

STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION 79/2007

31 July 2007

The Opposition has received details of an incident that took place at the frontier last night which confirms that the way in which the Spanish authorities operate at the border is still far from normal.

A group of 48 senior citizens went on an excursion to Granada by a Spanish coach tour company yesterday Monday.

The coach arrived back at the frontier at 9.25pm after the day-trip. The Spanish frontier authorities told the coach driver that he could drive into Gibraltar, but that if he was not back by 10pm he would not be allowed to cross the border back into Spain.

The elderly passengers offered to get out at the CEPSA petrol station to help the driver get back home to Granada that night.

The Opposition considers that it is not acceptable that so much inconvenience was caused to so many elderly citizens who had to make alternative arrangements to be taken home from the CEPSA petrol station.

Given the continuing traffic chaos in the roads of Gibraltar, if the driver had not turned round at CEPSA as he did, the probability is that he would never have made it back to Spain by 10pm that night.

It is becoming increasingly clear to many people, that contrary to the propaganda that is being put around, the frontier is not operating normally. In fact, there has not been a normal frontier between Gibraltar and Spain even though they promised one under the Lisbon agreement 27 years ago in 1980, and repeated the pledge in other agreements that they have entered into since.

It is time that Spain stopped saying that they have normalized the frontier until it is operating like a normal international frontier in any other part of Europe. The fact that they choose not to have customs available after 10pm is no excuse for running a frontier that is closed to particular types of traffic after 10 o'clock at night.

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