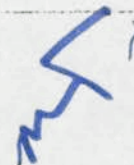


GRS 650
UNCLASSIFIED
DESKBY 181000Z
FM MADRID 180950Z MARCH 83
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 187 OF 18 MARCH
AND TO IMMEDIATE GIBRALTAR AND MOD



VISIT BY MORAN: SPANISH PRESS REPORTS

1. THE SPANISH PRESS GIVE PROMINENT COVERAGE TO MORAN'S MEETINGS IN LONDON UNDER SUCH HEADINGS AS 'LONDON CONTINUES PUTTING OFF NEGOTIATIONS WITH GIBRALTAR: LITTLE POSSIBILITY OF NEGOTIATIONS STARTING THIS SPRING' (EL PAIS): 'MORAN MADE NO PROGRESS IN HIS CONVERSATIONS ON GIBRALTAR' (ABC): 'NO LIKELIHOOD OF NEGOTIATIONS ON GIBRALTAR' (YA): 'THERE WILL BE NO SPANISH CONCESSIONS ON GIBRALTAR' (DIARIO 16): 'ANOTHER FAILURE BY MORAN IN LONDON' (ALCAZAR).

2. ALL PAPERS REPORT THAT THERE IS ALMOST NO POSSIBILITY OF STARTING NEGOTIATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LISBON AGREEMENT AND THEREFORE LITTLE PROSPECT OF PROGRESS. ALL MAKE CLEAR THAT SPAIN WILL NOT NORMALISE COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE ROCK WHILE LONDON IS UNWILLING TO DISCUSS THE BASIC POINT OF THE CONFLICT, THE ISSUE OF SOVEREIGNTY.

3. ALL PAPERS CONTAIN EXTRACTS FROM MORAN'S PRESS CONFERENCE. HE IS QUOTED AS SAYING 'ANY CONVERSATION SHOULD CONCERN THE RECOVERY OF SPAIN'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE OF GIBRALTAR'. HE IS SAID TO HAVE DENIED THAT THE PRESENT SPANISH GOVERNMENT REJECTED THE LISBON AGREEMENT. HE IS QUOTED AS INSISTING ON DESCRIBING IT AS A DECLARATION RATHER THAN AN AGREEMENT AND AS ONLY 'ONE POINT IN A PROCESS'. SEVERAL PAPERS REPORT HIM AS SAYING THAT CONCENTRATION BY BRITAIN ON ONLY ONE POINT IN THE SIX PROPOSALS OF THE DECLARATION (THE LIFTING OF RESTRICTIONS) WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE. HE IS ALSO QUOTED AS STRESSING THAT THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT HAD 'SHOWN ITS REASONABLENESS IN ALLOWING PEDESTRIAN CROSSING OF THE BORDER. IT WOULD NOT BE FAITHFUL TO ITS PRINCIPLES IF IT DID NOT TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE HUMAN ELEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, BUT IT WOULD NOT BE FAITHFUL TO THE FEELINGS AND NATIONAL WILL TO RECOVER (SPAIN'S) TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY IF IT DID NOT PUT FORWARD FIRMLY AND ON ALL OCCASIONS ITS WILL TO RECOVER SOVEREIGNTY BY DIPLOMATIC AND PEACEFUL MEANS AND WITHOUT DRAMA'. HE IS REPORTED TO HAVE ALLUDED TO DIFFERING INTERPRETATIONS OF THE LISBON DECLARATION, BUT AS HAVING REFUSED TO SPECIFY WHAT THESE DIFFERENCES WERE. THE BRITISH SIDE IS SAID TO HAVE REJECTED A SPANISH PROPOSAL TO DRAW UP AT OFFICIAL LEVEL A TEXT SETTING OUT THE AGREED CONTENT OF THE LISBON DOCUMENT.

4. BOTH EL PAIS AND DIARIO 16 REPORT THAT THE SPANISH SIDE WISHES TO BE SURE OF THE BRITISH WILL TO DISCUSS THE BASIC POINT AT ISSUE. SPAIN WILL NOT TAKE ANOTHER STEP UNTIL IT HAS ASSURANCES ON THIS POINT. DIARIO 16 ADDS THAT THE LACK OF RESULTS FROM THE VISIT DEMONSTRATES THE PROFOUND DIFFERENCES WHICH SEPARATE THE TWO SIDES. EL PAIS ALSO REPORTS THAT WHEN QUESTIONED BY A.F.P. ABOUT BRITISH READINESS TO NEGOTIATE, YOU REPLIED THAT THE UK WAS WILLING TO DISCUSS ANY ISSUE BUT ADDED THAT THE PROBLEM OF GIBRALTAR WAS A QUESTION OF SELF-DETERMINATION SIMILAR TO THE PROBLEM OF THE PALESTINIANS OR THE FALKLANDS. MORAN IS QUOTED AS HAVING REFUSED TO COMMENT, BUT IS SAID 'TO HAVE BEEN AMAZED BY THIS STATEMENT'.

5. MOST OF THE PRESS ALSO REPORT MORAN'S INSISTENCE THAT ANGLO-SPANISH RELATIONS ARE NOT CONFINED TO THE PROBLEM OF GIBRALTAR AND HIS HOPE THAT SOME NEW IDEAS WILL EMERGE FOR DEALING WITH THE LATTER ISSUE. ALL PAPERS REPORT THAT HE TRANSMITTED AN APPRECIATIVE MESSAGE FROM GONZALEZ TO THE PRIME MINISTER FOR HER SUPPORT AFTER THE ATTEMPTED COUP OF 1981. ALL ALSO QUOTE MORAN AS STRESSING THAT SPAIN WOULD BE DELIGHTED IF THE PRIME MINISTER WERE TO VISIT SPAIN.

6. EDITORIALS ARE ON GENERALLY SIMILAR LINES. ABC COMMENTS THAT THE PRIME MINISTER DREW ATTENTION TO THE PREAMBLE TO THE GIBRALTAR CONSTITUTION. THIS UNDERLINED THE NEED FOR THE CONSENT OF THE POPULATION OF GIBRALTAR TO ANY TERRITORIAL CHANGE. THIS CONTRASTED WITH THE SPANISH POSITION OF READINESS TO NEGOTIATE AT ANY TIME ABOUT GIBRALTAR WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF RESTORING SPAIN'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. IT COMMENTS THAT NO PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE TOWARDS BRINGING CLOSER THESE CONFLICTING POINTS OF VIEW - EVEN TO THE POINT OF PERMITTING NEGOTIATIONS TO BEGIN IN THE SPRING.

7. AN EDITORIAL IN DIARIO 16 SUPPORTS THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION. IT SAYS THAT GIVEN THE BRITISH ATTITUDE AND ITS REFUSAL TO RECOGNISE SPAIN'S HISTORIC RIGHTS, THE GOVERNMENT ARE CORRECT TO REFUSE FURTHER CONCESSIONS AND IN PARTICULAR THE FREE PASSAGE OF TOURISTS THROUGH GIBRALTAR. SPAIN SHOULD STAND FIRM. BUT IT SHOULD NOT AGAIN CLOSE THE BORDER TO PEDESTRIANS.

HERVEY

GIBRALTAR

LIMITED

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

PS/MR HURD
PS/LORD BELSTEAD
PS/FUS
SIR J BULLARD
MR GOODISON
MR GILLMORE
MR HANNAY

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION
GIBRALTAR