



Deputy Chief Minister

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Deputy Chief Minister introduces Referendum book to schoolchildren

The Government has commenced the distribution of a commemorative booklet on the 1967 Referendum to thousands of schoolchildren all over Gibraltar.

This morning, the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia commenced the process with an address on the subject to the combined senior forms of Bayside School, Westside School and the College of Further Education. He told them that the events surrounding the 1967 Referendum were the story of how a small people defied a military dictator in Madrid and in so doing took on the World.

The Deputy Chief Minister structured the talk in three parts. The first was the background against which the referendum took place, the second the actual referendum vote itself and the final part dealt with the consequences. He declared that the people of Gibraltar voted overwhelmingly to retain their links with the United Kingdom in the full knowledge that things were going to get worse. This showed a determination to defend their homeland which has continued to this day.

Dr Garcia explained the boiling cauldron of emotions that was bubbling in Gibraltar throughout the 1960s as a result of the two-pronged aggressive campaign conducted by Spain. The first was at the United Nations in New York and the second locally on the ground. He explained that at the UN Gibraltar faced a numerically unbeatable block vote of Communist, Latin American and anti-British countries. This encouraged Spain to turn the screws on progressively at the border and in the air.

The Deputy Chief Minister declared that the Referendum had several consequences. These included the closure of the land frontier by Spain, the withdrawal of the ferry to Algeciras and the ending of telephone communications. The 1968 constitutional conference and the 1969 Constitution, with the guarantees that it contained in the Preamble, were a direct and immediate result of the Referendum.

Commenting on the matter, the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia said:

“The Government have organised a number of events throughout the year in order to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1967 Referendum. In addition to these, we felt it was important to take the message to our schools in order that younger generations can better



appreciate the struggles and the sacrifices that our forefathers had to endure to move Gibraltar to where it is today. This is why we will be distributing thousands of these booklets to schoolchildren in the days to come. I have always believed very strongly that knowledge of the past is the key to the future. I am very grateful to my colleague the Minister for Education, the Department, the schools and the teachers for making this possible.”