

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH 17 July 1981

Dear Michael,

Prime Minister's meeting With Sr Spadolini

I understand that Sr Spadolini is anxious to see the Prime Minister during the Ottawa Summit.

I attach a brief. Like earlier supplementary briefs, this has not been seen by a Minister here, but a copy will be in the Lord Privy Seal's weekend box.

I am sending a copy of this letter and its enclosure to David Wright in the Cabinet Office.

(F N Richards) Theres

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PMVL (81)

17 JULY 1981

OTTAWA ECONOMIC SUMMIT

19-21 JULY 1981

MEETING WITH SIGNOR SPADOLINI

Brief by Foreign and Commonwealth Office

POINTS TO MAKE

- 1. Very important we should work closely together. Have had excellent relationship with successive Italian governments. Look forward to seeing him in Britain for bilateral summit in due course.
- 2. Does arrival in power of government not headed by Christian Democrat represent significant change in Italian political system?
- 3. Italian views on main issues at Ottawa?

DEFENSIVE

- 1. Anglo/Italian Summit (if Prime Minister agrees). Hope Signor Spadolini will let us know when he is in a position to suggest dates.
- 2. Tripartite/restricted meetings. Have taken note of Italian representations. Lord Carrington explained our position to Signor Colombo in Rome.
- 3. Middle East. Very important the 10 should hold to line of action agreed since Venice Declaration last year.

BACKGROUND

SPADOLINI GOVERNMENT

Spadolini sees his government not just as a temporary stop-gap but as offering opportunity for Christian Democrats to put

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their house in order. He sees it in interest of all Italians that he should have a long tenure.

TNF

Failure to go ahead on the TNF double decision could particularly embarrass his government. He has good personal relations with the Americans and is likely to try to put this point across and perhaps also to ask us to do so.

"MITTERRAND EFFECT"

Any references to possible spill-over effect of French Socialist victory would be likely to embarrass Spadolini who would not welcome an internal debate in Italy on this subject.

OTTAWA SUMMIT

See Rome telegram 258 of 3 July (attached) for Italian position on the main issues.

MIDDLE EAST

Colombo has told Lord Carrington in confidence that Spadolini has taken a pro-Zionist line in Cabinet.

UK DEVELOPMENTS

Spadolini has been consistently friendly towards Britain. He is likely to be interested and concerned by

- (a) position of the Labour Party on Europe
- (b) developments in Northern Ireland
- (c) social disturbances in Britain.

He is an intellectual who has specialised in the history of church/State relationships and has not got a closed mind on these issues.

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