

RESTRICTED

FM ROME

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 1072

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INFO PRIORITY EC POSTS, MADRID, LISBON, UKDEL STRASBOURG

[FRAME INSTITUTIONAL]

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MYTELNO 1067: INTER-GOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE IN BRUSSELS

1. ANDREOTTI YESTERDAY ANSWERED QUESTIONS IN THE PARLIAMENT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE BRUSSELS MEETING. HE SAID 'ITALY IS AT A CROSSROADS: EITHER WE ACCEPT WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED AND THAT IS NOT MUCH, OR WE REJECT IT BUT IN DOING SO GIVE SATISFACTION TO THOSE WHO DID NOT WANT THE IGC SO THAT EVERYTHING WOULD BE AS IT WAS BEFORE.' 'IL TEMPO' DESCRIBES ANDREOTTI'S POSITION AS 'LUCID PREGMATISM'. HE REAFFIRMED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT ACCEPT THE OUTCOME OF LUXEMBOURG AS COMPLETED BY BRUSSELS, WITHOUT CONSULTING THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT, BUT WAS EQUIVOCAL ON WHETHER THE POSITION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT WOULD BE DECISIVE. THE PROGRAMME NOW ENVISAGED APPEARS TO BE FOR A MEETING OF ALL ITALIAN MEPS IN EARLY JANUARY AFTER WHICH THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT WILL BE ASKED FOR ITS VIEW. THE LATTER WILL ITSELF DECIDE WHETHER TO AWAIT A DEFINITIVE DECISION BY THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT BEFORE ADOPTING ITS OWN POSITION. IL TEMPO COMMENTS THAT THE MOOD OF THE ITALIAN MPS YESTERDAY WAS NOT FAVOURABLE TOWARDS RATIFICATION OF THE 'SMALL STEPS' APPROACH BUT IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO WAIT FOR THE ISSUES TO RIPEN. IT NOTES THAT ANDREOTTI DESCRIBED THE BRUSSELS MEETING AS MAKING PROGRESS.

COMMENT

2. MFA OFFICIALS CONFIRM THE PROGRAMME OUTLINED ABOVE BUT IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHEN THE MEETINGS WILL BE HELD IE WHETHER THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT WILL MEET BEFORE THE EPS NEXT SCHEDULED SESSION FROM 13 TO 17 JANUARY. NOR WOULD CANGELOSI BE DRAWN ON THE LIKELY GOVERNMENT POSITION IN THE DEBATE. IT STILL APPEARS MOST LIKELY THAT THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT IS LOOKING FOR A DIGNIFIED CLIMBDOWN. GETTING THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT TO SHOULDER RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ITALIAN POSITION, IN THE ABSENCE OF AN OVERT GOVERNMENT LEAD, IS A POSSIBLE WAY OUT AND WE SUSPECT THAT SOME COALITION LEADERS, INCLUDING CRAXI, WILL BE ARGUING PRIVATELY FOR RELUCTANT ENDORSEMENT. BUT ANDREOTTI IS KEEPING HIS OPTIONS OPEN AND A WARY EYE ON THE DANES. THE CONCLUSION WE DRAW IS THAT, LIKE THE DANISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (COPENHAGEN TELNO 314), ANDREOTTI DOES NOT WISH ITALY TO BE ALONE IN REJECTING THE LUXEMBOURG PACKAGE BUT SEES POSSIBLE ADVANTAGE TO HIS EUROPEAN CREDENTIALS IN ITALY'S NOT HAVING ENDORSED IT IN THE EVENT OF ITS REJECTION BY DENMARK. THIS MEANS HE MUST PLAY A WAITING GAME.

BRIDGES

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EGD (1)

THIS TELEGRAM  
WAS NOT  
ADVANCED