

THE EXPLOSION OF ITALIAN TERRORISM AND THE PIAZZA FONTANA MASSACRE SEEN BY THE UNITED STATES¹.

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Abstract: The article deals with the analysis and reactions from the United States pertaining to the piazza Fontana massacre (1969) and the explosion of Italian terrorism. The work assesses these components through the most relevant and influential American newspapers and magazines and the analysis of the CIA, the White House, the Department of State, and the American Embassy in Rome. First, the article examines the widespread evaluations of the Italian situation at the moment of the December 12th bombings and the reactions to terrorist attacks or violent episodes already occurred in Italy. Second, it analyzes American reactions to the piazza Fontana massacre. Finally, it focuses on the different American comments about the possible consequences of the bombings on the Italian political system.

Key-words: Italy, terrorism, Piazza Fontana massacre, United States, CIA, American press

Introduction.

Thirteen persons were killed and nearly 100 others were injured tonight when between 12 and 16 pounds of explosives blew up in a crowded Milan bank. The explosion occurred almost simultaneously with three bomb blasts in Rome in which 16 persons were injured. A fifth unexploded bomb was found in another bank, near La Scala Opera House.

[...] Dismembered bodies were flung about by the blast at the National Agricultural Bank [in piazza Fontana], near Milan Cathedral. [...] The bomb [...] tore a yard-wide hole in the marble floor below and shattered all the windows and partitions.

After an instant of shock the hall turned into chaos, with dead scattered over the floor, wounded people screaming for help and bleeding clerks – who were protected by their counters – putting out fires among their papers and rescuing the injured. The bank and square outside were covered with broken glass and patches of blood².

With these crude but effective words, on December 13, 1969, the front page of the influential American newspaper the *Washington Post* described the «piazza Fontana massacre»³, the Italian *dies irae*⁴.

The terrorist attacks in Rome and, above all, in Milan on December 12, 1969, represent a crucial event in recent Italian history⁵. In fact, the Piazza Fontana massacre is widely interpreted as the first relevant episode of the Italian dramatic terrorist experience, which lasted for more than fifteen years causing a heavy toll in terms of the number of people killed and wounded.⁶ It was probably unique in the West in that period, as well⁷. Moreover, the Piazza Fontana massacre is generally considered as the most relevant and «the most emblematic» episode of the first wave (1969-1974) of neo-fascist terrorism and of that *strategy of tensions* pursued by radical Right

groups⁸, which – through many acts of violence, terrorist attacks, *stragi*, attempts of coups d'état and the consequent creation of an atmosphere of fear – tried to overthrow the democratic regime in Italy and to «promote a turn to an authoritarian type of government»⁹, probably with the complicity (if not the support) of some forces within the state¹⁰. Furthermore, the December 12th bombings are usually considered the «most complicated» (and not definitively resolved yet) «political and judicial case in the Italian history», with numerous judicial investigations, trials and sentences, hundreds of thousand documents, and different suspects and people accused¹¹. Also for this reason, the piazza Fontana massacre has provoked furious political and journalistic debates and has been the place of divided and contested memories¹². The December 12th bomb attacks, therefore, marked in a considerable and indelible way Italy's recent history, the political and social development of the country, and the culture and the attitudes of its citizens.

The event was perceived as a turning point in Italian history only a few minutes after the explosion of the bombs, even beyond the shores of Italy. «The bloodiness and seriousness of these events have no recent parallel here», the American Embassy in Rome stated on the evening of December 12th in a brief telephone report immediately enclosed to a memorandum sent to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Henry A. Kissinger¹³. This is – the *Los Angeles Times* commented – the «worst terrorist attack» in Italy «since World War II»¹⁴.

This article aims at reconstructing how the piazza Fontana massacre was interpreted outside of Italy. In particular, it deals with analysis, comments and reactions from the United States pertaining to the piazza Fontana massacre. The work assesses these components through the most relevant and influential American newspapers and magazines and the analysis of the CIA, the White House, the Department of State, and the American Embassy in Rome. First, the article examines the widespread evaluations of the Italian situation at the moment of the December 12th bombings and the reactions to terrorist attacks or violent episodes that occurred in Italy in the previous months. Second, it analyzes American reactions to the piazza Fontana massacre. Finally, it focuses on the different American comments and judgments

about the possible consequences and effects of the bombings on the Italian political system.

1. The explosion of a wave of bomb attacks, the *Hot Autumn* and the «violent confrontation of extremist forces»

The bombings in Milan and Rome ought to be considered – many American newspapers wrote the day after the explosions – not as an isolated phenomenon but as «the latest in a wave of violence»¹⁵ that had exploded some months earlier, actually as «the third wave of bomb attacks in Italy this year»¹⁶. This wave – the *New York Times* explained – «began in April when 20 persons were injured when a bomb exploded in the Fiat automobile pavilion at the International Milan Trade Fair». Some days later, at the beginning of August, «11 persons were injured when 8 bombs exploded on 7 trains»¹⁷. Actually, both of these earlier bomb attacks had received considerable attention in the United States. At first, the analysis and evaluations concentrated above all on the possible political origins of the culprits.

Commenting on the April 25th bombings, for example, American newspapers expressed little doubt that the bombs had been planted by some «anarchists», «agitators», «extremist political groups»¹⁸. The eight bombs on the trains at the beginning of August strengthened American journalists' firm belief that Italy was witnessing the birth of a «new wave of terrorist violence»¹⁹ – an idea that was not elaborated with such intensity in Italy. However, the precise political origin of this wave of attacks appeared still uncertain to many American observers. Some of them, for example, raised speculations that the terrorist attacks might have been the work of «Tyrolean separatists» who sought to detach the German-speaking northern province of Bolzano from Italy and to return it to Austria, which had exercised sovereignty there until the end of World War I²⁰. Others advanced the theory that the explosives «might have been planted by extreme left-wing “Chinese” Communists of the so-called Marxist-Leninist party, a group believed to be responsible for half a dozen acts of violence – with the Italian prosperous classes as targets – over the last two years»²¹. This was also the hypothesis formulated in those hours by the American Embassy in Rome, which in a brief telegram to Washington seemed to exclude the *Tyrolean* hypothesis and, rather, thought more likely that the action had been conducted by «anarchist or other extremist Italian

groups»²². Unlike what happened in the Italian political and journalistic debate in the same days, no one in the US seemed to mention a possible *neo-Fascist* (or black) connection, on which the Italian judicial proceedings concentrated in the following years.

According to the American point of view, the December 12th bombings took place in a nation deeply shaken and weakened not only by the explosion of the terrorist wave. In the opinion of the American observers, in fact, the piazza Fontana massacre «climaxed a period»²³ characterized also by a particularly widespread labor unrest, by continuous strikes (the so-called “hot autumn”), and by an increasing «violent confrontation of extremist forces – the “Maoist” left and the neo-Fascist right»²⁴. Relevant moments of tension and significant violent clashes between extremist forces and the forces of the order had been frequent since the beginning of the Fall. However, as some American observers rightly perceived already in those days, the November 19th general strike (the «third» in that year, «but only the fourth since World War II»²⁵, the *Washington Post* noted) launched by Italy’s big three labor unions, backed by Communists, Socialists, and Catholics, marked the «peak» in «the so-called hot autumn of labor agitation against managements and the government»²⁶.

The strike witnessed the most salient and serious incident of political violence prior to the piazza Fontana massacre, an incident which had profound consequences on Americans’ perception of Italy’s crisis. Even if some critical and caustic evaluations (probably echoing certain traditional images of Italians widespread in sectors of American culture) were expressed²⁷, all American newspapers highlighted the extraordinary magnitude and the success of the strike (“Half of Italy’s Workers Join General Strike”, was the main title of the *New York Times*), which had been «almost totally effective in Rome, Milan, Genoa, Naples and most other Italian cities»²⁸, had «cut across every sector of economy – industrial, agricultural, commercial and governmental»²⁹, and which consequently had really been able to bring «Italy to a Halt»³⁰ and to «shut down the country»³¹. However, in the view of American observers, the aspect which mainly marked the «big Italian strike», even more than its impressive magnitude and the level of support, was extremist violence. This violence had even led to the death of a young policeman, Antonio

Annarumma, who was killed «in violent clashes with extreme left-wing students and workers in Milan»³² – as the *Chicago Tribune* wrote the following day, giving voice to an interpretation widespread in wide sectors of American public opinion. Annarumma’s death alarmed and created a «big impression»³³ not only in Italy but also in the USA. In fact, after the policeman’s death, the problem of an increasingly intense and dangerous violence became a crucial and dominant factor in determining and influencing not only American analysis of the November 19th strike and the social (and youth) protest, but also the American perception of the general situation in Italy. Significantly, almost all the pictures in the newspapers were devoted to themes of «Italy strike violence», to «violence in Italy», and to the clashes between policemen and demonstrators-strikers. At the same time, the terms used in the articles («street battles», «barricades», «street fighting», cobblestones used as «missiles», etc.) revealed the firm belief that the violence in Italy was probably experiencing a qualitative leap.

In the hours immediately following the violent clashes in Milan, however, Annarumma’s death and the possible escalation of violence were not the only elements that worried observers in the US. A CIA report and a brief telegram from the American Embassy in Rome revealed, in fact, that the «initial reactions from police in Milan area» had not been «entirely reassuring»³⁴. The CIA noticed the «evidence of some police unrest in Milan», which reflected «the strain of trying to minimize violence during the autumn’s extensive labor-management disputes». The report added some relevant details:

After Milan labor extremists inadvertently killed one policeman and wounded a number of others during Wednesday’s general strike, senior officials had difficulty dissuading some elements of the police from revenge. Two of the more irate units have been replaced by police from outside Milan³⁵.

The Embassy believed that the «present episode» was «likely to be absorbed by normal resiliency of public order services». However – it concluded – «in event police get out of hand either on side of excessive violence or of refusing orders to continue previous moderate and responsible role, Government would immediately be in difficulties»³⁶.

2. Italy's Regime is «Under Attack»: «Near Collapse»?

Even if the CIA – in a report written at the beginning of December – noticed that «labor negotiations» were actually making some «progress»³⁷, Annarumma's death and the following events marked a point of no return in the opinion of the Americans and influenced deeply their analysis and perception of the Italian condition. The killing of the young policeman and the subsequent «insurrectional situation» (police mutiny, «groups of Fascist toughs» that had «roamed Milan streets during the policeman's funeral indiscriminately beating up anyone who looked or acted as though he might be a leftist») led, in fact, some influential observers in the US to draw a very dark and alarming picture of the «discouraging Italian public scene»³⁸. The flu epidemic, which was bringing the country to its knees in those days, seemed to be affecting Italy's political institutions too and appeared a metaphor perfectly tailored to describe the Italian cultural, political, and social condition³⁹. In other words, Italy appeared as a sick country, and its future condition might be critical. «Regime Near Collapse in Strike-Torn Italy» was the headline of a *Los Angeles Times* article published only a few days after Annarumma's death⁴⁰, while a similar headline was chosen by the *Washington Post* the same day («Italy's Regime Is Under Attack As Strike Disorders Grow»)⁴¹. However, it was perhaps the *New York Times* that described the Italian «major crisis» in the most detailed and alarming terms: «Even – Robert C. Doty wrote at the beginning of December – the most confident believers in the almost magical ability of Italians, individually and collectively, to “*arrangiarsi*” – approximately, “muddle through” – [are] alarmed by the present political and social disarray and the list of unpleasant possibilities for the future». The *New York Times* newspaper, as well as other American observers, underlined some of the possible manifestations of the “Italian disease” which they considered worrisome.

First of all, observers in the US (both journalists and analysts of the CIA and members of the American Embassy in Rome) pointed out the dramatic political instability. Since national parliamentary elections of May 1968, in fact, the Center-Left government formula (i.e. cooperation between Socialists, Christian Democrats and Republicans), which had provided reasonable stability and some reforms

to the Italian body politic, had been passing through a crisis: «each of the three governments since the national parliamentary elections of May 1968 – the CIA wrote in a long *Intelligence Memorandum* on “Political Stability in Italy” – has faced wide-spread dissatisfaction and insistent speculation that its tenure would be short. [...] Each of the political parties has since been seeking a more attractive stance, and the various factions within the parties have at the same time been vying for position»⁴². In particular, as the American Ambassador in Rome Graham Martin explained in a telegram to the Department of State, the main «question now being asked within and between democratic political parties is whether Center-Left formula is played out or not». That question had not found a clear answer among the political forces since the elections⁴³. The dangerous consequences for the political system deriving from this uncertainty and from the absence of clear outlooks were evident, according to American observers: instability, weakness, and the possible opening of a new government crisis with the possible «collapse» – the *New York Times* wrote on December 7– of the «present effort by the Christian Democrats to carry on minority, one party government with the grudging, uncertain support of two mutually hostile Socialist parties – one flirting with the Communists, the other uncompromisingly anti-Communist»⁴⁴.

Italy's second fundamental political problem was then identified as the fact that «no government in the postwar period» had been able to accomplish needed reforms «without years of parliamentary and political maneuver»⁴⁵: the consequence had been a widespread «loss of faith by the average Italian, particularly the workers, in the problem solving ability of parliamentary government» and an «increasing tendency» to seek «redress and satisfaction in the piazzas – by demonstration, peaceful or otherwise»⁴⁶. According to a widespread point of view in the USA during those days, an additional two symptoms of the “Italian disease” could be identified: one was the extraordinary power of the three major labor confederations «of Communist-Socialist, Social Democrat and Christian Democrat inspiration», which seemed to be «seeking successfully to fill the power vacuum created by semi-paralyzed Government and Parliament»; while the other was the increasing influence and power of «Italy's big Communist party» and, consequently, the «opportunity» for it «to make

resolution of any future crisis impossible without its collaboration and consent». American observers stressed one more crucial, and quite disquieting, aspect of Italy's crisis, which could have turned into a serious «threat» to the country: that is, the increasing success of the «extremes» and the explosion of violence. With regard to these aspects, the *New York Times* wrote, for instance, at the beginning of December:

Provocateurs of extreme left (Maoists, anarchists, “worker power” revolutionaries) [have] success in a significant number of cases in provoking violent clashes with security forces. This has occurred in spite of major efforts by the union and orthodox Communist leadership to isolate and oust the extremists. They are balanced ominously by a resurgence of the “*squadristi*” of the right, the organized bands of bully boy Fascists thirsting to bomb and beat up institutions and individuals vaguely labeled “Red”.

Some comments and analysis elaborated in the USA in that period pointed out also a final unpleasant possibility for Italy's future. Namely, they feared a «right wing authoritarian reaction», led – as the *New York Times* wrote on December 7 – by neo-Fascists but «probably enlisting support from moderate, middle class elements less frightened by the prospect of “strong”, even dictatorial government than by that of growing Communist influence»⁴⁷. Significantly, on the same day, the *New York Times* carried a story, based on a document said to have come from inside the Greek Government and published in those hours by the *London Observer*⁴⁸, dealing with a possible «plot in Italy», planned by Italian rightists and army officers with the active assistance of the Greek military junta⁴⁹.

Thus, between the end of November and the beginning of December, to many American observers the Italian situation appeared increasingly alarming and critical. Weak government, fractionalized parties, public exasperation over interrupted services due to frequent strikes, growing power and influence of the unions and of the PCI, fears of possible coups d'état, explosion of a wave of terrorism, continuous episodes of violence and disorders provoked by extreme left-wing agitators and by neo-Fascists were the main symptoms of the “Italian disease”. All these factors had collectively formulated «an atmosphere of crisis

more menacing than any time in the last half-dozen years»⁵⁰.

3. December 12, 1969: «Bombings in Italy»

Within this atmosphere of crisis, on December 12, bombs exploded in Milan and in Rome, and the Piazza Fontana massacre took place. Shock, insecurity, outrage, and «fear spread in the nation»⁵¹ according to the American press in the following days. Coming «after three months of mounting violence and social unrest – the *Washington Post* wrote –, the explosions cast a blight of gloom over the entire country»⁵²: «Christmas street lightings were dimmed in Rome and Milan» and «Christmas shoppers stayed home and the usually bustling streets were virtually deserted»; «public and private buildings flew flags at half mast; most theaters and moviehouses were closed and police guarded banks, department stores, newspaper offices and other buildings», while «state television canceled weekend variety programs as a sign of mourning»⁵³. The comments elaborated in the USA on the heels of the moment highlighted, even if not explicitly, a rift between Italian civil society's reaction to the terroristic attacks and that of the political class. In particular, some American analysis pointed out that the unity and the composure showed by most Italians in the hours following the terrorist blasts (which actually Pope Paul VI didn't hesitate to define as «wholly contrary to the civilization and Christian tradition of the Italians»⁵⁴) had not characterized political parties' reactions. Even if – as a December 12 evening report from Rome pointed out – the institutions' «reaction in Rome» had been undoubtedly «sharp»⁵⁵ and «virtually all political parties [had] stressed the threat to democracy in the strongest terms»⁵⁶, some of the most influential newspapers in the US noticed that even in this dramatic and delicate circumstance, it had been the traditional «partisan» spirit and attitude (considered to be deeply rooted in Italian political culture) that had prevailed in the political confrontation. Commenting on the December 13th parliamentary debate, the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* wrote, for instance, that «most of the statements in Parliament» had borne «the stamp of party interest despite the universal deference to the need for public order and strong government» and that «political parties» had done nothing but bitterly accusing each other of «instigating the explosions»⁵⁷.

In the hours immediately following the bombings, American analysis and comments focused mainly on the issue of the judiciary investigations and on the possible culprits of such a tremendous terrorist attack. The predominant points of view were essentially two, one backed up mainly by the American press, the other formulated instead in the analysis and the comments of the CIA and of the American Embassy in Italy.

The dominant position expressed by American newspapers in the hours following the Piazza Fontana massacre was that there was no clear «indication of the motive for the bombings or of the persons or groups responsible», «no solid» clue on who had «placed the bombs»⁵⁸. Actually, they were certain – also on the basis of the Italian police reports – that radical and extremist groups had to be blamed for the bombings (and some newspapers mentioned also the hypothesis of possible international links and connections, particularly focusing on Greeks⁵⁹). But they generally did not express a clear position about *which* of these groups could have been the responsible of the massacre. According to newspapers in the US, in fact, the possible culprits could have been «extremists» of «all directions» and of «all ideologies»: “black” or “red”, neo-Fascists or anarchists, Trotskyites or Maoist Communists⁶⁰.

A very different point of view and hypothesis was prevailing, instead, in the reports of the CIA and of the American Embassy in Rome. In fact, also on the basis of some information coming from Italian sources, these reports seemed to consider the so-called “red trail” (which blamed the left-wing extremists as the culprits of the bombings) as the most convincing. This hypothesis was expressed by the CIA and by the American Embassy from the very beginning. Only a few minutes after the explosion of the bombs, in fact, a telephone report from Rome, which was enclosed to a memorandum to Kissinger, stated: «we are told privately [...] that arrests of ultra-left elements, that is, the Maoisti, the anarchists, and the worker-power groups, have already begun in Milan and Rome»⁶¹. Some hours later, on December 13th, the same hypothesis was reaffirmed in three further documents and reports. Bomb explosions – the CIA wrote in a brief analysis – «may have been the work of young extremists of the left, who have been trying to inflame the labor unrest that has characterized recent months in Italy»⁶². Quite similar was the point of view expressed in

another memorandum to Kissinger, sent in this case from Helmut Sonnenfeldt: «Massive police action has included rounding up suspected terrorists on both the left and right, although the official thinking is that ultra-left (the Maoisti and anarchists) are responsible»⁶³. In the same hours, also the American Ambassador to Italy, Martin, in a long telegram to Washington seemed to be inclined – on the basis of some Italian sources – to attribute the Piazza Fontana massacre and the other December 12th bombs to extremists of the left. Martin stated that he understood that while police had been «concentrating on extreme left, extreme rightist ha[d] also come in for police interrogation», and he also wrote that some sources had indicated that «police did not exclude far right involvement although they did not think bombings bore neo-Fascist stamp» («extreme right – added – would of course stand to gain if it could pin these attacks on extreme left»). However, Martin reported to Washington that «good source in President Saragat’s entourage said police believe bombings were work of “Anarchists” and “Maoists”»: «technique of bombings – the ambassador concluded – appears similar to that used by anarchists last Summer when they launched series of attacks on railroad trains (some anarchists are still being held pending trial for these bombings)»⁶⁴.

A few hours later, on December 16th, President Richard Nixon was finally informed by Kissinger that, even if there was «no solid facts on who is responsible» yet and Italian police were actually «rounding up the extremists of both the ultra-left and right who have terrorist backgrounds», the «official speculation» was that «the ultra-left (the Maoisti and anarchists)» were «to blame»⁶⁵.

This point of view and more generally the “red trail” seemed to receive valid confirmation by the Italian police on exactly the same day Kissinger sent his memo to Nixon: «the anarchist, male ballet dancer Pietro Valpreda, 36, was the first person to be accused of taking part in the worst terrorist bombing attack in Italy in nearly 50 years», the *Washington Post* announced. Earlier in the day – the *Washington* newspaper added –, «another Italian anarchist jumped to his death from the fifth floor of the Milan police headquarters while undergoing questioning. Police said Giuseppe Pinelli, 41, a railroad employee and chairman of an anarchist club in Milan, committed suicide after his alibi collapsed. Police said Pinelli was one of the

strongest suspects in the Milan investigation». Neither the *Washington Post* nor the other major American newspapers expressed, in this early stage, any serious doubt about the guilt of the two anarchists and about the validity of the “red trail”⁶⁶. In the following days, some (very few) American observers actually noticed that other persons, coming from the opposite end of the political spectrum and members (or ex-members) of neo-Fascist organizations could have been involved in the December 12th bombings. For instance, on December 20, Robert C. Doty wrote in the columns of the *New York Times*: «Charged with a leading role in the attacks is Pietro Valpreda, 36 years old, who [...] is a member of a group of anarchists, unrecognized by the main Italian Anarchist Federation. At least one of the organizers of the Valpreda group, Mario Merlino, was a member of a neo-Fascist group at the University of Rome until 1965»⁶⁷. And some days later, commenting on the «crack-down on extremists» and the «new campaign» of arrests and «attack by the Italian authorities against extremist organization» which had followed the Milan and Rome bombings, the American Embassy significantly reported to Washington: «It should be noted that the subjects of the above arrests, searches, etc., are not linked with the anarchists presently being held for the bombings; these, now being increasingly identified as right-wing, total five in addition to the dancer Valpreda»⁶⁸.

However, as far as we can know on the basis of the available documentation, this news coming from further investigations seemed not to drive observers in the US to seriously call into question the guilt of Valpreda (and of Pinelli)⁶⁹ or to follow with conviction an alternative “black trail” with regard to the December 12th bombings. Actually, it can be said that, after Valpreda’s arrest, Americans’ attention for the issue of the political and intellectual origins of the accused bombers, even if considered «of some importance», deeply declined. After this point, American worries, analysis and comments, instead, began to focus on another relevant problem: that is, the possible effects and consequences of the bombings on the Italian political situation.

4. The Bombings’ Effects on the Political System.

As mentioned above, at the time of the bombings Italy was ruled by a Christian Democratic *monocolore*, that is by a minority,

one party (DC) government headed by the influential Christian Democrat Mariano Rumor. However, every well-informed person in Rome (and not only in Rome) thought that Rumor’s cabinet was only a transitory solution, even if no one knew exactly what the definitive one would be. In fact, the possible scenarios and questions were numerous: was the Center-Left formula played out or not? Would the *monocolore* formula have continued to be the favorite one? Was it possible to have a new government made up of all the four parties of the Center-Left (the Christian Democratic, the two Socialist parties, and the Republican party)? And, if not, was it more likely a coalition of the Christian Democrats with the right-wing Socialists, the Republicans and the conservative Liberals or a Christian Democratic coalition with the left-wing Socialists? Finally, if no one of these solutions was possible, would it have been necessary to hold an early election?

Understandably, the December 12th bombings influenced in a decisive way this debate and played a crucial role in determining the immediate future course of the Italian political situation. The White House, the American Embassy in Rome and the CIA followed with vigor and extraordinary attention the developments of the Italian political debate after the terrorist attacks. On the contrary, at least in the days immediately following the events, the American press didn’t pay much attention to these issues – with the only, relevant, exception being the *New York Times*.

The American Embassy in Rome immediately perceived that the «political implications» of the bombings «could be severe», as the telephone report received from Rome and enclosed to a memorandum to Kissinger right after the terrorist attacks shows⁷⁰. The following day, on December 13th, both the CIA analysts and the American Ambassador to Italy confirmed this first impression and began to speculate about these possible political implications. «Bomb explosions and resulting casualties in Milan and Rome yesterday – the CIA suggested – will increase pressures on the minority Christian Democratic government of Mariano Rumor»⁷¹. In a long telegram to Washington, the Ambassador Martin expressed an identical point of view. Although he believed it was «still too early» to tell what would have been the «political consequences of these incidents», Martin wrote in fact that there could have been «increased pressures for action of Government».

However – Martin concluded – «immediate change in government is not indicated»: «Not only would government “crisis” paralyze government machinery, but there is still long way to go before acceptable alternative to present government can be prepared»⁷². A more pessimistic hypothesis and prediction was instead elaborated by the *New York Times* in the same hours. The influential newspaper, in fact, wrote that «despite the nationwide wave of shock, insecurity, and outrage», there «appeared to be no likelihood that the two feuding Socialist parties and the Christian Democrats, former partners in the Center-Left majority, could heal their differences and produce a new coalition Cabinet». According to the newspaper, this could have produced very dangerous consequences: in fact «this means – *New York Times* stated – that the two anti-democratic extremes, the revolutionaries of the Left and the authoritarians of the Right, can continue to hope that the obvious weakness and semi-paralysis of the Rumor Government could eventually lead to breakdown and an opening for radical adventures»⁷³.

However, some events in the following hours proved that the predictions of the *New York Times* were, perhaps, excessively alarmist. On December 15th, the secretaries of the four Center-Left parties met, for the first time after a long period, to examine the situation of the country. It was the first and clear step to the resumption of the full Center-Left coalition. As some American observers perceived in this early stage (and as Rumor himself would have later recalled in his memoirs⁷⁴), the bombings and the subsequent appeal for a stable government coming from wide sectors of Italian society (an appeal also launched by the Milan Archbishop during the mass funeral for the victims⁷⁵) had undoubtedly played a crucial role in getting political leaders to try to resume the Center-Left coalition government. Commenting upon this political development, the *New York Times* itself, just a few hours after its pessimistic analysis, significantly admitted that «the deaths» had actually given «impetus to efforts to revive the shattered center-left coalition»⁷⁶. This same thesis was expressed in a brief telegram to Washington by Ambassador Martin. According to Martin’s point of view, in fact, «meeting with party secretaries, who were unwilling to meet together prior to Milan tragedy», clearly revealed that «tragedy ha[d] increased pressure for early return to center-left coalition»⁷⁷.

In the next days, as the American Embassy in Rome wrote to Washington on December 20, Rumor’s initiative to form a full Center-Left coalition was «approved by all four parties although with reserve by Socialists». Party positions toward the coalition had «been modified quite favorably», and the Embassy linked this significant evolution above all to the December 12th bombings: «Evident – the Embassy wrote – that Milan-Rome bombings have changed atmosphere. [...] After polemics of recent months present political atmosphere seems almost unreal»: «No one can say “no” to Center-Left at the moment». Therefore, the main problem was – according to the Embassy – that of «keeping up momentum as memory of terrorism passes and maintaining cohesion as difficulties emerge during negotiations»⁷⁸. These difficulties and possible dangers were denounced in the same hours also by a *New York Times* editorial: «with most labor disputes – the influential newspaper wrote – probably heading for settlement before Christmas, as is traditional, the party leaders may prefer to take a chance on weak Government until spring, when local and regional elections may alter the political power balance. Political rivalries and personal ambitions are involved within all the Center-Left parties». But – the editorial concluded – «the terrorist bombings in Milan and Rome, which have horrified the nation, point to the danger of delay»⁷⁹.

The widespread feeling that, mainly because of «the soberness brought on by the bombing»⁸⁰, the negotiations looking to the constitution of the new Center-Left coalition and the prospects for the new four-party government were enormously improving (even if slowly and among many difficulties) induced many relevant American observers to formulate, between the end of December and the end of January, some optimistic evaluations and predictions about Italy’s democracy. Among journalists in the US, this point of view was clearly expressed, above all, in some long articles by Louis B. Fleming for the *Los Angeles Times*. In the last days of December, Fleming stated that even if political instability in Italy may have continued, there appeared to be «no prospect of a significant shift of the government either to the left or to the right»: «significantly – he wrote –, nothing that is happening now, confused as it may be, appears to be helping the Communists»; on the other hand, also «the threat of a coup from the Fascists or the military is dismissed as most unlikely in the present situation» (in fact, the

Los Angeles Times journalist explained, «unlike the United States, the cry “for law and order” has not yet been translated into a clear mandate for the conservative in politics»⁸¹. One month later, Fleming reaffirmed his point of view (although he admitted that, if there had been a shift to the left, it would have brought «closer the day when the Communists will return to the coalition» like in the transition time immediately after the war). According to him, in fact, there was «no atmosphere of crisis», there was «no possibility of a takeover by extremists of right or left». Fleming added:

“I see neither colonels nor Communists taking over in the foreseeable future”, an expert said.

The extremists are under such stringent control, in fact, that some Italians are wondering whether the police may be instituting a reign of suppression. Once again, Italy has demonstrated its resilience and strength despite problems that in some other nations would be the signs of imminent collapse.

This is good news for Europe, which needs the economic vitality of Italy within the Common Market and the political insights of Italian leaders who have been farsighted in supporting a bigger Europe embracing Britain.

This is good news for the defense of the Free World, also, for the strategic position of Italy in the Mediterranean is increasingly important to NATO as the Soviet Union itself seeks to enlarge its influence⁸².

Positive general evaluations on the Italian political reactions to the December 12th bombings and (quite) optimistic predictions on the Italian future course were elaborated by the American Embassy in Rome. Exactly one month after the explosion of the bombs, in a most detailed telegram to Washington, the Ambassador Martin wrote:

During Autumn and Winter Center-Left parties were sharply divided within and among themselves on whether to attempt immediate return to four-party coalition or to wait Spring elections results. [...] Rumor, who has made clear his view that return to full coalition before Spring elections was desirable, seized upon indignant reaction of nation to Milan and Rome bombings December 12 to force Center-Left parties to come to grips with eroding political situation.

While other factors influenced this decision, it is of considerable interest that faced with unanimous popular reaction against bombings, parties quickly realized that further procrastination was not viable politics.

For these reasons and because the prospects for success of the full Center-Left formula were «good», the judgment of the American Ambassador about the Italian political situation and Italy’s democracy was entirely positive and reassuring: «We do no doubt – he concluded – [...] that the Italians will find an acceptable democratic solution to their problems, even though in the process they will appear at times to be close to edge»⁸³.

This positive and optimistic point of view was not the only one expressed during those days in the USA. Actually, an opposite view circulated as well in American public opinion between the end of December and the beginning of February. The traditional problems of the country, the absence of an effective government and the recent disquieting explosion of violence and terrorism induced some relevant American newspapers, magazines and journalists to express alarming evaluations and comments about the future of the country⁸⁴. According to this position, the days of the Italian democracy could be numbered. The threats to Italy’s democratic institutions, whose fall would have led to dramatic and severe implications for the international balance, were believed to be realistic and approached from many sides: a Communist takeover, a coup from the right and from the military, a civil war were all considered possible. This alarming hypothesis was put forward by the *Washington Post* in a long editorial published on January 18th and entitled “Italy: Opening to the Far Left – or Right?”. In Italy – the extremely influential newspaper wrote – the situation «rests, or rather, rumbles».

Its «gravity – it added – can scarcely be exaggerated»: «Hard-headed men on both sides of the Atlantic conceive that military men could take over a country which Americans helped liberate from Fascist tyranny in WWII. They conceive, too, that Communists could occupy positions of real power in a country whose saving from an earlier Communist takeover was at once a root cause and a great success of postwar intervention in Europe». According to the *Washington Post*, the «implications for NATO, for East-West policy, for Mediterranean strategy, for western democracy, for American

confidence, for Italy's welfare – all the implications are momentous». Therefore – the newspaper concluded – «one can only hope that occasion will not arise for the most of them to be spelled out»⁸⁵. For the well-known journalist Claire Sterling, «considering the state of Italy's democratic forces», one could «reasonably expect the worst». Her point of view was quite similar to that expressed by the *Washington Post*. «Very little actually happens in Italian politics», Sterling wrote in an articulated comment published on *Harper's*. However – the journalist believed – «should the governing parties deteriorate much further and more quickly [...], something may happen at last». Sterling outlined two possible outcomes of the Italian political crisis: the «Communists might get offers too tempting to resist» or «a frightened and exasperated middle class might come up with an alternative solution: “The Colonels' Solution”, Italians call it»⁸⁶. Finally, the magazine *The New Republic* painted in those days a black picture of the Italian situation and predicted a dark future for Italy's democracy, in an article published on January 10th. The thesis was clearly and entirely expressed by its title: “Italy between Governments. Military Coup or Popular Front?”. According to the author of the analysis, Roy Meachum, Italy had «lacked even the semblance of a stable government since July», and there could have been «Communists in the government – or a military coup as in Greece – before elections». In addition to these two possibilities, Meachum mentioned also «another road this unhappy country could take»:

One Italian said: “Our problem is Rumor is weak. And so are the other politicians. What we need is a strong man to straighten out the mess”. Another Duce? “Not like that”, the man said, throwing up his hands to push away the question. “But someone strong enough to come in and bump heads to get this country back in order”

Notas:

² “13 Die in Italian Terrorist Bombings”, *The Washington Post*, 13 December 1969.

³ Drake, R., *The Revolutionary Mystique and Terrorism in Contemporary Italy*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1989, 2.

⁴ Boatti, G., *Piazza Fontana. 12 dicembre 1969: il giorno dell'innocenza perduta*. Torino, Einaudi, 1999, 3.

⁵ On the piazza Fontana massacre (and on the following judicial investigations, trials and sentences) there is an extraordinarily wide

bibliography. Among the most detailed and most recent works: Ferraresi, F., “La strage di piazza Fontana”, in L. Violante (ed.), *Storia d'Italia, Annali 12, La criminalità*. Torino, Einaudi, 1997, 619-681; Panvini, G., *Ordine nero, guerriglia rossa. La violenza politica nell'Italia degli anni Sessanta e Settanta (1966-1975)*. Torino, Einaudi, 2009; Cucchiarelli, P., *Il segreto di piazza Fontana*. Milano, Ponte alle Grazie, 2009. Further analytical bibliography can be found in these books.

⁶ According to the most analytical study, between 1969 and 1982 Italy witnessed 2,712 attacks for which terrorist groups claimed responsibility, 324 of which were against people, with 768 injured and 351 killed: della Porta, D., and Rossi, M., *Cifre crudeli. Bilancio dei terrorismi italiani*. Bologna, Materiali di ricerca dell'Istituto Cattaneo, 1984.

⁷ Drake, R., “The Red and the Black. Terrorism in Contemporary Italy”, *International Political Science Review*, 5, 3, 1984, 279.

⁸ *Strategy of tensions* is the label by which this pattern of neo-Fascist action came to be called since then. However, as some scholars rightly observed, the concept is «very controversial». In fact, the term “strategy”, especially if used in the «literal meaning», tends to excessively simplify the events and therefore can be «inappropriate» because it «runs the risk of being misleading»: Ferraresi, F., “La strage di piazza Fontana”, cit., 621-629.

⁹ Cento Bull, A., *Italian Neofascism. The Strategy of Tension and the Politics of Nonreconciliation*. New York, Berghahn, 2007, 19.

¹⁰ Among the most in-depth and relevant studies on the first wave of black terrorism and on the *strategy of tension* it's necessary to mention at least: Ferraresi, F. (ed.), *La destra radicale*. Milano, Feltrinelli, 1984; Weinberg, L. and Eubank, W.L., *The Rise and Fall of Italian Terrorism*. Westview, Bolder, 1987; Drake, R., *The Revolutionary Mystique*, cit.; Ferraresi, F., *Threats to Democracy. The Radical Right in Italy after the War*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1996; Cento Bull, A., *Italian Neofascism. The Strategy of Tension*, cit.

¹¹ Cucchiarelli, P., *Il segreto*, cit., 9.

¹² See above all: Foot, J., “Contested Memories: Milan and Piazza Fontana”, in P. Antonello and A. O'Leary (ed.), *Imagining Terrorism. The Rhetoric and Representation of Political Violence in Italy (1969-2009)*. London, Legenda, 2009, 153-167; Foot, J., *Italy's Divided Memory*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009 (particularly Chapter 8: “The Strategy of Tension and Terrorism. Piazza Fontana and the ‘Moro Case’”); Cento Bull, A., *Italian Neofascism*, cit.

¹³ National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park (MD), Nixon Presidential Materials Staff, NSC Files, Country Files – Europe, Box: 694, Folder: Italy, Vol. I, Jan 69 – 31 Jan 70, “Memorandum for Mr. Henry A. Kissinger. Subject: Report on Bombings in Italy”, 12 December 1969.

¹⁴ “Terrorist Bombings Kill 13, Injure 108 in Italy”, *Los Angeles Times*, 13 December 1969.

¹⁵ “Blast in Milan Kills 13, Hurts 85; 3 More Bombs Injure 16 in Rome”, *The New York Times*, 13 December 1969.

¹⁶ “4 Suspects Seized in Italy Bombings; 13 Dead, 100 Hurt”, *Chicago Tribune*, 13 December 1969.

¹⁷ “Blast in Milan Kills 13”, cit.

¹⁸ “Bombs Injure 20 in Milan”, *The New York Times*, 26 April 1969; “Riots Erupt in Italy; 19 Injured by Bombs”, *Los Angeles Times*, 26 April 1969; “12 Jailed After Milan Blasts”, *The New York Times*, 27 April 1969.

¹⁹ “Terrorists Hit in Italy”, *Los Angeles Times*, 10 August 1969.

²⁰ “8 Bombs Hit Trains in Italy”, *The Washington Post*, 10 August 1969.

²¹ Doty, R.C., “8 Bombs Explode on Italian Trains”, *The New York Times*, 10 August 1969.

²² NARA, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Box: 2237, Folder: Pol 23-8 IT, 1/1/68, Telegram, “Terroristic Attacks on Trains”, 11 August 1969.

²³ “4 Suspects Seized in Italy Bombings”, cit.

²⁴ “Blast in Milan Kills 13”, cit.

²⁵ “Milan Clash Marks Big Italian Strike”, *The Washington Post*, 20 November 1969.

²⁶ “1-Day General Strike Brings Italy to a Halt”, *The Washington Post*, 19 November 1969.

²⁷ For example, the *Los Angeles Times* noted: «For millions of Italians [...], the strike occasioned trips to parks, the countryside or beaches to soak up the sun on a 68-degree November day. [...] Many demonstrators grumbled, however, they could not get coffee or rolls during their rallies because the strike had closed almost all restaurants and bars»: “Disorders Mark Strike of 12 Million Italians”, *Los Angeles Times*, 20 November 1969.

²⁸ “Half of Italy’s Workers Join General Strike”, *The New York Times*, 20 November 1969.

²⁹ “Disorders Mark Strike”, cit.

³⁰ “1-Day General Strike”, cit.

³¹ “Italians Begin Strike for Cheaper Housing”, *Los Angeles Times*, 19 November 1969.

³² “1 Dies, 62 Hurt as Fights Mar Italian Strike”, *Chicago Tribune*, 20 November 1969.

³³ This expression was then utilized in his journal by one of the most important Italian politicians, the Socialist leader Pietro Nenni: *I conti con la storia. Diari (1967-1971)*, edited by G. Nenni e D. Zucàro. Milano, Sugarco, 1983, 402.

³⁴ NARA, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Box: 1258, Folder: LAB 5 IT, 1/1/67, Telegram, “Early Reaction to Milan Incident”, 20 November 1969.

³⁵ NARA, CIA Records Search Tool (CREST), CIA, Central Intelligence Bulletin, “Italy: Police unrest reflects the strain of minimizing violence during extensive labor disputes”, 22 November 1969.

³⁶ NARA, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Box: 1258, Folder: LAB 5 IT, 1/1/67, Telegram, “Early Reaction to Milan Incident”, 20 November 1969. On the basis of some unofficial

reports published in Italian newspapers, also some American newspapers gave news of the police unrest. Their account was probably even more alarming than the reports of the Embassy and of the CIA. The *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *Chicago Tribune* referred to a possible «police revolt», to a «police mutiny» which had «created fears that the situation in Italy’s largest city would worsen dramatically», to «violent fighting [...] between the mutineers and “loyalist” policemen»: “Half of Italy’s Workers”, cit; “Report Milan Police Mutiny Is Put Down”, *Chicago Tribune*, 21 November 1969; “Milan Police Revolt After Colleague Is killed”, *The Washington Post*, 21 November 1969.

³⁷ NARA, CREST, CIA, Central Intelligence Bulletin, 4 December 1969.

³⁸ Doty, R.C., “Threat to Italy in Conflict of Extremes”, *The New York Times*, 7 December 1969.

³⁹ Cfr. for example “Italy: The Moon Bug”, *Time*, 19 December 1969.

⁴⁰ *Los Angeles Times*, 22 November 1969.

⁴¹ *The Washington Post*, 22 November 1969.

⁴² NARA, CREST, CIA, Intelligence Memorandum, “Political Stability in Italy”, 16 December 1969.

⁴³ NARA, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Box: 2235, Folder: POL 12 IT 7-1-69, Telegram, “Lost in the horse – Italian politics seek a new course”, 10 December 1969.

⁴⁴ Doty, R.C., “Threat to Italy”, cit.

⁴⁵ NARA, CREST, CIA, Intelligence Memorandum, “Political Stability in Italy”, cit.

⁴⁶ Doty, R.C., “Threat to Italy”, cit.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Finer, L., “Greek Premier Plots Army Coup in Italy”, *Observer*, 7 December 1969.

⁴⁹ “A Rome Coup Role Is Laid to Athens”, *The New York Times*, 7 December 1969. Cfr. also “Paper Says Greeks Aid Plot in Italy”, *The Washington Post*, 7 December 1969.

⁵⁰ Doty, R.C., “Metalworkers Pact Set in Italy But Other Strikes Disrupt Life”, *The New York Times*, 10 December 1969.

⁵¹ “Foreign Links Investigated in Italian Blasts”, *Los Angeles Times*, 14 December 1969.

⁵² Chancellor, A., “Italy Pushes Hunt for Terrorists”, *The Washington Post*, 14 December 1969.

⁵³ Ibid. and “Foreign Links”, cit.

⁵⁴ “Blast in Milan Kills 13”, cit.

⁵⁵ NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials Staff, NSC Files, Country Files – Europe, Box: 694, Folder: Italy, Vol. I, Jan 69 – 31 Jan 70, “Memorandum for Mr. Henry A. Kissinger. Subject: Report on Bombings in Italy”, 12 December 1969.

⁵⁶ Chancellor, A., “Italy Pushes”, cit.

⁵⁷ Doty, R.C., “Terrorist Blasts Outrage Italians”, *The New York Times*, 14 December 1969 and “Foreign Links”, cit.

⁵⁸ “Terrorist Bombings Kill 13”, cit. and Doty, R.C., “Terrorist Blasts”, cit.

⁵⁹ “Foreign Links”, cit.

⁶⁰ See for examples: “Terrorist Bombings Kill 13”, cit.; “Blast in Milan Kills 13”, cit.; “Raid Offices in Italy of Extremist Groups”, *Chicago Tribune*, 14 December 1969; Doty, R.C., “Terrorist Blasts”, cit.; “Papal Wrath Directed at Fatal Bomb”, *Chicago Tribune*, 15 December 1969.

⁶¹ NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials Staff, NSC Files, Country Files – Europe, Box: 694, Folder: Italy, Vol. I, Jan 69 – 31 Jan 70, “Memorandum for Mr. Henry A. Kissinger. Subject: Report on Bombings in Italy”, 12 December 1969.

⁶² NARA, CREST, CIA, Central Intelligence Bulletin, “Italy: Violence”, 13 December 1969.

⁶³ NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials Staff, NSC Files, Country Files – Europe, Box: 694, Folder: Italy, Vol. I, Jan 69 – 31 Jan 70, “Memorandum for Mr. Kissinger. Subject: Rumor Cancels Visit; Ultra-Left Suspected in Bombings”, 13 December 1969.

⁶⁴ NARA, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Box: 2237, Folder: POL 23-8 IT, 1/1/68, Telegram, “Terrorist Attacks in Italy”, 13 December 1969.

⁶⁵ NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials Staff, NSC Files, Country Files – Europe, Box: 694, Folder: Italy, Vol. I, Jan 69 – 31 Jan 70, “Memorandum for the President. Subject: Prime Minister Rumor Cancels January Visit; Ultra-Left Suspected in Bombings”, 16 December 1969. Cfr. also NARA, CREST, CIA, Intelligence Memorandum, “Political Stability in Italy”, 16 December 1969.

⁶⁶ “9 Charged in Italian Bombings”, *The Washington Post*, 17 December 1969. See also: “Male Dancer, 8 Others Held in Italy Bombings”, *Los Angeles Times*, 17 December 1969 and “9 Charged in Italian Bombings”, *Chicago Tribune*, 17 December 1969.

⁶⁷ Doty, R.C., “Italian Parties Closer to Accord”, *The New York Times*, 20 December 1969. Significantly, also the *Chicago Tribune* reported that Merlino had been charged but didn’t mention his previous militancy in neo-Fascist organizations: “Italian Ruling Party Heads Back Coalition”, *Chicago Tribune*, 20 December 1969.

⁶⁸ NARA, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Box: 2235, Folder: POL 13-1, IT, Airgram, “Crack-Down on Extremists in Italy”, 24 December 1969.

⁶⁹ Significantly, some days later, however, the *Los Angeles Times* would have noticed: «Police, under enormous pressure from the public, had one dead and one live anarchist to blame for the bombings. The evidence was enough to satisfy some of the major newspapers, even if some leaders privately conceded that they were not convinced» (Fleming, L.B., “Political Instability in Italy May Continue”, *Los Angeles Times*, 21 December 1969).

⁷⁰ NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials Staff, NSC Files, Country Files – Europe, Box: 694, Folder: Italy, Vol. I, Jan 69 – 31 Jan 70, “Memorandum for Mr. Henry A. Kissinger. Subject: Report on Bombings in Italy”, 12 December 1969.

⁷¹ NARA, CREST, CIA, Central Intelligence Bulletin, “Italy: Violence”, 13 December 1969.

⁷² NARA, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Box: 2237, Folder: POL 23-8 IT, 1/1/68, Telegram, “Terrorist Attacks in Italy”, 13 December 1969.

⁷³ Doty, R.C., “Terrorist Blasts Outrage Italians”, *The New York Times*, 14 December 1969.

⁷⁴ Rumor, M., *Memorie (1943-1970)*, edited by E. Reato and F. Malgeri. Vicenza, Neri Pozza, 1991, 450-452.

⁷⁵ Cfr. “Mass Mourning Marks Italy’s Bomb Funeral”, *The Washington Post*, 16 December 1969 and “Premier Leads 40,000 at Milan Blast Rites”, *Los Angeles Times*, 16 December 1969.

⁷⁶ “Italy Pushes Hunt for Bomb Killers”, *The New York Times*, 16 December 1969.

⁷⁷ NARA, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Box: 2235, Folder: POL 12 IT, 7/1/69, Telegram, “Italian Political Situation after Bombings”, 15 December 1969.

⁷⁸ NARA, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Box: 2235, Folder: POL 12 IT, 7/1/69, Telegram, “Italian Political Situation”, 20 December 1969.

⁷⁹ “The Italian Tinderbox”, *The New York Times*, 21 December 1969.

⁸⁰ Fleming, L.B., “Political Instability”, cit.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Fleming, L.B., “Center-Left Majority Seen in Italy Soon”, *Los Angeles Times*, 25 January 1970.

⁸³ NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials Staff, NSC Files, Country Files – Europe, Box: 694, Folder: Italy, Vol. I, Jan 69 – 31 Jan 70, Telegram, “Italian Political Situation”, 12 January 1970.

⁸⁴ In the following years, the well known journalist Leo J. Wollenborg would have severely criticized this point of view: *Stelle, strisce e tricolore: trent’anni di vicende politiche fra Roma e Washington*. Milano, Mondadori, 1983, 266-272.

⁸⁵ “Italy: Opening to the Far Left – or Right?”, *The Washington Post*, 18 January 1970.

⁸⁶ Sterling, C., “Italy’s happy Communists”, *Harper’s*, February 1970, 24-30.