

Ref: B06619

PRIME MINISTER

c Sir Robert Armstrong

OD: Gibraltar and Spain

BACKGROUND

One of the first reported remarks of Senor Gonzalez after his Socialist Party won an overwhelming victory in the Spanish elections was to reaffirm Spain's claim to Gibraltar. The JIC have produced an assessment (JIC(82)(IA) 196) following the elections which has been circulated to members of the Committee. It concludes that the arrival of a Socialist Government is likely to reduce, not increase, the already low risk of authorised military action against Gibraltar and says that they have no reason to believe that Spanish military units would take unauthorised action, though some risk will remain until the new Government has taken office.

who
says
authority??

2. You have also asked for a discussion of the problem presented by the Spanish construction of a mole near La Linea which encroaches upon Gibraltar's territorial waters and projects into "the Loop", an area of water which both we and Spain claim as territorial waters. The problem was drawn to your attention in the letters dated 22nd and 26th October from the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's Private Secretary to Mr Coles, the second of which covers the Attorney General's Opinion.

3. The Attorney General has been invited for this item.

HANDLING

4. It will be convenient first to have a report on the general situation following the Spanish elections and then discuss the Spanish mole. You should invite the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary to open the discussion and, if necessary, ask the Defence Secretary to report on our defence dispositions.

5. On the Spanish mole, you may like to ask the Attorney General if he wishes to add to his Opinion and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary to say whether there has been any response to the protest lodged with the previous Spanish Government and what action he recommends taking with the new one.

A D S Goodall

3rd November 1982

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