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FM ROME 281059Z MAR 85

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 320 OF 28 MAR 85

INFO IMMEDIATE UKREP BRUSSELS, ATHENS, BONN, PARIS,
INFO ROUTINE OTHER EC POSTS.

MB

MY TELNO 318: EUROPEAN COUNCIL.

1. I HAVE NOW BEEN ABLE TO SPEAK TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE MFA ABOUT ITALIAN TACTICS. RUGGIERO WAS IN PARIS ON MARCH 26 AND SPOKE TO DUMAS AND THE ELYSEE: HE IS REASONABLY CONFIDENT THAT THE FRENCH WILL SETTLE THE OUTSTANDING POINTS ON SPANISH ACCESSION AT THE FAC. CRAXI HELD A MEETING LAST NIGHT TO REVIEW PRESIDENCY TACTICS AND REACHED THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE WAS NO REAL POSSIBILITY OF REACHING AN AGREEMENT WITH GREECE UNLESS HE IS ABLE TO LINE UP THE NINE FIRST AND THIS COULD ONLY BE DONE ON THE BASIS OF THE LATEST COMMISSION PROPOSAL. THUS HE WOULD PRESENT PAPANDEOU WITH THE ALTERNATIVE OF ACCEPTING THE DELORS PROPOSALS, OR REMAINING ISOLATED. CRAXI DOES NOT WISH TO SPEND MANY HOURS OF THE COUNCIL IN DETAILED NEGOTIATION OF IMPS. HIS PRESENT IDEA WAS TO HAVE A TABLE ROUND TO SEE IF THE POSSIBILITY OF AN AGREEMENT EXISTS: IF IN HIS JUDGEMENT IT DOES NOT, HE WOULD SEEK TO PASS ON TO OTHER MATTERS. I COMMENTED THAT I WAS SURE THE OTHER EIGHT MEMBER STATES WOULD ALL BE KEEN TO REACH AN AGREEMENT AND HOPED THE PRESIDENCY WOULD NOT ABANDON THAT POSSIBILITY TOO SOON. RUGGIERO SAID THAT CRAXI INTENDED TO TALK PRIVATELY TO PAPANDEOU BEFORE THE COUNCIL BEGINS, WITH A VIEW TO SEEING HOW READY THE LATTER IS TO MOVE.

2. RUGGIERO ADDED THAT CRAXI HAS READ THE PRIME MINISTER'S DRAFT CONCLUSIONS ON WEALTH AND EMPLOYMENT WITH INTEREST AND SEES THEM AS A SERIOUS CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL. BUT, HE WENT ON, HE DOES NEED YOUR PRIME MINISTER'S HELP IN DEALING WITH THE GREEKS.

BRIDGES

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