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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

14 June 1982

MEETING BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND SIGNOR SPADOLINI

I am afraid that, owing to my absence from the Office last week, you have not yet had an account of the bilateral meeting between Mrs. Thatcher and Signor Spadolini in Versailles on Sunday 6 June. In the event, it was extremely brief. The Italians had been keen to set aside 45 minutes for the occasion, but the proceedings of the Economic Summit continued later than expected.

Signor Spadolini spent most of the 7 minute conversation reaffirming Italian support for Britain on the Falkland Islands and explaining the political difficulties which had led to the Italian decision on economic sanctions. He did not wish Italian failure to give full support on sanctions to be taken as an indication that he did not agree with our view of the rights and wrongs of the situation. He stressed that the Italian embargo on military supplies would be maintained. He had very recently declined to allow Argentina to place new orders for ships. He was also determined that Italian arms would not reach Argentina through third countries.

The Prime Minister commented briefly to the effect that she had no doubt that both Signor Spadolini and Signor Colombo would personally have been in favour of stronger action in support of the United Kingdom.

At the end of the conversation Signor Spadolini presented the Prime Minister with a book about Garibaldi.

AJC

Francis Richards, Esq.,
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SLZ