

With reference to Mr. Ritchie's letter of 8th December, 1944, concerning the Kobbe case, I am enclosing a copy of a letter from Mr. Garran of the Foreign Office, dated April 13th,[†] together with a translation of *Note Verbale* No. 131 from the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated February 14th.[†]

In his letter Mr. Garran points out that the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs have made little real progress in their investigations into the case. The Ministry take the view that there is insufficient proof as yet that Kobbe ever received the microfilm codes with the letter containing the instructions in invisible ink, or if he did that these were sent to him with his foreknowledge. The *Note* also asks us for specific information as to whether the invisible writing on the letter, having been developed by the Canadian authorities, was restored by them to invisibility before the letter was delivered. Mr. Garran also reports a conversation by the First Secretary of the United Kingdom Embassy in Madrid with Senor Rolland of the Ministry.

Mr. Garran emphasizes the extent of Spanish obstructiveness. It is the view of the United Kingdom Embassy in Madrid that the Spanish Government is hoping to postpone indefinitely having to send the case for trial before the Courts in order to avoid embarrassing exposures which might come out at the trial. They suggest on the other hand that some of the delay might have been due to the ill-health of Señor Rolland. Although Mr. Garran says that the Foreign Office would be interested to see the answer to the specific question about the invisible ink requested of the Canadian authorities, they are not at all certain that even with this evidence the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would engage in a more active prosecution.

On receipt of this letter I had a discussion with Mr. Garran in the hope of securing some indication as to how future steps in this case might be fitted in to general policy towards Spain. I was interested to know whether the United Kingdom Government might be interested in pressing this case as part of their present policy of reminding General Franco that he was in no position to beg favours. It was not a question of receiving formal instruction from the Foreign Office as to what Canadian policy should be in this matter, but rather of securing some informal guidance as to what steps might best conform with Allied policy. Mr. Garran agreed to discuss the legal aspects further with the security experts before communicating with me. It now seems doubtful, however, if the Foreign Office have any clear-cut intentions on this subject. My impression is that they take a pretty hopeless attitude towards a further prosecution of the case because of long experience with Spanish frustrations. As de Kobbe is not likely to be very dangerous to us in the future it might seem scarcely worth the effort to press the case against him further. On the other hand, there are arguments against allowing the Spaniards at this stage to believe that they can successfully get away with condoning such activities.

The Foreign Office proposes, on receiving the information required from us, to instruct their Embassy at Madrid to give the Ministry for Foreign Affairs the answer they asked for about the invisible ink, and to inform them that they already have all the other information at the United Kingdom Government's