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Viewing cable 03ROME3199, USTICA CRASH BACK IN THE HEADLINES: REQUEST FOR

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
03ROME3199	2003-07-14 12:37	2011-08-30 01:44	SECRET	Embassy Rome

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

S E C R E T ROME 003199

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR A/RPS/IPS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/11/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [IT](#) [FAA](#) [AVIATION](#)

SUBJECT: USTICA CRASH BACK IN THE HEADLINES: REQUEST FOR INFO

REF: ROME 2887

CLASSIFIED BY: POLITICAL MINISTER COUNSELOR THOMAS COUNTRYMAN FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (U) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST. PLEASE SEE PARA 5.

¶2. (C) THIRTY ITALIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS HAVE SIGNED A RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE GOI TO OFFICIALLY PROTEST TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT FOR "SPYING" ON THE ITALIAN PM AND MOD IN 1992, ACCORDING TO CARLO GIOVANARDI, MINISTER FOR RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT. GIOVANARDI TOLD POL MC AT A JULY 10 MEETING THAT THE RESOLUTION LAMENTS THE USG'S "LACK OF CLARITY AND COOPERATION" WITH THE GOI ON THE 1980 USTICA CRASH CASE. GIOVANARDI SHOWED POL MC THE JUNE 21 TG3 TV REPORTAGE ALLEGING THAT THE USG INTERCEPTED IN 1992 A PHONE CALL BETWEEN PM GIULIANO AMATO AND MOD SALVO ANDRO WHILE THE GOI WAS DECIDING WHETHER TO BECOME A PLAINTIFF IN THE USTICA CASE (REFTEL). THE TV REPORT CLAIMED THAT THE INTERCEPTED PHONE CALL WAS MENTIONED IN DOCUMENTS THE STATE DEPARTMENT RELEASED TO USTICA VICTIMS' RELATIVES PURSUANT TO A FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST.

¶3. (C) GIOVANARDI EXPLAINED THAT, A YEAR AGO, HE SPOKE IN PARLIAMENT TRYING TO PUT THE 20- YEAR OLD USTICA CRASH CASE TO REST. HE FAVORED THE EXPLANATION THAT THE CRASH WAS CAUSED BY AN INTERNAL EXPLOSION AND NOT BY A US MISSILE. THESE NEW ALLEGATIONS UNDERMINE HIS CREDIBILITY, HE SAID. HE MUST SPEAK AGAIN ON THE CASE IN A PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE HEARING ON THE OPPOSITION MOTION BEFORE THE END OF JULY. HE ASKED POL MC FOR THE DOCUMENTS ALLEGEDLY RELEASED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO THE VICTIMS' FAMILIES IN ORDER TO BE PREPARED TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE AGAIN IN PARLIAMENT, AND ASKED THAT WE COORDINATE OUR PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE MATTER.

¶4. (C) COMMENT : GIOVANARDI AND POL MC AGREED THAT THE TG3 REPORTAGE PRESENTED NO NEW EVIDENCE ON THE USTICA CRASH ITSELF, AND INCLUDES NOTHING THAT WOULD DISPROVE WHAT GIOVANARDI BRIEFED TO THE PARLIAMENT OR WHAT WE HAVE ALWAYS SAID: THAT THERE WAS NO USG INVOLVEMENT IN THE CRASH. THE PROGRAM DID RAISE NEW ALLEGATIONS OF "ESPIONAGE" BY THE USG, HOWEVER, AND IMPLIED THAT THE USG MUST HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE USTICA CRASH AND "COVER-UP" OR IT WOULD NOT HAVE "SPIED" ON SENIOR GOI CONVERSATIONS REGARDING THE CASE. POST NEEDS TO REVIEW THE DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN THE PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY AND THE TV PROGRAM IN ORDER TO BE FULLY INFORMED (OR AT LEAST AS INFORMED AS THOSE MAKING THE ACCUSATIONS). EMBASSY DOES NOT INTEND TO COMMENT PUBLICLY ON THE NEW ALLEGATION, BUT IF THE ALLEGATION IS NOT SUPPORTED BY THE DOCUMENTS THEMSELVES, THEN WE WOULD BE ABLE TO HELP GIOVANARDI FEND OFF THE OPPOSITION'S MOTION. GIVEN THE VOLATILE CONSPIRACY THEORY TENDANCIES THAT STUBBORNLY SURROUND THE USTICA INCIDENT, WE WOULD PREFER NOT TO HAVE TO ASK THE VICTIMS' FAMILIES FOR COPIES OF INTERNAL STATE DEPARTMENT DOCUMENTS.

¶5. (C) ACTION REQUEST: WE REALIZE THE MAGNITUDE OF THE TASK

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*courage is contagious*

OF LOCATING PARTICULAR DOCUMENTS FROM THOUSANDS RELEASED UNDER FOIA, AND WE GREATLY APPRECIATE THE EFFORT A/RPS/IPS HAS ALREADY PUT IN TO REFTEL REQUEST. THE ONLY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WE CAN PROVIDE, HAVING NOW VIEWED THE VIDEOTAPE, IS THAT THE DOCUMENT CITED HAS THE APPEARANCE OF A STATE CABLE (POSSIBLY EXDIS OR NODIS), RATHER THAN AN INTELLIGENCE PRODUCT. THE ONLY IDENTIFYING DATA WE COULD SEE ON THE ONE PAGE SHOWN WAS WHAT APPEARED TO BE A CABLE NUMBER "0467" AND A DTG "161624Z" (MONTH INDISTINCT). WE AGAIN REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT'S MOST RAPID ASSISTANCE WITH IDENTIFYING THE DOCUMENTS RELEASED PURSUANT TO THE FOIA REQUEST. END COMMENT AND ACTION REQUEST.  
SEMBLER

NNNN

2003ROME03199 - Classification: SECRET