

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SECRET/XGDS

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Giovanni Leone, President of Italy
Aldo Moro, Minister of Foreign Affairs

President Gerald R. Ford
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
and Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant
to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, September 25, 1974
11:30 a.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

Leone: I would like to reiterate my gratitude for your kind invitation to visit. There is the importance of this visit as a first contact. I want to assure you of my interest in building better relations with the United States.

President: We treasure our ties with the Italian people and want to expand them. There are millions of Americans with Italian ancestry. We are anxious to build on this already warm relationship.

Leone: On the aircraft, the press asked me how we approach our dialogue with the United States. As we are both lawyers, we approach it as defending the same cause. I would like to talk how ever you would like. We can discuss European and world problems, or I will tell you the Italian scene.

[The press was admitted briefly for photos.]

President: How long were you in Parliament?

SECRET/XGDS

~~TOP SECRET~~ - XGDS (3)
CLASSIFIED BY: HENRY A. KISSINGER



Leone: I was in the Constitutional Assembly in 1946. During the last term I was a lifetime Senator -- an honorary title that is given to only five people.

President: I was in Congress for 25 years.

[Kissinger and Moro come in.]

President: While chatting before the press, President Leone asked if I wanted his appraisal of the Italian scene. I was about to ask him to give us his views of the situation in Italy and the Mediterranean.

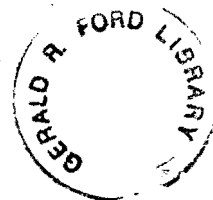
Leone: The situation, Mr. President, is as I discussed with Dr. Kissinger at our meeting in Rome last July, despite Cyprus. There has been the development that Southern Europe is revealed as the soft under-belly of Europe. There is concern over all the South European countries. Portugal, for example, fears a right-wing or a left-wing dictatorship; Spain has Franco. In France the socialists missed only by a hair. In Greece we got an appeal from the military to get the U. S. to get Turkey to make some step which will unblock the situation. They fear the left in Greece. I forgot Yugoslavia -- there are many problems there. What will happen when "our friend" Tito goes?

President: I wondered if you would mention Yugoslavia, because of Tito's age and what might happen when he leaves office.

Leone: Yugoslavia is a problem of universal concern which affects the national Communists in many countries. Yugoslavia consists of many nationalities with conflict among each other and who are held together only by Tito, and his passing can have a real threat to security in the Mediterranean.

President: Italy's participation in the security of this area of Europe is essential. I hope we can strengthen this in this vital area about which we are concerned.

Leone: What you said is very true. I left Italy to the end, and I will be brief -- though perhaps more eloquent. Many confuse the instability of our governments with political stability. That is not so. In fact, since 1946 we have been stable with a constant foreign policy. We have had centrist governments or center-left governments. One other illusion is that we will



be having talks with the Communists. All the center parties are against it. Even the Communists are, although they say otherwise. So we have been very stable and I would say there is no possibility of an opening to the left.

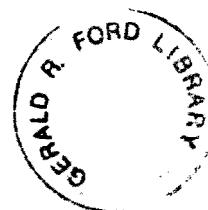
Kissinger: Moro is Secretary General of the Christian Democrats and he gave me a lesson in politics. I will never oppose him.

Leone: Italy in foreign policy has always been loyal to NATO. We deplored the French departure, and in a visit to France I urged Pompidou to return. We have never opposed the U. S. in Europe and have always supported the United States.

President: Your observations are very important to us. We have the view that the stability of Italy depends on the Communists not participating. If NATO is to be strong, we can't have the Communists participating in the political life of any member. It is reassuring to hear that the center and center-left won't take to the Communists. We laud your past exclusion of them and think it vital they continue to be excluded from your government as such.

Leone: This picture I painted applies to the present and I hope to the future. But we have to be realistic. We favor detente and appreciate the American role in achieving it, but there is a price, which is a slackening of democratic ideals and an increase in attacks on those ideals. When all the U. S. -Soviet meetings go on it is hard for us and others to say the Reds are the enemies of democracy. I will be candid: In your talks with the Soviet Union, is there no success in making the Soviet Union make a gesture toward detente? Can't the Soviet Union instruct the national parties to desist and not go on the attack to destroy the status quo? We made every effort with Mintoff to keep Libya and the Soviet Union out of Malta. We think the U. S. could tell the Soviet Union to respect the status quo in Europe, because we are paying a stiff price. The things I used to say about the Communists just aren't accepted now.

President: We face the same problem. We think movement in the broad areas is beneficial, but we don't think detente will change the ideology of either. We hope for a change in the Soviet Union, but detente is not directed toward that. We are trying to make progress in detente for the welfare of the world. We don't know what kind of response we would get.



Kissinger: We have tried once or twice, but frankly we are more worried about a responsible than an irresponsible Communist party, because if they appear responsible they will be a bigger threat to democracy in the long run.

Leone: I agree with Secretary Kissinger that the more respectable the Communists appear the more dangerous they are. Presenting themselves thus is their present tactic all over Europe -- whatever the U.S. does. So we should take advantage of it. We have not interfered in Eastern Europe and I think the Soviet Union should instruct the Reds not to interfere in the conduct of our political system.

President: Do you find the Communists acting more responsibly?

Leone: The Communist Party in Italy appears to be more moderate and takes stands we appreciate, but is it not just tactics?

Moro: I think they are somewhat more independent.

President: By appearing responsible they could have an impact on Italian policies. We want to continue to cooperate with the center groups in the same way as we have done since 1946.

Kissinger: In fact, we could not exchange military information if they came into the Government. We have had to make such a change with respect to Portugal.

Leone: Perhaps we have spoken more about Italy than constitutionally permitted, but before Moro talks about the Arab world let me say a few words about the economy of Italy. We have taken stringent measures and the nation have taken them gracefully. But the situation is dangerous, and if there is a collapse, the political system may take a turn to a different form. That is why we need help from our friends. We need to redress the trade balance and export more and we need help here. Appraisals about Italy are black. The Federal Reserve Board's appraisal was bad, and others are adopting the same approach. The fact of the meeting of Foreign Ministers and Finance Ministers here without us at the time when our people are here is a matter of regret, for our image. I say this frankly. What do we need? Some obvious and open steps to reverse the Federal Reserve Board appraisal. Your speech took the same approach and I hope you will show this in your approach to Italy. These are words from a dear friend of the United States and the Atlantic Alliance. When Moro and I returned from



voting for NATO the Communists had black crosses saying we voted for war.

President: I appreciate this frankness among friends -- it is essential to the growth of friendship. As for the Federal Reserve Board, I have trouble with it too. It is autonomous, and their cooperation with the government is a judgment on their part about what their actions should be. I think it is unfortunate the Five are meeting here, but as I understand it it is a traditional group. I hope you and the Italian people won't feel excluded. We will continue the close cooperation we have always had with Italy. We admire your stand for NATO. I come from an isolationist area and know what you mean. It has been of great benefit to Italy and I am proud of my support. Historians will write that NATO was beneficial not just to the Atlantic Community, but to the world.

Leone: Can we continue?

President: It would be helpful if we could do it tomorrow. I would look forward to a resumption of the discussion tomorrow.

Leone: I think we must continue and I am grateful you agreed to another talk.

President: I am pleased you will be meeting with Secretary Kissinger. He is the most popular figure in America because of his accomplishments. He and I are continuing the policies which have been so successful. I am looking forward to the continuation of those policies in the months ahead.

Leone: I am very glad to continue with Dr. Kissinger and to talk to you tomorrow. I am glad to invite you officially to Italy.

President: I am honored, and I hope sometime in the future that will be possible.

Kissinger: The President lives in a modest little establishment.

Leone: It is a palace, but I am a prisoner. It was the Pope's palace. Will we have a communique tomorrow?

Kissinger: It would be better at the end of the visit.



P/Leone / Mas / K / ?

25 Sept 74

Transcribed
by PWR
12/26/77

L like to interview him in relation to visit - important
press issues, 1st contact. Want to assess you of my
interest in building better relations w/ US

P Use transmission time w/ Italian people & want
to expand them. Millions of Euro w/ Italian
community. We can't build on this already
warm warm relationship.

L One aspect; press aspect we have been opposed or
displeased w/ US. As we both have no one of power
or depending someone. I would like to talk
how we can understand like - you talk, we
discuss Euro & world parts, as I will you Italian
view

(Press)

P How long in Paris

L In ~~the~~ cabinet assembly in 46. During best
time I was lifetime Senator - an honorary title
given to 5 people.

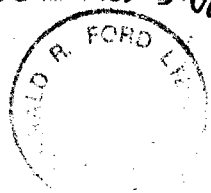
P I'm ~~not~~ long for 25 yrs
(K + Mas were in)

P While chatting before press I asked if I wanted his
approval of Italian news I want to ask him to
give no views of Italy & world.

L Sit, the P is decided w/ Kinty in Rome last year,
despite Cyprus. Has been kept out that Southern Euro
would be soft belly of Euro. Concern over all
S. Euro countries. Part for example from right
& left using dictatorship, Spain, France. Fewer
secondist missed only by hard, Greece we got approval
from military to sit. Turkey to make one step which
will unblock a bit. They plan to keep in Greece.

I forgot Yugo - may parts there. What will happen
when "our friend" Tito goes.

P I wondered if you would mention Yugo because
of Tito age & what might happen when he dies.



L Yugo is part of universal concern which affects all
Crests. Yugo consists of many smaller units w/ conflict
held together only by Tito, and his passing can have
real threat to security in ^{land}.

P Study participation, ^{in context of the arms of Europe} is essential. I hope we can
strengthen in the vital areas about which we
are concerned.

L What you said is very true. I hope study & analysis will be high-
er perhaps more eloquent. Many confuse stability of our
goals w/ political stability. That is not so. In fact since 1945
we have been stable w/ constant F.P. We have had
various sorts of center left parts. One other illusion
is that we will be having talks w/ Crests. All center
parties are against it. Even Crests are although they
may otherwise. So we have very strong & should
say our possibility of opening to left.

K Moscow says and of C.O. + you are a leader in politics -
I will ^{have} ~~return~~ ^{appear} him

L Study in F.P. has always been key at the NATO. We
aligned F.P. against in west to F.P. against
Pragmatism to return. We have since opposed US
in Eur & have always supported US

P Your observations are very important & so, we shall
know that stability of study depends on Crests not
participating. If NATO to be strong, we cannot have
Crests participating in ^{for} this form of membership. It
is necessary to have that center & center left would
trust Crests. We have your past behavior &
think it vital they continue to be defended from
your part as such.

L This picture I painted applies to present & I hope to future. But
~~we~~ we have to be realistic. We face doubts - & opponents
US who is achieving it - but there is a price, which
is shattering of democratic ideal & success in
attacks on these rebels. When all the US-US outlets



before Mrs talks about the Arab world

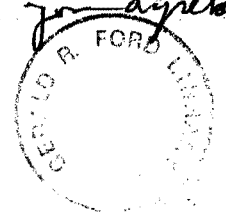
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L Can we continue

P Would be helped if we could do it tomorrow - I would look forward to a resumption of discussion tomorrow

L I think we must continue & grateful for ~~your~~ ~~agreed~~



~~Visit to the~~

Conversation with

P Pleased you will be visiting K. He's a most popular figure in US because of his success. He + a country - policies which have been so successful - looking ahead to continuation of those policies in a number of years.

K Very glad to continue w/ K + talk to you tomorrow. I glad to visit you especially to study.

P Honored - I hope something in future that will be possible

K P. lives in modest little cot.

L # It's a palace but I a prisoner. At the Pope's palace. Commenced tomorrow?

K Both at end of visit.

(1) Where are we on negotiations

(2) Jackson's assessment



heavy
Call Turk Ambassador

& explain what
during

Wickert

Krenkin sent this guy to see if K would
on his own, but support a
turkey deal.

What is role of Land

CIA strongly vote for veto
of Freedom of info act.

Flennyon - Janssen's fund
no reason not to fund
humanitarian program

