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THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE SECURITY SITUATION

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PAGE 01 MILAN 01856 01 OF 02 222151Z POSS DUPE
ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 INR-05 NSC-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

NSAE-00 PM-03 PRS-01 MCT-01 SY-02 SP-02 NEA-07

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MILAN 1856

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VICENZA FOR GENERAL WOLFF

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SUBJECT: THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE SECURITY SITUATION

SEEN FROM MILAN

REF: ROME 19081

1. WE HAVE NOW COMPLETED A ROUND OF CONVERSATIONS WITH THOSE IN THE MILAN AREA WHOM WE BELIEVE MOST LIKELY TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT OF THE SECURITY SITUATION. WE DOUBT THAT THERE ARE IMPORTANT SOURCES ELSEWHERE IN OUR TERRITORY. WE HAVE MET WITH THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF ALL MILITARY FORCES NORTH OF THE APPENINES AND WEST OF THE YUGOSLAVIA DEFENSE AREA, THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF ALL CARABINIERI FORCES IN NORTHERN ITALY (EXCLUDING GENOVA), THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOMBARDY REGION (DC), THE PRESIDENT OF THE PROVINCE (PCI), THE MILAN QUESTORE (CHIEF OF CRIMINAL POLICE), THE SECRETARY OF THE PSI, SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 MILAN 01856 01 OF 02 222151Z POSS DUPE

AND THE PAST AND PRESENT EDITORS OF THE CORRIERE DELLA SERA, AND THE EDITOR OF IL GIORNALE, INTER ALIA.

2. OUR OBJECTIVE WAS TO EXAMINE THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CONTINUING TERRORISM PERPETRATED BY THE EXTREME LEFT, PARTICULARLY IN THE LIGHT OF THE APPARENT ESCALATION MARKED BY THE ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATIONS LAST WEEK IN TURIN AND GENOA. WE HAVE

BEEN HASTENED TO THE TASK BY THE MILAN CONCEIT OR PERCEPTION THAT AS IT GOES, SO GOES THE NATION.

3. OUR CONCLUSION IS THAT POLITICAL TERRORISM IS INCREASING

THE DEPENDENCE OF THE NON-COMMUNIST PARTIES UPON THE PCI AND INCREASING THE LIKELIHOOD, WHILE ADVANCING THE DAY, OF A SHOW-

DOWN ON COMMUNIST RE-ENTRY TO AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT.

4. CONTRARY TO MY HUNCH LAST AUTUMN, POLITICAL TERRORISM HAS

INCREASED RATHER THAN BEGUN TO DECLINE. IT IS CLEAR FROM ALL OUR CONVERSATIONS THAT NEITHER THE POLICE NOR OTHERS HERE

BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE NOW ABLE TO PREVENT OR SURPRESS THE TRICKLE TERRORISM BEING CARRIED OUT BY THE EXTREME LEFT. WHILE BIG NAMES

AT THE CABINET LEVEL AS WELL AS SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS LOCAL- LY ARE WELL GUARDED CONSTANTLY, THE TERRORISTS HAVE INNUMERABLE

DEFENSELESS TARGETS. NOR DO THE POLICE BELIEVE THAT THEY CAN CATCH THE CULPRITS. AND ACCORDING TO LOCAL SOURCES, THAT IS

THE VIEW OF THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR HIMSELF.

5. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF REASONS ADVANCED FOR THIS IMPOTENCE.

FIRST, ALL AGREE THAT THE ITALIAN COVERT SERVICES HAVE BEEN

LITERALLY DESTROYED. THE POLICE HAVE FEW INFORMERS, COVERT AGENTS OR INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS. IT IS REPORTED THAT THE SERVICES

THEMSELVES ARE INFILTRATED WITH EXTREMISTS, MAKING INFORMANTS UNWILLING TO RISK EXPOSURE. AND WITHOUT COVERT INTELLIGENCE ON A CLANDESTINE NETWORK THAT AVOIDS OPEN CONFRONTATION, THE

SECRET

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PAGE 03 MILAN 01856 01 OF 02 222151Z POSS DUPE

POLICE ARE ON THE DEFENSIVE. THERE IS NO MORE SERIOUS SHORT

COMING, OUR INFORMANTS INSIST, NOR ANY THAT WILL TAKE LONGER TO

RECTIFY, SINCE THERE IS A LACK OF TOP LEVEL BACKING AND LEADERSHIP FOR A DETERMINED ATTACK ON PROBLEM AT COVERT LEVEL.

6. SECOND, THERE IS A LACK OF POLITICAL COMMITMENT TO LET THE

POLICE TAKE ACTION THAT MAY LEAD TO CASUALTIES. THE COMPLAINT IS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WANTS ORDER BUT NOT THE INEVITABLE DEATHS

THAT WILL BRING IN THE STREETS AS THE POLICE CRACK DOWN ON THE MASS DEMONSTRATIONS OF TERRORIST SYMPATHIZERS WHO SUPPORT AND COVER THE SEVERAL THOUSAND COVERT TERRORISTS THEMSELVES. (ARAB TERRORISTS

ARE ANOTHER CATEGORY THE GOVERNMENT HAS REPEATEDLY HELPED TO ESCAPE RATHER THAN RISK AN INCIDENT).

7. THIRD, THE UNWILLINGNESS OF THE COURTS TO CONVICT ARRESTED

DEFENDANTS HAS THE POLICE AND OTHERS IN A LATHER. THIS RELUCTANCE IS BLAMED ON THE EXTREME LEFT SYMPATHIES OF SOME OF THE

JUSTICES AND ON THE FEAR BY OTHERS OF REPRISAL THAT THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS HAVE INSTILLED BY THEIR ATTACKS.

8. FOURTH, THE POLICE CLAIM TO LACK THE MEN AND THE EQUIPMENT

NEEDED. THE CARABINIERI ARE THE ONLY CREDITABLE ANTI-TERRORIST

FORCE AND THEY ARE TOO FEW, TOO THINLY SPREAD, TOO TIED TO ESCORT, GUARD AND OFFICE DUTY. THEY COMPLAIN OF A LACK OF CONCEALED, FLE-

XIBLE BODY ARMOR, OF RIOT CONTROL EQUIPMENT, OF ARMORED VEHICLES AND OF ADEQUATE SECURE COMMUNICATIONS WITH THEIR TACTICAL UNITS.

9. FIFTH, THE LACK OF PRISON SPACE STANDS IN THE WAY OF DETAINING

SUSPECTS OR VIOLATORS EXCEPT IN THE MOST SERIOUS CASES. THE PRISONS ARE OLD, OVERCROWED AND INSECURE. THE MOST DANGEROUS TERRORISTS CAN AND DO ESCAPE.

10. SIXTH, THE SEMI-CLANDESTINE GROUPS LIKE AUTONOMIA OPERAIA

WHO PROVIDE THE IDEOLOGICAL BACKING FOR THE TERRORISTS AND CONFER
ON THEM A MEASURE OF LEGITIMACY AT LEAST ON THE RADICAL FRINGE

OPERATE MORE OR LESS FREELY IN MILAN AND IN ACADEMIC SETTINGS LIKE
SECRET

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PAGE 04 MILAN 01856 01 OF 02 222151Z POSS DUPE

THE UNIVERSITY OF PADUA. ALTHOUGH THE MILAN QUESTURA RECENTLY
ASKED FOR WARRANTS FOR THE ARREST OF 18 OF THESE PEOPLE AND
SEVERAL ARE NOW BEHIND BARS AWAITING TRIAL FOR SPECIFIC CRIMES,
THIS INFLAMMATORY GROUP HAS BEEN LEFT LARGELY UNTOUCHED.

11. SO MUCH FOR THE REASONS LOCALLY GIVEN FOR THE INABILITY OF
THE POLICE IN THIS AREA TO GET THE TERRORISM UNDER CONTROL.

12. WHAT ARE THE POLITICAL EFFECTS OF THIS SITUATION?

13. LOCAL NON-COMMUNIST POLITICOS AS WELL AS SECURITY OFFICIALS
AGREE THAT THE COMMUNISTS DAILY BECOME MORE IMPORTANT TO THE
MAINTENANCE OF LAW, ORDER AND DEMOCRACY. THE PCI INFLUENCE
WITH THE TRADE UNIONS AND ITS MILLIONS OF OTHER SUPPORTERS
MULTIPLIES ITS IMPORTANCE TO THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC MINORITY

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PAGE 01 MILAN 01856 02 OF 02 222222Z

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INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 INR-05 NSC-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 MILAN 1856

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GOVERNMENT. THE ROLE OF THE PCI WAS SUDDENLY PROJECTED CENTER
STAGE BY THE STATEMENT BY PCI SHADOW CABINET MEMBER FOR INTERIOR,

PECCHIOLI ON NOV 17TH WHEN HE CALLED FOR WORKERS TO SECOND AND
HELP THE POLICE MAINTAIN ORDER. LOCAL MILITARY AND POLICE OFFICIALS

ARE OPPOSED TO ANY SORT OF ORGANIZED PARA-POLICE ACTIVITY BY THE
PCI...AS IS THE PCI PRESIDENT OF THE PROVINCE, HIMSELF WHO THINKS

INITIATIVE ATTRIBUTED TO PECCHIOLI SINGULARLY MISGUIDED. THE
NIGHTMARE OF ARMED COMMUNIST VIGILANTES HELPING THE POLICE

MAINTAIN ORDER IS THUS PROBABLY NOT A SERIOUS POSSIBILITY. BUT
THE IDEA ITSELF IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE WAY THE COMMUNISTS MIGHT

VERY WELL LOOM LARGE IN AN EVENTUAL SOLUTION. AND WERE THEY TO LOOM THAT LARGE, THE POLITICAL IMPACT IS EASY TO IMAGINE.

14. THE COMMUNISTS ARE LIKELY TO MOVE WITH A GOOD DEAL MORE FINEESE THAN PECCHIOLI'S VIGILANTE REMARKS WOULD SUGGEST IN

FACT IF ONE IS TO CREDIT THE PRESIDENT OF THE PROVINCE OF MILAN, VITALI, A YOUNG, UP FROM THE RANKS LIFETIME PARTY MILITANT,

SECRET

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PAGE 02 MILAN 01856 02 OF 02 222222Z

THE PCI IS APPALLED AT THE IDEA OF BEING RUNG INTO GOVERNMENT TO RESTORE LAW AND ORDER. DURING A LONG DISCUSSION OF THE

ISSUE NOV 21, VITALI SURMISED THAT BRIGATE ROSSE ARE TRYING TO FORCE A RIGHTIST REACTION IN ITALY THAT WOULD, IN TURN, EXPLODE

AND OPEN THE WAY FOR AN EXTREME LEFTIST TAKE OVER. (THAT THEORY ALSO EXPOUNDED BY OTHER NON-COMMUNIST CLOSE OBSERVERS OF EXTREMIST MOVEMENT) PCI DEAD SET AGAINST SUCH A SCENARIO, VITALI SAID,

AND WANTS TERRORISM SUPPRESSED. HE PERSONALLY FAVORS POLITICAL APPROACH I.E. BUILD UP OF PUBLIC OPINION ISOLATING TERRORISTS

AND DEPRIVING THEM OF ACTIVE AND PASSIVE HELP FROM PUBLIC. BUT WANTS THIS ACCOMPANIED BY POLICE ACTION WHICH, HE SAID, SIX PARTIES

HAVE ALREADY AGREED - INCLUDING MAJOR OUTLAYS OF FUNDS. VITALI OPPOSED TO ANY IDEA OF COMMUNIST OR OTHER VIGILANTES. A LOUSY IDEA,

HE ARGUED, THAT RECALLED FASCIST MILITIA BEFORE MUSSOLINI CAME TO POWER. WHEN POLITICAL PARTIES BEGIN TO HAVE PRIVATE ARMIES, DEMO-

CRACY IS FINISHED. PECCHIOLI HAD BEEN MISREPRESENTED IN THE PRESS ON THIS SUBJECT OR HE HAD PUT IT POORLY, ACCORDING TO VITALI.

WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS A RALLYING OF PUBLIC OPINION NOT A DESCENT

INTO THE STREETS.

15. IN ANY EVENT, SHOULD THE COMMUNISTS EITHER DEMAND, OR OTHER PARTIES INSIST, THAT THE PCI BE BROUGHT INTO A COALITION GOVERNMENT TO ENABLE THE STATE TO SUPPRESS EXTREMIST LEFT TERRORISM, LOCAL POLITICAL LEADERS PREDICT A SPLIT IN THE DC WHICH COULD FURTHER PARALYZE GOVERNMENT AND OPEN A PANDORA'S BOX FOR THE DEMOCRATIC STATE.

16. THE PIVOTAL QUESTION, HOWEVER, IS NOT THE TENDENTIAL IMPACT OF TRICKLE TERRORISM. ABOUT THAT THERE APPEARS TO BE LITTLE DISPUTE HERE. THE REAL QUESTION CENTERS ON TIMING. HOW MUCH TERRORISM CAN THE ITALIAN PUBLIC ABSORB BEFORE COMMUNIST ADMISSION TO GOVERNMENT BECOMES AN IMMEDIATE PROBLEM? THE ANSWER MAY BE IMPOSSIBLE TO GIVE. FOR AN AMERICAN, THE EXTENT OF THE

SECRET

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PAGE 03 MILAN 01856 02 OF 02 222222Z

TERRORISM ALREADY EXCEEDS TOLERABLE LEVELS IN THE UNITED STATES. THE WEATHERMEN, THE PUERTO RICAN NATIONALISTS AND THE SYMBION-

ESE LIBERATION ARMY WERE SMALL BEER IN COMPARISON TO THEIR ITALIAN COUNTERPARTS. OUR LOCAL INTERLOCUTORS ARE UNANIMOUS IN DESCRIBING THE SITUATION AS FRAUGHT WITH DANGER TO ITALIAN DEMOCRACY.

BUT THEY ALSO SAY THAT, AT PRESENT LEVELS OF VIOLENCE, THE CRISIS COULD DRAG ON FOR MONTHS OR EVEN YEARS WITHOUT COMING TO A POLI-

TICAL HEAD ON THE ISSUE OF COMMUNIST MEMBERSHIP IN GOVERNMENT. ITALIAN TOLERANCE, PATIENCE, CYNICISM, RESIGNATION AND INDECISIVE-

NESS, THE DEEP IMPRINT OF CATHOLICISM, FAVOR A CONTINUATION OF THE STATUS QUO.

17. AND IT IS TRUE THAT MUCH OF POST-WAR ITALIAN HISTORY SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN A STEADILY MOVING WAVE PERPETUALLY ABOUT TO BREAK OVER THE TROUGH RUNNING BEFORE IT. OLD ITALIAN HANDS HAVE HEARD AND SHOUTED WOLF SO OFTEN THAT THEY KNOW HOW UNLIKELY IT IS THAT THEY

WILL ACTUALLY FORESEE THE CRASH WHEN-AND IF-IT COMES.

18. IN THIS CASE, HOWEVER, IT IS ENOUGH THAT THE PROBABLE EFFECT OF THE TERRORISM SHOULD BE TO INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD OR PROXIMITY OF COMMUNIST RE-ENTRY TO GOVERNMENT TO WARRANT OUR PRAYERFUL AND URGENT ATTENTION.FINA

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