

SAVING TELEGRAM
FROM PARIS

CONFIDENTIAL

TO FCO TELNO 43 SAVING OF 2 APRIL 1982

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BERLINGUER'S VISIT TO PARIS

1. The Secretary General of the Italian Communist Party (PCI), Enrico Berlinguer, visited Paris on 29-31 March for talks with leaders of the French Socialist Party (PS). He was accompanied by Romano Ledda, a member of the PCI Central Committee. Berlinguer had four hours of talks with the First Secretary of the PS, Lionel Jospin, on 30 March, followed by an hour with President Mitterrand on 31 March.
2. According to a communiqué issued after the meeting with Jospin, there had been a convergence of views on many of the topics discussed: the crisis of capitalism and of Eastern Europe, the refusal to accept the logic of blocs, the need for progressive forces in the developed countries and the Third World to cooperate, and the role of the working class movement as the fulcrum for the development of socialism in the democracies. Berlinguer and Jospin said that their meeting had been very positive and that they had agreed to continue talks in order to establish concrete forms of cooperation.
3. There was no communiqué issued after the shorter meeting with President Mitterrand but the press reported that it was devoted to an exchange of views on the international situation, particularly Central America, the reduction of the arms race and a discussion of the political situation in France and Italy. Little was said by Berlinguer after this meeting, but he remarked to the press that on questions of foreign policy, detente and European security he had more in common with the West German SPD than with Mitterrand and Jospin.
4. Press comment on the visit has been extensive. The principal theme adopted by French commentators has been the question of a new grouping of left-wing forces in Europe, a so-called "Euroleft" ("Eurogauche") replacing the defunct Eurocommunist alliance. Most of the press judged that this concept had made only limited progress during the visit. Berlinguer himself remarked that agreement in principle on the concept of a "Euroleft" had not been difficult but the analyses made by the two sides were so different that any form of common programme would be slow to emerge. The press underlined the fact that in talking to PS leaders in this way, Berlinguer was placing the French Communist Party (PCF) in a delicate position. It was perhaps for this reason that Berlinguer emphasised that the development of relations between the PS and PCI was not aimed at anybody else in France or in Italy. In fact the press report that he will return to Paris in May for a meeting with Georges Marchais, the Secretary General of the PCF.

5. Despite Berlinguer's professed desire to maintain good relations with the PCF, this renewed contact with PS leaders (his last substantive discussions with Mitterrand were in Strasbourg in March 1980) will not be welcome to the PCF. It was perhaps a coincidence that Marchais left Paris for three weeks in Cuba and Nicaragua several hours before Berlinguer's arrival here. Nevertheless, he must have expected that the talks between Berlinguer and Jospin would reveal considerable agreement over developments in Poland, the negative aspects of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and

the need for a new path towards socialism, involving communist and non-communist forces. The fact that Berlinguer and Jospin disagreed over the role of the peace movement in promoting disarmament and over questions like the deployment of Cruise, Pershing and SS20 missiles will have given Marchais little comfort.

6. There are of course two wallflowers at this particular dance; Marchais and Craxi, Jospin's true opposite number in the Italian Socialist Party. In arranging Berlinguer's visit, the PS seem to have taken pains to accommodate all sides. Mitterrand talked to Craxi in Paris on 15 March and gave lunch to Marchais on 24 March (the first time for months that the two men had met like this). But if Mitterrand's desire to promote closer cooperation with the PCI is partly motivated by the continuing internal struggle between the PS and PCF, there is also the danger that any significant rapprochement will alarm the centre and centre-right elements in the PS. Jospin must have been considering this when he remarked to a journalist who was pressing him on the closeness of PS and PCI views that there was one essential difference: the PS were socialists and the PCI communists.

7. I discussed this visit with Mauroy, the French Prime Minister, over lunch yesterday. He spoke of it in very sweeping terms as a truly historic development. He asked how anyone could have imagined such a development to have been possible even ten years ago. He saw it as a harbinger of what could be achieved in the third millennium (which, as his prepared remarks later showed, he sees as a socialist millennium). I asked whether he expected other Communist Parties to join in the same movement. He said that the Spanish Party was part of it, but not the Portuguese, nor the British. He could not be too precise about the French Party, which after all was his partner in government, but the sense of his remarks was that he and the Socialist Party were in competition with the French Communists to clutch the PCI to their bosoms. He confirmed in reply to a question that the key point of difference between the "Euroleft" and the hard-line Communist Parties was the rejection of direct Soviet authority and of the Soviet Union as a model for the organisation of society.

8. Mauroy does not have a reputation as a visionary but he evidently shares the far-reaching ideas expressed by Mitterrand in the past about re-integrating the Communist Parties of Western Europe in the traditional European left and building a socialist millennium on that basis. In spite of the caution of Jospin's remarks (paragraph 6 above) this is what Mauroy apparently believes is now afoot.

FRETWELL

STANDARD

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**THIS TELEGRAM
WAS NOT
ADVANCED**



Red pen
Italian Communist Party

BRITISH EMBASSY

PARIS

2 April 1982

Mr. Amadori
17/4

N H S Armour Esq
WED
FCO

URGENT
13 APR 1982
McM *7/5*

Dear Nicholas,

BERLINGUER INTERVIEW WITH LE MONDE

1. Before leaving Paris on 31 March (see Paris saving telno 43) the PCI Secretary General gave an interview to "Le Monde". I attach the text.

2. The points of chief interest here are:

- (a) His guarded reply to the question on different approaches by the PCI/PCF towards the Soviet Union;
- (b) The admitted differences between the PCI/PS over the Peace Movement and the inclusion of French nuclear weapons in any East/West disarmament talks;
- (c) Berlinguer's comments on Poland, which could have been made by a PS spokesman here and are in sharp contrast with the PCF point of view.

3. Rome will no doubt tell you what, if anything, is new in his comments on PCI/CPSU relations. Seen from here, he is frank about the failures of the Soviet system as a model, but cautious on the PCI/CPSU split. "There has not been a rupture and we are not seeking one. There is a very bitter polemical argument."

Yours ever,
Mike

M J Reynolds

cc: Research Dept, FCO
Chancery, Rome