EUROCOMMUNISM: ITS STAKES AND RISKS

by

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The most casual newspaper reader or TV viewer could not be unaware of the appearance in the last few years of a political phenomenon which has succeeded, at least sporadically, in wrenching our attention away from Asia, Africa, and South America to focus it instead on Western Europe. I refer to what journalists, if not the principal actors, call Eurocommunism. Barzini has presented a TV special on its mysteries, and Henry Kissinger, while Secretary of State, described it as "unacceptable." Others hail Eurocommunism as accelerating the dissolution of the Soviet empire over which Brezhnev has been called to preside.

In Western countries, political terrorism on the right and the left, stubborn unemployment, discontent among university students, and intractable social tensions provide the backdrop of a stage seemingly set for revolutionary changes in expectations, in demands, and in elites. Examining the role which Eurocommunism has played and is likely to play in this transitional period is an exercise in which we all should engage. Its effects will be felt primarily in the European states where Communist parties have historically been important. Nonetheless, to the extent that our economic, strategic, and cultural interests are intertwined with Western Europe, Eurocommunism's effects may be felt by us as well.

THE SETTING

In the following pages, I propose to review some of the pronouncements made by or attributed to the leadership of those Western European Communist parties generally thought of as being the (self-styled) pluralistic, civil libertarian mavericks of Communism: the Italian Communist Party, or PCI; the French Communist Party, or PCF; and the Spanish Communist Party, or PCE. Illustrative emphasis will be placed on the Italian Communist Party.

The European Communists have been called the "renegade reds,"[1] and their views can be arrayed on a spectrum of sorts running from the pole of pragmatism to that of principle. Fidel Castro has reportedly defined a revolutionary as "an opportunist with principles." If we examine attentively the tension between pragmatism and ideology as motive forces for political choices, one may stretch Castro's definition to cover all politicians. That is, the pragmatist who is totally lacking in principle is usually defined by us as an opportunist. Conversely, the highly principled ideologue who takes little or no account of pragmatic considerations is often condemned as being politically ineffective. The distinction is an important one in discussing a topic which deals—like all politics—with the response of "principled opportunists" to the demands put on them by the need for change. The essence of political leadership is surely the capacity to respond to shifting reality flexibly and pragmatically without losing sight of principles and the objectives they dictate.

Another distinction might make a useful preface to a discussion of the features of parliamentary politics as the setting in which Eurocommunism has emerged as a political factor. I refer to the distinction between a pluralist and a unanimous society. The latter, characterized by 20th-century fascism and by Stalinism, is one in which relations among and demands by contending social groups

(whether drawn on religious lines; regional interests; occupational and sectoral divisions; or ethnic, tribal, or class sensitivities) lead to tensions viewed by the authoritarian as surmountable because they are rooted in a single fundamental contradiction which can and must be overcome, thus producing unanimity. Conversely, the pluralist sees contradictions as insoluble or sees short-run solutions as giving rise to other contradictions so that society moves in a setting of partially surmounted obstacles, forever reemerging or replaced.[2]

One of the characteristics that binds together the advanced industrial states of the Western World is the relatively long-standing pluralistic tradition manifested in political systems which we generally call liberal-democratic or constitutional. That generally means that the demands of the aforementioned groups are expressed through competitive elites organized into political parties, rather than through a single-party regime. The competitive parties test their relative strength in contests for seats in the legislature, the function of which is either to control the executive, as in the US presidential system, or to choose the executive, as is the parliamentary norm. In either case, it is the function of the executive to make policy choices that will insure that political stability be reflected in the perpetuation of his supportive majority. In the most "stable" democracies, the demands put on the executive limit themselves to changes in personnel and adjustments in the policy choices affecting the distribution of political goods such as wealth, prestige, and security. That is to say, in stable systems the status quo is regarded as adequately desirable, with a few tinkering accommodations, to be worth perpetuating rather than running the risks entailed in a fundamental systemic revision. Those who are generally satisfied with the status quo, in other words, can be relied on to advocate stability even if it means occasional social injustices for small minorities. Advocates of more fundamental systemic changes in either the socioeconomic order or in the polity itself—people we generally call revolutionaries—are more likely to use as a rallying cry "demands for justice," even if those demands can only be satisfied by destabilizing a status quo in whose benefits—in terms of wealth, prestige, and security—the discontented do not share.

Put another way, the features common to all liberal-democratic or constitutional regimes include the important aspect that the minority parties or groups defeated in the race for legislative influence are given a stake in retaining the stability of the status quo by being given a clear input-role in the exercise of power. This is what our fundamental Bill of Rights and civil rights statutes generally guarantee by protecting the opposition from majority abuses. That is a central part of the constitution of every democratic state. The extent to which Eurocommunism constitutes a threat to the democratic order must take account, then, of the degree to which its advocates will contribute to giving heretofore excluded interest groups a stake in the preservation of the present order.

Alternative ways in which liberal-democratic systems can be organized include the presidential system, which is familiar to Americans, and the more common parliamentary systems. The presidential system, which seems to suit American expectations reasonably well, has rarely been adopted elsewhere. Our system, after all, combines in the office of President several functions which are elsewhere put in separate hands. That is to say that when our popularly elected chief of state becomes his own chief executive, he combines the emotive power of a monarch or a ceremonial "president" with the governing powers of a prime minister. Combining these roles presents the risk, in many foreign eyes, of establishing a *de facto* dictatorship.

The essence of the parliamentary systems which are generally to be found in the Western World is that the legislative assembly chooses a steering committee or a cabinet which becomes, in fact, the government, the chairman of which becomes the prime minister or premier—the chief executive. In a "high consensus" society, where single-member district voting systems are

often used, it is not uncommon to find relatively neat divisions between two large parties with the result that one party emerges from an election with a genuine majority, does not depend on coalition, and therefore can choose a cabinet representing its own leadership. That cabinet and its prime minister, insured of a parliamentary majority, can easily constitute what has been called "an executive dictatorship with a satellite parliament," unchecked by the 18th-century balances which our Constitution created. It is much more common that in a "low consensus" society, proportional representation be used which, far from creating the possibility of executive dominance, creates the reality of legislative dominance. That is, it offers the advantage of representing accurately all the social divisions and tensions present within the society. The likelihood becomes remote, under such conditions, that a single party will achieve a simple majority of the seats available. As a consequence, governments tend to be formed on the basis of carefully negotiated coalitions among several parties, thereby leaving the choice for the formation of a government not in the hands of the voting public but in the hands of the party leaderships, a reality which has tempted at least one European observer to coin the word "partitocracy." In either parliamentary case, the choice exists between having a strong executive based on a voting system which is relatively insensitive to differences and tensions within the population-base and, alternatively, a highly representative parliament which, reflective of the low consensus within the society, is at best able to produce relatively unstable coalitions chosen by party factions unable to sustain an effective government long enough to deal with the problems faced by the society.

Perhaps we might illustrate the logic of the parliamentary system by looking at the alternative coalitions which could be conceived for the Italian Republic. Note that the 630-member Italian chamber of deputies can only be governed by a cabinet supported by at least 316 deputies, one more than half of the total membership.

Of the coalitions that might be conceived, assuming that each party's leadership is able to rely on the discipline of its party members, only one coalition would control a majority. This would include the Christian Democracy Party, with 263 seats; the Socialist Party, with 57 seats; the Social Democratic Party, with 15 seats; the Republican Party, with 14 seats; and the conservative "Liberal" Party, with 5 seats. This would essentially be a reproduction of the classical immobilist centrist coalition on which Italian Governments were based consistently between 1947 and 1960—predominantly, the so-called DeGasperi years. By balancing reformist forces with the inclusion of conservative forces, the Christian Democracy Party was able to maintain control simply by following a policy of inactivity.

A second alternative would be a center-right coalition including the Christian Democracy Party; the MSI, a neofascist party with 35 seats; and the Liberal Party. This alternative can be excluded not only because it would not control a majority, but also because the inclusion of fascists would split the Christian Democracy Party badly and would probably be resisted by many Liberal Party members as well.

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A third alternative would be an all-left government consisting of the Communist Party, with 227 seats; the Socialist Party; the Social Democratic Party; and the Proletarian Democracy Party and Radical Party, anti-Communist extreme left-wing parties with a combined total of 10 seats.[3] This alternative, like the previous one, would not control a majority. Even if that were not so, however, it has been a chief contention of the Italian Communist Party that under no circumstances would it take part in an all-left government because of the likelihood of provoking at least a civil war and, at worst, foreign intervention.

Italy has been governed since the summer of 1976 by none of the above coalitions but by a Christian Democracy Party minority government. This minority government has been able to stay in power only because the Communists, Social Democrats, Socialists, Republicans, and Liberals have abstained from voting against the cabinet, leaving in opposition only the two fundamentally antiparliamentary factions of the neofascist right and of the anti-Communist left organized in a parliamentary group called Proletarian Democracy. The six parties which sustain the government together form the so-called "democratic area," and it is those six parties which signed the programmatic agreement of 15 July 1977 which is the basis of Italy's hope to restructure some of her institutions. At the same time, the agreement is a test of the sincerity and political skill of the leadership of the Communist Party, for while it has been the largest mass party on the left since World War II and has exercised power in many cities and regions, this is the first time since DeGasperi that the Communists have been treated as system "insiders."

THE PRINCIPAL ACTORS

The word Eurocommunism is used to describe those Western Communist parties which, particularly since 1974, have shown themselves—at least verbally—eager to be autonomous from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and independent of Russian direction. More than that, the Eurocommunist parties—led in Italy by Enrico Berlinguer, in France by Georges Marchais, and in Spain by Santiago Carrillo—claim to have embraced the pluralistic attitude toward political reality rather than the unanimous solution earlier referred to. Their claims prompt a number of questions, including the following: Are the Italian, French, and Spanish Communist Parties independent from Moscow, or are they instruments of Soviet policy? Would the Eurocommunist parties adhere to democratic processes once in power? Would the United States "allow" the Eurocommunist parties to join coalitions to form governments in their countries? Would the inclusion of Communists in a governing coalition change that particular country's role in NATO? Indeed, would NATO allow an Italian Government which included the PCI or a French Government which included the PCF to remain in NATO?[4] The answer to all these questions during the Nixon-Kissinger-Ford years was a resounding "No." The answer during the current Carter Administration seems to be qualified to a somewhat more pragmatic "Let's wait and see." Let us precede an attempt to sort the pragmatic from the ideological reasons moving the advocates of Eurocommunism by looking at the views of their critics.

The French, Italian, and Spanish Communists have been described as "jockeying for dictatorial power,"[5] and as instruments through which the Soviet Union will intervene in the West "through the medium of *their* Communist parties" [emphasis added].[6] *National Review* warns of "tactical" steps to "destroy capitalism,"[7] a fear echoed in an observation in *Fortune* that "Strident and demagogic rhetoric about the menace of multinational corporations does not sound encouraging."[8] The same protective anxiety concerning the multinational corporations is found in a recent study for the Committee on Appropriations of the United States Senate.[9]

Elsewhere, one is warned of the "domino effect" of further participation of Eurocommunist parties in parliamentary

life[10] and is told that formerly "loyal NATO members" might become "potential problem children."[11] George Ball concludes that "Berlinguer's professions of liberalism are clearly a tactic by which power is to be gained; once it is achieved, they would be promptly jettisoned."[12]

Surprisingly similar judgments are offered by the countries of the Eastern bloc, which call Eurocommunism "unacceptable,"[13] an instrument of "opportunists,"[14] and "agents of imperialism,"[15] engaged in a "dirty enterprise."[16] Eurocommunism, it is said, amounts to little more than "revisionism in the service of anti-communism,"[17] a view which has led Claire Sterling to ask whether the Soviet Union might not be tempted to preserve its hegemony in the East by destabilizing the historic compromise and Eurocommunism in order to discredit it in the eyes of the Warsaw Pact nations.[18]

The burden of proof must rest on the Communist parties themselves. It is they who must persuade their own nationals and their countries' friends and allies that they are, indeed, independent of political manipulation by the Soviet Union and genuine in their dedication to the pluralism which one expects from a parliamentary, liberal-democratic party. These are the crucial areas in which will be found the answers to everyone's queries: independence and pluralism.

The strongest profession of both these points is contained in a series of three articles by Enrico Berlinguer which appeared in 1973 in the leading Italian Communist theoretical weekly, *Rinascita*. In those articles, Berlinguer drew on Lenin's teachings, on recent events in Chile, and on nostalgia for the resistance-born CLN (National Liberation Committee) to propose something very much like John Calhoun's doctrine of rule by the concurrent majority. That is, just as the Southern spokesman had advocated "rule by a consensus of all the major sections and interests rather than by a simple majority of the people,"[19] so Berlinguer proposed a recreation of the common resistance-born policies of the three mass Italian parties–the Catholic Christian Democracy Party, the Marxist Socialist Party, and the PCI. Such a combined force would represent tactical Leninism in its approach to power and would, pragmatically, avoid the risks which Allende's experience in Chile had laid bare: that is, the risk of mobilizing the right opposition against a minority government and the parallel risk of indirect or even direct US intervention. Such an eventuality, said Berlinguer, can be avoided only by insurance that a "historic compromise" unite the three mass parties in a common program which would have the consensus of the overwhelming majority of the population. This would indeed be "a different type of socialism in its essential aspect from that which exists in the Soviet Union and in other countries."[20]

French and Spanish Communist leaders share this view, the Spanish party alleging that such a policy would contribute "to a Europe independent of the U.S. and of the Soviet Union (and neither anti-American nor anti-Soviet)."[21] French Communist Party leader Georges Marchais has said, "Moscow cannot be a model or teacher and new ways to socialism must be explored which pass notably through alliances with socialists, social democrats and Christians and include guarantees of individual freedom."[22] It is little wonder, then, that one French observer commented that the Eurocommunist parties are "on the road that led Martin Luther to break with Rome 450 years ago."[23]

Berlinguer, Marchais, and Carrillo have accelerated their activities concerning both party autonomy and the pluralist society. At Communist Party international conferences in East Berlin, Warsaw, Belgrade, and Moscow itself, the issue was unambiguously raised. On each occasion, the talk was of "a road to socialism . . . which guarantees respect for all individual and collective freedoms, religious freedoms, cultural freedoms, freedom in art and science. We . . . can and must progress towards socialism . . . in a pluralistic and democratic system."[24] At the Twenty-fifth Party Congress, Soviet translators rendered the word "pluralism" as "multiformity" so as not to "confuse the readers" of *Pravda*. Tensions became so high that Berlinguer and

the secretary of the Yugoslav League of Communists threatened to boycott the Congress when further changes in their speeches were suggested.[25]

The "right to demonstrate, to travel, to express diverse ideologies, even those critical of socialism, the plurality of political parties—including the right of opposition parties to exist and to act" were parts of a joint declaration issued two summers ago by French and Italian Communist leaders. The same view is mirrored in a recent article by a Spanish Communist theoretician in the conservative Milanese *Corriere della Sera.* "For years," Carrillo has said, "Moscow was our Rome. That was our childhood. Today we have grown up."[26]

THE LIBRETTO

The pragmatic success of the Eurocommunist phenomenon seems beyond question. In the Italian elections of 20 June 1976, the PCI gained 48 seats. Until recently, polls freely predicted a Socialist-Communist coalition victory in the elections due in France in March 1978. Even the Spanish party, in the first elections in two generations, gained nearly twice the electoral support which the polls had predicted.[27]

It is the Italian case which is most dramatic, however, in view of the fact that every major Italian city is now governed either by a PCI administration or by a left coalition including the PCI. This is true of Milan, Genoa, Bologna, Florence, Venice, Naples, Siena, Turin, and even Rome. Ten of the 20 Italian regions are in the same situation. The reasons for the continuing electoral success of the Italian party surely include a capacity "to reflect more sensitively the demands of new or recently transformed social groups and to be present wherever social change is occurring."[28] The PCI has apparently managed to convince a great many Italians that it is better able to resolve the tensions involved in managing change than the faction-ridden Christian Democracy Party, which has exercised power for the last 30 years.

A prominent Italian Social Democrat suggests other factors in the PCI's electoral victory. For one thing, it has been outside the government but inside the unions and therefore in a position to be credited with many of the innovations produced by union pressures without having to be saddled with any of the responsibilities for policy failures, even those brought on by earlier PCI intransigence. The decline in American prestige has probably affected the electoral position of its Christian Democracy Party protégé, and the attendant scandals have discredited a great many Demochristian politicians. Moreover, to the PCI's credit, its staff, personnel, and capillary organizations "do their homework" and are generally described as "serious people." This confers on the PCI a certain appeal, to intellectuals and others, and undoubtedly feeds the natural social tendency toward opportunistic conformity to what seems a swelling tide of opinion. Youthful supporters seem particularly drawn to a party of change.[29]

Other observers have suggested that the "charismatic factor" is significant in that the Italian party, unlike the French party, is led by "intellectual, cultural and aristocratic classes . . . from a tradition that still reflects the humanism of the Italian heritage and the liberalism of Benedetto Croce."[30] Finally, a dramatically reduced reluctance felt by Catholics to vote for Communists—nourished perhaps by Pope John XXIII's Encyclicals, *Mater et Magistra* and *Pacem In Terris*—is revealed in recent surveys which included the question, "Is Catholic faith reconcilable with a Communist vote?" In 1953, 67 percent answered "No." In 1970, the figure was 44 percent, and in 1972 it dropped to 34 percent.[31]

However, recent events suggest that the PCI may very well be undercut by its own success. That is, the PCI's inclusion in Italian Government would oblige the party to reconcile wholly contradictory needs. On the one hand, the party has committed itself under its present leadership to building a widespread, interclass consensus. At the same time, it recognizes that its natural pillar of support is the Italian working class. This clearly means that it must undertake to court

the middle class without antagonizing the worker.

One can assume, I think, that the PCI is genuinely interested in reform, but let us examine what that would entail. First, a complete reordering of the taxation system to distribute sacrifices equitably among the social classes and income groups is a prerequisite to demanding the tightening of labor's belt. Similarly, the consolidation and commercialization of agriculture, a modernization of the south, and the reform of the entire bureaucratic and "parastatist" organization of the Italian bureaucracy are necessary to retain working class support, but these actions would be seen by many members of the middle class as direct assaults on the privileges and prerogatives which they have accumulated during 30 years of Demochristian patronage. Moreover, if Italian productivity is to increase adequately to regain the favorable position of Italian exports in world markets, social discipline must be brought to bear on the labor unions and on the working class.

For many Italian workers, the PCI has come so close to power that it is now perceived as being more preoccupied with saving capitalism than with transforming Italian society. Thus, statements such as that of Fiat's Vice President, Umberto Agnelli, may confirm worker suspicions while placating the middle class. He said, "As an industrialist, I have no reason to doubt . . . official statements of [the PCI] which say that it accepts the Western logic of the market economy and the pluralistic system."[32]

The PCI must also contribute to dealing effectively with terrorism springing both from the right and from the left. As the German Government can testify, it is difficult to deal with terrorism without jeopardizing civil liberties. That is a risk which the vote-courting PCI would presumably be reluctant to run, especially because foreign reaction would predictably be harsher if Italian civil liberties were suppressed with PCI connivance than if German civil liberties were suppressed by Social Democrats and Liberals.

In France, these tensions are exacerbated by the fact that the French Communist Party is the smaller partner in its electoral coalition with Mitterand's Socialists. Recent newspaper accounts suggest that the Socialist-Communist coalition which had been expected to win a majority in the March election is already strained by programmatic differences arising from Communist doctrinaire insistence on, for example, widespread nationalizations.[33]

In Italy, not only must the Communist Party face the risk of losing labor support, but it is apparently already losing much of the support of Italian university youth, particularly after the riots in Bologna and Rome in the spring of 1977, which were put down with relative effectiveness by the city's Communist administration. In fact, requests by Bologna's mayor for the extradition from France of one of the principals involved in the riots prompted heated journalistic exchange in which such French luminaries of the intellectual left as Sartre, Henri-Levi, Guattari, and Glucksmann joined in attacking the Italian Communist Party and indeed the entire Italian State structure as being fascist and repressive.

Finally, the Italian and French Communists are caught in a dilemma between the Leninist doctrine of democratic centralism and the need to widen the electoral base. It has long been a source of pride for Communists, and very possibly a source of electoral influence, that their parties have been free of the factional divisions which have characterized other parties, most conspicuously the Italian Christian Democracy Party. Democratic centralism meant that a party decision was taken by the leadership and could not be criticized or opposed by party members under pain of reprimand, discipline, or expulsion. While that offers a tactical advantage, it denies the most basic tenet of pluralism which the Eurocommunist parties now claim to embrace wholeheartedly. For the PCI to retain the Leninist principle of democratic centralism means making far less convincing its claims to pluralistic enthusiasm. However, its surrender may nourish the factionalism which has immobilized party life in Italy.

EEC AND NATO

To the claims that Italian or French

Communist participation in European Economic Community negotiations would be damaging, Sergio Segre—foreign affairs specialist of the PCI's central committee—rebuts that "An Italy determined to solve her problems should actually be seen as a force of stability, not disruption."[34] He applies this view to the consequences for NATO as well, but let us treat NATO separately.

Berlinguer, speaking to the central committee of the PCI several months before the publication of the 1973 historic compromise articles, argued concerning Italy's future in NATO that peaceful coexistence is essential so there can be a "progressive overcoming of counter-poised military blocs until they are finally liquidated . . . neither anti-Soviet nor anti-American."[35] Similar ideas have been expressed by Spain's Manuel Azcarate, who has written that a Europe independent of the United States and of the Soviet Union (and which is neither anti-American nor anti-Soviet) would "provide an impulse to the process of overcoming military blocs." Even more recently, speaking at an Italian Communist Party festival in Modena, he said that "We will fight for the dismantling of American bases in Spain only when there are no more Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia."[36]

On moral grounds, the argument has been made in the West—specifically by former Secretary of State Kissinger—that Eurocommunist inclusion in European NATO governments is precluded because of the "moral base [of NATO] in a heritage of shared convictions about principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law."[37] Jacques Fauvet replied to this argument that the "U.S. welcomed Salazar's Portugal and the Junta's Greece. Can [the US] not concede that, should the French or Italian left ever obtain power, it might better observe these principles than the Portugese or Greek fascists?"[38]

After an exhaustive study of PCI documents, Giuseppe Are concludes that the Italian party would maintain the NATO connection so long as there is no change in the equilibrium between the United States and the Soviet Union and so long as there is a general revision in West-East relations to make the opposing blocs effectively obsolete.[39] Members of the central committee have been quoted as saying that "Italy's participation in NATO is not open to question. . . . An Italian government with communist participation will preserve an absolute independence of judgment, including with respect to Moscow."[40]

The current Italian Demochristian Premier—the man in all the world who has the most to lose if the worst predictions are verified—says simply that one cannot foresee the effects upon NATO of Communists entering Western European cabinets.[41]

What should be of concern to us is the answer to the single question, "Is the PCI likely to be an instrument for the advancement of Soviet policy, or is it, rather, a nationalist, Communist party whose role in Italian life should be decided by the Italian electorate and whose participation would have little effect on immediate interests vital to the United States?" Indeed, helping the PCI to resolve Italy's problems might very well increase the PCI's interest in maintaining equidistance between the United States and the Soviet Union. All the nations of Europe—and the United States—wrestle with the efforts to strike a balance between private and social consumption. It is quite possible that an Italy made more effective by serious reform to which the PCI has contributed can offer something of use to us all.[42]

SOVIET REACTION

For the USSR, such a prospect clearly raises the specter of increased expectations and demands both within the Soviet Union and within Eastern Europe. The Soviets "can't tolerate [the pluralist contagion] without risking calling into question the entire system of power which exists in Eastern Europe."[43] Indeed, it is on this basis that Neil McInnes concludes that it is in the Soviet interest and in the interest of the Italian and French Communist Parties to drop the word "Communism" and confess to being social democratic. Accepting this advice might

lessen the temptation or the sense of obligation on the part of the Soviets to intervene or to apply heavy pressure, but it would certainly also have the effect of eroding the major electoral base on which both these Western parties depend. For them, the very phrase "social democrat" is an affront.

Think of the position in which the Soviet Union will be put:

> The failures of those parties [PCI, PCF] are apt to stand as the failure of communism generally in world opinion; whereas their successes, bound to increase their independence, can serve only to diminish Russian authority in the world communist movement and to increase the size of the already large sector of it that goes its own way.[44]

Such a loss "of the image of leadership among the communist forces of the world would . . . subject the Soviet Union to a military isolation as well as a political one."[45]

SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE

Before specifically addressing the future of Eurocommunism, a few summary statements may help clarify the atmosphere in which Eurocommunism exists today:

• The Italian and French Communist Parties are committed to reform.

• Assertive policies would jeopardize their access to power and would risk provoking internal reaction and external intervention.

• Tactically, the Eurocommunist parties have in the past suffered electorally from their image as anti-democratic and Stalinist instruments of a foreign power.

• The Italian and French Communist Parties are under increasing pressure from non-Stalinist socialist models, including Marxist humanism, the Yugoslav example of market socialism, *autogestion* or worker self-management, and so forth.

• The Italian and French Communist Parties seem ready to compromise ideology for pragmatic gains, but both are aware that such opportunism and incrementalism will deprive them of their electoral base.

With these summary statements in mind, the following scenes are possible, if not probable, in Italy:

• In general elections held in 1978, a coalition among all the left parties is able to form a government without the participation of the Demochristians. It can fairly be assumed on the basis of the past 10 years and on recollections of the events of 1960 that the political right would come into the streets and that the forces of order as well as left militants would engage in urban fighting. It seems quite likely that under such circumstances the *carabinieri*, units of the army, or NATO forces might intervene to reestablish "normalcy."

• After the 1978 elections, another Demochristian minority government is possible only with the repetition of the current formula of the abstention by the other five members of the democratic area. The impasse continues and the Communist Party, immobilized by its internal contradictions, proves unable to apply useful pressure on the Christian Democracy Party for further reforms. Discontent continues, and Italy is isolated by being asked to leave the European Economic Community[46] and becomes the "only Latin American country in Europe." Political terrorism from right and left continues, and the military intervenes in order to establish "normalcy."

Both of these scenarios have already been foreseen by the current advisor of the National Security Council, Zbigniew Brzezinski, who has suggested that although Communism is a threat in Italy, in other Western nations the right may prove to be a greater danger.[47] This view is extended to include Italy by P. Allum, who writes that "It may well be that Italian democracy would have more to fear from the right and from the

army's efforts to restore 'normalcy' than from the communists' misuse of power."[48] For the United States to become involved, directly or indirectly, in either of those scenarios would perpetuate what is already roundly attacked by progressive elements in Italy as being support for "corrupt, clientelistic and inefficient" governments.[49]

Other possible scenarios include the following:

• On the death of Tito, the Soviet Union applies pressure to the Yugoslavs to re-Stalinize and to draw closer to the Warsaw Pact. In such a case, if the Italian Communist Party already shares power in Italy, it may feel obliged to become more Stalinist, thereby not only losing its consensus but provoking a civil war, as in the first scenario cited. On the other hand, should Tito die while the PCI is not in power, it seems quite likely that Soviet pressures brought on the Yugoslavs would increase the reluctance of Italians to put their confidence in the PCI and would largely serve to discredit the party.

• After general elections, the Christian Democrats, Socialists, and Communists have the support of 75 to 80 percent of the electorate and form a government, the "historic compromise." Of that prospect, Premier Andreotti said in an interview:

> I believe that the so-called historic compromise would be a great mistake. A coalition of the two [*sic*] major parties would strike a serious blow at political pluralism in Italy by virtually eliminating the historic parliamentary function of the other parties. . . . A Big Two [*sic*] government would . . . lead to a dangerous counterreaction from both the extreme right and the extreme left. These are the forces that already are making such trouble in Italy through their terrorism.[50]

The significance of Andreotti's comment is that he, like Segre and Berlinguer, cautions against any move which would provoke increased terrorism, split the country into warring factions of private armies, and induce military correctives for a state of civil war.

• The most likely future seems to me to be a marginal swing vote in the next general election, and in that event the present balance of political power in Italy will not materially change. The Communists will not only remain outside the government, but—whether in or out—they will find themselves as effectively immobilized by their own internal contradictions as the Demochristians have been in the last 30 years. Able to move neither to the right nor to the left without jeopardizing its electoral base and tempted, conceivably, to rely on patronage as a cohesive force in view of the declining role of ideological centralism, the Italian Communist Party may fall prey to exactly the same paralyzing inertia that has left Italy incapable of resolving its recurring crises, of reforming its administration, and of reducing the disparity between life in the industrial North and in the patch-farming South. Under such circumstances, the future will hold for Italy simply more of the past. Indeed, it is this fear that impels some university youth to engage in antiestablishment gestures of raging frustration.

It may prove to be the case, then, that nothing would change very much. And that may be exactly the intention—and conceivably the interest—of both the United States and the Soviet Union! Those powers might agree, tacitly at least, that it is undesirable that Eastern Europe be "destabilized." Thus, neither power would bemoan the passing of Eurocommunism.

NOTES

1. "Europe's New Renegade Reds," *Time*, 8 December 1975, p. 32.
2. Andre Hauriou, *Droit Constitutionnel et Institutions Politiques* (Paris: Montchrestien, 1970), p. 230.
3. Data drawn from *La Stampa*, 23 June 1976, p. 2.
4. Robert Leonardi, "The United States and the Historic Compromise: An End to the Cold War?" (paper delivered at the 1977 American Political Science Association Convention, Washington, D.C., 1-4 September 1977).
5. Robert Wuliger, "Will Italy go the Way of Chile?" *The Progressive*, 39 (May 1975), 28-31.
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