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GRS 170
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AMENDED DISTRIBUTION 16 MARCH 1983
FM MADRID 151005Z MARCH 83
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 178 OF 15 MARCH
INFO PRIORITY GOVERNOR GIBRALTAR(PERSONAL), RABAT.

MY TELNO 174 (NOT TO RABAT): GIBRALTAR.

1. WHEN SPEAKING TO ME YESTERDAY ABOUT GIBRALTAR THE KING OF SPAIN SAID THAT THERE WERE TWO GOOD REASONS WHY ANY SOLUTION WOULD TAKE A VERY LONG TIME. FIRST, AS BRITISH MINISTERS HAD MADE CLEAR, IT WAS UP TO SPAIN NOW TO MAKE HERSELF ATTRACTIVE TO THE PEOPLE OF GIBRALTAR, SO THAT THEY SAW FOR THEMSELVES THE ADVANTAGES OF JOINING THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN. SECONDLY, AS HE HAD REMINDED ME ONCE BEFORE, IT WAS NOT(NOT) IN FACT IN THE INTERESTS OF SPAIN TO RECOVER GIBRALTAR SOON, EVEN IF IT WERE POSSIBLE. THE KING OF MOROCCO HAD REPEATEDLY WARNED HIM THAT IF SPAIN APPEARED TO BE ON THE VERGE OF RECOVERING THE ROCK, MOROCCO WOULD MAKE AN IMMEDIATE BID FOR CEUTA AND MELILLA. THAT WOULD BE EXTREMELY SERIOUS.

2. IT WAS FOR THESE REASONS, CONTINUED THE KING, THAT HE THOUGHT THE GIBRALTAR ISSUE HAD TO BE HANDLED ON A LONG-TERM BASIS AND IN THE WIDER PERSPECTIVE OF SPAIN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH BRITAIN AND THE WEST IN GENERAL. HE HOPED THAT HIS FOREIGN MINISTER SHARED THESE VIEWS.

PARSONS

GIBRALTAR

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