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*Mr Adams*  
~~PRIME MINISTER~~ *Haly*  
*We could wish that Sr Cossiga's tenure was more secure.*  
*MAP 1/2*

D A S Gladstone Esq  
WED  
FCO

*ms*

Your reference

Our reference

Date

7 February 1980

*Dear David,*

SIGNOR COSSIGA AND THE PRIME MINISTER

1. Peter Nicholls of The Times, has been asked to produce a syndicated article for the Italian press about the European credentials of the Prime Minister. The Italian editor who commissioned the article gave Peter Nicholls a rather hostile steer. I spent some time earlier this week taking Nicholls through the Prime Minister's European record in order to counter negative arguments.
2. Nicholls rang me on 5 February to say that he has had parallel briefing at the Palazzo Chigi and had seen Cossiga. The Italian Prime Minister had told him categorically that he regarded Mrs Thatcher's European credentials as beyond doubt. Perhaps she sometimes expressed her arguments in a rather individual way but the same might be said for other heads of Government of the Community. All in all said Nicholls, Signor Cossiga had spoken very warmly about Mrs Thatcher.
3. Yesterday evening, 6 February, I saw on Italian television, a short programme at the peak watching hour, about Cossiga's travels abroad. These were inevitably concentrated on his visits to Washington and London and more stress was laid on London. In answer to questions Cossiga paid a tribute to the British people for their attachment to tradition and love of liberty. The questioner also asked him for his impressions of the Prime Minister, given that she was no doubt the first lady Head of Government he had met. Cossiga said in effect that the Prime Minister combined all her innate qualities of charm and femininity with those of an exceptional negotiator.
4. When the Ambassador called on the Communist Mayor of Rome the other day the latter complained that the Prime Minister appeared to have bewitched Cossiga!

*Yours ever,*  
*Adams*

W J Adams

cc: Michael Alexander Esq  
*Neko.*

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