

EWA. (3)

Mr Gladstone
spoke well.

WR2 0206	
27 APR 1982	
REGISTRY	
Action Taken	
M.H.	DB

Mr Gladstone has seen
Mr Ochoa

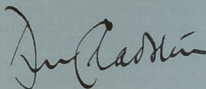
27/4

Mr Bullard ✓

ITALY/ARGENTINA

1. After you had briefed Community Embassies this afternoon, Signor Fontana Giusti called on me. He said that he had not wished to take up a bilateral point with you in the company of Community colleagues but wished us to know just how difficult the decision to go along with EC sanctions had been for the Italian Government. As we would know, the PSI in particular have criticised the Government for its decision and there would be strong pressure within the coalition's ranks to re-open the question if there were violence and bloodshed over the Falkland Islands. The Italian Government had supported us fully over the principle at stake but hoped very much that there would be a quick and above all a negotiated settlement: nearly half the population of Argentina were of Italian origin and Italian public opinion would not easily be able to accept a complete humiliation of Argentina. Such a humiliation would in any case lead to the collapse of the present junta and it was to be feared that whatever came afterwards would be worse.

2. In reply, I assured him that the delicacy of the Italian domestic situation was well known to us: we had in particular studied the communique issued after the Council of Ministers' meeting on 23 April (Rome telno 196). Nevertheless, I must ask him, as no doubt you had already asked him, to urge on his government the need for patience. It could be some time before the Argentine Government were brought to negotiate seriously over the Falklands and HMG would have no option but to continue to use whatever means of pressure presented themselves until a satisfactory outcome had been achieved. I stressed that when I said 'satisfactory' I was not thinking merely of the re-establishment of British sovereignty over the Falkland Islands but of the wider principles of international law which had been flouted by the Argentinians and to which I was sure our Italian friends attached as great importance as we.


D A S Gladstone
Western European Department

26 April 1982

cc:
Mr Goodison
Falkland Islands Emergency Unit