

MOROCCO.

[August 10, 1926.]

CONFIDENTIAL.

SECTION 1.

[W 7338/5/28]

No. 1.

The Marquess of Crewe to Sir Austen Chamberlain.—(Received August 10.)

(No. 1487.)

Sir,

Paris, August 9, 1926.

THE recent Franco-Spanish Agreement, the signature of which on the 13th July was reported in my despatch No. 1332 of the 17th July, presumably indicates the bases on which the French and Spanish Governments intend, or at all events hope, to organise the Riff. As explained in my above-mentioned despatch, the text of this agreement has not yet been made public, and the full extent of its provisions are therefore not known. In the meantime, however, it may perhaps be useful to recall to mind the terms upon which the French and Spanish Governments were originally prepared to make peace with Abd-el-Krim, to show how these conditions became modified during the course of time, and to contrast the situation, which might have arisen had Abd-el-Krim accepted these terms, with the situation as it is now, or rather as it is likely to become, when the present still-disturbed state of affairs in North Morocco has come to an end, and the provisions of the Franco-Spanish Agreement of the 13th July have been put in force.

2. As you will recollect, the original peace terms, which the French and Spanish Governments declared themselves ready to offer to Abd-el-Krim, were drawn up on the Madrid Conference in July 1925. It was, however, not until October, when M. Painlevé enumerated them in the course of a speech at Nîmes, that they actually became known to the general public in France. These terms were as follows:—

- (1.) The French and Spanish Governments would offer the tribes of the Riff and the Jebala all measures of autonomy, which were compatible with the treaties governing the status of the Shereefian Empire.
- (2.) The two Governments were ready to enter into negotiations with Abd-el-Krim, with a view to establishing the new régime foreshadowed in the preceding paragraph. Acceptance by the Riffians of the following conditions was, however, essential:—
 - (1.) There should be a mutual exchange of prisoners.
 - (2.) There should be a reciprocal amnesty.
 - (3.) The régime of administrative autonomy must be clearly defined.
 - (4.) The area to be placed under this new régime must be clearly defined.
 - (5.) A police force within this area must be organised.
 - (6.) Freedom of commerce must be permitted.
 - (7.) Arms traffic must be suppressed.
 - (8.) An area on the coast must be allotted to Spain.

3. As you are aware Abd-el-Krim refused to consider these terms, and hostilities continued throughout the winter. The uncompromising attitude of Abd-el-Krim in this connection did not make the French Government any less desirous of reaching a peaceful solution of the problem as soon as possible, always provided that the terms of peace were such as to afford a reasonable guarantee against a recurrence of similar trouble in the future. M. Briand made it clear on more than one occasion in the Chamber in the winter months that the French Government did not consider that the fact that Abd-el-Krim had refused to consider the Madrid Conference implied that the offer made by the French and Spanish Governments had lapsed. It became clear, however, as active military operations began again in the spring, and as the French and Spanish troops started to gain ground at the expense of the Riffians, that the French Government intended to adopt a firmer attitude and to insist on more severe terms of peace. Thus, M. Briand, speaking in the Chamber of Deputies on the 29th March, admitted that the Madrid terms had been altered to the extent of providing more effective safeguards for the integrity of the French zone. More explicit or detailed information was not forthcoming. In this connection it must be remembered that the Madrid terms had been

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