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Liberal Democrats

Aug. 1944

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
POLITICAL SECTION
APO 394

Ref #530

18 August 1944

MEMORANDUM TO: G-5, Allied Force Headquarters;
Copies to: British Resident Minister,
U. S. Political Advisor.

SUBJECT : Italian Political Party Tendencies.

There has recently been some realignment in the political parties in Italy. This was of course to be expected since in origin the six parties of which the National Committee of Liberation were formed were for the most part expressions of tendencies against Fascism and against the policies of tying Italy to Germany. Now that the time is coming when each of them will have to consider a positive program, there is a natural regrouping into tendencies towards alliance or fusion of the parties of the Left and of the Right.

2. For instance on the 8th August an announcement appeared in the press in which the Socialist and Communist Parties published their intention to associate together in a close alliance to achieve more active participation in the war, to intensify the application of anti-Fascist measures and to bring wages and salaries into line with the cost of living. A coordinated commission was set up consisting of three members of each party and in each case the members include the secretary general of the party, that is, Mr. Togliatti for the Communist and Mr. Deam for the Socialist. This Commission will not only coordinate policy in political matters, but also over trade union questions and the officers of each party principally concerned with the trade union movement are both members of the commission, namely, Mr. Di Vittorio of the Communist Party and Mr. Lizzadri, better known in Naples under the pseudonym of Longobardi, for the Socialist Party. In the statements that have been published it has been made plain that this association of the Communist and Socialist Parties is not a fusion and that each party will maintain its individuality. Finally the two parties stated their conviction that the establishment of a democratic republic by means of a constituent assembly was the solution which best suited the aspirations of the Italian people.

3. As for the right the press of the 13th August published an announcement that as a result of a meeting in Naples of the 8th August the Italian Liberal Party (Partito Liberale Italiano) and the Democrat Liberal Party (Partito della Democrazia Liberale) had decided on fusion. The Liberal Party are of course one of the six parties of the National Committee of Liberation which form

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part of the present government. Their leaders (Croce, Solari, Garandini, Casati, etc.) have been part of the Bonomi Administration and historically are the followers of Giolitti, that is the right-wing of the Liberal Party. The Democrat Liberal Party came into existence in Southern Italy after the Armistice, their nominal head being De Nicola. Their main members were a group of fairly influential local politicians most of them free-masons: Vito Reale, De Caro, Cuomo, etc. Philipson had been the real organizer of the Party and he had done it to a great extent by approaching former masonic friends. These Democrat Liberals used to be followers of Nitti and of Amendola and were the left-wing of the Liberal movement. Whatever the historic background, their fundamental characteristic as a group since the Armistice was their willingness to work under Badoglio and the present distinction between them and the Liberal Party is probably negligible. The Liberal Party has a certain following among the upper and middle classes in Northern and Central Italy and the Democrat Liberals among the popular masses of the South. The fusion of the two parties will undoubtedly strengthen the electoral position of the Liberal movement and as both parties are in favour of the Monarchy, the fusion between the two is likely to concentrate in the new combined party the monarchist elements who are unwilling to join the Christian Democrat Party. It is too soon to say whether this fusion will lead to some change in the Liberal representation in the present Bonomi Government or whether the combined party will be able to draw into it Orlando, who is another outstanding Liberal figure, but who so far has not committed himself to any party.

4. Meanwhile the Action Party has recently held a party convention at Cosenza. At this meeting the fact came into the open that the party is made up of discordant elements who had banded together for "action" against Fascism and against the Germans, but who had no underlying agreement on political matters. The result of the convention was a victory for the leftward tendency of the party who wish that it should become a party of the masses. The leader of this tendency is a Sardinian republican of standing, Emilio Lussu. It remains to be seen what the effect of this will be upon the members of the party who are in the Government as well as upon the minority group of the party who desired it to be a lay party of the Centre.

5. Copies of this memorandum have been sent to the British High Commissioner and U.S. Representative to Advisory Council for Italy.

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H. A. CASSIA
Vice President

Public opinion has been shown to be against the form of government run by self appointed representatives of six parties. This form of protest has materialized in the re-formation of the Liberal Democratic Social Party, which from Cavour to Giolitti, Salandra, Orlando, Always run Italy's destinies on the bases of national institutions.

Leading personalities of this Party are: Orlando, Badoglio, Della Torretta Bergamini, Frassati, Pollastrelli, De Nicola, Philipson, Persio, etc., etc., and its secretary is Leonardo Assarita.

The program of the Party is:

- 1)- To fight the war to the end by the side of the Allied Nations.
- 2)- To rebuild the national structure on the bases of liberty, order and work.
- 3)- Promote and insure the respect of national institutions.

The Party would need a paper which should be the one which always represented the liberal democratic ideals, viz: *Il Giornale d'Italia*, edited by Alberto Bergamini.

In order to achieve this end, Colonel Charles Poletti would be asked to appoint a "Commissario" to the Gruppo the Amiche Armenise - *Giornale d'Italia* - Tribune - with the order to place the newspapers offices and printing press at the disposal of the Liberal Democratic Social Party.

Under the supervision of the A.C.C. this Party would run with its own funds the said newspapers.

The Allied authorities will be asked to take full advantage of the editorial facilities of these newspapers.

In view of the fact that the transfer of the administrative control of Rome to the Italian Government will be effected on August 15th it is pre-eminently desirable that the matter be given immediate attention.

Pen notes: "Mi consiglia come Commissario il Com. Leonardo Assarita".

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(C O P Y)

TRANSLATIONPARTITO DELLA DEMOCRAZIA LIBERALE
B.

To the ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION - To the Italian Government

With reference to the Congress of the Parties, sponsored by the Committee of Liberation for the 28 inst. at Bari, we wish to inform you that the organizations of the Congress, in order to assure in advance homogeneous in the votes of the assembly, which (votes) should then have the appearance of the expression of the will of the country have adopted a criterion of organization designed to exclude all political forces which approach institutional problem in a different way from that of the Committees of Liberation.

In the scheme of this artful system the sponsoring committee, after taking the votes and the representatives of political refugees within a picked circle of those holding a point of view similar to its own, is trying to exclude from participation in the Congress this "Partito di Democrazia Liberale" and to maintain the thesis that the all liberals of Italy are represented by the "Partito liberale Italiano" founded by Croce in Naples and more recently in Apulia.

This party raises its voice loudly in protest against its exclusion and against the above mentioned attempt. It turns to the ACC in order that with its sense of justice, it may take note of the irregularity and the peculiarity of the purposes animating the aforementioned congress and that it (the ACC) may intervene in order to insure on this occasion the triumph of that liberty for which the United Nations are fighting.

Sen. Croce is without doubt a master, before whose doctrine all Italy bows. He is furthermore the theorist and the philosopher of liberalism. But it is a great step from admitting that to conceding that he personifies the political thought of all Italian liberals or that he has at his back a supporting party. As a matter of fact, Croce expresses, on present political problems only his own opinion and that of a small group of admirers and friends. This is shown by the fact (easy to verify) that in Naples and Apulia the Liberal party headed by him has very few members. (iscritti - members by writing, subscribers.)

Furthermore Croce in his life has carried on very little political activity; and on that account he has taken a position in favor of tendencies which even in Naples failed to receive a majority of votes. In fact he was the leader of the so-called "Fascio" of the forces of the extreme right in the administrative elections in that city in the pre-Fascist period, and his party was soundly beaten by the "Block" of the democratic-liberal forces, headed by Arturo Labriola and the greatest exponents of Neapolitan democracy.

From which it may be seen that even though Croce himself may represent today a liberal trend and liberal thought, all the liberal forces in Italy cannot be included in his thought and teachings.

2430

Liberal Democracy, however, reorganized as a party of the same name, which held in Bari on the 5th inst. its first interregional Congress, represents forces of importance, the activities of which go back to the origin of the Kingdom of Italy, which it (Liberal Democracy) has governed from the time the Left came into power. The majority of deputies to parliament up to 1922 came from the body of Liberal Democracy; a party well-defined in its program and its political action; the members included: G. Giolitti and A. Salandra, V. E. Orlando and F. S. Nitti, Giovanni Amendola and Enrico De Nicola.

Clearly to this party, antifascist in membership and political activities, the right cannot be denied to make its voice heard in a Congress of Parties - if such a Congress is really to be a free assembly and not a closed circle with a preconstituted order of ideas and objects.

It may be logical to assume that a closed circle is precisely the object of the organizers of the Congress since they are determined to create an apparent and artificial unanimity of agreement on their own postulates; it cannot however be admitted that such an object is either just or opportune.

It would not be sufficient answer to argue that the Congress is limited to the parties belonging to the Committees of Liberation in which Liberal Democracy is not included. For such a Congress would be a long way from representing a meeting of political forces alive and active in Italy but would be limited to gather the expression of only a part of them. And furthermore Liberal Democracy has in fact given adherence to the Fronte Nazionale di Azione, later changed to Comitato di Liberazione, from its very origin. Only, in conformity with the thought expressed in contrast to Croce by V. E. Orlando and F. S. Nitti, no less antifascist than Croce and having suffered much more than he at the hands of Mussolini and his followers, they have refused their adherence to the special point of view of the Comitato di Liberazione on the institutional question. The Comitato demands a quick solution while Liberal Democracy maintains the solution should be postponed until after the Victory so that soldiers and Italians oppressed by the enemy may be able to express themselves.

In these circumstances this party, in whose first ranks may be found the followers of Giovanni Amendola and the comrades in battle of Francesco Nitti, who once represented the same electorate as these in the Italian Parliament, denounces the partisan line of behavior of the Committee organizing the Congress. Further in homage to the ideals and the principles affirmed in the Atlantic Charter and at Tihheran it refuses to accept the imminent manifestation of the 28th inst. as a vote of all parties and as the voice of all Italy and it asks the Commission to transmit the attached address to the heads of the United Nations.

THE SECRETARY

2430

TRANSLATIONPARTITO DELLA DEMOCRAZIA LIBERALE
Bari

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TRANSLATION

PARTITO DELLA DEMOCRAZIA LIBERALE

BARI

Addressed to the Chiefs of the United Nations

To President Roosevelt
 To Prime Minister Churchill
 To Marshal Stalin

Ninety citizens, who wrongly claim to represent all the vital political issues in Italy, are preparing to meet in Congress at Bari for the discussion of important problems. Although the Partito della Democrazia Liberale includes members in F. S. Nitti's deputation to the Parlamento and counts among its partisans the adherents of G. Amendola and V. E. Orlando and although finally, it unites the preponderant strength of almost all the towns in liberated Italy (and numerous representatives in occupied Italy), it was unjustly excluded from the meeting because of a difference in opinion with the promoters of the meeting on the institutional question. The Nation, the Party of Democrazia Liberale raise their voice in protest to you and, reaffirming their own anti-fascism (never denied) and their loyalty to the democratic principle proclaimed in the Atlantic Charter and at Teheran, disavow a Congress so partisan and demand the safeguarding of our trampled on liberty.

THE SECRETARY
 (Avv. Giuseppe Perrone-Capuno)

/s/

Mr. Caccia:

Capt. Stone sends this
 to you for your further
 action. Nothing has
 been done about forwarding
 to the 3 addressees.

Copy to Mr. Caccia

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505-Perone-Capuno

21 Jan

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PCC

21 JAN 1944

21/31

PARTITO DELLA DEMOCRAZIA LIBERALE

B A R I

Indirizzo ai Capi delle Nazioni Unite

Al Presidente ROOSEVELT

Al Primo Ministro CHURCHILL

Al Maresciallo STALIN

Mentre 90 cittadini, che a torto affermano di rappresentare tutte le correnti politiche imperanti in Italia, stanno per riunirsi a Congresso in Bari per la discussione dei maggiori problemi interessanti, nell'ora attuale, il Paese, il Partito della Democrazia liberale, che racchiude nel suo seno i compagni di deputazione in Parlamento di F.S. Nitti e i compagni di fede e di azione politica di G. Amendola e di V.E. Orlando e che riunisce le maggiori forze di quasi tutti i comuni dell'Italia liberata nonchè numerosi rappresentanti delle regioni dell'Italia irredenta, ingiustamente escluso dal Convegno perchè in dissidio coi promotori di esso intorno alla questione istituzionale, leva sino a Voi la sua voce di protesta e, riaffermando il proprio antifascismo mai smentito e la fede nei principi democratici proclamati dalla Carta Atlantica ed a Teheran, sconfessa un Congresso così partigiano e reclama la tutela della libertà conculcata..

IL SEGRETARIO

(Gen. Giuseppe Scione - Capone)

Giuseppe Scione

TRANSLATION

PARTITO DI DEMOCRAZIA LIBERALE
11

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305-Peronelephano, Trieste
505-Croce, Neapolitano

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THE SECRETARY

21 JAN 1944

PARTITO DELLA DEMOCRAZIA LIBERALE

B A R I

Per la COMMISSIONE INTERATLEATA di CONTROLLO
presso il Governo Italiano

In riferimento al Congresso dei Partiti, promosso dai Comitati di Liberazione per il 28 corrente in Bari, portiamo a Vostra conoscenza che gli organizzatori del Congresso predetto, al fine di assicurare preventivamente omogeneità ai voti dell'assemblea, i quali dovrebbero poi apparire espressione della volontà del Paese, hanno adottato un criterio di organizzazione che mira ad escludere, con la massima cura, tutte le forze politiche orientatesi, sul problema istituzionale, in modo diverso da quello seguito dai Comitati di Liberazione.

Nel quadro di tale artificioso sistema il Comitato promotore, dopo aver raccolti i voti e le rappresentanze dei rifugiati politici entro una cerchia selezionatissima di aderenti al proprio punto di vista, intende precludere la partecipazione al Congresso a questo "Partito della Democrazia Liberale" e varare la tesi che, i liberali d'Italia, sono rappresentati tutti dal "Partito liberale Italiano" che il senatore Benedetto Croce avrebbe fondato dapprima in Napoli e recentemente in Puglia.

Ora contro la preclusione e contro il tentativo testè accennati, questo Partito leva alta la sua voce di legittima protesta e si rivolge a questa On. Commissione, perchè, nel suo senso di giustizia, rilevi la irregolarità e la stranezza dei propositi coi quali il supputato Congresso è impostato e intervenga al fine di assicurare, anche in questa occasione, il trionfo di quella libertà per la quale le Nazioni Unite combattono.

Indubbiamente il senatore Croce è un Maestro, innanzi alla dottrina del quale si inchina l'intera Italia. Egli è inoltre il teorico e il filosofo del liberalismo. Ma da ciò al riconoscimento che Egli personifichi il pensiero politico di tutti i liberali d'Italia ed abbia alle proprie spalle un partito che lo segua, intercorre grande distanza. In realtà, invero, il Croce esprime, sui

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problemi politici dell'ora attuale l'opinione personale sua e di una ristretta schiera di suoi ammiratori ed amici, come dimostra il fatto, facilmente constatabile, che a Napoli ed in Puglia il Partito Liberale a lui facente capo annovera pochissimi iscritti.

Peraltro il Croce ha svolto, durante la sua vita, un'attività politica scarsissima, in occasione della quale ha preso posizione in favore di tendenze, che nappure in Napoli riscossero la maggioranza dei voti. Capeggiò, infatti, nelle elezioni amministrative che in quella città si svolsero in periodo anteriore al fascismo, il cosiddetto "Fascio" delle forze di estrema destra, che fu battuto clamorosamente dal "Blocco" delle forze demo-liberali, che avevano a capo Arturo Labriola e i maggiori esponenti della democrazia napoletana.

Si deve concludere da ciò che, se esso senatore Croce può oggi personificare un pensiero ed una corrente liberali, le forze liberali d'Italia, non si esauriscono nel pensiero e negli insegnamenti di lui.

Dal suo canto, invece, la Democrazia Liberale, riorganizzata nel Partito dello stesso nome, che in Bari ha tenuto il 5 corrente il suo primo congresso interregionale, convoglia forze imponenti, la cui attività rimonta ai primordi del Regno d'Italia, che dall'avvento della sinistra al potere essa ha sempre governato. La maggioranza dei deputati ai Parlamenti, succedutisi sino al 1922, usciva dal seno della Democrazia Liberale: partito ben definito nel suo programma e nella sua azione politica, e del quale fecero parte G. Giolitti e A. Salandra, V.E.Orlando e F.S.Nitti, Giovanni Amendola ed Enrico De Nicola.

A questo Partito, antifascista nei suoi componenti e nella sua opera politica, non si può evidentemente precludere il diritto, di far udire la sua voce in un Congresso di Partiti, che sia realmente una libera assemblea e non un circolo chiuso entro un precostituito ordine di idee e di propositi.

Che questo sia negli obiettivi degli organizzatori del Congresso può essere logico, atteso che costoro tengono a mettere in essere un'apparente ed artificiosa unanimità di consensi intorno ai propri postulati, ma che ciò sia del pari giusto ed opportuno non può essere am-

PARTITO DELLA DEMOCRAZIA LIBERALE

B A R I

nesso.

Nè varrebbe opporre che il Congresso sia limitato ai partiti aderenti ai Comitati di Liberazione, mentre la Democrazia Liberale non farebbe parte di questi, sia perchè un Congresso simile sarebbe ben lontano dal rappresentare la riunione delle forze politiche vive ed operanti in Italia, ma si limiterebbe a raccogliere le voci di una parte di esse, sia perchè la Democrazia Liberale ha aderito al Fronte Nazionale di Azione, trasformato poi in Comitato di Liberazione sin dal sorgere di esso, e soltanto - (in conformità del pensiero che al riguardo, in contrasto col senatore Croce, hanno manifestato V.E. Orlando e F.S. Nitti, non meno antifascisti del primo e più di lui vittime di Mussolini e dei suoi seguaci) - hanno rifiutato di aderire al particolare punto di vista del Comitato di Liberazione sulla questione istituzionale: che questo esige sia risolto subito, mentre la Democrazia Liberale sostiene debba essere rinviato al periodo successivo alla vittoria, perchè vi si pronunzino anche i combattenti e gli italiani oppressi dal nemico.

In tali condizioni questo Partito, nelle cui prime file sono i seguaci di Giovanni Amendola e i compagni di lotta di Francesco Nitti, già deputati dagli stessi elettori di costoro al Parlamento Italiano, denuncia la partigiana linea di condotta del Comitato organizzatore del Congresso e in omaggio alle idealità e ai principi affermati con la Carta Atlantica e a Teheran, sconfessa l'imminente manifestazione del 28 corr. come voto di tutti i partiti, e come voce dell'intera Italia, e chiede che questa On. Commissione voglia trasmettere ai Capi delle Nazioni Unite l'allegato indirizzo.

IL SEGRETARIO

(Econ. Giuseppe Scione-Capone)

Giuseppe Scione-Capone

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