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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

DATE AND TIME: August 1, 1975
8:00 a.m.
PLACE: Finlandia Hall, Helsinki

SUBJECT:

PARTICIPANTS: US
The President
The Secretary
Assistant Secretary Hartman
Counselor Sonnenfeldt

Italy
Prime Minister Aldo Moro
Foreign Minister Mariano Rumor
Secretary General Manzini
Diplomatic Adviser, Francesco Vallauri

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5
NSC Memo, 11/24/98, State Dept. Guidelines (Subser)
By KAH, NARA, Date 6/29/99

PRESIDENT: What do you think about the situation in Portugal?

MORO: It is full of uncertainties. It is quite clear that there is no unity among the Armed Forces Movement. They don't have any effective executive present.

PRESIDENT: We find that there is a very disturbing trend in Portugal and we think that this new three-man government is going to be very dangerous.

MORO: Yes, I would say that they are extremely dangerous.

PRESIDENT: Some of the statements that Carvalho has made are shocking.

MORO: Maybe that is because he just got back from Cuba.

RUMOR: We think that Carvalho is a genuine Marxist while Continno is probable a communist-leaning opportunist and some say he may be the next Foreign Minister.

PRESIDENT: What about Antunes?

RUMOR: He seems to be the leading moderate in the Armed Forces Council but I am afraid that he will not have a place in the new government. They seem to want to push the moderates aside.



EUR:AAHartman/dm:gw

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EX GDS 1

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CLASSIFIED BY: HENRY A. KISSINGER

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PRESIDENT: We do not see how it is possible to tolerate a Marxist government in NATO.

RUMOR: The problem is to see how this situation shapes up.

PRESIDENT: With the liberal, leftist leanings of these people you are sure to end up with a communist government and such a situation would be completely unacceptable to us if they were in NATO.


MORO: Indeed, that is our view as well, but we think that Soares may be able to help. We will have to see.

PRESIDENT: Is he a strong man? I have never met him.

MORO: He is very courageous and popular. He even has some tendencies toward the same views as the Christian Democrats. He would certainly be a safe personality for all of us with strong ties to the West and the Atlantic Alliance. We don't know if it may be possible for him to get power.

SECRETARY: He has been very good except for his speeches during the Italian election campaign when he praised the communists.

MORO: No, he came to our country to support socialist candidates. He went to Rome and Naples. We think that the Portuguese situation perhaps helped to soften conflicts but it is an extremely intricate situation. At one stage we thought that the Portuguese example was helpful. It was certainly an eye opener, but unfortunately many of the Italian voters prefer to look at Berlinguer and the Italian communists. They are trying to be very moderate now and I am afraid that their push had more effect than the Portuguese situation on Italy. In any case, Fanfani tried to use the Portuguese situation. The trouble in Italy is that most people have excessive trust and they are beginning to think that the communists are just Social Democrats -- even some small businessmen. The communists have made a great appeal to all classes. They tried to stand for order and tranquility. Many people listen to this and forget what the communists are really like and that they are undemocratic. What you must remember is that not everyone who votes communist is in fact a communist. Most of them are also in favor of freedom and liberty.



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PRESIDENT: What sort of ties do they have to the Soviets and the Communist Party in Russia?

MORO: They do not seem to be very close at the moment. In fact, there is some friction and they claim to have autonomy.

SECRETARY: When I was in Poland, Gierak told me that the Polish Communist Party has very close ties with the Italian Communist Party.

MORO: That may be. The Italian Communist Party tries to maintain close ties with the Western Communists, Yugoslavia and Romania as well. I am not saying that there are no links but they do have autonomy. Where their ties break down is with France, but they have excellent relations with the Spanish Communist leadership. Both in Italy and in Spain the leadership seems to want to be very close with the rest of Europe and they are very cool toward the Portuguese Communists.

PRESIDENT: Is that Cunhal?

MORO: Yes. Most of the other Western Communist parties deplore the attitude of Cunhal. It gives them all a bad name.

PRESIDENT: Are the Italian Communists asking for participation in the government as a result of the recent election?

MORO: No. In any case, they could not demand it but it is a difficult ~~situation~~ situation. The problem is they stay in opposition to the government and then they never have to perform on their promises. The Socialist Party wants the Communists in the government so they can share the unpopularity of the measures they know must be taken. In fact, the Communists did not expect such a high vote. Despite the fact that they were attacked from the left and the right, they managed to pick up votes from both of those quarters.

PRESIDENT: If Communists were in the government of Italy, it would be very difficult to explain how you could remain a member of NATO, as it is difficult to explain in the case of Portugal.

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- MORO: There is no doubt about that. Although the Italian communists profess to support NATO, we know they won't. What they are trying to do is to become part of the regular political process and adjust their policies.
- SECRETARY: If I may speak more bluntly than the President, we don't care if they sign onto NATO in blood. Having the communists in the Government of Italy would be completely incompatible with continued membership in the Alliance. There is a difference between an election tactic and reality. There is no way that we can be persuaded to be in an Alliance with governments including communists which is supposed to be against communism, no matter what you say.
- PRESIDENT: Henry is a very subtle diplomat.
- SECRETARY: If the President wants me to, I can say these things in undiplomatic language.
- MORO: There is no doubt you are right. But as I mentioned there is a difficult problem with public opinion. They hear the speeches and think that this is a part of the present trend of detente and the barriers against communists look not to be as great as they hear. I talked to one of the leading Socialists, Nenni, and he asked the question why we have these barriers given the international political situation and where detente seems to have produced a growing trust among people from different systems. This trickles down to the people and they ask why do we keep these rigid barriers when you can see that the American President is talking to Soviet leaders. And people are not very subtle.

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- PRESIDENT: But that is not the meaning of detente. This is not the same thing. I do not understand how people do not see the difference between an apple and an orange. What we need is firmness for detente. We have to stand against Communism in all our countries in order to achieve detente. The fact that I shake hands with Brezhnev does not mean that I wish to have him as my Vice President.
- RUMOR: If I may be allowed to say a word - what the Prime Minister says is correct. There is confusion in the public mind, but the Christian Democratic Party in Italy is irrevocably opposed to Communist participation in the government. We know that we would lose votes and that would be bad politics. Also we touched on another subject in my meeting with the Secretary yesterday and, bluntly, I wish to ask the question whether there is understanding on the part of our friends when I hear that there is going to be a Four Power meeting to discuss economic problems, excluding Italy.
- SECRETARY: That has been denied by the British and by us. Genscher may have put it out but he doesn't understand English.
- RUMOR: But I understand that there was a specific announcement about a Five Power meeting.
- SECRETARY: We explained very carefully to our friends that we could not agree to such a conference and the President has explained that we have not agreed to such a conference.
- RUMOR: If Italy is to be excluded this would be a mortification of the democratic forces in Italy. There would be a repercussion in the press and public opinion. The middle classes would have to take their bearings again. This is why we insist on some sensitivity with respect to the international

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aspects of our relations. You stopped many times on your trips in Bonn and we have a feeling that we are on the outside. We need more consideration from you for our public opinion. Every time something like that happens it gives several percentage points to the Communists.

PRESIDENT: We deliberately came to Rome after the Brussels Summit meeting. I thought it was a very successful visit. In our efforts we spent a day in Rome and we had as our purpose to strengthen the democratic forces in Italy.

MORO: There is no doubt about it and I would not wish to be critical of your visit. We considered it to be very constructive and helpful. We would, however, also like to see the Secretary stop more often. That way Italy would fit into the world scene.

RUMOR: You can be sure that the Italian democratic parties will not agree to have Communists in the Alliance. We fear that the voters may be leaning toward Communism and it would help us if the U.S. showed some consideration for Italy. For example, why don't you state publicly that you desire to have Italy in any group that discusses economic affairs? We very much appreciated the President's visit and we hope the Secretary will come more often. This will have a tremendous psychological impact.

SECRETARY: Mr. President, I have talked to the Foreign Secretary and told him that in addition to the two times that I have been in Rome over the past few months I will look forward to consulting with him frequently during the time when Italy is in the chair of the EC Council. Second, let me say that the President has not agreed to an economic summit. He cannot say that he wants to have Italy in something that he hasn't agreed to. Third, with respect to yesterday's lunch, you should know that the initiative came from the European side. Now let me speak very

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frankly since I am considered to be a soft member of your administration, Mr. President. There are some similarities in this situation to the period 1946 to 1948. If the Communists achieve respectability, their victory will be inevitable. We are willing to cooperate to strengthen the democratic forces and particularly to help your party but you have to make the real fight. Detente is a way of regulating competition -- not a way of disarming the West.

PRESIDENT: Let me assure you of two things. First, my Government will make every effort to build up the democratic forces in your country and in Europe. This is essential to the West and to the world. Second, I will continue to do all that I can to resist Communist expansion whether it be in Italy or Portugal or elsewhere.

SECRETARY: I might add one point and I have mentioned this to your colleagues. The President is doing all that he can to end the recession in the United States in order to help create world economic conditions in which it will be possible to build democratic forces.

MORO: That is very good because many of the votes that went to the Communists were from people without jobs. When you are suffering you tend to turn to those who promise the most.

PRESIDENT: What shall we say to the press?

RUMOR: I think we should say we discussed the general international situation and the policies of our governments.

MORO: I would like to see the emphasis on international affairs and not on domestic affairs. We ought to mention Alliance relations, US-European relations, Cyprus and the Middle East. We can also say we discussed economic recovery in the West.

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PRESIDENT: Yes, we ought to put great stress on the interdependence of our countries.

SECRETARY: We will stay in close touch.

RUMOR: (Talking to President) We and the Nine have been discussing the Cyprus situation and we have a feeling that the Turks are being very rigid. We will see them this afternoon.

PRESIDENT: We welcome any initiative that the EC-Nine can take with the Greeks and the Turks on Cyprus.

RUMOR: We hear that the Turks refuse to move while the arms embargo applies to them.

PRESIDENT: Well, we may have more news on that later today. The Senate passed a new bill and we still have some hope that we can get House action but it may be marginal. The fact that the opposition is trying to prevent this vote shows that they know we have a majority.

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