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FM ROME 101215Z MAY 82

TO PRIORITY FCO
 TELEGRAM NO. 242 OF 10 MAY 82
 INFO PRIORITY UKREP BRUSSELS AND UKDEL STRASBOURG

FALKLANDS: EUROPEAN LIBERALS AND DEMOCRATS CONGRESS IN VENICE

1. THIS CONGRESS TOOK PLACE IN VENICE ON 7-8 MAY, FOLLOWED BY A PUBLIC MEETING ON 09 MAY AT WHICH SPADOLINI AMONG OTHERS SPOKE. MUCH OF THE PROCEEDINGS WERE DEVOTED TO ECONOMIC QUESTIONS, EUROPEAN UNION AND A GREATER ROLE FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. A MEMBER OF MY STAFF ATTENDED FOR PART OF THE TIME, AND A REPORT WILL FOLLOW BY BAG.

2. INEVITABLY THE FALKLANDS AROSE, AND MIFT CONTAINS THE TEXT OF A RESOLUTION THAT THE CONGRESS ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY. THIS WILL GUIDE THE LIBERAL BLOC IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN A FURTHER DEBATE ON THE FALKLANDS WHICH WE UNDERSTAND WILL TAKE PLACE LATER THIS WEEK. THE TEXT IS A GREAT IMPROVEMENT ON AN EARLIER PVV (BELGIAN) AND VENSTRE (DANISH) DRAFT SUPPORTED BY THE GERMAN FDP. WE WERE IN TOUCH WITH MESSRS STEEL AND JOHNSTON, BUT THEY NEEDED LITTLE PROMPTING TO PRESS FOR AMENDMENTS, ESPECIALLY ON THE LINK BETWEEN CEASEFIRE AND WITHDRAWAL, ON CONDEMNATION OF THE ARGENTINE INVASION AND ON FULL SUPPORT FOR SCR 502 AS A WHOLE. MADAME WEIL INTERVENED USEFULLY TO URGE DELEGATES NOT TO BACKTRACK ON THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S RESOLUTION OF 22 APRIL (THOUGH PARA 3 OF THE TEXT IN MIFT MODIFIES THE EARLIER RESOLUTION'S DEMAND FOR PRIOR ARGENTINE WITHDRAWAL) FROM THIS POST'S POINT OF VIEW, WE WERE GRATEFUL TO MR JOHNSTON FOR THANKING OUR EUROPEAN PARTNERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND FOR EXPRESSING PARTICULAR UNDERSTANDING OF ITALY'S POSITION.

ARCULUS

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