

RESTRICTED

FM BONN

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 029

OF 160600Z JANUARY 93

INFO PRIORITY VALLETTA

INFO ROUTINE UKREP BRUSSELS, ROME, PARIS, ACTOR

FRAME EXTERNAL

BONN TELNO 933: EC/MALTA

SUMMARY

1. MALTESE FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS BONN. CLAIMS GERMAN SUPPORT FOR EARLY EC MEMBERSHIP. GERMAN POSITION DELIBERATELY AMBIGUOUS.

DETAIL

2. THE MALTESE FOREIGN MINISTER, DE MARCO, VISITED BONN ON 14-15 JANUARY. HE HAD BRIEF MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KINKEL AND THE MINISTER OF STATE RESPONSIBLE FOR EC AFFAIRS, FRAU SEILER-ALBRING. THE LATTER'S APS TOLD US AFTERWARDS THAT THE GERMAN POSITION REMAINED UNCHANGED: FRAU SEILER-ALBRING HAD TOLD DE MARCO THAT THE EC HAD TO WAIT FOR THE COMMISSION'S AVIS. DE MARCO HAD SAID HE THOUGHT THIS WAS BEING HELD UP BECAUSE THE COMMISSION WANTED TO WAIT FOR THE RESULT OF THE IMPENDING ELECTIONS IN CYPRUS. MALTA WAS READY TO COMPROMISE ON INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES.

3. IN A PUBLIC SPEECH NEAR BONN DE MARCO SAID THAT KINKEL HAD ASSURED HIM OF GERMAN SUPPORT FOR MALTESE MEMBERSHIP. RESPONDING TO QUESTIONING HE CLAIMED THAT KOHL HAD TOLD THE MALTESE PRIME MINISTER BEFORE EDINBURGH THAT MALTA SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO JOIN THE EC QUOTE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNQUOTE. THE MALTESE GOVERNMENT TOOK THIS TO BE GERMAN SUPPORT FOR MALTA TO JOIN IN THE FIRST WAVE OF APPLICANTS. ALTHOUGH HE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY, DE MARCO DID NOT DIRECTLY CRITICISE UK POLICY ON ENLARGEMENT.

COMMENT

4. THE GERMANS ARE MAINTAINING A JUDICIOUS AMBIGUITY ABOUT THE EXTENT OF THEIR SUPPORT FOR MALTA, PARTLY IT SEEMS BECAUSE KOHL

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THINKS HE NEEDS ITALIAN SUPPORT FOR THE PROSPECT OF EC ENLARGEMENT  
TO THE EAST AND PARTLY, WE SUSPECT, BECAUSE THEY DO NOT SEE WHY  
THEY SHOULD BE THE ONES TO BEAR BAD TIDINGS. OFFICIALS, WHO  
RECOGNISE THAT MALTESE MEMBERSHIP WILL CAUSE PROBLEMS, ARE RELYING  
ON THE COMMISSION AND OTHER MEMBER STATES TO ENSURE THAT IN  
PRACTICE MALTA WILL NOT BE IN THE FIRST WAVE OF NEW ACCESSIONS.  
BUT IT IS A DANGEROUS GAME AND THE MALTESE ARE EXPLOITING THE  
AMBIGUITY WITH SKILL.

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