

FRENCH ARE SILENT ON RIFFIAN PARLEY

Officials at Rabat Make No Comment on the Reported Peace Negotiations.

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RABAT, April 1.—In the absence of the French Governor, M. Steeg, now in Paris, no officials here at the capital of French Morocco could make any comment concerning the new peace negotiations reported proceeding between the French and Spanish authorities and Abd-el-Krim.

Unofficially it was made known, however, that whether or not there is a possibility of early end of the Riffian war, the French army in Morocco is ready to take the field, whenever the situation demands it, with a better organization than ever.

The view unofficially expressed by the French has been to be ready at all times to receive peace proposals from the Riffian chief, but their acceptance necessarily must include a safeguard for French interests in the Moroccan protectorate and must also conform to the engagements entered into by France and Spain for the promotion of order and progress in Morocco.

It is assumed that such safeguards include police patrol by the French and Spanish of their respective zones and the disarming of the Riffians, as previously insisted. If Abd-el-Krim is now ready to submit to these terms it means that he is in a weaker position even than recently reported.

Formal recognition by the Riffians of the sovereignty of the Sultan of the Shereefian Empire is also one of the points upon which the French and Spanish have insisted. Abd-el-Krim has been ready to recognize the Sultan's religious sovereignty, but has balked at conceding him temporal authority.