

GRS 260
DESKBY 091530Z TO UKDEL NATO, GIBRALTAR AND FCO
UNCLASSIFIED
FM MADRID 091320Z DEC 82
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 658 OF 9 DECEMBER
INFO IMMEDIATE GIBRALTAR MODUK (D13 WEST)
INFO IMMEDIATE UKDEL NATO (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY)
INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON
INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK D13(W)
INFO SAVING UKREP BRUSSELS

GIBRALTAR : SPANISH PRESS REACTIONS TO PEDESTRIAN OPENING

1. THE SPANISH PRESS HAVE GIVEN EXTENSIVE COVERAGE AND EDITORIAL COMMENT TO THE GOVERNMENT DECISION TO OPEN TO PEDESTRIANS THE FRONTIER WITH GIBRALTAR. REACTIONS ARE VERY MIXED. ONE PARTICULARLY INFLUENTIAL COMMENT IS FROM OREJA, THE FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER (WHO SIGNED THE LISBON AGREEMENT). HE HAS DESCRIBED THE DECISION AS A MISTAKE : SPAIN HAS GIVEN AWAY A BARGAINING CARD FOR NOTHING IN RETURN. THE CONSERVATIVE AND RIGHT WING PRESS FOLLOW THIS CRITICAL LINE. THEY ALSO CALL FOR MEASURES TO PREVENT SPANISH COMMERCIAL INTERESTS IN THE AREA BEING ADVERSELY AFFECTED. THE MORE LIBERAL PRESS WELCOME THE DECISION AND ONE EDITORIAL WRITER SUGGESTS THAT A DEMOCRATIC AND HUMANITARIAN POLICY TOWARDS GIBRALTAR COMBINED WITH NATO MEMBERSHIP WOULD BE A MORE EFFECTIVE WEAPON AGAINST 'BRITISH COLONIALISM'. THE CAMPO AREA IS REPORTED TO BE POSITIVE IN ITS OPINION WHILE THAT IN CEUTA IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE EFFECTS ON ITS INTERESTS.

2. THE FCO SPOKESMAN'S COMMENTS ARE REPORTED FACTUALLY TOGETHER WITH HASSAN'S GENERALLY WELCOMING ATTITUDE. THE PRESS ALSO REPORTS FEELING IN THE CAMPO AREA THAT THIS INITIAL MEASURE WILL INEVITABLY LEAD TO A FURTHER LIFTING OF RESTRICTIONS.

3. FURTHER REPORT FOLLOWS BY BAG.

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING TO UKREP BRUSSELS

PARSONS

[REPEATED AS REQUESTED]

LIMITED
SED
DEF D
NEWS D
PUSD
ECD (E)

PLANNING STAFF
PS
PS/MR HURD
PS/LORD BELSTEAD
PS/PUS

SIR J BULLARD
MR GOODISON
MR GILLMORE
MR HANNAY

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION
GIBRALTAR

P 090900Z DEC 82
FM GIBRALTAR
TO RBDW DFA/FCO LONDON
INFO RBDW DFA/MADRID
BT
UNCLAS
SIC

UNCLASSIFIED ENCLAIR
FROM GIBRALTAR 090900Z DECEMBER
TO PRIORITY FCO TEL NO 109 OF 9/12/82
INFO PRIORITY MADRID

MADRID TELNO 655: GIBRALTAR FRONTIER OPENING

1. REACTION~~S~~ BY POLITICAL AND BUSINESS LEADERS HAS BEEN CAUTIOUS~~LY~~ WELCOME WITH CONCERN AT THE POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE GIBRALTAR ECONOMY OF THE LIMITATIONS IN THE PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS.

2. CHIEF MINISTER GENERALLY WELCOMED THE RELAXATION OF RESTRICTIONS NOTING THAT AS THE PROPOSED OPENING WAS WITHOUT REFERENCE TO THE LISBON AGREEMENT IT WAS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE 24 HOUR OPENING HAD BEEN PROVIDED FOR IN PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS 'TO OVERCOME THE AGE-OLD COMPLAINT ABOUT SPANIARDS NOT BEING ALLOWED TO STAY IN GIBRALTAR OVERNIGHT'. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE APPARENT ABSENCE OF CUSTOMS CONTROL ON THE SPANISH SIDE NOTING THAT 'THEY CANNOT EXPECT PEOPLE TO MOVE ABOUT WITHOUT CARRYING LUGGAGE OF SOME SORT'.

3. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION PETER ISOLA ALSO CONSIDERED THAT THE DECISION WAS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. HE NOTED THAT STATEMENTS BY SPANISH MINISTERS HAD CONCENTRATED ON THE THREAT TO THE SPANISH ECONOMY AND SAID THAT GIBRALTAR WAS NO THREAT TO SPAIN BUT THAT THE PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS WERE A DANGER TO GIBRALTAR'S ECONOMY. HE CONTINUED THAT AS THE OPENING WAS NOT THE FULL LIFTING OF RESTRICTIONS ENVISAGED IN THE LISBON AGREEMENT AND AS THE SPANISH SIDE WOULD NOT BE MANNED ON A NORMAL FRONTIER BASIS GIBRALTAR SHOULD NOT HAVE TO KEEP THEIR SIDE OF THE FRONTIER OPEN 24 HOURS A DAY.

4. ISOLA SUBSEQUENTLY LAID A MOTION IN THESE TERMS BEFORE THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY FOR DEBATE DURING THE CURRENT SESSION. THE RESOLUTION READS: 'THIS HOUSE CONSIDERS THAT SO LONG AS THERE IS ONLY A PARTIAL OPENING OF THE FRONTIER THE GIBRALTAR SIDE OF THE FRONTIER SHOULD CONTINUE TO OPEN AND CLOSE AS AT PRESENT AND FURTHER THAT URGENT CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE POSSIBLE DAMAGING EFFECTS ON THE GIBRALTAR ECONOMY OF THE PROPOSED MANNER OF OPENING AND STEPS TAKEN TO PROTECT GIBRALTAR INTERESTS FOLLOWING FROM THE ABSENCE OF SPANISH CUSTOMS FACILITIES'.

5. LEADER OF GSLP, JOE BOSSANO, COMMENTED THAT SPANISH GOVERNMENT WERE DOING WHAT GSLP HAD ALWAYS SAID THEY SHOULD: SPAIN HAD CLOSED THE FRONTIER UNILATERALLY AND SHOULD NOW OPEN IT UNILATERALLY. HE WAS AGAINST GIBRALTAR AND BRITAIN GIVING ANY CONCESSIONS IN RETURN FOR ANY RELAXATION.

6. PRESIDENT OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, WILFRED GARCIA, WELCOMED SPANISH GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT IF THE MOVE WAS A GENUINE EARNEST OF NEW GOVERNMENT'S INTENT TO TAKE MORE POSITIVE APPROACH TO THE GIBRALTAR ISSUE. BUT HE TOO WAS DISTURBED BY POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE ECONOMY CAUSED BY THE DISCRIMINATORY NATURE OF THE ARRANGEMENTS PARTICULARLY PREVENTING TOURISTS CROSSING AND BY LACK OF CUSTOMS FACILITIES ON SPANISH SIDE. HE ADDED THAT CHAMBER WOULD REMAIN IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH GIBRALTAR GOVERNMENT IN CASE ACTION WAS REQUIRED TO RECIPROCATATE RESTRICTIONS TO PROTECT GIBRALTAR ECONOMY BUT SAID THAT LEADERS WOULD "WAIT AND SEE".

LIMITED
SE D
DEF. D
PUS D
MAE D
ECD (E)
NEWS. D
PLANNING STAFF
PS
PS | MR HURD
PS | LORD BELSTEAD

PS | PUS
SIR J BULLARD
MR WRIGHT
MR GOODISON
MR HANNAY
MR GILLMOKE

ADDITIONAL
DIST:
GIBRALTAR

THIS TELEGRAM
WAS NOT
ADVANCED