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cc Mr. Ferguson

(7)



British Embassy
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DESK OFFICIAL	Your reference	REGISTRY
DATE	Our reference	non Taken
	Date	25 February 1980

D A S Gladstone Esq
Western European Dept
FCO

Mr. Vencker

Miss Smith - spoken to Miss (Fence) fa. 10/2

Jean David

? BU 1/4 noted

1. pre prime Conservative Central Office.
2. The new Secretary General of the DC should be an British target

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT CONGRESS: VISIT OF SIR ANTHONY ROYLE

1. FCO Tel No 86 about Sir A Royle's visit to Rome arrived in the middle of the morning of Saturday, 16 February. I happened to be in the Embassy at the time and when Sir Anthony telephoned me a few minutes later to ask whether such a message had been sent I was able to say that we had only just received it. Could somebody please point out to the Conservative Central Office that this kind of information is only useful if it is sent in advance of such a visit?

2. Sir A Royle told me he had had a pretty wretched time at the Congress, having been placed among the minor delegations on the floor of the Congress and having been pretty much ignored by everyone. He did not think the Christian Democrats as a party liked the British Conservatives very much. He said that he might seek informal and private advice in due course from Sir R Arculus (whom he saw in London last summer) on how the Conservatives can improve their relations with the Christian Democrats, once the latter have sorted out their new Party organisation. As you know, the elections for the new Party Secretary have been postponed to early next month. Sir Anthony added that the German Christian Democrats were trying to persuade their Italian counterparts to join the EDU (my letter of 1 November last refers) and this might improve matters in the long run.

3. I remain pessimistic about the prospects of an early improvement in the formal relations between the two parties for the reasons described in my letter under reference. A further problem is that most of the Christian Democrat Party's best men are permanently in office and do not have much time to devote to international party business. I do feel, however, that it ought to be possible to improve informal and personal relations between politicians on both sides and although we as an Embassy must not get involved in party matters perhaps we can discreetly advise Sir A Royle in due course of the names of some Christian Democrat leaders whose outlook is suitably international and pro-British. We did occasionally play a discreet part in facilitating links between the Italian Socialists and our Labour Party when the latter were in Government.

thanks so

Yours ever,
James.