

GRS450

FRAME INSTITUTIONAL
UNCLASSIFIED

FM ROME

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 1067

OF 181430Z DECEMBER 85

INFO PRIORITY ALL EUROPEAN COMMUNITY POSTS, MADRID, LISBON.

INTER-GOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE IN BRUSSELS: ITALIAN PRESS
REACTION.

SUMMARY.

1. THE PRESS TAKES A RESIGNED RATHER THAN A DISAPPOINTED VIEW OF THE RESULTS OF THE MEETING. EMPHASIS ON ITALIAN AND DANISH RESERVES. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY'S COMMENT 'FROM EURO-PESSIMISM WE CAN NOW PASS TO EURO-ACTIVISM' IS WIDELY CARRIED.

DETAIL.

2. ALL PAPERS CARRY FULL AND REASONABLY POSITIVE REPORTS ON THE RESULTS OF THE MEETING. THE PRESS ACCEPTS THAT ITALY HAS HAD TO BE SATISFIED WITH MUCH LESS THAN IT WANTED AND THAT THE MIDDLE GROUND, REPRESENTED BY FRANCE, BRITAIN AND GERMANY HAS CARRIED THE DAY. THE OPPOSITION OF DENMARK TOWARDS MORE POWER FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IS SEEN AS A DECISIVE FACTOR. THE TWO PARTY PAPERS, AVANTI FOR THE SOCIALISTS AND IL POPOLO FOR THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, BOTH TAKE FAIRLY POSITIVE LINES. AVANTI TALKS OF 'A MODEST VICTORY OF PRINCIPLE FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT' AND COMMENTS THAT 'PRAGMATISM AND REALISM HAD THE BEST OF THE DREAMERS, EVEN THOUGH THE REALISTS DON'T SEEM TO KNOW THAT EUROPE IS MISSING ONE TRAIN AFTER THE OTHER'. THE PRO-GOVERNMENT IL TEMPO CARRIES THE HEADLINE 'EUROPE TAKES A STEP FORWARD: EURO-PESSIMISM IS FINISHED'. WHILE THE USUALLY AGGRESSIVE LA REPUBBLICA SAYS 'A STEP FORWARD TOGETHER' THE AUTHORITATIVE CORRIERE DELLA SERA TAKES A MORE SOMBRE LINE 'THE EUROPEAN SPIRIT OF ITALY IS DEFEATED' AND GOES ON TO COMMENT THAT 'NONE OF THE REQUESTS FORWARDED BY THE STRASBOURG ASSEMBLY WERE ACCEPTED. BUT PROBABLY THE EURO-MPS WILL HAVE TO PUT A GOOD FACE ON IT'. THE AGNELLI NEWSPAPER LA STAMPA TALKS OF 'EC STILL IN DISAGREEMENT' AND OF BRITISH AND DANISH INTRANSIGENCE AGAINST ANDREOTTI'S POSITION.

3. ANDREOTTI HAS NOT HIDDEN DISAPPOINTMENT AND IS QUOTED AS SAYING 'THE GLASS IS EITHER HALF FULL OR HALF EMPTY DEPENDING ON WHO IS LOOKING AT IT. FOR SIR GEOFFREY HOWE IT IS HALF FULL BUT I CANNOT SAY I SHARE HIS VIEWS'. AND 'IF WE HAD THROWN EVERYTHING AWAY WE WOULD HAVE GIVEN GREAT SATISFACTION TO THOSE

WHO

WHO DID NOT WANT AN IGC IN THE FIRST PLACE'. HE RECOGNISES HOWEVER,
THAT SOME USEFUL PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE. ALL PAPERS CARRY HIS
STATEMENT THAT THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT WILL HAVE TO APPROVE THE
PACKAGE OF REFORMS BEFORE ITALY CAN SIGN, PROBABLY ON 27 OR 28
JANUARY. SOME PAPERS COMMENT THAT IS IS UNLIKELY THAT THE
ITALIAN GOVERNMENT WILL REFUSE THEIR APPROVAL.

4. ALMOST ALL PAPERS CARRY SIR GEOFFREY HOWE'S REMARK 'FROM
EURO-PESSIMISM WE CAN NOW PASS TO EURO-ACTIVISM' AND COMMENT
THAT BRITAIN IS SATISFIED WITH THE OUTCOME OF THE MEETING. THERE
IS NO CRITICISM OF THE UK'S POSITION.

BRIDGES

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