

GRS 540
CONFIDENTIAL
FM MADRID 211222Z JUL 83
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 439 OF 21 JULY
INFO GOVERNOR GIBRALTAR (PERSONAL)

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Read in file.

TALK WITH KING OF SPAIN

1. THE KING ASKED ME TO CALL LAST NIGHT. HE SAID HE WANTED TO KEEP IN TOUCH. THE SITUATION OVER GIBRALTAR WAS DISTURBING. THERE WAS A LACK OF PERSONAL CONTACT BETWEEN MINISTERS OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON BOTH SIDES WERE TENDING TO INCREASE THE PRESSURE. THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER'S COMMENT IN THE HOUSE ON 19 JULY HAD BEEN SEIZED ON IN THE SPANISH PRESS. HE SAID THAT MRS THATCHER'S COMMENT REPRESENTED NOTHING NEW. IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN THE BRITISH POSITION THAT SPAIN COULD NOT ENTER THE COMMUNITY UNTIL ALL RESTRICTIONS ON THE GIBRALTAR FRONTIER WERE LIFTED. THE KING ACCEPTED THIS POINT. BUT HE SAID IT WAS NEVERTHELESS AN EXAMPLE OF THE SORT OF PRESSURE TO WHICH BOTH GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE SUBJECTED IF THERE COULD BE NO MEETING OF MINDS. HIS OWN FOREIGN MINISTER HAD TOLD HIM THAT THERE MIGHT BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO COME HERE AND TALK TO MORAN AT THE TIME OF THE CLOSURE OF THE CSCE CONFERENCE. THE KING THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE AN EXCELLENT IDEA. HE WANTED YOU TO KNOW THAT IT HAD HIS FULL SUPPORT. A MEETING IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD NOT AROUSE UNDUE PRESS ATTENTION. THE GREAT THING WAS SIMPLY TO START TALKING.

2. THE KING EMPHASISED THAT, FAILING THIS, THERE WAS A DANGER OF MORE UNHELPFUL STATEMENTS INCLUDING IN SUCH FORA AS THE UNITED NATIONS. AT THE SAME TIME IT WOULD BE A PITY TO HOLD UP EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION. FOR EXAMPLE, HE HAD HEARD FROM THE CHIEF OF NAVAL STAFF ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF EXERCISES WITH THE ROYAL NAVY. NOR HAD HE AT ALL FORGOTTEN ABOUT THE ADVANTAGE OF AN EXCHANGE OF STATE VISITS WHEN THIS COULD BE ARRANGED.

3. THE KING EMPHASISED, AS HE HAS DONE WITH ME BEFORE, THAT THE REQUIREMENT WAS TO TAKE SOME STEP OVER GIBRALTAR WHICH WOULD KEEP PUBLIC OPINION QUIET FOR THE TIME BEING. IT SHOULD BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD IN PRIVATE BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS THAT IN FACT SPAIN DID NOT REALLY SEEK AN EARLY SOLUTION TO THE SOVEREIGNTY PROBLEM. IF SHE RECOVERED GIBRALTAR, KING HASSAN OF MOROCCO WOULD IMMEDIATELY ACTIVATE HIS CLAIM TO CEUTA AND MELILLA. THE TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS SHOULD REACH A PRIVATE UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN EACH OTHER, DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN THEIR ACTUAL AIM AND THE METHODS USED TO PROPITIATE PUBLIC OPINION ON BOTH SIDES.

CONFIDENTIAL

14

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4. I EXPLAINED THAT WE WERE COMMITTED TO THE EARLY IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LISBON AGREEMENT. THIS WOULD HAVE TWO ADVANTAGES. IT WOULD START NEGOTIATIONS ON ALL OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS. ALSO BY REMOVING RESTRICTIONS IT WOULD HELP TO BRING THE GIBRALTARIAN PEOPLE CLOSER TO THEIR SPANISH NEIGHBOURS. THE KING AGREED. THIS WAS WHAT HE MEANT BY TALKING. I SAID THAT THERE WAS A GOOD POSSIBILITY THAT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO COME TO MADRID IN EARLY SEPTEMBER FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH MORAN AT THE TIME OF THE CLOSURE OF THE CSCE MEETING. THE KING SAID HE WAS VERY GLAD TO HEAR THIS. HE HOPED TO MEET YOU HIMSELF.

PARSONS

GIBRALTAR

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2

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