



Foreign policy A meteor called Rice

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She arrived; she allowed herself be seen only fugaciously and then she vanished, as in a 21st century version of *Welcome, Mr. Marshall*, the Spanish movie. She seemed to have nothing to do here; perhaps she only intended to do her part, but the bare minimum. A day before her visit, an editorial published by the Spanish newspaper *La Razón* wondered, "What is the purpose of Rice's visit?" "Why did [the Spanish Foreign Minister] Moratinos invite Condi Rice?" was the headline written by columnist Ramón Pérez Maura two days later in the Spanish daily *ABC*.

And Moratinos prevails again. He pesters her; he begs her; he pleads with her. And when she finally comes to Spain, his colleague at the Defense Ministry, as a warm-up and in a demonstration of Zapatero-style courtesy, managed to criticize a typical accident of war by American troops in Afghanistan that happened two months ago. These things happen to those who fight against terrorists, whose favorite trick is to murder

civilians by setting traps to kill them. One can try to avoid such problems by sending the Secret Service in search of a truce with those great tactical innovators so that, instead, one can dedicate the time to do gratifying deeds in NGOs while others supply the casualties. In addition, Moratinos, the clingy host, gave lessons to the representative of the world's foremost democracy about how to lift an impoverished Caribbean Communist country out of economic and political misery by flattering its senile tyrant.

Surrounded by such harsh cordiality, Rice was stunned by the big round of applause with which the personnel of the Santa Cruz Palace received her. She asked her colleague "Is it for me?" Perhaps it happened to be diplomats fed up with the way things are being done, just taking advantage of the opportunity to express themselves in the most diplomatic of manners. Perhaps they wanted to compensate her for having to endure so many hard blows struck by the sinister hand, just to show there are still some

professionals left. And yet, with all the anti-American sentiment exercised in this country—right and left, up and down, among people of the trade and mere amateurs—there is a possibility that more than in honor of the Secretary of State, it was in dishonor of Moratinos, the Incompetence Minister.

In the meantime, the person in charge of the Socialist Party's International Area went wild attacking the opposition Popular Party (PP) and denounced its lack of patriotism for not supporting the Socialist Government in foreign policy matters. How much they despise the opposition! They cannot stand it on domestic or foreign issues. They become so irritated. The very idea of opposing them is considered pure extremism. How idyllic democracy would be if neither the PP nor its voters existed! What right do they have to exist? The Socialist must win a second mandate so that Justice Minister Bermejo calls them to account in all seriousness.

If the Socialist Basque "friends" knew how to scare away many tens of thousands that have fled with their votes to somewhere else, and also know very well how to bring into line all those state officials who tried to keep the neutral role of the State in place, won't the Zapatero people know how to do the same thing with those PP fascists in whatever is left of Spain

if they win again the presidential seat? But, his supporters do not care much if told little lies! Zapatero could say anything with beatific ease, surrounded by a chorus of committed supporters!

And that eminent internationalist thinker, can it be that she suffers memory lapses or is it merely that she has a lot of nerve? In either case, she has plenty. To support the Government's foreign policy... Just like the Socialists did under ex-President Aznar.

To support Hugo Chávez's steady road to tyranny and misery. Evo Morales's perpetuation of secular poverty marinated with resentment and arbitrariness. The nostalgia for past holocausts that are denied; the perverse pleasure for promised futures ones thanks to Ahmadinajed. Our subservient neutralization in Europe. Moreover, she said even more, "Foreign policy problems? What problems? They are the result of PP's schemes. It was unheard of that an opposition party had such a powerful international influence; that without mentioning that PP leader Mariano Rajoy has hardly put a foot outside Spain. No, my child, no. Zapatinos and Morateros deserve every bit of it. Graduated with honors for Rice's visit.

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