

PUBLIC LIBRARY OF US DIPLOMACY

[Specified Search \(/search.wikileaks.org/plusd/\)](#)

[View Map \(/plusd/map\)](#)

[Make Timegraph \(/plusd/graph\)](#)

[View Tags \(/plusd/tags/\)](#)

[Image Library \(/plusd/image/library/\)](#)

CONVERSATION WITH SOCIALIST PARTY LEADER CRAXI

Date: 1977 December 22, 00:00 (Thursday)
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS - Limited Distribution Only
Executive Order: GS
TAGS: IT - Italy (/plusd/?q=&qftags=IT#result) |
PINT - Political Affairs--Internal Political
Affairs (/plusd/?q=&qftags=PINT#result)

Enclosure: -- N/A or Blank --
Office Origin: -- N/A OR BLANK --
Office Action: ACTION EUR - BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND
EURASIAN AFFAIRS

From: ITALY ROME (/PLUSD/?Q=&QFORIGIN=ITALY
%23%23ROME#RESULT)

To: SECRETARY OF STATE (/PLUSD/?Q=&
QFDESTINATION=SECRETARY OF STATE#RESULT)

Canonical ID: 1977ROME20943_c
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Character Count: 5793
Locator: TEXT ON MICROFILM,TEXT ONLINE
Concepts: PARTY LEADERS (/plusd/?q=&
qfconcept=PARTY+LEADERS#result) |
VISITS (/plusd/?q=&
qfconcept=VISITS#result)
Type: TE - Telegram (cable)
Archive Status: Electronic Telegrams

Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released
US Department of State EO Systematic
Review 22 May 2009

SUMMARY: PSI SECRETARY BETTINO CRAXI TOLD ME DURING BRIEF

VISIT AT OUR RESIDENCE THAT HE IS DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE
"TO PUT THE BARKES ON UNFOLDING POLITICAL CRISIS. HE
EXPECTS MOMENT OF TRUTH TO COME IN MID-JANUARY, WHEN THE

PCI WILL EITHER AGREE TO ENTER INTO MAJORITY ALONG WITH
INCLUSION OF ONE OR TWO "TECHNICIANS" IN GOVERNMENT, OR,

IF THIS ARRANGEMENT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO PCI, NATIONAL
ELECTIONS, PROBABLY IN JUNE, WILL BECOME INEVITABLE. CRAXI

SEES HARDINING OF PCI'S POSITION AS PROBABLE RESULT OF
SOVIET PRESSURE AS WELL AS PRESSURE FROM PCI BASE AND THE

TRADE UNIONS. HE SEES MAJOR PCI AND SOVIET EFFORT
TO OUST HIM IN ORDER TO MAKE PSI "INSTRUMENT OF

PCI'S WILL" BUT FEELS CONFIDENT HE CAN HOLD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 20943 01 OF 02 221332Z

LEADERSHIP AT CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING JANUARY
13-14 AND BEYOND. I REITERATED OUR POLICY OF OPPOSITION

TO PCI PARTICIPATION IN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. IN COURSE OF BRIEF VISIT TO OUR RESIDENCE THIS MORNING AT MY INVITATION, BETTINO CRAXI GAVE ME SUMMARY OF HIS VIEWS ON UNFOLDING POLITICAL SITUATION. AFTER

I NOTED APPROVINGLY HIS EFFORTS AT MODERATION, HE CONFIRMED THAT HE IS DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO "PUT THE BRAKES" ON THE UNFOLDING CRISIS--SPECIFICALLY BY WORKING AGAINST THOSE WHO ARE URGING IMMEDIATE INCLUSION OF PCI IN "GOVERNMENT OF EMERGENCY." IN CRAXI'S VIEW, CURRENT CRISIS WAS TRIGGERED BY LA MALFA AND ALSO BY UNEXPECTED HARDENING OF PCI POSITION, WHICH HE SEES RESULTING NOT ONLY FROM DISSATISFACTION OF ITS BASE AND TRADE UNIONS BUT ALSO FROM SOVIET PRESSURE. THE SOVIET UNION, HE BELIEVES, HAS OPENED "CLEAR OFFENSIVE AGAINST EUROCOMMUNISM"; IN FRANCE THIS TOOK FORM OF BREAKING UP ALLIANCE OF LEFT; IN ITALY IT HAS TAKEN FORM OF PRESSURE ON PCI THROUGH PRO-SOVIET FIGURES LIKE COSSUTTA AND PAJETTA TO TOUGHEN PARTY'S POSITION AND INCREASE ITS INFLUENCE IN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT.

2. CRAXI DEPICTED PCI AS MAKING A MAJOR EFFORT TO OVERTHROW HIM AS PSI LEADER AND MAKE HIS PARTY "INSTRUMENT OF PCI'S WILL." HE FEELS, WITHOUT CITING ANY HARD EVIDENCE, THAT KGB IS ALSO WORKING FOR HIS OVERTHROW AND IS ACTIVELY FINANCING EFFORTS OF MANCA AND OTHER OPPONENTS. HE CITED ITALIAN AMBASSADOR IN PEKING AS REPORTING THAT CHINESE BELIEVE KGB HAS STEPPED UP ITS ROLE IN ITALY. IN THIS CONNECTION,

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 20943 01 OF 02 221332Z

CRAXI SAID MEMBERS OF RED BRIGADES HAVE BEEN
FOUND WITH CZECH PASSPORTS AND THAT WEAPON USED TO

KILL DEPUTY EDITOR OF LA STAMPA CARLO CASALEGNO WAS
CZECH-MADE. CRAXI OPINED THAT QADHAFI MAY ALSO

BE FINANCING HIS PSI OPPONENTS. HE EXPRESSED CON-
FIDENCE THAT NOTWITHSTANDING EFFORT AGAINST HIM,

HE WILL RETAIN LEADERSHIP AT JANUARY 13-14 CENTRAL
COMMITTEE MEETING AND BEYOND.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 20943 02 OF 02 221349Z
ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00
NSCE-00 PM-03 TRSE-00 SP-02 SIL-01 L-01 EB-04

H-01 /040 W

-----125226 221424Z /45

R 221229Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9420
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO

USDOCOSOUTH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 20943

LIMDIS

3. MOMENT OF TRUTH IN CRAXI'S OPINION WILL COME
IN MID-JANUARY. CGIL PRESIDENT LUCIANO LAMA SEEMS
DETERMINED TO HAVE GENERAL STRIKE AT THIS TIME, BUT

CRAXI SAYS IT MIGHT STILL BE AVOIDED. OTHER
EFFORTS WILL BE MADE AFTER HOLIDAYS TO BRING DOWN

GOVERNMENT. ZACCANINI HAS ASSURED CRAXI THAT
HE WILL NOT BRING PCI INTO "GOVERNMENT OF EMERGENCY"

IN ABSENCE OF NEW ELECTIONS, AND CRAXI BELIEVES
THIS IS POSITION OF DC LEADERSHIP GENERALLY.

(INTERESTINGLY, HE CITED FANFANI AS ONLY DC LEADER
WHO SEEMED "AMBIGUOUS" ON THIS ISSUE.) IN THIS

SITUATION HE HOPES PCI WILL FINALLY ACCEPT COMPROMISE
OF ENTERINT PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY WITH POSSIBLY

ONE OR TWO "TECHNICIANS" IN GOVERNMENT. IF NOT,
THERE WILL BE NEW ELECTIONS, PROBABLY IN JUNE.

4. CRAXI TOOK POSITION THAT COMPROMISE ALONG ABOVE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

LINES WAS NOT PARTICULARLY DANGEROUS, SINCE HAVING
PCI IN PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY WAS "A MERE FORMALITY"

INVOLVING NO REAL CHANGE FROM PRESENT SITUATION,
AND BRINGING IN TECHNICIANS WAS ALSO "HARMLESS."

WHEN I ASKED WHETHER THIS WOULD APPLY TO TECHNICIANS
SUCH A PROFESSOR LUIGI SPAVENTA, INDEPENDENT

SENATOR WHO RAN ON PCI TICKET, CRAXI ANSWERED
THIS WOULD BE NO PROBLEM FOR HIM. "SPAVENTA IS

CERTAINLY NO COMMUNIST--JUST AN OPPORTUNIST." WHEN
I REMONSTRATED THAT OPPORTUNISTS COULD BE DANGEROUS,

HE RESPONDED: "YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION WE FACED
IN JUNE OF 1976. THE BOURGEOISIE WERE FRIGHTEND. MANY
OF THEM VOTED FOR THE PCI AND OTHERWISE LENT SUPPORT, INCLUDING

MANY BUSINESSMEN. SPAVENTA MERELY WENT ALONG."

5. IN COURSE OF OUR MEETING, I REITERATED OUR POLICY OF

OPPOSITION TO PCI PARTICIPATION IN ITAL GOVERNMENT
AND OUR DESIRE TO SEE PCI INFLUENCE LIMITED

AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. I ALSO STRESSED OUR DESIRE
TO SEE GOVERNMENT TAKE STEPS NECESSARY TO DEAL WITH

ECONOMIC CRISIS. CRAXI SAID US POLICY WAS CLEAR
AND UNEXCEPTIONABLE. WE AGREED TO MEET AGAIN IN JANUARY.

GARDNER

CONFIDENTIAL

Help Expand The Public Library of US Diplomacy

Your role is important:

WikiLeaks maintains its robust independence through your contributions.

Please see

<https://shop.wikileaks.org/donate> (<https://shop.wikileaks.org/donate>) to learn about all ways to donate.

Top



WL Research Community - user contributed research based on documents published by WikiLeaks. (<https://our.wikileaks.org>)



Tor is an encrypted anonymising network that makes it harder to intercept internet communications, or see where communications are coming from or going to. (<https://www.torproject.org/>)



Tails is a live operating system, that you can start on almost any computer from a DVD, USB stick, or SD card. It aims at preserving your privacy and anonymity. (<https://tails.boum.org/>)



The Courage Foundation is an international organisation that supports those who risk life or liberty to make significant contributions to the historical record. (<https://www.couragefound.org/>)

Bitcoin uses peer-to-peer technology to operate with no central authority or banks; managing transactions and the issuing of bitcoins is carried out collectively by the network. (<https://www.bitcoin.org/>)

 (<https://www.facebook.com/wikileaks>)

 (<https://twitter.com/wikileaks>)