

Italy 5

December 4, 1973


Confidential

Mr. Kubisch:

Subject: Cesare Bensi

Cesare Bensi and the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) provide an excellent example of how it is possible to cooperate with and influence Marxists and leftists to our own advantage. When I first went to Rome, in 1957, our Embassy had no contact with the PSI, which had been working closely with the Communists (the USG and PSI had incredible misconceptions regarding each other). Bensi was one of my first PSI contacts and we later became good friends. He came here in 1962 or 1963 on a Leader Grant I obtained for him. The PSI, which at one time resembled the Chilean Socialist Party, entered the Italian Government in a center-left coalition around 1965, leaving the Communists isolated on the left. Fortunately it was possible to overcome Embassy and Department opposition to the center-left "experiment". If we had intervened and prevented the center-left, as some wished to do, I believe we would have had a Greek solution.

I have not seen Bensi since 1962-63. His father was a big name in the anti-Nazi resistance.


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