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BRITISH EMBASSY

BUDAPEST

12 February 1982

 F A Wilson Esq  
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WR 2 0111

24 FEB 1982

Dear Fraser,

## THE HSWP AND THE PCI

1. We have already reported, in our letters of 25 and 27 January 1982, the HSWP's initial reaction to the PCI's attitude to events in Poland. On 6 February, the HSWP again took up arms against the PCI in a long and authoritative editorial in the Party paper, Népszabadság. The article (written by Ferenc Várnai, the paper's Chief Foreign Policy Editor) is a stinging attack on all aspects of the PCI's attitudes to the Polish crisis.
2. The HSWP "knows the difficult situation of the PCI .. and the tensions of the internal political situation in Italy". It was not the HSWP's intention to drag this debate into the open and "give propaganda points to our common enemies". But the HSWP "cannot imagine why the PCI should have reacted as it did". Most Western European leaders breathed a sigh of relief when the state of emergency was declared in Poland: the Poles were solving their own problems at last. It was only after Washington had given the sign that this was to be treated as a Soviet intervention that they changed their tune. Incomprehensibly the PCI had condemned it from the start. The HSWP understood why the Polish crisis should cause bitterness in the ranks of their Italian comrades, but "why did the PCI leaders not see the difference between the mistakes made by the old guard and the new leadership's genuine constructive attempts at a solution?" The PCI's attitude now was the stranger because in 1956 they had given their full support to Hungarian Communists in their time of trial.
3. According to Várnai, the PCI's most serious crime is in its denial of the leading role of the Soviet Union and its attack on Soviet and Warsaw Pact policies. Várnai finds it incredible that anybody should even think of blaming the policies of the Socialist countries for the present dangerous world situation.
4. Várnai then describes the "third way" as "historically untenable unjust and faulty".
5. Finally he reminds the PCI that it owes its very existence to the fact that there is a Socialist world behind it supporting it in everything it does. He does not want to "excommunicate" the PCI for its wrong opinions: that, he says "would be to return to bad practices which have happily long fallen into abeyance." But the HSWP, and every Socialist country hopes that the PCI will soon return to the road of "social progress and Socialism".

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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London SW1A 2AH

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6. Várnai's article is the strongest comment that the Hungarians have made about a sister Party for many years. Its concluding sentence - with the wish that Italy should soon return to the road of Socialism - hints that the PCI is no longer considered as a sister Party at all even if the HSWP does not yet want to use the word "excommunicate".

PCI/CSRP RELATIONS

*Yes we*

*John Nicholls*

J R Nicholls

cc: Chancery Rome  
Miss A Burke, Research Dept, FCO