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Mr Keeling WED

Mary Nambo.

CARLO DONAT CATTIN'S INTERVIEW IN EPOCA

1. I am returning the interview in EPOCA passed to you by Mr Walker of the Conservative Central Office, in which Carlo Donat Cattin states his position on what is likely to be the central issue at the forthcoming Christian Democrat (DC) Congress, namely policy towards the communists (PCI) and socialists (PSI). Donat Cattin is Vice Secretary of the DC and a leading member of the Forze Nuove faction. His known opposition to the communists is reflected in this interview which unfortunately appears to have a column missing (on page 1).
2. Donat Cattin recognised that the way ahead would not be easy. He reaffirmed his total opposition to the inclusion of communists in government. Those who were working for this were experiencing "distress" both within the party and outside. He was in favour of some sort of agreement with the PCI along the lines outlined by Moro. He claimed that Moro had fixed the limit of PCI non-participation in government. To go further would provoke splits in the DC, ruinous both for the party and the country as this would weaken one of the pillars of the system. The recent Amendola/Berlinguer dispute had confirmed that the PCI's objective was the transformation of the system. He dismissed the Socialist Party demands as the usual pre-negotiation statements - the PSI was asking for an "open" majority (i.e. including the communists) and the DC also proposed a majority "in the spirit of national solidarity". As for the PSI request for the premiership, what the Socialists wanted was something that looked different from the previous centre left arrangement. He maintained that even without a Socialist premier a centre left alliance would in any case be different now and that in the past the centre left had in fact provided an enormous re-distribution of power. What linked the DC and PSI was the fact that both were western parties. He hoped that a majority government could be formed, but the DC was not obliged to form a government at all costs; someone else could do it, or there should be new elections.
3. Speaking on internal party questions Donat Cattin denied that he was standing for Secretary, from which post Zaccagnini has announced his retirement. Donat Cattin considered that the only person enjoying general popularity was Andreotti who had in effect been leading the party since Moro's death. Although Donat Cattin maintained that Andreotti's policies repeatedly contradicted the spirit of the party Andreotti had deferred the feeling in the party, for example, on Italy's membership of the EMS and on the functioning of NATO.
4. Donat Cattin's appeal to the Socialists to enter a coalition with the DC and his remarks about an "open majority" reflect the DC's desire to return to past formulae but they ignore the fact that on present form neither the PSI nor the PCI is prepared to be used again to keep the DC in power without deriving substantial

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benefit for themselves. Indeed, it looks at the moment as if the divisions in the Socialist Party which will be fought out in the current Central Committee meeting, may render socialist support for a DC government even less on the cards. Otherwise the interview is interesting for Donat Cattin's slightly disparaging remarks about Andreotti's inability to reflect party feeling and his hint that the DC might be prepared to let someone else form a government.

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