ROCK WEEKLY ADVERTISER



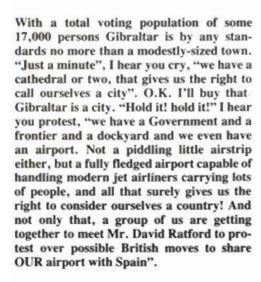
GIBRALTAR'S LARGEST CIRCULATION NEWSPAPER

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GIBRALTAR

The Town that thinks it is a CITY that thinks it is a COUNTRY!





Well we suppose that the airport and the isthmus on which it stands could loosely be described as belonging to the people of Gibraltar but it surely is a most nebulous interpretation of ownership. It seems to us that the airport really belongs to the British taxpayer and it may fall to Mr. Ratford's lot to explain, as the representative of those taxpayers, that they are no longer prepared to carry the financial burden on their own and that Spanish participation on manning and maintaining would lessen that financial burden.

It may be that Mr. Ratford puts forward a proposal that the Government of Gibraltar accept the airport as a gift from Britain providing that Government can see it's way clear to providing Air Traffic Control staff, Fire-fighting staff, vehicles and equipment, Meteorologists, Security Personnel and the full gamut of maintainance people and equipment. Mr. Ratford may make that suggestion, but then again he is possibly aware of that other super Christmas present the British taxpayer gave to the people of Gibraltar — the dockyard, and he may remember the £3 million new engine for the generating station and the ex gratia payments to improve Gibraltar's standing as a tourist resort, as he treads carefully along our dog-polluted streets.

Perhaps his hosts will take him on a sightseeing tour to Europa Point where he can see Gibraltar's refuse disposal system at work. And it may be that Mr. Ratford will decide that few if any SMALL TOWNS, of 17,000 population could possibly afford the luxury of their own airport . . . and opt for a deal with Spain.



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