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GRS 288  
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 FM FCO 291420Z APRIL 82  
 TO PRIORITY ROME  
 TELEGRAM NUMBER 91 OF 29 APRIL  
 INFO ROUTINE BONN, PARIS, WASHINGTON.  
 INFO SAVING BIS BUENOS AIRES.

(181) - YOUR TELNO 205: ITALIAN REPORTING ON ARGENTINA

1. FONTANA GIUSTI, MINISTER AT THE ITALIAN EMBASSY, CALLED ON GLADSTONE ON 26 APRIL FOLLOWING A COMMUNITY BRIEFING ON FALKLANDS CRISIS.
2. FONTANA GIUSTI SAID THAT THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT FULLY SUPPORTED THE UK OVER THE PRINCIPLE AT STAKE, BUT HE WISHED US TO KNOW JUST HOW DIFFICULT IT HAD BEEN FOR THE ITALIANS TO GO ALONG WITH EC SANCTIONS AGAINST ARGENTINA. HE POINTED OUT THAT ALMOST HALF THE POPULATION OF ARGENTINA IS OF ITALIAN EXTRACTION AND THAT PUBLIC OPINION IN ITALY COULD NOT TOLERATE A COMPLETE HUMILIATION OF ARGENTINA. FURTHERMORE, SUCH HUMILIATION WOULD LEAD TO A COLLAPSE OF THE PRESENT JUNTA, AND IT WAS FEARED THAT WHATEVER CAME AFTERWARDS WOULD BE WORSE. FONTANA GIUSTI ALSO MENTIONED THE INCREASED PRESSURE ON THE SPADOLINI COALITION WHICH THE SOCIALIST PARTY COULD BE EXPECTED TO EXERT IN THE EVENT OF BLOODSHED.
3. GLADSTONE SOUGHT TO ASSURE FONTANA GIUSTI THAT THE POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS OF THE CRISIS ON THE ITALIAN DOMESTIC POLITICAL SCENE WERE WELL KNOWN TO US: NEVERTHELESS HE URGED THE NEED FOR PATIENCE, POINTING OUT THAT IT COULD BE SOME TIME BEFORE THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT WERE BROUGHT TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY. IN THE MEANTIME HMG WERE OBLIGED TO USE ALL AVAILABLE MEANS IN THE SEARCH FOR A SATISFACTORY OUTCOME. SATISFACTORY IN THIS RESPECT MEANT NOT ONLY THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH SOVEREIGNTY BUT ALSO RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW, FOR WHICH ARGENTINA HAD SHOWN NO REGARD. GLADSTONE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT ITALY SHARED THE

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IMPORTANCE WHICH THE UNITED KINGDOM ATTACHED TO SUCH WIDER ASPECTS OF THE DISPUTE.

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