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British Embassy
Via XX Settembre 80A 00187 Roma

Telex 61049 Telephone 4755.441

Enter
Mr. G. Stone for background
Mr. Young
a useful run-up. If anything Soviet/PCI relations have continued to worsen over the past 10 days
Mr. P. Donnelly, PUSD
PA de
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R P Osborne Esq
WED
FCO

Your reference
Our reference
Date 19 January 1982

WRD out		
RECEIVED IN REGISTRY		
29 JAN 1982		
DESK OFFICER		REGISTRY
INDEX	PA	Action Taken
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Dear Roy,

Mr. P. Donnelly has now virtually communicated to the PCI.

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see
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PCI VIEWS ON POLAND

1. The Polish crisis has posed grave problems for the PCI; indeed, rumour has it that at one meeting of the Direzione Berlinguer was rebuked for interpreting it almost as a personal challenge. The leadership know that the party is on trial and that indecisiveness could either reduce its acceptability in the Italian context as a potential party of government or damage its relations with the Soviet Union. This letter shows how they have walked the tightrope, and describes the party's major pronouncements in the first month of the crisis.
2. The PCI realised from the beginning that their response to events in Poland would need careful articulation (see my letter of 4 September 1980 to your predecessor, not to all). Support for the early moves of Solidarnosc was modified this autumn when a head-on collision with the Polish authorities began to seem probable. The military takeover on 12 December, while not as disastrous as Soviet intervention, posed the same basic dilemma for the PCI as Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and to a lesser extent Afghanistan in 1980. This dilemma is that the leadership have to retain the support of the Marxists at the party base, many of whom (30% according to a recent poll, and not all of them 'old guard') regard the USSR as the best form of society yet achieved and will instinctively support it; but at the same time the leadership must show enough independence of the USSR to convince the uncommitted electorate that the PCI is not a tool of Moscow.
3. Resolving this dilemma has never been easy. Hungary in 1956 hastened destalinisation in the PCI but sounded the death knell of its 'Popular Front' with the PSI. Czechoslovakia in 1968 drew

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a tougher response, for the party was by then more set on the Eurocommunist road, but there were correspondingly greater doubts at the base. By the end of the 1970's, the party's electoral gains seemed to show that the reformists were right to insist on presenting a moderate image and keeping the USSR at arms length. Afghanistan drew a clear condemnation: Poland, closer to home and in the Soviet sphere of influence, was bound to prove a more severe test. Knowing this, the other parties have done their best to embarrass the PCI leaders: the PCI complain bitterly about such "exploitation" of the Polish crisis, but have been forced in self defence to criticise the Polish authorities and the USSR ever more explicitly.

4. PCI sensitivity was shown by the speed with which the Direzione met on Sunday 13 December. The resulting document spoke of "the need to overcome errors of direction in economic and political life" and said that this must depend on "the renewed Communist party, the free trade union movement, and the Church". It condemned the emergency measures and called for civil and trade union rights to be respected, and spoke of the need to avoid external pressure. But neither in the document nor in the extensive reports in the next day's party press was there any explicit reference to Soviet influence or responsibility.

5. The DC and the PSI were quick to criticise this PCI line as too timid on the USSR and too mild on the past failures of the Polish Communist Party. On 15 December, Berlinguer said on Italian television that events in Poland "lead us to think that the propulsive capacity to renew the societies, or at least some societies, of Eastern Europe has been exhausted. I speak of a force of propulsion which has been evident for long periods and which had its starting point in the socialist October revolution ... Today we have reached the point where that phase is ending". He saw two preconditions for the renewal of socialism in Eastern Europe: continuation of detente, and the emergence of a new socialism in the West, inextricably linked to liberty and democracy, which could help the Eastern states 'democratise' their political life. The next day he made a statement in the European Parliament repeating PCI condemnation of human rights violations in Poland.

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5. These remarks certainly helped to shield the PCI from the criticism of other parties when Parliament debated Poland on 17/18 December (see Rome savingram no. 34 of 18 December). But some militants at the base of the party found its criticism of socialismo reale (ie. as practised in Eastern Europe) too harsh, and were upset by the lack of any positive reference to the USSR or the Polish Communist Party. In a long interview on 19 December Pajetta, the veteran head of International Affairs and pro-Soviet by temperament, criticised Solidarnosc's attitude and said that the Communist system could and should have found different solutions since the war to Poland's particular problems. He refused to accept that Communism itself had been found wanting, and when the interviewer reminded him of Berlinguer's statement about the October revolution phase being over, he replied: "But another phase is beginning. We cannot turn back". Pajetta's tone was a long way from the willingness of Napolitano (leader of the PCI group in the Chamber) in an interview the next day to take analysis of the failures of socialismo reale "all the way" and to criticise the Kremlin for putting pressure on the Polish party. This confusion at the top served only to increase unease among the party base, expressed in a series of Regional Congresses up and down the country. On 22 December, the Direzione decided that a further statement was required and that the party's highest body (the Secretariat) should prepare it; a week was needed, a sure sign of the degree of disagreement even among Berlinguer's closest colleagues.

7. The Secretariat's document, issued on 30 December, immediately became the centre of political attention in Italy (copy enclosed for FCO). It repeated the condemnation of Jaruzelski's coup, describing his emergency measures as incompatible with PCI ideals of socialism and democracy. It opposed sanctions or a recreation of cold war attitudes, and said that any interruption of the Geneva negotiations or other disarmament talks because of Poland would be very serious. The document then set out in detail the PCI's views on Eastern Europe (summary at Annex A). Sections on the 'third way' (ie. neither capitalism nor socialismo reale) and on the PCI's opposition to CPSU hegemony over other communist parties were routine, and there was the usual eulogy of the achievements of Soviet communism (this last section sits uncomfortably in the document as a whole and was inserted, apparently, to reassure those elements in the party's

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who cannot easily stomach a sudden distancing from the Soviet Union). The document was explicit about the failure of the POUP, about the legitimacy of Solidarnosc's political claims, and above all about Soviet interference in Poland. It therefore caused a stir, re-opening old debates about the PCI's independence of Moscow etc. The Christian Democrats (DC) acknowledged the document's importance: Popolo, the DC paper, described the PCI's recognition that the October revolution had exhausted its propulsive capacity as "perhaps the furthest point yet reached in PCI's critical revision of the ideological basis of Marxism/Leninism". As always, part of their motivation concerned internal Italian politics; in particular, the party's left wing, favouring closer relations with the PCI at the expense of the Socialists, have taken fresh heart from this firm PCI line. Others were more cautious, but even the Socialists, who for sound electoral reasons have no wish to give bouquets to the PCI, accepted that the document went further than ever before in its condemnation of socialismo reale. They said, however, that the PCI still had a lot more to do to clarify its attitude to Western European societies.

8. All the members of the PCI Direzione accepted the terms of this document on Poland except the pro-Soviet Cossutta. The party paper, Unita, took the unusual step of publishing his letter explaining the grounds of dissent. He argued that the document represented a break with PCI tradition and that renewal should not mean destroying the roots of the party. The document was too dismissive of all the socialist societies so far achieved: would the prospects for a revolutionary process in the West be as good without the weight of the USSR to counter-balance capitalist domination? Natta, number two in the PCI Secretariat, replied the following day in Unita, emphasising the continuity in PCI policy: but Cossutta's views must have found a strong echo at the base of the party, which was presumably his intention.

9. Against this background of uncertainty, an extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee on Poland was held on 11-13 January. Berlinguer himself gave the opening speech, along lines similar to the Secretariat document. He attacked Cossutta by name. There was very little support for Cossutta but he stuck to his guns, accusing Berlinguer of betraying the party's

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traditions and its Marxist ideology. The leaders of the two main wings of the party, Ingrao and Napolitano, both supported Berlinguer, although their interpretation of the 'third way' is different. The Committee therefore ended in agreement, with Cossutta, too, abiding by its decision in the best traditions of democratic centralism, although he voted against adoption of Berlinguer's report. The federations and sections throughout Italy will also abide by the decision: the real risk is not of splits or rebellions but of "demobilisation", ie. lack of enthusiasm among party members and (more important) party workers.

10. There has so far been no reaction from Moscow, but the Czechs have already criticised the PCI line. Berlinguer is dismissive about the possibility of Soviet "excommunication", stressing that there is no question of a break in relations: whether he could be so sanguine if the USSR invaded Poland is another question. In present circumstances, a mild rebuke of the PCI from Moscow could be a positive advantage for their general image, but sustained hostility would cause alarm at all levels.

11. The PCI have still not taken the decisive step to full independence of Moscow. A cynic would interpret their pronouncements on Poland as the minimum necessary to safeguard their position vis-a-vis the other parties and the non-Communist electorate whom they need to woo. But in my view their criticisms, sharpened by Poland, of communism in Eastern Europe are sincere. Acceptance of the doctrine that Italy needs a different model of development, however heretical in Marxist terms, is becoming more widespread in the party. One day the PCI leadership may have the courage to press it to its logical conclusions. Their difficulties will remain, first, to convince some parts of the party that this is the right course; and, secondly, to find an ideology that is not simply a variant of social democracy.

Yours ever,

R N Culshaw

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ANNEX A

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SUMMARY OF THAT SECTION OF THE PCI SECRETARIAT DOCUMENT OF 30 DECEMBER WHICH DEALS WITH EASTERN EUROPE

cc: Mrs K Colvin, Research Dept

Chanceries: Paris

Luxembourg

Brussels

The Hague

Bonn

Dublin

Copenhagen

Athens

Moscow

Warsaw

Prague

Holy See

Washington

UKDEL NATO

Madrid

Democracy and socialism are indivisible. In the countries of Eastern Europe, the regressive tendencies and recurrent crises which put a mark against the monolithic conception of power, effectively the elements of society, and the closed hierarchical way of receiving relations within the "socialist camp". This phase of socialist development, beginning with the October revolution, exhausted its propulsive force.

The advance of socialism is now entrusted to the ideas and conquests of democracy in developed capitalist countries, particularly in Western Europe, and to the novel successes of progressivism in the third world.

The Polish crisis has many causes, but cannot be attributed to reactionary forces hostile to socialism, although it gives them opportunities. Mistaken economic policy created the conditions for it, but the rebellion was also directed against the lack of democratic life in that political system.

The success of Solidarnosc showed that it was necessary to give the working classes a share of responsibility, for the direction of the state and the economy, which could only have been done by transforming Polish socialism in a democratic and pluralist direction.

The attitude of the USSR and other Warsaw pact countries in this crisis has had a great negative weight. There have been heavy pressure, unjust interference, and an insistent political and ideological campaign against the force of renewal. That made it more difficult to isolate extremist tendencies in solidarity and the party.

The adoption of one model, that of the USSR, in Eastern Europe has caused economic and political damage, and it was not a necessary consequence of Yalta. For Poland as for Hungary it was a grave mistake to duplicate the Soviet system.

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The PCI opposed the conception of two blocs in Europe. For Europe there has to be a "third way". It must go beyond the experience of the social democrat parties, to overcome the crisis of capitalism.

The PCI intends to maintain normal relations with all communist parties as with every other socialist, revolutionary and progressive force, without special or privileged links with anyone, and on the basis of complete freedom of thought and political action, with no ideological, political or organisational restrictions.

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Mr Mervyn Jones
Information Department

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RECEIVED		19 JAN 1982
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THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY AND POLAND

1. I attach, as requested, translated extracts from Italian Communist Party statements on Poland. The most important is the document issued by the Directorate and printed in L'Unita of 30 December 1981 in which the PCI reviewed developments in Poland and in Eastern Europe in general.

Directorate statement L'Unita 14 December 1981:

" the serious measures taken by the Polish Government ... raise very great alarm. This blow must be condemned, the blow which has thus been struck against the efforts to resolve the Polish crisis politically with the responsible participation of all the components of society and by a process of effective democratisation ... The PCI ... asks for the restoration and guarantee of civil and trade union freedom ..."

Directorate statement L'Unita 30 December 1981:

" The Communists ... reconfirm their clear condemnation of the military coup in Poland, the arrests and committals by courts martial, the obstacles to all activity by political, trade union and social organisations. These measures - which are incompatible with our democratic and socialist ideals - cannot resolve the deep crisis of the Polish nation. Nor can they be justified by the necessity of saving the substance of a regime of a socialist model, for when one can no longer respond to the protest of the working class and the people with political measures and resorts to military force this represents a blow to the very cause of socialism ... The PCI expresses its condolences to the victims of the tragic, blood-stained facts, renews its solidarity with the Polish people and repeats the request for the immediate restoration of civil and trade union freedom, for the release of the arrested citizens, the renewal of the dialogue and of the search for agreement between the fundamental components of Polish society and life - Party, trade unions, Church - placing them in such a position that they can operate in freedom: only the Poles, in full independence and autonomy, without any foreign intervention, can resolve the problems of their own country."

" ...The forward thrust of the phase in the development of socialism which began with the October Revolution has been exhausted, just as the phase which saw the birth and development of the socialist parties and trade

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union movements which were gathered into the Second International was exhausted".

"It is necessary to give impetus and new horizons to the struggle for freedom in western Europe in order to open up a new phase for socialism in the whole world and to contribute to the democratic renewal of the societies of Eastern Europe".

"The negative weight which the attitude of the USSR and other countries of the Warsaw Pact has had in this crisis is great. There have been serious pressures, undue interference, an unremitting political and ideological campaign against the force of renewal ..."

"The starting point for this reflection, which is not new to the Italian Communists, concerns the harm which has been done by the adoption of a single model - the Soviet type - in the countries of Eastern Europe."

"...The "model" adopted in the Soviet Union and transferred to the Eastern countries, cannot be repeated and every separation between socialism and democracy is unacceptable ...".

"The Italian Communists stand by the autonomous and positive role which they have followed in debates, and meetings, in the open exchanges with the Communist Parties in power and principally with that of the Soviet Union. The PCI intends to maintain normal relations with all Communist Parties and, in the same way, with all other Socialist, revolutionary and progressive forces, without particular or privileged links with anyone, on the basis of absolute autonomy of thought and political actions, without ideological, political or organisational chains".

18 January 1982

K F Colvin
West and Southern
European Section
Research Department
G 87/3: 233-3282

cc: Miss Truesdale
Information Department

✓ Mr Osborne
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Mr Beel
Research Department

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R N Culshaw Esq MVO
British Embassy
ROME

WRD OULL 29 January 1982

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Mr Rank	D M

PCI VIEWS ON POLAND

1. Thank you for copying to me your letter of 19 January to Western European Department on the PCI and Poland which I have circulated further in Research Department and to Information Department.
2. I was struck by the presentation and cohesion of the 29 January statement which is something of a landmark in PCI public statements. I do not recall another statement of this length which concentrates so heavily on the situation in Eastern Europe and so little on the evils of "the other side". This may have made the Soviet task of rebuttal that much easier. L'Unità also seems of late to have been giving greater coverage than hitherto to the difficulties of Eastern European societies.
3. I am enclosing a copy of the Soviet reply in English in case you do not have access to it in Rome. I have not yet seen the text of L'Unità's response which is summarised in your telegram No 28 of 27 January.

K F Colvin
West and Southern
European Section
Research Department

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cc:
✓ Mr Osborne
WED
Mr Beel
RD
Miss Truesdale
Information Dept
Mr Mervyn Jones
Information Dept

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