



Deputy Chief Minister

PRESS RELEASE

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1967 Referendum Exhibition to Open on Wednesday

The first official event to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1967 Referendum will be an exhibition which will be staged at the John Mackintosh Hall as from next week.

It will be opened by the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia on Wednesday 14 June. This is fifty years to the very day on which the holding of the Referendum was officially announced by the UK Government in the House of Commons.

The exhibition will include over 150 photographs and over 100 press cuttings spread over three rooms. There will also be relevant murals, banners and other memorabilia of the time.

One of the rooms will contain a replica polling and counting station and visitors to the exhibition who wish to do so will be able to cast their vote on replica mock ballot papers on production of their identity cards. The options in 1967 and on the mock ballot will be identical.

The options were as follows:

“Option A: To pass under Spanish sovereignty in accordance with the terms proposed by the Spanish Government to Her Majesty’s Government on 18th May 1966; or

Option B: Voluntarily retain their link with Britain, with democratic local institutions and with Britain retaining its present responsibilities.”

There will be two large screens with rolling displays of historical news footage of the time. This will include reports on the Referendum from Pathe News, ITV news and footage supplied by a member of the public.

The Government has invited the Heritage Trust to set up a stall to sell commemorative pins that they have commissioned to mark the Referendum and also Mr Richard Labrador to sell Referendum commemorative flags the proceeds of which will go to charity.

Commenting on the matter, the Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Joseph Garcia, said: “The Referendum was an important landmark in our political and historical evolution as a people. The United



Kingdom Government had determined that the people of Gibraltar had come of age and could be entrusted with the decision on what the future sovereignty of Gibraltar should be *vis-a-vis* UK or Spain. It is important to bear in mind that Gibraltar was British by conquest in 1704 and by formal cession under a Treaty in 1713. The Referendum of 10 September 1967 added to that. Gibraltar was British after that date because it was the will of Gibraltarians that this should be the case.

We should also recall the tense political background against which that choice was made. This included continuous harassment and restrictions imposed by General Franco's regime against Gibraltar both at the land frontier and internationally at the United Nations. The result of the Referendum had immediate consequences too. It led to a new Constitution and to the closure of the land frontier. This is a story that younger generations should know about so visits by schoolchildren to the exhibition are being planned.

The Government is very grateful to the team that will be involved in the organisation and manning of the exhibition. This includes the personal staff in my Office, the Government Archives and the protocol and media sections at No 6."

The exhibition will close on 7th July.