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DESKBY FCO AND UKREP BRUSSELS 141800Z

FM ROME 141720Z JAN

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 41 OF 14 JANUARY 1980

AND TO IMMEDIATE UKREP BRUSSELS

INFO PRIORITY OTHER EEC POSTS

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 < 5 JAN 1980
 JH

(b)

MY TELNO 40 ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER:

1. AS EXPLAINED IN TELECON ADAMS/CROWE (UKREP) MINISTER RUFFINI (FORMERLY MINISTER OF DEFENCE: ITALIAN PERSONALITIES LIST NO.111) HAS NOW TAKEN MALFATTI'S PLACE. RUFFINI LEFT THIS AFTERNOON FOR BRUSSELS TO PRESIDE OVER THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. A MEMBER OF HIS PRIVATE OFFICE TOLD US THIS AFTERNOON THAT HE WOULD UNDERSTANDABLY HAVE TO RELY VERY HEAVILY AT THIS COUNCIL ON THE KNOWLEDGABLE HEAD OF THAT OFFICE, RENATO RUGGIERO.

2. MEANWHILE, SARTI (FORMERLY MINISTER FOR RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT: PERSONALITIES LIST NO.117) HAS TAKEN OVER FROM RUFFINI. SARTI'S POST HAS BEEN FILLED BY DARIDA, HITHERTO A PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY IN THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR WHO WAS THE LAST CHRISTIAMN DEMOCRAT MAYOR OF ROME. I WILL SEND A FURTHER ASSESSMENT TOMORROW OF THE NEW MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE. BUT RUFFINI HAS LONG HAD CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH HMG. HIS LAST VISIT TO THE UK WAS AT THE INVITATION OF MR PYM IN NOVEMBER LAST TO DISCUSS TNF AND OTHER PROBLEMS OF MUTUAL INTEREST.

ARCULUS

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TO IMMEDIATE UKREP BRUSSELS

TELEGRAM NUMBER 64 OF 14 JANUARY

PERSONALITY NOTE AS REQUESTED FOR THE PS/LPS

RUFFINI, ONOREVOLE ATTILIO

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT)

1. BORN MANTOVA 1925. BARRISTER. TOOK PART IN WARTIME RESISTANCE. JOINED DC IN 1945. DEPUTY FOR PALERMO SINCE 1963. MEMBER OF PARTY NATIONAL COUNCIL SINCE 1969. UNDER-SECRETARY (JUNIOR MINISTER) FOR EDUCATION 1972, AND FOR THE TREASURY 1972-74. PARTY VICE-SECRETARY APRIL 1974 TO JULY 1976, RESPONSIBLE FOR PRESS AND INFORMATION. MINISTER OF TRANSPORT FROM JULY 1976 TO SEPTEMBER 1977 WHEN HE WAS SWITCHED TO DEFENCE AFTER THE PREVIOUS MINISTER OF DEFENCE, LATTANZIO, HAD BEEN HEAVILY CRITICISED FOR THE ESCAPE FROM A ROME PRISON OF THE NAZI WAR CRIMINAL KAPPLER. RUFFINI RETAINED HIS JOB AS DEFENCE MINISTER WHEN THE NEW ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT WAS FORMED IN MARCH 1978.

2. RUFFINI IS A MEMBER OF THE MAINSTREAM "DOROTEI" FACTION OF THE DC, AND IS PERSONALLY CLOSE TO ANDREOTTI. HAS A SOLID BASE OF LOCAL SUPPORT IN SICILY, AND IS AN ACTIVE AND CAPABLE MINISTER.

3. WELL-DISPOSED TOWARDS BRITAIN. INTERESTED IN LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS. GOOD ON TELEVISION. MARRIED - WIFE IS LIVELY, INTELLIGENT, INTERESTED IN POLITICS, AND COMES FROM AN INFLUENTIAL SICILIAN FAMILY. FIVE CHILDREN - ONE SON WORKING IN UK TO LEARN ENGLISH.

CARRINGTON

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16 JAN 1980