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## (C) ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) BEARISH ON COSSIGA

**Date:** 1979 December 12, 00:00 (Wednesday)  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Handling Restrictions:** -- N/A or Blank --  
**Executive Order:** R4 19991211 PAGANELLI, ROEBERT P  
**TAGS:** IT - Italy (/plusd/?q=&qftags=IT#result) |  
PINT - Political Affairs--Internal Political  
Affairs (/plusd/?q=&qftags=PINT#result)

**Canonical ID:** 1979ROME34445\_e  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Character Count:** 9245  
**Locator:** TEXT ON MICROFILM,TEXT ONLINE  
**Concepts:** COMMUNISTS (/plusd/?q=&qfconcept=COMMUNISTS#result) |  
POLITICAL LEADERS (/plusd/?q=&qfconcept=POLITICAL+LEADERS#result) |  
POLITICAL PARTIES (/plusd/?q=&qfconcept=POLITICAL+PARTIES#result) |  
RECORDINGS (/plusd/?q=&qfconcept=RECORDINGS#result) | SALES  
(/plusd/?q=&qfconcept=SALES#result)

**Enclosure:** -- N/A or Blank --  
**Office Origin:** -- N/A OR BLANK --  
**Office Action:** ACTION EURE

**Type:** TE - Telegram (cable)  
**Archive Status:** Electronic Telegrams

**From:** ITALY ROME (/PLUSD/?Q=&QFORIGIN=ITALY%23%23ROME#RESULT) | ROME OR-M  
(/PLUSD/?Q=&QFORIGIN=ROME+OR-M#RESULT)  
**To:** STATE FLORENCE (/PLUSD/?Q=&QFDESTINATION=STATE FLORENCE#RESULT)

**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US  
Department of State EO Systematic  
Review 20 Mar 2014

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TRSE-00 OMB-01 /067 W

-----026910 160405Z /75

R 121248Z DEC 79

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 12065: RDS-4 12-11-99; (PAGANELLI, ROEBERT P.) OR-M

TAGS: PINT IT

SUBJECT: (C) ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) BEARISH ON COSSIGA

1. C-ENTIRE TEXT

2. SUMMARY: AT MEETING DECEMBER 4, LUCIANO BARCA, DIRECTOR,  
RINASCITA, TOLD REPORTING OFFICER THAT COSSIGA GOVERNMENT  
WAS WEAK AND GETTING WEAKER. WHILE BEARISH ON COSSIGA,

BARCA WAS PREDICTABLY BULLISH ON THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY.  
AMENDOLA HAD CREATED A STIR IN THE PCI WITH HIS CELEBRATED  
ARTICLE, BUT THE PRACTICAL EFFECT HAD BEEN TO GIVE BERLINGUER  
A HAND, SELL A RECORD NUMBER COPIES OF RINASCITA, AND BRING THE  
BASE AND LEADERSHIP CLOSER TOGETHER. BARCA WAS UPBEAT, REFLECTING  
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A CONFIDENT, ALMOST JAUNTY, AIR DEISGNEED, WE SUSPECT, TO CONVINCCE  
INTERESTED OBSERVERS OF IMPROVED PCI POLITICAL FORTUNES.  
THE COSSIGA GOVERNMENT, IN THE PCI VIEW, IS BARELY HANGING ON,  
AND THE SHARED CONCERN OF MOST PARTIES, INCLUDING THE DC, IS  
THAT SOMETHING UNTOWARD COULD PUSH IT OVER THE BRINK. THE  
COMMUNISTS HAVE NO INTENTION OF BEING TAGGED WITH RESPONSIBILITY  
FOR COSSIGA'S FALL. THEY WILL, HOWEVER, CONTINUE TO PLAY AN

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INCREASINGLY HARD OPPOSITION ROLE CALCULATED TO DEMONSTRATE  
THAT ITALY IS UNGOVERNABLE WITHOUT THEM. END SUMMARY.

3. PERSONAL NOTE. BARCA SAID HIS SON IS STILL AT  
CAMBRIDGE WHERE HE IS STUDYING UNDER A BANK OF ROME  
SCHOLARSHIP. THE BOY WILL RETURN TO ITALY WITHIN THE NEXT  
FEW MONTHS. BARCA, WHO SEEMED RESIGNED TO THE FACT THAT  
HIS 25-YEAR OLD SON HAS A LIFE OF HIS OWN, IS EXTREMELY  
DEVOTED TO HIS FAMILY.

4. AMENDOLA. BARCA SAID THAT ALMOST THE ENTIRE PCI LEADERSHIP  
ACTUALLY AGREED WITH AMENDOLA'S VIEWS. IN FACT AT A RECENT  
MEETING IN LEGHORN, BARCA SAID THE LOCAL PCI LEADERSHIP UNDERSTOOD  
THE ISSUE BETTER THAN MOST OTHER SECTIONS. AS AN EXAMPLE OF  
AMENDOLA'S CONCERNS, BARCA NOTED THAT OUT OF A NOMINAL 7-HOUR  
WORKING DAY IN THE PORT OF LEGHORN, THE STEVEDORES WORK  
AN EFFECTIVE TWO-HOUR DAY. THEY ARE PAID AROUND 1.5 MILLION  
LIRE (ABOUT \$2,000) A MONTH FOR THEIR EFFORTS. AT THE SAME TIME,  
BARCA SAID, ADJUSTMENTS ALONG THE LINES PROPOSED BY AMENDOLA  
WERE JUST NOT POLITICALLY FEASIBLE. THE GENERAL OUTCOME OF THE  
CENTRAL COMMITTEE DEBATE, BARCA SAID, WAS THUS A STRENGTHENING  
OF BERLINGUER'S HAND.

5. FACTIONS WITHIN THE PARTY. BARCA DISMISSED AS PRESS GOSSIP  
ANY TALK OF EFFECTIVE DISCREET FACTIONS WITHIN THE PARTY. ON  
THE AMENDOLA FFAIR, FOR EXAMPLE, ABOUT 5 PERCENT ACTIVELY  
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SUPPORTED THE OLD PCI LEADER; ANOTHER 20 PERCENT SUPPORTED HIM  
WITH NUMEROUS CONDITIONS (BARCA INCLUDED);  
AND THE REST TOOK THE STRAIGHT BERLINGUER LINE. IN RESPONSE TO THE OBSERVATION THAT THE PARTY SEEMED

INCREASINGLY SPLIT

OVER SUCH FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS AS COOPERATION WITH THE DC, RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION, AND BASIC IDEOLOGY, BARCA ADMITTED TO SOME DIVISIONS BUT HE CLAIMED THE PARTY WAS BASICALLY UNIFIED.

6. THE BIGGEST PROBLEM WAS THE SHIFT BY THE PARTY FROM AN OPPOSITIONAL ROLE TO COOPERATE WITH THE DC. THE RANK-AND-FILE JUST COULDN'T SWALLOW IT.

7. THERE WERE SHADES OF OPINION AMONG THE LEADERSHIP ON VARIOUS QUESTIONS BUT ALL AGREED ON FUNDAMENTALS. FOR EXAMPLE, ANTISOVIETISM WAS FASHIONABLE AMONG SOME INTELLECTUALS, BUT BARCA SAID THAT HE WAS NOT ONE OF THEM. HE WAS ALSO NOT AMONG THOSE WHO WOULD SUBSTITUTE FREUD FOR MARX.

8. COSSIGA GOVERNMENT. COSSIGA MAY HAVE WON ON TNF, BARCA SAID, BUT THE PRIME MINISTER WAS NEITHER STRONGER NOR WEAKER FOR IT. HE CONTINUED TO HANG ON BY HIS FINGERNAILS.

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THE FEAR AMONG THE POLITICAL PARTIES WAS, BARCA SAID, THAT SOME UNFORESEEN EVENT WOULD BOWL OVER THE GOVERNMENT AT AN INOPPORTUNE TIME. THE PCI FOR ONE, HE SAID,

HAD NO INTENTION OF BEING BLAMED FOR THE COLLAPSE OF THE COSSIGA GOVERNMENT ON THE EVE OF THE REGIONAL ELECTIONS.

9. IN THE MEANTIME THERE WOULD BE NO BUDGET OR FINANCIAL PLAN PASSED IN PARLIAMENT FOR 1980. HE MAINTAINED THAT WITHOUT THE PCI NO QUORUM WAS POSSIBLE IN PARLIAMENT. IF THE COMMUNISTS DID SHOW UP, COSSIGA PROBABLY COULD NOT

MUSTER ENOUGH VOTES TO WIN.

10. BARCA SEEMED TO HINK THAT THE PCI'S OPPOSITION ROLE WAS PAYING OFF. THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE LEADERSHIP AND CONFIDENTIAL  
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THE BASE HAD NARROWED, AND PARTY HEADQUARTERS HAD MORE SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING TODAY THAN IT HAS HAD IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS. THE PCI POSITION IS ALSO UNCHANGED: A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY (INCLUDING THE COMMUNISTS) IS THE ONLY POSSIBLE SOLUTION. COSSIGA'S SAD PERFORMANCE OVER THE PAST MONTHS WAS AMPLE PROOF THAT ITALY COULD NOT BE GOVERNED WITHOUT THE COMMUNISTS. IN ANY EVENT, THE EXPECTED LIFE SPAN OF THE COSSIGA GOVERNMENT WAS SHORT.

11. ASKED BY THE REPORTING OFFICER WHAT ANDREOTTI WAS UP TO (MEANING ANDREOTTI'S RECENT GESTURES TOWARDS THE PCI ON TNF AND COOPERATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT), BARCA ANSWERED THAT NOTHING INCRIMINATING AGAINST ANDREOTTI HAD BEEN FOUND BY THE CHAMBER BUDGET COMMITTEE'S LOOK AT THE ENI AFFAIR. THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT ANDREOTTI DID NOT GET A SHARE, BARCA SAID; IT MEANS ONLY THAT THERE IS NO PROOF OF IT.

12. TNF. ACCORDING TO BARCA, ONE OF THE PCI'S MOST DIFFICULT TASKS IN RECENT TIMES WAS EXPLAINING TNF TO PCI MEMBERS. BARCA SUGGESTED THAT THE PCI HAD NOT GONE ALL OUT IN OPPOSING TNF. IT OPPOSED INCREASED ARMAMENTS ON PRINCIPLE, BUT AT THE SAME TIME THE PARTY UNDERSTOOD FULLY THE IMPORTANCE OF EQUILIBRIUM IN ARMS CONTROL MATTERS. THE REPORTING OFFICER EMPHASIZED TO BARCA THAT TNF WAS A KEY ISSUE INVOLVING WESTERN SECURITY AND THAT THE U.S. SUPPORTED EFFECTIVE ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS AS MUCH AS ANY NATION; TNF WAS A RESPONSE TO SOVIET ACTIONS.

13. THE NEW PCI. BARCA SAID THAT PCI WAS A DIFFERENT PARTY TODAY FROM THE ONE HE JOINED SOME THIRTY YEARS AGO. HE WAS PARTICULARLY ENCOURAGED BY THE YOUNG PEOPLE AROUND BERLINGUER, PARTICULARLY ROMANO LEDDA AND ANTONIO RUBBI.

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HE SAID THAT IT WAS A SHAME THAT LEDDA'S HEALTH WAS NOT GOOD. (HE HAD A HEART ATTACK NOT 00 LONG AGO.) NOTING THE REPORTING OFFICER'S SURPRISE THAT RUBBI IS CONSIDERED A NEW YOUNG TYPE, BARCA SAID THAT RUBBI'S APPOINTMENT WAS NOT THE REGRESSIVE PRO-SOVIET STEP THE ITALIAN PRESS HAD REPORTED IT

TO BE. THE MOVE INSTEAD REFLECTED AN OPENNESS IN THE PARTY THAT ACCOMMODATED A DIVERSITY OF OPINION.

14. COMMENT: BARCA WAS SELF-CONFIDENT TO THE POINT OF BEING JAUNTY ABOUT HIS PARTY'S POLITICAL FORTUNES, WHICH HE CLEARLY FELT ARE ON THE UPSWING. OPPOSITION IS PAYING OFF IN HIS VIEW, AND THE COMMUNISTS ARE IN NO MOOD TO EASE OFF THEIR PRESSURE ON THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS. THE ENI AFFAIR HAS GIVEN THE PCI ADDED AMMUNITION AND THE TACTIC NOW SEEMS TO BE TO EMBARRASS COSSIGA

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AND SICREDIT HIS GOVERNMENT WITHOUT BRINGING IT DOWN--FOR THE TIME BEING.

15. BARCA ALSO SAID THE PARTY HAD SOME VISITS IN MIND TO THE U.S. BUT THAT THE PCI WANTED TO MOVE AWAY FROM ITS PREVIOUS TOURIST JAUNTS WHICH HAD PRODUCED FEW RESULTS. BARCA'S REMARKS ECHOED THE LINE RUBBI HAD ALREADY TAKEN WITH THE REPORTING OFFICER. INDICATIONS ARE THAT THE PCI IS LOOKING AT HOW TO RENEW ITS BID TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. IN CONJUNCTION WITH ITS EFFORT HERE TO CONVINCING ITALIAN VOTERS THAT THE COMMUNISTS' PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT IS STILL INEVITABLE, AND THAT ITALY IS UNGOVERNABLE WITHOUT THEM.

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