yes  
CJP  
22/1*

*New Notes,*

As you may be aware the Secretary of State for Defence has invited his Spanish opposite number, Senor Narcis Serra, to visit Britain on 14th/15th February. During his stay he will be calling on the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, and the purpose of this letter is to ask whether it would be possible to arrange a short call on the Prime Minister.

The visit comes at a very important time in Anglo-Spanish relations (just one week after the opening of the border with Gibraltar) and a call on the Prime Minister would provide a valuable opportunity to stress the importance we place on increasing bilateral contacts. In the run-up to the Spanish referendum on NATO we also wish to take every opportunity to put over our views on the importance of continued Spanish membership.

I understand that the FCO fully supports the proposed call on the Prime Minister. I should be grateful to know whether this will be possible.

I am copying this letter to Colin Budd (FCO) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

*Your etc,*

*Richard Mottram*

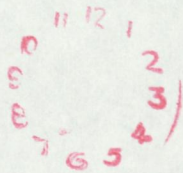
(R C MOTTRAM)

C Powell Esq  
No 10 Downing Street

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22 JAN 1985



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COMMUNICATIONS

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