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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

21 April, 1983

*Rel. agreed.
F/C.O. inf'd.*

AK 2/4

Joe John

Links with the Italian Christian Democrat Party

Thank you for your letter of 19 April about the possibility of asking the Secretary General of the Italian Christian Democrats over here on a sponsored visit. We have consulted the Embassy in Rome and see no reason why a visit later in the year might not do very well. There is a degree of uncertainty in Italy about the date of their General Elections, which could be quite soon but we do not think this need be a bar to acting now. It would help if we could extend an invitation to De Mita at once, particularly as the Ambassador in Rome is hoping to call on him next week. Would you be content if we sent a telegram to Rome on the lines of the enclosed draft?

Joe

John E Holmes

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street

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Italy: Anglo/It. Relations
June 79.

OUT TELEGRAM

Classification and Caveats

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FM FCO APRIL 1983
TO IMMEDIATE ROME
TELEGRAM NUMBER
TELECON WOOD/RICHARDSON: DE MITA
1. Please tell De Mita when you see him that we hope he will be able to visit the UK as a (Category I) sponsored visitor. We would hope during any such visit to arrange discussions for him with leading members of the Conservative Party, and the Prime Minister would like arrangements to be made for him to call on her. It would be difficult for this to be set in hand before the autumn. Are there any particular dates in eg ^{October} ~~September~~ which would suit him?
PYM
NNNN

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword
File number	Dept Private Office	Distribution
Drafted by (Block capitals) JOHN HOLMES		
Telephone number		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

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re. Cardine

19 April 1983

**LINKS WITH THE ITALIAN CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRAT PARTY**

The Prime Minister has seen your letter of 15 April about the possible strengthening of links with the Italian Christian Democrats. She agrees that the Secretary General, Senator De Mita, should be invited to London on a sponsored visit but would not wish to add to her already heavy burden of engagements in July. Would it be possible to think in terms of a visit later in the year? If so, dates could be discussed between the two diary secretaries.

A. J. COLES

R.B. Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Your diary in July is already very full.

Would you like me to suggest that the Secretary-General of the Italian Christian Democrats be invited later in the year?

15 April, 1983

Yes - if possible
not

John Deakin

A.S.C. 14/4

Links with the Italian Christian Democrat Party

Before he retired from the Embassy in Rome, Sir Ronald Arculus wrote to Mr Hurd about the possibility of strengthening links with the Italian Christian Democrats (DC). We have been considering this in the wake of Senator Fanfani's visit to London on 24/25 February. Mr Hurd has had a talk with Sir A Royle, and this letter reflects their joint views.

Links between the Conservative Party and the DC have in the past been intermittent. Conservative Party efforts to get closer to the DC have usually been rebuffed. The main inhibition has been DC reservations about being termed 'a conservative party'. However, the DC President of the Senate, Senator Morlino, who succeeded Senator Fanfani in that office, told Sir R Arculus in February that the DC were now less worried on that score and would be happy to meet Conservative visitors.

We can only test this apparent change of attitude by encouraging suitable visitors to go to Italy and by inviting Italian politicians back. A way of trying to place contacts with the DC on a more solid footing would be to invite the DC Secretary-General, De Mita, to London on a sponsored visit. De Mita is a major influence in Italy's largest political party. As you know, the nature of Italian coalitions is such that policy is often decided by direct agreement between the party bosses, who may (as in De Mita's case) have no government position. Recent foreign policy issues largely considered outside the Council of Ministers have included the Soviet gas pipeline, El Salvador and Poland. De Mita is therefore a key figure in Italian decision-making.

We would aim to set up a wide-ranging official programme for De Mita, including a session with the Conservative Party and perhaps a meal hosted by Mr Pym or Mr Parkinson. To tempt him to London, however, we would have to offer top-table treatment on a par with that which he enjoyed during a recent visit to Washington, where he was received by President Reagan, Shultz and many other top Americans. Mr Pym would therefore be grateful if the Prime Minister would agree to receive De Mita during a visit to London. Armed with her agreement in principle, the

/Embassy

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Embassy in Rome could then put the proposal to De Mita, and assuming he agreed, would try to arrange dates which fitted the Prime Minister's programme. In the light of discussion about dates between Mr Hurd and Sir Anthony Royle, Mr Pym thinks we should aim for a visit in July, ie not too close to the proposed inaugural meeting of the International Democrat Union.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R B Bone'.

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street



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