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DESKBY 291200Z

FM ROME 291010Z JAN

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 94 OF 29 JANUARY 1980

WES 04/2	
RECEIVED IN REGISTRY NO. 13	
25 FEB 1980	
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PA	

- ② MY TELNO 83: SIGNOR COSSIGA'S VISIT TO LONDON:
ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION

1. ONE DOMESTIC SUBJECT WHICH WILL BE ON SIGNOR COSSIGA'S MIND WHEN HE ARRIVES IN LONDON TODAY IS THE PACKAGE OF ANTI-TERRORIST MEASURES WHICH IS CURRENTLY UNDER DISCUSSION IN PARLIAMENT. IN THE FACE OF FILIBUSTERING BY THE FAR-LEFT RADICALS, SIGNOR COSSIGA WAS OBLIGED TO ANNOUNCE YESTERDAY EVENING THAT THE VOTE ON THE MEASURES WILL BE A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE. HE STRESSED THAT THIS WAS BEING DONE FOR PURELY TECHNICAL REASONS IN ORDER TO LIMIT DEBATE (SINCE EACH SPEAKER WILL NOW BE LIMITED TO ONE INTERVENTION) AND ENSURE THAT THE MEASURES ARE PASSED INTO LAW BEFORE THEIR EXPIRY ON 14 FEBRUARY.

2. IT IS NOT LIKELY THAT THE COMMUNISTS AND SOCIALISTS WILL WANT TO ASSOCIATE THEMSELVES WITH FRINGE ELEMENTS OF THE FAR-LEFT AND FAR-RIGHT IN ORDER TO BRING THE GOVERNMENT DOWN ON THIS ISSUE. NEVERTHELESS THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE WHICH IS EXPECTED TO TAKE PLACE IN 4 OR 5 DAYS TIME, INTRODUCES A NEW ELEMENT OF UNCERTAINTY.

3. ADVANCE COPIES TO:-

NO 10, ALEXANDER

P.S.

PS/LPS

PS/PUS

LORD BRIDGES

MR BULLARD

MR HANNAY

HEAD OF W.E.D.

HEAD OF EID(1)

HEAD OF EID(E)

4. WED PLEASE PASS ADVANCE COPY ALSO TO SIR R ARCULUS.

GOODISON
DEPTL DISTN
WED
EID

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