

CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 1050
CONFIDENTIAL
FROM ROME 110645Z JUL 83
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELNO 322 OF 11 JUL 83

PS TO PM 10 DOWNING ST.

INFOR ROUTINE WASHINGTON MOSCOW AND UK DEL NATO

SAVING TO MODUK BONN BRUSSELS COPENHAGEN THE HAGUE AND PARIS:
HOLY SEE (ACTIONED ROME.

ITALY/INF

SUMMARY

1. INF WAS NOT AN ISSUE IN THE ITALIAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN. THE BUDESTAG DEBATE ON SECURITY POLICY ATTRACTED LITTLE ATTENTION HERE, AND COMMENTATORS DREW NO IMPLICATIONS FOR ITALY FROM KOHL'S TALKS IN MOSCOW (MYTELNO 329). THE PARTIES ARE NOW PRE-OCCUPIED WITH NEGOTIATIONS TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT, WHICH ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE INTO AUGUST. THERE IS STILL NO REASON TO THINK THAT ITALY WILL NOT STAND BY HER COMMITMENT TO INSTALL GLCM AT THE END OF THIS YEAR, ALTHOUGH THERE WILL BE FRESH OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME IN THE AUTUMN.

PARTY ATTITUDES

13. THE PCI ARE MAINTAINING THEIR LOW-KEY OPPOSITION TO BASING AT COMISO, AND THE DC AND MINOR LAY PARTIES (REPUBLICANS, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND LIBERALS) CONTINUE TO ACCEPT THE NEED TO GO AHEAD AS PLANNED. SO THE PSI ARE STILL THE PARTY WHOSE ATTITUDE WILL BE CRUCIAL IN THE COMING MONTHS. DURING THE CAMPAIGN MORE THAN ONE OF THEIR SPOKESMEN GAVE THE NEED TO TAKE DIFFICULT DECISIONS OVER BASING AT COMISO AS ONE OF THE JUSTIFICATIONS FOR CALLING EARLY ELECTIONS. THE REPLIES OF CRAXI TO QUESTIONS ON INF WERE ROBUST, AND THE LESS ORTHODOX VIEWS OF SOME ON THE LEFT OF THE PARTY (LIKE VITTORELLI) WERE KEPT OUT OF SIGHT. ALL THIS HAD BEEN ENCOURAGING.

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE MINISTER AT THE US EMBASSY HAS TOLD ME IN CONFIDENCE (PLEASE PROTECT) THAT THE PSI SENT A MESSAGE TO THEM ABOUT INF ON 28 JUNE, THE DAY AFTER THE ELECTIONS. IT CAME IN THE FORM OF A TELEPHONE CALL FROM ACQUAVIVA, THE HEAD OF CRAXI'S OFFICE, WHO DOES NOT NORMALLY DEAL WITH DEFENCE OR FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. HE ASKED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF DELAYING THE TIMETABLE FOR THE ARRIVAL OF CRUISE MISSILES AT COMISO. MY US COLLEAGUE INSTRUCTED THAT A FIRM REPLY BE SENT THAT ANY SUCH SUGGESTION WOULD BE VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES. ON HEARING THIS ACQUAVIVA BACKTRACTED, SAYING THAT IT HAD ONLY BEEN AN IDEA.

CONFIDENTIAL

/5. WE

CONFIDENTIAL

5. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT THE PSI ARE GIVING SERIOUS THOUGHT TO THE POSSIBILITY OF CHANGING THEIR LINE ON INF. THEY ARE HOWEVER IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH THE SPD, AND CRAXI IS AWARE OF HIS VIRTUAL ISOLATION AMONG EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS ON THIS ISSUE. MUCH WILL DEPEND ON WHETHER THE PSI IS PART OF THE NEXT GOVERNMENT, AND IF SO, ON THE MINISTRIES WHICH THEY ARE ALLOCATED: THERE ARE STRONG RUMOURS THAT THEY WISH TO RELINQUISH DEFENCE. A FRESH INF DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT THIS AUTUMN, WHICH IS NOT IN THEORY NECESSARY BUT MAY BE HARD TO AVOID NOW THAT ONE IS PLANNED IN THE BUDESTAG, WOULD INCREASE THE PRESSURE ON CRAXI. NEVERTHELESS, HIS POSITION IN THE PARTY IS STRONGER THAN IN DECEMBER 1979 WHEN THE ORIGINAL DECISION WAS TAKEN, AND A VOLTE FACE BY THE PSI NOW WOULD EXPOSE THEM TO FIERCE

CRITICISM FROM ALL OTHER PARTIES IN GOVERNMENT.

6. A MEMBER OF CHANCERY SPOKE TO ACQUAVIVA ABOUT INF ON 5 JULY, WITHOUT MENTIONING THE US APPROACH. HE ADMITTED THAT A DEBATE WAS LIKELY, AT THE INSTIGATION OF THE PCI OR EXTREME LEFT (DP), BUT DENIED THAT THE PSI WOULD MAKE TROUBLE.

PUBLIC OPINION

7. POPULAR OPPOSITION TO BASING AT COMISO IS STILL SPORADIC, AND THE PCI HAVE MADE NO RECENT EFFORT TO EXPLOIT IT. THERE HAVE BEEN NO FURTHER PEACE MARCHES, BUT THE PERMANENT CAMP OF DEMONSTRATORS AT COMISO MAY RECEIVE SOME FRESH RECRUITS IN THE SUMMER INFUX OF TOURISTS AND STUDENTS. THE CHURCH HERE IS KEEPING A LOW PROFILE ON THE INF AT THE MOMENT.

MFA VIEWS

8. MFA OFFICIALS REMAIN OPTIMISTIC. THE NATO DEPARTMENT TOLD US ON 5 JULY THAT PREPARATIONS FOR THE ARRIVAL OF GLCM WERE GOING AHEAD ON SCHEDULE, AND THAT OVER 300 US PERSONNEL WERE ALREADY AT COMISO. THERE WERE NO SIGNS OF THE SICILIANS THEMSELVES MOUNTING ANY SERIOUS OPPOSITION TO THE PLANNED DEPLOYMENT.. UNLESS THE PSI WENT INTO OUTRIGHT OPPOSITION IN PARLIAMENT, WHICH WAS VERY UNLIKELY, HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE SOCIALIST WOULD CREATE DIFFICULTIES. IF THE PCI WENT THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF DEMANDING A PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE, THE BEST TIME FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO HOLD IT MIGHT BE THE FIRST HALF OF NOVEMBER: MINISTERS COULD THEN USE ANY POSITIVE RESULTS FROM THE OCTOBER NPG MEETING, AND THE OPPOSITION COULD NOT EXPLOIT THE BUDESTAG DEBATE. IT WAS UNFORTUNATE THAT KOHL HAD NOT CONSULTED OTHER BASING COUNTRIES BEFORE GIVING HIS UNDERTAKING TO STOP THE STATIONING OF MISSILES AND THEIR PARTS UNTIL 15 NOVEMBER (YRTELNO 338 TO BONN): BUT NO-ONE WOULD DEMAND THAT ITALY FOLLOW SUIT.

CONFIDENTIAL

9. THE MFA HAVE SUBMITTED TO FANFANI'S OFFICE A DRAFT REPLY TO ANDROPOV'S LETTER (MOSCOW TELNO 712NOTALL). SINCE ANDROPOV MADE NO IMPORTANT NEW POINTS, THE REPLY WAS A REPETITION OF STANDARD ALLIANCE ARGUMENTS. ON BRITISH AND FRENCH SYSTEMS IT ARGUED FORCEFULLY THAT THE WESTS' POSITION WAS SERIOUS AND THAT THE USSR COULD NOT HOPE TO DEVIDE WESTERN EUROPEAN NATIONS INTO DIFFERENT CATEGORIES AS REGARDS SECURITY. ALL WERE THREATENED BY SOVIET MISSILES, AND THEREFORE NEEDED THE PROTECTION WHICH ONLY US MISSILES, INCLUDING CRUISE, COULD SUPPLY. ITALY COULD NOT THEREFORE ACCEPT ANY SUBCEILING IN THE INF NEGOTIATIONS TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF BRITISH AND FRENCH SYSTEMS, WHICH WERE DIFFERENT IN THEIR NATURE AND THEIR PURPOSE. THE MFA ARE NOT SURE WHETHER FANFANI WILL AGREE TO REPLY IN THESE TERMS: HE MIGHT SEND A SIMPLE ACKNOWLEDGMENT, OR EVEN IGNOR THE LETTER ON THE GROUNDS THAT AS CARETAKER PRIME MINISTER HE SHOULD NOT COMMIT HIS SUCCESSOR . BUT IF THERE WERE A SUBSTANTIVE REPLY, IT WOULD BE CIRCULATED TO NATO ALLIES.

10. THE SITUATION IS THUS REASONABLY SATISFACTORY FOR THE PRESENT. IF THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR ANOTHER FIVE-PARTY COALITION SUCCEED, STILL THE MOST LIKELY OUTCOME, I SEE NO REASON TO FORESEE A CHANGE IN THE ITALIAN POSITION. THE EPISODE IN PARAGRAPH 4 MAY BE EXPLAINED BY THE INTEREST BEING TAKEN AT THE TIME, BY SOME WITHIN THE PSI, IN A DIFFERENT POLITICAL ALIGNMENT INVOLVING A DEGREE OF COMMUNIST SUPPORT (OUTSIDE THE GOVERNMENT) FOR A COALITION. BUT CRAXI HAS FIRMLY TURNED DOWN THIS IDEA, SUGGESTED BY FORMICA, SHOULD RENEWAL OF THE FIVE PARTY COALITION FAIL, WE SHALL NEED TO KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON THE SITUATION BUT IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO SHOW ANY SIGN OF ANXIETY NOW.

11. FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING ADDRESSEES

BRIDGES

LIMITED

DEF D

WED

ACDD

NEWS D

EESD

NAD

WED

PS

PS/MR HURD LUCE

PS/PUS

SIR J BULLARD

MR WRIGHT

MR CARTLEDGE

MR JAMES

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION
START