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PRESS REACTION	
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MY TELNO 196: ITALIAN GOVERNMENT CRISIS

- PRESS REACTION

1. PRESS COMMENT SPECULATES ON THE LENGTH OF TIME TAKE TO APPOINT A NEW GOVERNMENT AND ON THE COMPOSITION OF A NEW COALITION. CRAXI IS IDENTIFIED AS THE INSTIGATOR OF THE PRESENT CRISIS, ITS OUTCOME WILL DEPEND ON HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE BEST COURSE FOR THE PSI.

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2. POSSIBILITIES CANVASSED INCLUDE:

(1) A NEW FORLANI GOVERNMENT WITH INCREASED REPRESENTATION FOR THE SOCIALISTS,

(2) A LAY PRIME MINISTER WHO IS NOT A SOCIALIST. THIS POSSIBILITY WOULD ONLY EMERGE AFTER A LONG CRISIS IN WHICH BOTH FORLANI AND CRAXI HAD TRIED AND FAILED TO FORM AN ADMINISTRATION,

(3) A NON-POLITICAL PRIME MINISTER,

(4) EARLY ELECTIONS (PRESIDENT PERTINI HAS SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE IS UNWILLING TO DISSOLVE THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES).

3. THE PRESS RECOGNISES THAT THE CRISIS HAS COME AT A DIFFICULT TIME FOR CRAXI WHOSE SOCIALISTS ARE AT LEAST AS MUCH INVOLVED AS OTHER PARTIES IN THE P2 SCANDAL. NEVERTHELESS, 'LA STAMPA' (FIAT OWNED/CENTRE) SAYS THAT CRAXI WILL SEEK TO USE THE CRISIS TO GET CLOSER TO THE APPOINTMENT OF A SOCIALIST PRIME MINISTER. THE PAPER COMES OUT AGAINST ANTICIPATED ELECTIONS, SAYING THAT IT WOULD LEAVE THE COUNTRY WITHOUT LEADERSHIP FOR TOO LONG. 'CORRIERE DELLA SERA' (CENTRE) ALSO CALLS FOR AN EARLY SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS SO THAT ITALY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS CAN BE DEALT WITH. 'IL GIORNALE' (RIGHT) SAYS THAT THERE IS A RISK THAT CRAXI WILL KEEP THE CRISIS OPEN UNTIL 21 JUNE, IN THE HOPE THAT THE RESULTS OF THE PARTIAL ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS TO BE HELD ON THAT DAY WILL LEAVE THE SOCIALISTS BETTER PLACED TO INCREASE THEIR REPRESENTATION IN A NEW GOVERNMENT. IT GIORNALE ALSO FEARS THAT THE LEFT-WING OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY WILL SEEK TO BRING THE PCI INTO A NEW GOVERNMENT. 'IL TEMPO' (RIGHT) SAYS THAT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WILL BE UNWILLING TO GIVE UP THE PRIME MINISTERSHIP AT A TIME WHEN THEY ARE WEAKENED BY THE P2

SCANDAL. 'REPUBBLICA' (LEFT) CALLS FOR A UNITED LEFT TO OPPOSE THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS.

4. AMONG THE PARTY NEWSPAPERS, 'UNITA' (PCI) CARRIES A SPEECH BY BERLINGUER ON 26 MAY IN WHICH HE REPEATS HIS CALL OF LAST NOVEMBER FOR A DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE TO THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, AND CALLS FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT WITH THE PCI AS THE MOTIVE FORCE, COMPOSED OF CAPABLE AND HONEST MEN FROM THE POLITICAL PARTIES AND FROM OUTSIDE THE PARTIES. 'AVANTI' (PSI) REPORTS DE MICHELIS' STATEMENT THAT THE SOCIALISTS WANTED THE POSSIBILITY OF A SOCIALIST PRIME MINISTER CONSIDERED (HIS FIRST OUTRIGHT STATEMENT WAS MODIFIED LATER, PROBABLY FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS WITH CRAXI). 'UMANITA' (PSDI) REPORTS PRETI, ONE OF THE PSDI'S LEADERS, AS SAYING THAT FORLANI SHOULD FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT QUICKLY, BASED ON THE CURRENT FOUR PARTY COALITION AND IF POSSIBLE WITH ADDED LIBERAL SUPPORT, TO FACE UP TO THE PCI'S OPPOSITION. 'IL POPOLO' (CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT) CRITICISES CRAXI FOR INSTIGATING THE CRISIS AND SAYS THAT FORLANI HAS THE FULL CONFIDENCE OF THE DC; THE SOLUTION OF THE CRISIS IS TO BE FOUND IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CURRENT FOUR-PARTY COALITION.

5. THE OVERALL IMPRESSION GIVEN IS THAT NONE OF THE PRESS IS SURE OF THE OUTCOME SEMICOLON THE SCANDAL GOES TOO WIDE TO BE EASILY COVERED OVER BY ANOTHER D.C.-LED COALITION AND BUSINESS AS USUAL SEMICOLON THE SOCIALISTS ARE NOT SHOWN UP TO ADVANTAGE SEMICOLON AND THERE IS LITTLE DISPOSITION ON THE PART OF THE REST TO GIVE ANY OPENING TO THE COMMUNISTS.

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