

PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR LUCE  
PS/Ld. TREFGARNE  
PS/PUS  
MR GIFFARD  
MR WRIGHT  
MR ADAMS  
MR GILLMORE  
MR URE

[TYPISTS]

ADVANCE COPIES ( [scribble] )

19

HD/SED →

HD/CONSULARD  
HD/SAMD (Standard Dist.+ A.D. FI.)  
HD/DEFENCE D.  
HD/NEWS D  
HD/UND  
PS/No. 10, DOWNING STREET  
DIO CABINET OFFICE

(Copies passed to the Emergency Staff and MOD SITCEN).  
HD/PLANNING STAFF

UNCLASSIFIED  
FM MADRID 051017Z APRIL 82  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 174 OF 5 APRIL  
INFO IMMEDIATE GOVERNOR GIBRALTAR

ADVANCE COPY

IMMEDIATE

FALKLAND ISLANDS/GIBRALTAR; SPANISH PRESS COMMENT.

1. SPEAKING AT AN IMPROVISED PRESS CONFERENCE IN THE CAMPO DE GIBRALTAR DURING A SCHEDULED ELECTORAL VISIT, CALVO SOTELO TOLD THE SPANISH PRESS ON 3 APRIL THAT THE PROBLEMS OF THE MALVINAS (FALKLAND ISLANDS) AND GIBRALTAR WERE DIFFERENT FOR REASONS OF DISTANCE, HISTORY AND POPULATIONS AND THAT CONCLUSIONS COULD NOT BE DRAWN FROM ONE FOR THE OTHER. HE ADDED THAT THE OPENING OF THE BORDER AND BEGINNING OF NEGOTIATIONS ON GIBRALTAR WERE A ROAD LEADING TO "THE RECOVERY BY SPAIN OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER GIBRALTAR FOR WHICH WE WILL NOT HAVE LONG TO WAIT."

2. THE MAJORITY OF PRESS AND OTHER MEDIA REPORTING LINK THE TWO PROBLEMS; ALL SUPPORT ARGENTINA'S MORAL RIGHT TO THE ISLANDS AS FIRMLY AS SPAIN'S RIGHTS TO GIBRALTAR. THE RIGHT WING PRESS HAVE CRITICISED THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT FOR FAILING TO SUPPORT ARGENTINA AND FOR THEIR 'SHAMEFUL' AGREEMENT TO OPEN THE GIBRALTAR BORDER IN RESPONSE TO BRITISH DEMANDS AT A TIME WHEN ARGENTINA HAS SUCCEEDED IN RECOVERING SOVEREIGNTY OVER ITS OCCUPIED TERRITORY. THE MORE LIBERAL PRESS, WHILE SYMPATHISING WITH ARGENTINA'S IMPATIENCE OVER BRITAIN'S ALLEGED REFUSAL TO NEGOTIATE A SOLUTION, CONDEMNS THE USE OF FORCE AND CRITICISES THE ARGENTINE REGIME'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD. ONE EDITORIAL CRITICISES THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT FOR FAILING TO CONDEMN AN ACT OF FORCE BY A PARTICULARLY UNPLEASANT REGIME, THUS DIFFERENTIATING THE SPANISH POSITION FROM THAT OF

REGIME, THUS DIFFERENTIATING THE SPANISH POSITION FROM THAT OF OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

3. OTHER EDITORIALS AND ARTICLES POINT OUT THE HISTORICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO COLONIES AND THE FACT THAT SPAIN HAS ALWAYS RENOUNCED THE USE OF FORCE WHICH WOULD IN ANY CASE BE INCONCEIVABLE AGAINST A FUTURE NATO PARTNER. THE 'EL PAIS' EDITORIAL NOTES THAT PUBLIC OPINION IN BRITAIN WILL NOW BE LESS PREPARED TO GIVE UP SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE ROCK BUT ADDS THAT THE UK GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOTE THAT PATIENCE IS NOT INFINITE ON COLONIAL QUESTIONS. THE FORMER MINISTRY OF DEFENCE SPOKESMAN, AN ARMY COLONEL WHO REPRESENTS MODERATE MILITARY OPINION, UNDERLINES THE LATTER POINT IN A SIGNED ARTICLE AND SAYS THAT AFTER 300 YEARS OF HUMILIATING DELAY AN IMMEDIATE DECISION IN PRINCIPLE OVER THE RETURN TO SPAIN OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER GIBRALTAR IS NECESSARY.

PARSONS

NNNN

SENT/RECD AT 05/1046Z PJ/PA