

by some Gibraltarians. I can see why the Spanish Government does not wish Gibraltar to ever become independent as apart from all else such a course of action would be guaranteed to stir up trouble in the Basque region.

### RESTRICTIONS

I think that the Spanish Government should be indicted for imposing the restrictions. Quite frankly it is about time the United Kingdom stood up against the Spanish Government as whether they like to admit it or not, Gibraltar is part of the European Union. Both physically and politically it was part of the EEC before Spain even

thought of joining. To me it is clear that Spain's entry, for whatever political reason, was at the cost of the Gibraltarians who as a small community has its own political rights.

No other Member State of the EU would tolerate these restrictions.

## FOREIGN OFFICE AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland does have close involvement with the Foreign Office and officials are seconded to work in the Northern Ireland office. All contact with Eire is through the Foreign Office. The late Rt. Hon. Enoch Powell was not far wrong when he called the Foreign Office a nest of vipers. But to balance this assessment I can recall being told by Joe Bossano, when he was Chief Minister, that the mandarins in Madrid have more in common with their counterparts in Whitehall than either have with their own ministers. But however accommodating these diplomats might become, be warned that when something unexpected blows up they revert to type. This is my experience over the political affairs of Northern Ireland.

### POLITICAL LOBBYING OF THE 97 INTAKE

Unless a Member of Parliament happens to have made a study of the Gibraltar problem the great majority are not aware of what is happening. New Members must be recruited to swell the numbers in the Anglo-Parliamentary lobby as it is imperative that pressure must be kept on the British Government.

### THE FUTURE

The Anglo Gibraltar Parliamentary Group will continue to give political support from Westminster. Gibraltarians should be encouraged to develop the lobby in Brussels and take the political fight, as it were, to the heart of the European Union.

Gibraltar's economic future looks good with tourism, telecommunications, financial centre and marine bunkering

to the fore. There is no doubt that Gibraltarian businessmen can provide the brains and finance to develop the economic prosperity of the region.

The delegation, at the level of local Spanish politics, saw no real problems to prevent this from happening. It is my opinion that the majority of the present problems and hostility emanate from the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in general and from the Spanish Foreign Minister in particular. Abel Matutes continues to play politics with the Gibraltar problem. I would have thought that, as Spain enters the new millennium as a member of modern Europe, such thoughts and actions were a relic of the past."

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