



BRITISH EMBASSY
 BONN

28 September 1979

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Dear Peter,

PRESIDENT PERTINI'S STATE VISIT TO THE FRG

1. President Pertini paid a state visit to the Federal Republic between 18 and 21 September. He was accompanied by S. Malfatti and by officials. After the usual talks in Bonn with President Carstens, Chancellor Schmidt, Brandt and others, he visited Berlin and Munich.
2. A number of factors combined to make the occasion stand out somewhat from the plethora of state visits to Germany. Firstly, relations between the two countries are well developed, as one would expect between fellow members of the Community and NATO and fellow participants at world economic summits. Despite periodic squalls (the escape of the war criminal Kappler from detention in Italy two years ago; Italy's non-participation in Guadeloupe and the inner circle of Defence Ministers; outbursts of anti-Germanism in the Italian press and retorts in the German media about terrorism and so on in Italy) Schmidt and Andreotti managed to build up a good working relationship. (See, for example, the Chancellor's very favourable words about Andreotti in his interview in the Economist of 28 September). The summit consultations were put on a regular basis and all is set for this to continue under Cossiga. The two heads of government will meet in mid-October.
3. Secondly, this was the first inward state visit since Carstens became President. The spotlight was therefore on the occasion more than normal. Although there was a marked contrast between the informal approach of Pertini and that of his host (Carstens was stiff and a bit cold) the visit passed

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off well from the protocol point of view and Carsten's staff have expressed satisfaction (perhaps with a tinge of relief).

4. Thirdly, and to his hosts' enormous relief, Pertini handled with some delicacy the question of Germany's past. He himself had been active in the underground during the war and his brother died in a German concentration camp. So predictably the Germans were jittery. But Pertini said clearly at the outset that he did not believe in the philosophy of collective guilt. The Germans of today were no more to blame for Nazi behaviour than were today's Italians for that of the Fascists. Pertini also put heavy and welcome emphasis on the ultimate goal of German reunification and he appeared genuinely moved when he visited the Berlin wall.

5. Fourthly, the Socialist Italian President spent much of his time here talking to members of the SPD: Schmidt, Brandt and others. Pertini was portrayed as a dedicated and influential member of the movement; and his meeting with Brandt was an obviously warm and happy occasion.

6. All these factors made for a successful visit and both German officialdom and the Italian Embassy are well pleased. (The atmosphere was good enough to survive Henry Moore, who was in Bonn to present "Large Two Forms" to the Chancellor, addressing Malfatti as Forlani! Malfatti promptly replied by offering Henry Moore the freedom of the city of Florence).

7. There were suggestions in the press, notably "Der Spiegel", that Pertini had snubbed Carstens over the most delicate part of the visit by rejecting Carsten's offer to accompany him to a memorial at Flossenburg where his brother had died in Nazi hands. The story had almost died away but the Federal President's Press Office have seen fit to revive it by publishing today a firm denial that the visit was anything other than harmonious at all stages. We do not know what actually happened, but it would have been contrary to normal protocol arrangements for the Federal President to accompany a state guest outside Bonn. The Italian Embassy have been at pains to say that nothing went wrong and the Government are accusing "Der Spiegel" of stirring up trouble. (There is something of a running battle between the magazine and the President. The former was instrumental in digging up dirt about

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Carsten's Nazi activities and the latter has been unenthusiastic about giving them an interview). In the event Pertini was accompanied at Flossenburg by Strauss and by von Dohnanyi, the number two Minister at the Auswärtiges Amt.

8. During the visit Malfatti had talks with Genscher, covering the following subjects:

(a) TNF: The Germans took the opportunity to re-emphasise the importance they attached to as many NATO members as possible agreeing to permit the siting of the modernised systems on their territory. Malfatti said that Italy was in principle prepared to agree but that the final decision had to be taken within the context of the Alliance. (cf Bonn tel 530).

(b) MBFR: Genscher repeated German interest in extending associated measures to all participants at the Vienna talks, including Italy. According to the Italian Embassy, Malfatti replied that confidence building measures should apply to all CSCE countries and that the question should be discussed and implemented as part of the CSCE rather than the Vienna process.

(c) Community Questions: Malfatti went over the Italian complaints about the Commission's reference paper on the Community budget. He repeated well known arguments about the need for convergence and alluded to a further Mediterranean package. But all our interlocutors have commented that it was impossible to work out from Malfatti's presentation or from that of his accompanying officials precisely what the Italians wanted in concrete terms. Genscher was sympathetic but we are told that he made no firm commitment. The subject, he said, would have to be discussed at the Dublin European Council.

(d) Middle East: Genscher described his recent visits to Arab capitals and Dayan's visit to Bonn. He reaffirmed that the FRG had no intention of recognising the PLO until the PLO had accepted Res 242. He denied emphatically that there was any intention of inviting Arafat to Bonn.

Yours ever

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cc: Chanceries: Rome: UKDEL NATO: UKREP Brussels.