

OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

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INDICATE: COLLECT
 CHARGE TO

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Origin
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Info:

ACTION: Amembassy MADRID

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INFO: Amembassy RABAT

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Authority FRUS 64-68, vol. 12, #204

Subject: Franco Letter to President

By je. NARA, Date 5-16-04

In absence of Spanish Ambassador, who is out of town, Spanish Minister, acting on urgent instructions from FonMin Castiella requested and received appointment with Under Secretary, February 1 at 5 p.m. EST to deliver following personal letter from General Franco to President Johnson: (Translation ~~made~~ by Spanish Embassy);
QUOTE My Dear President ~~Johnson~~ Johnsons:

Please forgive me for retaining your attention for a few ~~more~~ moments, but I trust that the importance of what I have to say will ~~far~~ justify my writing directly - to Your Excellency.

The publicity which is being given in Morocco to the announced visit of His Majesty the King ϕ to the United States and the fact that among the Ministers accompanying him will be the Minister for Mauritanian and Saharan Affairs, coincides with a campaign of expansionist claims in the territories of her neighbors - Algeria, Mauritania and Spain - and reveals Morocco's intentions to exploit the King's visit to the United States to attempt to present the

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Clearances:

AFN - Mr. Spicer

S/S - Mr. Shaver
White House - Mr. Bator

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United States as being implicated in her aspirations. I have therefore thought it best to forewarn you of this ~~possibility~~ possibility; firstly, because none of the parties affected are ready to cede their rights, and in our case the Spanish rights of sovereignty is clear as is the firm and repeatedly evidenced loyalty of the people of the Sahara - about -- 26,000 inhabitants -; and secondly, because this sparsely populated territory has a very marked geo-strategic importance as it includes an extensive portion of the African coast immediately adjacent to the clearly Spanish Canary Islands, which are a center of world sea-routes, and which Spain has for centuries developed and defended.

Among the objectives publicized in Morocco for this visit is that of asking the American Administration for a larger economic and military aid. While I find their economic interest legitimate and very convenient for the peace, development and internal stability of their country, in ~~which~~ which we are truly interested, such is not the case with respect to military aid. The American Government is aware through our Representatives of the constant Spanish concern with respect to the increase of armaments taking place in North Africa with the general intention of threatening peace and attempting to satisfy imperialist ambitions in conflict with ~~the~~ neighboring countries. But no one is threatening the integrity of Morocco's frontiers; she already has sufficient weapons for her defense and for her internal peace and security; and Spain, who only a few years ago underwent the aggression of supposedly spontaneous bands which Morocco utilized to break the peace in the territories of Ifni and Sahara, now feels alarmed by Morocco's attempt to secure more arms at a time in which she is ~~incongruous~~ stirring up bellicose feelings in her inhabitants. It is ~~is~~ really ~~incongruous~~ that

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when Morocco's ~~economic~~ economic need is at its greatest she should wish to devote to military expenses amounts far in excess of her ~~means~~ means in the hope that another country will finance them.

I have wished Your Excellency to be acquainted with this concern, in order to avoid the possibility that, in the light of an apparent ~~neutral~~ neutrality, and heeding a supposed need for ^{self-defense} ~~self-defense~~ which has been ably and ^{artificially} ~~artificially~~ contrived, your Administration might err on the side of δ generosity in this military aspect.

Due to my great confidence in your ~~judge~~ judgment and fairness, I feel satisfied in having made this known to you.

At these moments, when the United States is going through a great sorrow at the loss of δ her heroic astronauts, I wish to express to you the ^{solidarity} ~~solidarity~~ and appreciation that this sacrifice has ^{inspired} ~~inspired~~ throughout all the Spanish nation.

May I avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate to you my highest consideration and affection.

I remain, Your Excellency's good ~~friend~~ friend.

(Signed) Franco END QUOTE

END

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